

PART II

THE QUESTION PAPER

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II.

Numerical references are to Question Paper page numbers.

An asterisk preceding an entry in the index indicates
that an answer has not yet been received.

NOTICE GIVEN ON DATE SHOWN

From 18 November 1980

Government Assistance for Tradesmen to Visit Remote Areas

44 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What assistance will the government provide to enable electrical, plumbing and building tradesmen and inspectors to visit remote centres such as Borroloola to assist home owners?

From 24 February 1981

Electricity Supply

133 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Will electricity to be reticulated to the new water supply at Donkey Camp near Katherine be extended to cater for consumers and future subdivisions on the Gorge road, and to Katherine Gorge?

From 2 June 1981

Interest rate on Loan to Northern Meat Exporters Pty Ltd

195 Mr MacFARLANE to TREASURER

What rate of interest is being charge on the \$1.4m special assistance loan granted to Northern Meat Exporters Pty Ltd?

From 9 June 1981

Aboriginal and Islander Medical Service

198 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. What is the present staffing of the Aboriginal and Islander Medical Centre? Are there plans to increase the staffing levels and, if so, what positions?
2. What are the functions and duties of the Aboriginal and Islander Medical Service?
3. During the 6 months to 31 May 1981, (a) how many Aboriginals have been treated per week by AIMS, (b) what are the major categories of illness, and (c) where do the Aboriginals, in the main, come from?
4. How many Aboriginal liaison officers are attached to Casuarina Hospital; what hours do they work; and are there plans to increase the numbers?
5. Are any Aboriginal liaison officers to be employed at Darwin Hospital?

From 18 August 1981

Rape in Southern Region

210 Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

1. (a) How many rapes have been reported in the Southern Command region since 1 July 1980 to 10 June 1981, (b) how many have resulted in charges being laid, (c) what is the state of these charges, and (d) have any reports of rape been false?
2. What facilities and resources are available for the psychological counselling of women raped in (a) the Alice Springs region, and (b) the Tennant Creek region.

3. Has he received any representations from women's organisations regarding the level of rape counselling services in the Territory?
4. If so, (a) what organisations have made representations, (b) what has been the basis of these representations, and (c) what has been his response?

Darwin Hospital Pathology Laboratory

224 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. Can he inform me as to the fate of the pathology laboratory at the Darwin Hospital?
2. Has he considered the future of the laboratory in the light of a lack of such scientific facilities in the Department of Primary Production?

Security for Belongings of Hospital Patients

225 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

What arrangements are made to ensure the security of the belongings of hospital patients, for example psychiatric and geriatric patients, who are unable to care for themselves?

From 24 November 1981

Sexual Assault Cases

379 Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH

How many sexual assault cases have been seen at the major Territory hospitals in (a) 1980-81, and (b) 1979-80?

From 1 December 1981

Liquor Campaign

500 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. How much is being spent on the 'Boozers are Losers' campaign?
2. For what reason was the contract awarded to a southern firm?
3. Has any contact been made with the liquor industry with a view to controlling the nature of liquor advertising?

Collia Tin Mine

512 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

As a number of people have lost their savings in the Collia tin mine affair,

- (a) what detailed action has been taken by the Department of Mines to settle the matter;
- (b) how much money has been lost by people involved;
- (c) how much did Mr Ken Day receive for the tin he mined from Collia;
- (d) why has he not explained in the Legislative Assembly what action the government has taken;
- (e) did the Department of Law recommend that anybody be charged over the affair and, if so, why was not that recommended action proceeded with;

- (f) was the government's lack of action coloured by the fact that Mr Day was once the head of the Progress Party, whose votes had helped the Country Liberal Party;
- (g) what is now being done about the matter; and
- (h) are police trying to contact the previous leaseholder who disappeared and, if so, do they know in which state he is residing?

Public Housing in NT - Applications

513 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

- 1. How many applications for general public housing were received during (a) 1979-80, and (b) 1980-81, and how many applications were outstanding at (c) 1 July 1980, and (d) 1 July 1981 in (i) Darwin, (ii) Alice Springs, (iii) Tennant Creek, (iv) Katherine, (v) Nhulunbuy, and (vi) Pine Creek?
- 2. How many outstanding applications were there for general public housing (a) at 1 July 1980, and (b) at 25 June 1981?
- 3. How many applications for general public housing were received in the financial years (a) 1979-80, and (b) 1980-81?
- 4. How many applications for general public housing were cancelled in the financial years (a) 1979-80, and (b) 1980-81?
- 5. How many tenants were accommodated in the financial years (a) 1979-80, and (b) 1980-81?

Internal Reviews of Health Department

517 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

- 1. He stated during the June 1981 sittings that his department had reviews taking place on all aspects of medical services offered to the public, and referred to an internal review of community health services. What were the details and outcome of this review?
- 2. In regard to other internal reviews conducted during the past year, (a) in which areas were they conducted, (b) who have the committees comprised of, (c) how many times have they met, and (d) what has been the outcome of these reviews?
- 3. How many internal reviews are being conducted at the moment?

Psychiatric Services

534 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

- 1. For what reason is psychiatric services included in the general administrative expenditure for health services?
- 2. For what reason has the level of funding for psychiatric services been reduced from \$510 000 to \$475 000? Where will this cut be felt?

Doctor-Patient Ratios in NT

538 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

- 1. What is the current ratio of doctors per patient at each hospital in the NT?
- 2. What are the duty rosters of doctors and nurses? How does this compare with last year?

3. Is the percentage that salaried doctors can earn on top of their income to be increased from 25%? If so, to what level?

From 9 March 1982

'Fellow Territorians' Circular

564 Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

What was the cost of a circular letter dated October 1981, addressed to 'Fellow Territorians' and signed by the Chief Minister?

Geoffrey Peter Bellenger

611 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Has his attention been drawn to the hardship suffered by Geoffrey Peter Bellenger, who was injured by a truck on a pedestrian crossing in Alice Springs on 23 May 1975 and who has not yet received any compensation for his injuries or costs?
2. Was the driver of the truck involved in the incident charged with any offence?
3. Is any of the almost 7 years delay between the injury and compensation attributable to any shortcoming or congestion in Northern Territory courts?

Liaison between Government Departments

618 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is there liaison between the Department of Lands, other departments and statutory bodies such as Telecom on the provision of services such as electricity, water, sewerage and telephones for new private or government subdivisions?

From 16 March 1982

Male Public Servants

640 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

As at 30 April 1981, what was (a) the average male earnings in the Northern Territory Public Service, and (b) what were the numbers and levels of the males?

Motor Vehicles - NTEC

645 Mrs LAWRIE to TREASURER

1. How many motor vehicles are (a) owned by NTEC, (b) what classes of vehicles are they, and (c) in what numbers?
2. To which designations of NTEC employees are these vehicles allocated and allowed to be driven to and from work?
3. Is it a fact that a lawyer retained by NTEC has an NTEC vehicle assigned to him for his personal use?

Houses, Darwin City Council

649 Mr VALE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is he aware of (a) the number of houses owned by the Corporation of the City of Darwin, and (b) to what use these houses are put?

From 25 May 1982

Repairs and Maintenance, Rapid Creek Primary School

657 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What plans does the department have to (a) repair and cyclone proof the roof of the older part of the Rapid Creek Primary School, including the covered way area, (b) paint, (c) replace furniture, and (d) repair gutters in the older part of the school, and (e) bituminize the school carpark?

National Parks, MacDonnell Ranges

663 Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer to question No. 586 regarding the gazetting of a MacDonnell Range National Park and ask:

What other 'acquisition proposals are proceeding satisfactorily in the Central and East MacDonnells', and for what purposes is the Conservation Commission seeking to acquire such land?

Drilling and Exploration, Magellan Petroleum

667 Mr BELL to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. What are the details of the current drilling program being pursued by Magellan Petroleum in central Australia?
2. What is the (a) registration number of, and (b) nature of exploration on each E.L. held by the company?
3. What funding has been committed to the exploration program either (a) in general, or (b) for each E.L.?

Education Staff, Banka Banka

670 Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many staff positions does his department fund at Banka Banka?
2. Of these, (a) how many are members of the community, and (b) how many were recruited from outside the community?

Blasting, Sadadeen Hills

675 Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What consultation took place, if any, with Aboriginal traditional owners and other citizens before officers of his department commenced blasting a section of the Sadadeen hills to enable erection of a water tank?

From 3 June 1982

Mt Wells Battery

697 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Is the area of the Mt Wells Battery still part of the Ban Ban pastoral lease?
2. If so, is this the reason for the delay in full payment of Jingellic Minerals to the government for the Mt Wells Battery and associated leases?
3. If so, when will this be resolved?

From 17 August 1982

Publicity Officer, Yulara

707 Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

What (a) qualifications were required by the Conservation Commission of applicants for the recently-advertised position of Yulara Publicity Officer, (b) how many applications were received, and (c) how many applicants were interviewed?

Coal-fired Power Station, Darwin

719 Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

1. Will a crushing mill for converting lump coal into powder for use in the proposed coal-fired power station be constructed in Darwin?
2. If so, (a) where will it be constructed and (b) what is the anticipated cost?

Power Plant, Newcastle Waters

723 Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

1. When was Newcastle Waters (a) provided with a public power supply, and (b) what was the cost of the provision of that power supply?
2. What is (a) the capacity of the Newcastle Waters Power Station, (b) how many consumers are using the power, and (c) how many people from Newcastle Waters township signed a petition seeking the provision of a public power supply in October 1980?

From 31 August 1982.

Roads - Pastoral Properties

727 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

On how many pastoral properties (a) does the government maintain roads from the station boundary to the homestead, (b) what is the longest length of road maintained under this system, (c) what is the average length of road maintained, and (d) what was the cost of maintaining these roads in the 1981-82 financial year?

From 2 September 1982

Access Road, Bynoe Harbour

728 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Further to his answer to question 652 (a) what future development does he envisage for the small community at Belyuen which he said generates traffic volumes warranting upgrading the road to the standard presently being constructed, (b) to what additional development in the pastoral, mining, fishing and recreational industries is he referring, (c) fishing and mining by whom, (d) what amount of capitalisation, (e) mining for what, (f) what type of pastoral and recreational development, where, when, by whom and at what capital outlay, and (g) where does the road through Bulldog Pass lead to, or is it part of the main Bynoe Harbour access road?

Loan - Katherine Meatworks

729 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT and TOURISM

1. Was a government loan made available to the operators of the Katherine

meatworks?

2. If so, (a) was this loan to the value of \$1.4 million, (b) what is the current status of this loan, and (c) is it being serviced correctly?

2 km Drinking Law

731 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What was (a) the cost of preparation and distribution, including postage, of the 2 leaflets, (b) the cost of the recent TV advertisements, and (c) the cost of recent newspaper advertisements regarding the 2 km drinking law?

Buffaloes

732 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

1. How many buffaloes have been received at the government's facility at Annaburroo Station?
2. Have the suppliers met the conditions required in terms of buffalo type and age?

From 12 October 1982

Essential Services, Aboriginal Communities, 1982-83

735 Mr BELL to TREASURER

1. What amount is being allocated for (a) essential services in 1982-83 and for which Aboriginal communities, (b) what are the proposed projects, and (c) what projects have been completed?
2. How many Aborigines (a) have been, and (b) are employed with the essential services program, (c) what training are they receiving, and (d) from whom?
3. What improvements are to be carried out in respect of (a) a water supply, (b) provision of toilets and showers, and (c) upgrading of, and access to airstrips?

Radio Station Costs

736 Mr BELL to TREASURER

What was the cost of establishing radio stations (a) 8CCC-FM, and (b) 8 TOP-FM, and what is the budget allocation for each in (c) 1981-82, and (d) 1982-83?

'High Rise' Development, Alice Springs

737 Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many applications for 'high rise' development - that is, for buildings of more than 3 storeys - in Alice Springs have been received by the Planning Authority in the 12 months to 1 August 1982?
2. Has the Planning Authority rejected any such applications outright considering the height constraint currently imposed by the 1980 Alice Springs Town Plan, or has the authority advised developers to put their plans 'on ice' until it has considered more carefully the issue of high rise development in Alice Springs?
3. What is the nature of the Planning Authority's consideration of the issue of 'high rise' development in Alice Springs?

Industrial Subdivision, Alice Springs

738 Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is the government considering any alternatives to the Sadadeen East location for its planned Alice Springs industrial subdivision, bearing in mind the disputed nature of the Sadadeen East site?

Access Road, Beetaloo

741 Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Bearing in mind that the route for the realigned section of the access road to Beetaloo Station has been determined in consultation with traditional owners and that large numbers of stock are expected to be turned off in the near future, when will work to upgrade the access road be completed?

Stormwater Canal, Tennant Creek

742 Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Does the government plan to upgrade the main town stormwater canal located adjacent to a motel, caravan park, residential areas and a school in the northern and eastern areas of Tennant Creek?
2. If so, when is the work likely to commence?
3. If not, why not?

Roads, Plenty-Sandover Region

743 Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer to his press release of 28 July and ask what are the details of the government's 'plans to improve pastoral roads' in the Plenty-Sandover region?

Causeway, Alice Springs

744 Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When does he expect the extent of residential development east of the Todd River and south of Heavitree Gap will be sufficient to justify reviewing the location of the existing causeway, which is a government undertaking revealed by him in his latest communication to me on the subject?

Solar Power, Yulara

746 Mr BELL to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he detail his department's plans for using solar energy as a means for supplying power to Yulara Village, described in 'The Age' of 11 August 1982, as a 'solar power tower'?

School, Lake Nash

747 Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer to an advertisement lodged by the manager of Lake Nash Station in the 25 March edition of 'Queensland Country Life' seeking the services of a mechanic in which conditions of employment listed included the phrase 'no school' and ask will he take steps to inform or convince the manager of Lake Nash Station that the Department of Education does indeed operate a school on that station?

Community Government, Borroloola

748 Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Does the majority of the Borroloola community oppose the introduction of community government?
2. If so, will the government continue to negotiate the introduction of community government despite the fact that the community generally opposes it?
3. If the government concludes negotiations, what is the likely date for the introduction of community government at Borroloola?

Alpurrurrulam Community

749 Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Following receipt of a letter sent to his department dated 28 May 1982 from the Alpurrurrulam community at Lake Nash which states: 'We want to tell you that we do not want to move to Bathurst Downs. We want to stay here in this country, Lake Nash, that we call Alpurrurrulam.', does he acknowledge that the Aboriginal community wants to remain in its present location at Lake Nash?

Tourist Operations Standards

750 Mr BELL to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT and TOURISM

1. As a rule, does the NT Tourist Commission critically assess the standard and quality of a tourist operation before it offers the operation promotional support?
2. If so, what general procedures are followed to make such assessment?
3. If consumer opinion indicates a tourist operation is sub-standard in any respect, does the Tourist Commission consider withdrawing its promotional support from this operation?

Parkinsonia Eradication

751 Mr BELL to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Does the government offer incentives to pastoralists and other persons to control and eradicate the noxious species *Parkinsonia* before it affects access to stock-watering places, and, if not, why not?

Grants-in-aid, Community Service Organisations

752 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for YOUTH, SPORT and RECREATION

In 1981-82, under the grants-in-aid scheme to voluntary community organisations working in the youth, sport and recreation fields, how much money was given to organisations for (a) administration, (b) equipment, (c) facilities, (d) salary subsidies, (e) special projects, (f) training-coaching, and (g) travel subsidies?

Grants-in-aid, Community Service Organisations

753 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

How much money under the grants-in-aid scheme was given to community service organisations in 1981-82?

Farm-fuel Projects

754 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Is the government giving any encouragement to farm-fuel projects and, if so, can he give brief details?

BCF Fire Extinguishers

755 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Is he aware that some state fire prevention authorities recommend against the use and installation of Bromochlorodifluoromethane (BCF) fire extinguishers in confined spaces, and in hospitals, nursing homes and child care centres?
2. Is it proposed to replace BCF fire extinguishers in hospitals in the Northern Territory?
3. Is it proposed to discontinue the use of BCF fire extinguishers in any other types of public buildings in the Northern Territory?

From 14 October 1982

Residential Tenancies

756 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In regard to residential tenancies:

1. What is the average bond paid in respect of (a) 1 bedroom units/flats, (b) 2 bedroom units/flats, (c) 1 bedroom houses, (d) 2 bedroom houses, and (e) 3 bedroom houses?
2. In respect of categories (a) to (e) above, how many leases are there existing at present?
3. What is the average term of residential leases?

System-wide Testing in NT Schools

757 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What steps have been taken to introduce system-wide testing into NT schools?
2. (a) How many people will be involved in the implementation of system-wide testing, (b) how much will it cost, and (c) how much time is it likely to take on the part of the professional people involved?

Loan to Government Printer

758 Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

1. Why were the terms and conditions of a government loan of \$3.5 million to the Government Printing Office not established at the time the loan was made?
2. Have the terms and conditions of this loan yet been settled and, if so, when did this take place?

Book Purchases - NT Library Service

759 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What was (a) the value of books purchased by the Northern Territory Library Service since 1 January 1982, (b) from which suppliers or book-sellers were these purchases made, both Territory and interstate, (c) is

the library service still purchasing books direct from publishers, and
(d) what was the total expenditure by the library service on book
purchases in the financial year 1980-81?

Incidence of Tuberculosis in 1979-80

241 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. What was the incidence of tuberculosis in 1979-80 in (a) Australia, and (b) the Northern Territory?
2. Is his department undertaking any program to eradicate tuberculosis in humans similar to the program being undertaken to eradicate tuberculosis and brucellosis in cattle?

ANSWER

1. Australian tuberculosis statistics are prepared on a calendar year basis. The incidence of tuberculosis per 100 000 population for 1980 was, (a) Australia 9.97, and (b) Northern Territory 21.43.
2. The Health Department is continuing a long-standing tuberculosis control program. This program is based on BCG vaccination, tuberculin skin test screening, active case finding, strict follow-up of cases and their contacts, together with surveillance of community groups known to be especially vulnerable to the disease.

The 1980 results for the Northern Territory continue the steady decline in incidence, which was approximately 9 times the Australian rate in 1950.

Report on Nursing and Administration of Medicine

527 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

When does he expect the report on manpower requirements for nursing and the administration of medicine to be completed?

ANSWER

An investigation is being undertaken into the nursing manpower and education needs of the Northern Territory for the 1980s. The report should be available by December 1982.

There is no investigation of 'administration of medicine' being conducted at the present time.

Rapid Creek Water Gardens Project

596 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Given that the Rapid Creek water gardens project already had 2 signs, 1 being a conventional Transport and Works sign and the other a pictorial representation of what the gardens will look like, what was (a) the purpose of erecting a third much larger sign identifying the project, and (b) what was the cost of the third sign?

ANSWER

- (a) The sign was erected to give an artist's impression of the appearance of the gardens when completed along with a list of many of the features to be included in the project.
- (b) The cost of the sign was \$3000.

Aboriginal Community Work Program

641 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. The Northern Territory government initiated the Aboriginal Community

Work Program for a pilot period of 3 years, which was to conclude in January 1982. Has this occurred?

2. Has a report been compiled for consideration by the government agency reviewing the program?
3. If so, when is it anticipated that the government will table this report?

ANSWER

1. The program has not concluded but following a review at the end of the 3 year period is continuing to operate on a limited scale while supervisory methods are re-structured and tested with a view to equipping workers with higher levels of operational skill.
2. Following the above review a comprehensive report was presented to the Minister for Community Development. The decision to continue the program was based on this review.
3. The departmental report was an internal document and will not be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Firearms, Security Guards

692 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What, in general terms, are the regulations governing the use of firearms by private security guards, and what type of training and level of competence in the use of firearms by private security guards is required in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

There are no regulations governing the use of firearms by private security guards specifically.

Private security guards have no greater authority, privileges or powers than that of private citizens, and are required to comply with all laws.

The government has considered the introduction of legislation for the registration of security firms and or security guards. Special legislation would not provide any special protection to the public, especially as the firearms legislation is flexible enough to control the issue of firearms licences to persons of acceptable character and to provide for the endorsement of licences of special conditions. The real problem is not so much competence in relation to the carriage and use of firearms as it is the circumstances under which firearms may be improperly carried or used thereby contravening the criminal law.

Section 164 of the draft criminal code now before the Assembly should remove much uncertainty now surrounding the use of force.

The relevant parts are as follows:

"164. CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH FORCE CAUSING DEATH OR GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM CAN BE USED

"In the circumstances following it is lawful to use force, not being unnecessary force, that will kill or cause grievous bodily harm and if, in such circumstances, death, grievous bodily harm or bodily harm results, that killing or that causing of grievous bodily harm or bodily harm is lawful -".

[(1) to (5) not relevant to security guards].

"(6) In the case of any person when acting in self-defence or

in the defence of another, where the nature of the assault being defended is such as to cause reasonable apprehension of death or grievous bodily harm."

No specific type of training or standard of competence in the use of firearms by private security guards has been determined but before such a licence is issued the person must satisfy police that he (a) is a fit and proper person to possess, carry and discharge firearms; (b) has an adequate understanding of the laws in force in the Territory relating to firearms; (c) has adequate training and experience in the discharging and safe handling of firearms and ammunition; and (d) if the application relates to a firearm class 'C', i.e. a pistol - has a sufficient reason to possess, carry and discharge a firearm class 'C'.

The existing practice is to issue, in most circumstances, a temporary licence which contains special conditions. The firearm legislation is flexible enough to permit any other conditions which might be appropriate to be added. In regard to competence in the use of firearms, all applicants are required to complete a questionnaire in which a theoretical knowledge and their use has to be demonstrated.

Negotiations are under way with security agencies to formulate a policy under which there would be a requirement for their employees to undertake firearms training under the auspices of appropriate organisations such as pistol clubs, etc.

This requirement could then become a condition of the permit or licence.

Life Sentences

693 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In relation to life sentences imposed in the Territory, (a) how many persons are presently serving life sentences, (b) what is the average length of the actual sentence served, (c) are there any administrative procedures for the review of life sentences, and (d) if so, what are they?

ANSWER

- (a) Two. One Northern Territory offender is presently serving life imprisonment in the Northern Territory whilst one is imprisoned in South Australia. An additional 2 Northern Territory offenders who were sentenced to life imprisonment were removed to South Australia but escaped lawful custody and have not been recaptured.
- (b) No average length of actual sentence served by life prisoners can be given. The 4 persons referred to in (a) represent all offenders sentenced to life imprisonment by Northern Territory courts since 1964. As at 9 August 1982, the offender serving life imprisonment in the Northern Territory had just commenced her term of imprisonment whilst the Northern Territory offender serving a life sentence in South Australia will have served 5 years 11 months imprisonment. No other life sentence prisoners have gained release since 1964.
- (c) There is an established administrative procedure for the review of life sentence prisoners held interstate. The development of administrative procedures for the review of life sentence prisoners held in the Northern Territory is still in progress.
- (d) The release of life sentence prisoners held in South Australia pursuant to the Removal of Prisoners (Territories) Act is the prerogative of the Governor-General. The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department has not yet requested that the Parole Board of the Northern

Territory review the case of the one life sentence prisoner held in South Australia and no advisory recommendation in regard to his possible release has been supplied.

When procedures for the review of life sentence prisoners held in the Northern Territory have been adopted I will inform the Assembly of their nature.

Boundaries, Koolpinyah Station

696 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

On 9 March 1982 he advised the Assembly that the matter of redrawing the boundaries of Koolpinyah Station was under consideration. Is he yet in a position to provide further information on this matter?

ANSWER

The advice of 9 March 1982 referred to in this question was provided by the honourable Minister for Primary Production. Nevertheless, I can advise the honourable member that the matter is still under consideration.

Farmers' Co-operative at Adelaide River

699 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

1. How many people has the farmers' co-operative at Adelaide River employed on average over the last 5 years?
2. Have continuing accumulated debts from earlier years contributed to the fact that the co-operative is not now solvent?
3. Does the government have any plans for land development north of Adelaide River, or is it content to see blocks sold for real estate value as is occurring at the present time?

ANSWER

1. The NT Producers' Co-operative Ltd at Adelaide River has employed, on average, between 5 to 7 persons on a full-time basis over the last 5 years.

During busy periods, up to 4 additional casual employees were employed by the co-operative at any one time.

2. The NT Producers' Co-operative Ltd has experienced trading difficulties for a number of years, despite government attempts to assist.

Portion of the total liabilities of the co-operative are a result of the co-operative being an agent of the government, administering schemes of assistance prior to the establishment of ADMA.

The co-operative is in a position where it is unable to trade its way out of its financial difficulties even if portion of the existing debt to government was written off. This situation has developed for a variety of reasons, including:

- The lack of adequate management control, particularly over debtors.
- Inconsistent quality control on stockfeeds, leading to a decision by its major customer to undertake its own feed milling operation.
- The failure of the co-operative to cater for the expanding market for products required in the rural area close to Darwin.
- The loss of fertilizer sales to a competitor based in Katherine.

The co-operative failed to respond to the growth now being witnessed

in the agricultural sector of the Territory, due to financial and managerial restraints, with the result that a substantial proportion of its business has been lost to competitors.

The co-operative's problems are a result of accumulated debts and inflexible management.

3. At present the government does not have any plans for land development north of Adelaide River, however, farmers who wish to participate in cropping activities in this area will be eligible for the normal types of assistance currently available.

Secondary Text Book Allowance

700 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

How many people received the secondary text book allowance during the period 1 July 1981 to 31 May 1982?

ANSWER

189 students received the allowance during the period.

Dingo Baiting

714 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware of the concern of cattlemen that aerial baiting of dingoes with the poison 1080 is being scaled down and that the potency of the poison is being reduced?

ANSWER

The commission's policy has been and continues to be to assist with dingo control whenever necessary.

In reference to poison potency, the 1080 concentration being used in meat baits is continually monitored to ensure that only the target species is affected and is in line with most other states. Reductions in concentration done recently have been as a result of checks into continuous effectiveness.

Life Imprisonment

718 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What is the effective sentence served by persons receiving life sentences?
2. What review procedures, if any, exist for the periodic review of life sentence detainees?
3. How many people are presently serving life sentences in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

1. No effective sentence served by persons receiving life sentences can be calculated because, of the 4 Northern Territory offenders sentenced to life imprisonment since 1964, none have gained lawful release. As at 9 August 1982, the longest serving Northern Territory life sentence prisoner had served 5 years 11 months imprisonment.
2. The release of Northern Territory life sentence prisoners held interstate pursuant to the Removal of Prisoners (Territories) Act, is the prerogative of the Governor-General. The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department has not yet requested that the Parole Board of

the Northern Territory review the case of the one life sentence prisoner held in South Australia and no advisory recommendation in regard to his possible release has been supplied.

The procedures for the review of life sentence prisoners held in the Northern Territory are still being developed and I will inform the Assembly of their nature when they have been adopted.

3. One. An additional Northern Territory life sentence prisoner is serving his imprisonment in South Australia.

Coal-fired Power Station, Darwin

720 Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

What is (a) the expected daily consumption of coal, (b) what is the expected waste, and (c) what is the anticipated cost of waste disposal for the proposed coal-fired power station for Darwin?

ANSWER

- (a) Consumption of Coal - Daily coal consumption, dependant on average daily generation, would range between 400 tonnes per day (1 x 50MW) to 2500 tonnes per day (6 x 50MW).
- (b) Expected Waste - It is assumed that the question refers to ash which results from combustion of coal rather than to waste of coal which may occur before passing into boilers.

The quantity of ash which results from the combustion of coal is an important characteristic which varies with different coals from different mines. Ash production would range from 30-80 tonnes per day (1 x 50MW set) to 180-500 tonnes per day (6 x 50MW sets).

- (c) Cost of Waste Disposal - It is assumed that this question refers to capital cost for works - (a) precipitator - in the order of \$1.2M per unit; (b) ash disposal - in the order of \$3M; and (c) ash lagoons - in the order of \$3M. In addition to the capital cost there will be ongoing operating and maintenance costs for the ash disposal plant.

Power Plant, Elliott

722 Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

When was the power generating equipment currently servicing the township of Elliott (a) installed, (b) has there been any major upgrading of the plant since its installation, (c) what is its capacity, (d) how many consumers are serviced by the plant, and (e) what is the level of demand for power from the community?

ANSWER

- (a) The power generating equipment currently servicing Elliott was installed in 1974 and 1980 -
- (i) 2 Scania 130 kW sets in 1974; and
- (ii) 1 Cummins Dunlite 200 kW set installed in 1980.
- (b) Major upgrading, apart from installation of the third set (Cummins) in 1980, involved installation in 1981 of (i) automatic switchboard; (ii) increasing fuel storage capacity threefold; (iii) H.V. (11 kV) reticulation; and (iv) upgrading of surrounds.
- (c) Total installed capacity is 460 kW, firm capacity is 260 kW.

- (d) Number of consumers serviced by plant is 50.
 (e) The community level of demand is 210 kW.

Doctor and Nurses, Kalano

724 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is the government paying the wages of the Kalano doctor and nursing sisters?

ANSWER

Recently, the Kalano Association employed a Dr A. Beattie. His salary is the responsibility of Kalano although the Northern Territory government has included 50% of this cost as a grant-in-aid to the association.

One nursing sister is located by the Northern Territory Department of Health at the health centre run by the Kalano community Association. As a member of the department's staff, her salary is covered by the department. Kalano do not employ other nursing sisters.

Water Consumption

726 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What was the total water consumption in (a) 1980-81, and (b) 1981-82; total revenue raised from water rates in financial years (c) 1980-81, and (d) 1981-82; and what percentage of water used was unmetered in (e) 1980-81, and (f) 1981-82 in (i) Darwin, (ii) Alice Springs, (iii) Tennant Creek, and (iv) Katherine?

ANSWER

<u>Total Water Consumption</u> (kL)	<u>1980-81</u>	<u>1981-82</u>
Darwin	21 070 000	23 837 009
Katherine	2 041 910	1 871 277
Tennant Creek	1 250 530	1 185 828
Alice Springs	8 593 860	6 776 922
<u>Total Collections - Water Supply</u>	<u>1980-81</u>	<u>1981-82</u>
Darwin	\$2 653 660	\$2 405 897
Katherine	157 446	220 343
Tennant Creek	161 179	219 607
Alice Springs	666 593	823 396
<u>Unmetered Water</u>	<u>1980-81</u>	
Darwin	18%	
Katherine	50%	
Tennant Creek	21%	
Alice Springs	33%	

It is not possible at this time to provide 1981-82 figures as annual meter readings were completed only on 31 August 1982. Statistical totals of metered consumptions will be extracted during the billing process but are not likely to be available before November 1982.

Free Trade Zone

730 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. In relation to the proposal to establish a free trade zone in Darwin, has he requested the Commonwealth government to exercise its power under Section 122 of the Commonwealth Constitution to enable such a

free trade zone to be established?

2. If so, what has been the Commonwealth government's response?
3. Would the establishment of a duty-free zone in the Northern Territory create a customs barrier that could concomitantly interfere with trade, commerce and intercourse between the Northern Territory and the states of Australia?
4. Has the Commonwealth government indicated that it would agree to the removal of customs duties?
5. What, if any, specific financial incentives are intended to be offered to potential investors?

ANSWER

The Territory government currently has in preparation a detailed submission on the establishment of a free trade zone in Darwin.

No approach will be made to the Commonwealth until the submission has been completed and all aspects of the proposal have been covered in detail.

The submission will cover such aspects as constitutional and customs arrangements, and whether particular incentives may be appropriate to support the establishment of the zone.

A free trade zone would not create a customs barrier between the Northern Territory and other Australian states.

Recreation Lake, Alice Springs

733 Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Have alternative site to Walletje Terre for the construction of a recreation lake in Alice Springs been examined by his government?
2. If so, when will he release comprehensive details of the suitability of alternative sites and any plans to develop them as a recreation lake?

ANSWER

1. Yes. Details of alternative sites were provided in answer to Question No. 661, to which answer was appended a comparison of 3 sites selected for closer examination namely the Old Telegraph Station (Todd River), Birthday Gap (Hugh River) and Ildjarabada (Jay Creek).
2. The information supplied with the answer to Question No. 661 gives details of the suitability of alternative sites. The matter remains under consideration.

Alligator Rivers Monitoring

734 Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Was money allocated in 1974 or subsequently for NT government monitoring of the condition of the estuarine region of the Alligator Rivers?
2. If so, (a) has this monitoring program commenced, (b) if so, is it current, (c) has any data been collected and or published, (d) if not, why not?
3. If a monitoring program of the estuarine region of the Alligator Rivers has not commenced, will the government take steps to introduce such a program?

ANSWER

The time mentioned precedes self-government and any activities of this nature would have come under Commonwealth's Department of the Northern Territory.

Following the recommendations of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry the Commonwealth established the Office of the Supervising Scientist. In August 1978 a workshop was held at Jabiru by this organisation to implement the proposals in that report in relation to environmental matters.

An extensive water quality program which included an element dealing with water quality in the estuarine area, was set out for the Magela and Cooper Creek systems and approved by the Commonwealth. This program was considered at the workshop and with the method of water management at Ranger developing to a 'no release of contaminants' system, it was decided that the resources available would be engaged in the baseline data gathering of Magela and Cooper Creeks only. The estuarine study was given a low priority as not being of sufficient environmental importance in relation to other aspects of the program to warrant the immediate application of resources. (Refer Supervising Scientist First Annual Report 1978-79 Appendices 9 and 10).

The Northern Territory government is now responsible for these environmental programs through funds made available by the Commonwealth.

Home Loans, 1981-82

739 Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In relation to the 488 loans advanced under the Northern Territory Housing Commission home loans scheme during 1981-82, what was (a) the average deposit, (b) the median deposit, (c) how many borrowers required second mortgages, (d) what was the average amount of second mortgages, and (e) what was the median amount of second mortgages?

ANSWER

- (a) \$11 976.
- (b) \$8 500 (range \$5 000 to \$97 000).
- (c) 133.
- (d) \$16 828.
- (e) \$15 000 (range \$2 576 to \$40 400).

Rents for Pensioner Tenants

740 Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Does the Northern Territory Housing Commission increase rents payable by pensioner tenants in situations where the tenant earns income in addition to the pension?
2. If so, what is the relationship between income, in addition to the pension, and rental increases?

ANSWER

1. Yes.
2. Full details were supplied to the honourable member in a letter of 7 September 1982:

Minister for Lands and Housing
P.O. Box 4396
Darwin
Northern Territory 5794

7 September 1982

Mr N.R. BELL, MLA
Member for MacDonnell
P.O. Box 2115
ALICE SPRINGS NT 5750

Dear Mr Bell,

On 6 August 1982 you wrote to me concerning the level of rent payable to the Housing Commission by pensioner tenants.

The current formula for calculation of rental rebate provides for rent payable to be assessed as follows:

- Single pensioners or pensioner couples in receipt of age, invalid, widow, service or other similar type pensions and additional income of less than \$16.00 per week are assessed at 15% of total gross weekly income.
- Supporting persons in receipt of a Commonwealth supporting persons benefit with one child, six years of age and over and receiving additional income of up to \$22.00 are assessed at 18%. The allowable additional income varies according to the number of dependents.
- Single pensioners, married pensioners or supporting persons whose additional income exceeds the allowable rate are assessed at 20% of their gross weekly income up to and equal to the Northern Territory minimum wage and then 28% of any additional income in excess of the Northern Territory minimum wage.

Under the terms of the 1978 Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement a uniform approach has been agreed upon for the calculation of rental rebates.

The rent payable calculated under the Rental Rebate formula is assessed as a percentage of gross weekly income, it bears no relationship to the Department of Social Security's procedure in assessing the level of benefit received by pensioners. It is noted however, rent payable by pensioners is usually lower than that of wage earners.

Using the Rental Rebate formula the following are examples of rentals which would apply:

- Single pensioner on standard pension of \$74.15 per week with no additional income, rent payable is \$11.10.
- Single pensioner on standard pension of \$74.15 plus \$10.00 additional income, rent payable is \$12.60.
- Single pensioner on standard pension plus \$50.00 additional income, rent payable is \$24.80.
- Married pensioner on standard pension of \$123.60 per week rent payable is \$18.60.
- Married pensioner on standard pension of \$123.60 plus \$50.00 additional income, rent payable is \$36.70.
- Supporting parent plus one child (under 6 years of age) receiving \$92.15 per week, rent payable is \$16.60.
- Supporting parent with two children (under 6 years of age) receiving

\$102.15 plus \$75.00 additional income, rent payable is \$37.70.

I trust that the above answers your enquiry.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) MARSHALL PERRON

Medical Staff, Tennant Creek and Barkly

745 Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. What is the current level of medical staffing in the (a) Tennant Creek, and (b) the Barkly regions?
2. How does this number compare with staffing levels as at 2 September 1981?
3. Will his department (a) maintain, or (b) increase the staffing level in the Tennant Creek and Barkly regions?

ANSWER

1. There are currently 3 medical officers employed at the Tennant Creek Hospital and 1 medical officer employed for the Barkly region.
2. This number is the same as at 2 September 1981.
3. There are currently no moves to change the medical staffing levels in either the hospital or the region.

Investigations of Breaches of the Companies Act

Mr B. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

My question follows an answer by the Attorney-General regarding the ramifications for the Northern Territory of the disclosures to date by the Costigan Royal Commission. The Attorney-General stated in response to that question: 'Of course tax avoidance schemes such as the bottom-of-the-harbour schemes have no relevance to the Northern Territory government, as such. It has no taxation legislation that I am aware of. The bottom-of-the-harbour schemes would avail people of not one jot or tittle of benefit'. Given the abuse of the provisions of the Companies Act - and that that abuse is ancillary to the activities of the taxation avoidance industry - is the government investigating breaches of the Companies Act related to tax avoidance?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, of course the honourable Leader of the Opposition has not provided me with any notice of this question. Nor has he provided me at any time with complaints of breaches of the Companies Act. It is very difficult to investigate alleged breaches unless one is pointed in the right direction. It is an ongoing task of the Registrar of Companies to ensure that annual returns of companies are lodged and that all the normal statutory requirements are complied with. As far as I am aware, the Registrar of Companies in the Northern Territory carries out those requirements of his office. Recently, the Attorney-General of New South Wales wrote to me as a result of inquiries carried out by him. He indicated to me that, following interviews with promoters of bottom-of-the-harbour schemes in Sydney, he was able to provide me with a list of Northern Territory incorporated companies. That does not mean that any persons connected with the operations of the companies actually live in the Territory. I was provided with a list of companies, which I personally found very interesting from the point of view of some of the mnemonics, if I can describe them that way, of the names of the persons involved in the companies and the way they have changed the order of lettering of their usual surnames apparently to incorporate these companies. There are so many companies registered these days that it is very difficult to come up with fresh names. Some unique and original devices are used at times to secure a fresh name which the Registrar of Companies will register. Although there are only 6 or 8 companies on the list, when I received this correspondence, I immediately forwarded it to the Solicitor-General. I requested that he ask the Registrar-General to inquire particularly into the situation in relation to these companies which the Attorney-General of New South Wales believes - and I do not think that I can put it any stronger than that - may have been used as vehicles in bottom-of-the-harbour schemes. That investigation is still going on because the correspondence from the Attorney-General of New South Wales was received only last week. I look forward to the results of those investigations with a great deal of interest. I am indeed deeply grateful to the Attorney-General of New South Wales for sending this list of company names to me. When the investigations have been completed, the findings may contain revelations that will be of considerable surprise to a great number of Territorians.

Grumman Trackers

Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

Given that there are 13 Grumman Trackers sitting idle at Nowra and the existing contract for coastal surveillance in the Northern Territory expires in March, has he made an approach to the Minister for Defence for the transfer of these Grumman Trackers to Darwin or any other northern base and, if so, what has been the response since the last time I asked the question?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Nightcliff knows that I have made a number of approaches to the honourable Minister for Defence, previously Sir James Killen and presently Mr Ian Sinclair. I have made representations to Mr Sinclair in the course of the last month or two. To the best of my knowledge, correspondence has gone from my office within the last month. On Friday morning I received a letter from the honourable Minister for Defence who advised me that the question of the Grumman Trackers has been referred to a committee on naval fixed-wing aircraft once again. I think I spoke about this at some earlier sittings when we tried to divine whether perhaps there was a naval committee on blimps, balloons and other types of aircraft as well.

Mr Speaker, I was also informed, in the latest letter from the honourable the Minister for Defence, that it appears that no decision will be taken in relation to the final disposition of these aircraft pending a decision by the government on the acquisition of an aircraft carrier for the Royal Australian Navy. Because of the relative obscurity with which the final paragraph of the honourable minister's letter was phrased, I have taken steps to attempt to find out what he actually meant. I feel considerable regret for these naval airmen if they are to remain at Jervis Bay or Nowra pending Australia actually taking delivery of an aircraft carrier. Even if the decision were taken today, there are no longer any good, used, second-hand aircraft carriers available for sale around the world unless they be Argentinian. I think it would be several years before Australia could expect delivery of an aircraft carrier, probably from sources in the United States.

To add my little contribution to the debate on whether Australia should have an aircraft carrier I say, if we are to have an aircraft carrier I pray that it will be an American aircraft carrier because our fleet, in almost any conflict, will be cooperating with units of the American fleet in the Pacific. I believe it is much more rational and logical that we should have American equipment that is compatible with the units it will be working with rather than British equipment which, although proven relatively satisfactory in tough circumstances in the South Atlantic, nevertheless has been proved to be wanting in several respects. That is the one prayer that I would lodge in the aircraft carrier debate. I can assure the honourable member that I will maintain pressure on the Minister for Defence. In fact, I hope to see him this weekend. I will take the matter up with him again and perhaps be able to give the Assembly better news at the next sittings.

Buffalo Domestication Program

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

What progress has the government made with its buffalo domestication program?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the subject of buffalo domestication was fairly much in vogue before the beef crisis at which time it was dropped. With the momentum of the brucellosis and the tuberculosis eradication program, it is fairly important that further domestication programs be undertaken to avoid complete destruction of the buffalo herd in the Top End. By the end of this year the program will involve the passage of some 700 to 1000 buffalo through the Annaburoo marshalling yards, which have been installed and funded by the Department of Primary Production and the Conservation Commission. Some 16 properties, including small farms, will be involved with the program resulting in around 5000 domesticated buffalo by the end of this year. In view of current progress, we hope that next year we can look at a further 8000 buffalo in the domestication program.

Mr Speaker, the policy of the NTDC is being expanded to support this program and we are looking at a special package for buffalo domestication farmers. It is clear to me that, in the long haul, buffalo will be a very important part of a mixed farming concept and I believe we are on the right trail with this program.

Management Committee for Darwin Performing Arts Centre

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Given recent publicity in the media regarding the management committee of the Darwin Performing Arts Centre, has a final decision been made as to the structure of such a committee and, if not, what options are being considered?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as the honourable member would be well aware through publicity on this matter, an arrangement was entered into by the government with the Darwin City Council. That agreement, in the form of a memorandum of understanding, was signed on 14 April 1981. As far as the government is concerned, contracts entered into with a semi-government or local government organisation ought to be honoured. The provisions of the memorandum of understanding are still existent and the intention is that the title to the performing arts centre will be vested in the city council. Needless to say, the government will honour its undertaking for continuing assistance to the operations of the performing arts centre. Certainly the government is not of a mind to abandon its responsibilities; it merely wants the city council to honour its undertaking in relation to the operations of the performing arts centre. Mr Speaker, much has been said about the desirability or otherwise of various forms of management for the performing arts centre. A view is widely held that a trust, similar to the Araluen Trust, ought to be established. I think people should bear in mind the vast difference between the establishment of a single performing arts centre, as part of a private building, and an operation like the Araluen Trust which has a large tract of land and has, as part of its corporate structure, many diverse users not just the performing arts. It involves static arts, visual arts, museums and the like. Such an operation is quite different from the operation of a single theatre. By its very nature, such a theatre is a very expensive undertaking and deficits can become severe. We believe that maximum accountability ought to be provided to the taxpayer for this facility. In my view, that should be provided directly by those people who purport to represent the taxpayer and the ratepayer - in this case, the Darwin City Council. It is not sufficient simply to establish a body, either by act of this Assembly or otherwise, responsible solely to the performing arts and not to the taxpayer. It is not sufficient for me to agree to a proposal whereby these people simply carry out the functions that they see to be in the interests of the arts and then send the bill to the taxpayer or ratepayer at the end of the year. A greater degree of responsibility and accountability is necessary and, for that reason, this government intends that the council shall honour its agreement.

Road Closures for NTEC Works

Mr HARRIS to TREASURER

My question relates to the NTEC extension to the tunnel system in the main city area. Is he aware that hardship is being experienced by business operators in Daly Street and Mitchell Street and that it is caused by these road closures, and is he able to indicate when the Mitchell Street-Daly Street intersection will be reopened?

ANSWER

I am aware that there has been some disruption to business as a result of major works being undertaken by NTEC in Darwin at present. It is an unfortunate fact of life that major earthworks in a built-up area create disruption for various businesses. I guess most businesses have been affected at one time or another in the past. The work being undertaken by NTEC at the present time is an extension of the underground tunnel system throughout Darwin. This project is designed to give Darwin modern electricity distribution until the year 2000 and beyond. Honourable members who have been around the Territory for a long time will know the very distinct improvement in the visual appearance of Darwin since the city's electricity has been placed underground. This causes special problems in rapidly growing areas where electricity distribution systems have to be upgraded continually to take account of major developments that occur. The work under way now will take about 6 weeks. I am hopeful that the intersection of Daly Street and Mitchell Street will be completed earlier than that but I cannot give a specific date at this time. It seems that it is that intersection that is causing most of the disruption mentioned by the honourable member for Port Darwin. However, I ask businesses which are affected in this way to bear with us. Once the job is done it will accommodate the distribution system until at least the year 2000. The work has to be done prior to the coming wet season to minimise disruption.

TIO Investments

Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Who decides the nature of investments undertaken by the Territory Insurance Office and what forms of control are exercised to monitor the investment program?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the board of the TIO makes decisions on its investment portfolio and the mix of investments that the TIO has. To date I have not directed the TIO in any way in this regard although the act provides - if I recall correctly - as most statutory authority acts do, that the body is subject to the direction of the minister. The board of the TIO has been established to make these decisions itself. I am informed of the decisions made by the TIO from time to time in regard to investments. It follows generally accepted insurance principles in its portfolio of investments and also has regard, of course, to the needs of the Northern Territory. The TIO is not allowed to invest in projects outside the Northern Territory and this limits to some degree the range of securities it can invest in, as it were, that are open to other insurance companies which operate on an Australia-wide basis and perhaps even a world-wide basis. But, aside from the fact that the TIO must keep its money in the Northern Territory, the decisions are made by the board and I believe they are made in a prudent manner.

Gate on Bynoe Harbour Road

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware that the new Bynoe Harbour Road now has a gate across it and a sign saying 'private property keep out'?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of such a gate across the Bynoe Harbour Road. However, I will have the department provide me with information and furnish the honourable member with that information at a later date.

Child-care Facilities in Rural Area

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What help is the government prepared to extend to private individuals who want to set up child-care facilities in the rural area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I suppose the members of the rural community would like as wide a range of child-care facilities as is possible. They range from family-day-care to small, private, child-care facilities to large, private, facilities such as we have in Darwin. People in the rural area who wish to establish private child-care centres can certainly seek the assistance of the department in such matters as regulation requirements, methods of establishing the centre, options for management, the equipment required and the like. They can also seek the advice of the Small Business Advisory Bureau of the Northern Territory Development Corporation. I dare say that if such a private facility were regarded as a unique, highly desirable and private industry non-existent in that area the owners could seek the advice and assistance of the NTDC itself.

Other than that there is no direct government financial assistance to private child-care centres. It is private business after all. Nonetheless, the federal government has set aside \$200 000 in this year's budget to provide for a pilot study on the possibility of providing subsidies to families in need who choose to use private child-care facilities. I do not know whether that will lead to a decision of the Commonwealth to provide a subsidy which now is available only at such institutions as day-care centres and community-based organisations.

Distinction between Static and Visual Arts

Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I refer him to his answer to a previous question about art centres. What is the distinction between static arts and visual arts?

No answer given.

High Voltage Powerlines

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

On 10 March I raised the problem of high voltage powerlines close to high rise buildings in my electorate and the minister undertook to investigate the matter. Could he advise the result of any such investigation?

ANSWER

Yesterday I approved a letter addressed to the honourable member in response to her inquiry. An investigation was carried out and it was found that the statutory requirements for distance between buildings and powerlines have all been met in Nightcliff. However, buildings are erected from time to time without NTEC's complete knowledge. Action is being taken to ensure that approvals issued through the Building Board include a specific advice to builders that they need to pay heed to the statutory requirements of distance where erecting high rise buildings. They must stay away from existing powerlines and consult with NTEC if there is a need to have any of them moved. The honourable member will receive this letter within a day or so.

Outbreak of Golden Staph at Alice Springs Hospital

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he assure the people of Alice Springs that every possible precaution is being taken to control and hopefully eliminate the outbreak of golden staph at the Alice Springs Hospital?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for a few minutes notice on this question from the honourable member. I will relay to him, the constituents of Alice Springs and honourable members, the advice of Dr Edgar, the Medical Superintendent at Alice Springs Hospital. He advised me that, as soon as the case of golden staph was located, immediate and intensive measures were taken to deal with the situation. The current position is that one patient has been identified as having golden staph and cannot be discharged. Present indications are that the patient is now clear. One staff member has been found to have MRSA and is presently off work. At the present, there appear to be no known organisms in the hospital but investigation and preventative work is continuing. It is hoped normal surgery at the hospital can recommence shortly. I emphasise that the early and strict preventative measures taken when the outbreak was first identified appear to have been successful.

TIO Investments

Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Is he willing to make available to this Assembly a complete list of all investments undertaken by, or on behalf of, the Territory Insurance Office?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I believe that some such information is provided in the annual report of the TIO. However, I will examine the matter and report to the Assembly during these sittings.

Fire at Jape Building

Mr LEO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

On the assumption that the fire department issued a certificate of compliance prior to occupation of the Jape building, can he explain the obvious breaches of the terms of that certificate brought to light, so to speak, as a result of the recent fire in that building?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have asked for a complete report on the Jape Arcade incident. I believe the fire was started by a cigarette butt being thrown into a plastic bin. I understand that in future metal bins will be provided. However, the fire chief is to provide me with an up-to-date report and I will provide it to the honourable member as soon as I have it.

Proposed Closure of Kitchener Drive and Hughes Avenue

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

A proposal is being put forward by the Port Authority to the Darwin City Council to close off Kitchener Drive and Hughes Avenue. Is he aware of this proposal and, if so, what guarantee can he give that these roads will not be closed to the public permanently?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this matter is new to me as minister responsible for road closures. I usually learn of such proposals quite late in the piece when they are in the statutory form ready to go to Executive Council. In this particular case, I do not have details of the sections of Kitchener Drive, or the whole of Kitchener Drive, which it is alleged the Port Authority would wish to close off from being a public road. I will bear the honourable member's concern in mind when this matter comes to my desk, if indeed it does. The public interest will be taken into account fully in the assessment of any proposal presented by the Port Authority.

Statements attributed to Member for Elsey

Mr BELL to Mr SPEAKER

Mr Speaker, I seek clarification of Standing Orders. Is it in order to ask a question of yourself? I believe that it is.

Mr SPEAKER: You are right.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, do recent statements in the press endorsing strongly racist ideas attributed to the member for Elsey threaten the good conduct of business in this Assembly?

No answer given.

Vacant Position on Gove District Hospital Board

Mr LEO to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he yet advise me when a vacant position on the Gove District Hospital Board will be filled? I believe it has been vacant since June.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I believe the instruments for the appointment to the Gove Hospital Board are on my desk at the moment and I will be signing them within the next few days. I might even sign them today.

Domestic Dogs in Parks

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the position regarding control of domestic dogs in parks that are managed by the Conservation Commission?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Conservation Commission's real attitude to dogs in parks is summed up in a pamphlet it circulated particularly amongst Northern Territory schools some years ago. The pamphlet was prepared and illustrated by an Alice Springs cartoonist called Peverill. The title was 'Parks are for People' and displayed dogs making a nuisance of themselves amongst people using parks. The actual legal position is that dogs are allowed in most parks controlled by the Conservation Commission but only if they are suitably controlled or on a leash. In some parks, such as Katherine Gorge, dogs are restricted to areas near public access points and not permitted in the rest of the park. Dogs are not permitted on the walking tracks for instance. In other states, with few exceptions, dogs are generally banned from parks although I think that rule may be honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Whilst I was in Queensland recently, I took the opportunity to inspect a few of the parks under the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Commission of Queensland. I observed quite a number of people camped in some parks and they certainly had dogs and other pets with them. Mr Speaker, in the Territory, because of the long distances people travel before reaching parks, the general lack of suitable kennel facilities near many park entrances and, in some cases, lower visitor numbers, it has been considered that it would be somewhat unreasonable and arbitrary to ban dogs outright. However, it is an objective that the Conservation Commission will eventually be working towards and hoping for.

Education Advisory Council

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Given his public commitment to do so, can he advise approximately how many times in the past year he has met with the Chairman of the NT Education Advisory Council on official business and how many times he has met with the council itself on official council business?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have details of that. I will look into the matter.

Port Charges

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I understand that port charges are currently under review. Is he able to indicate when a new scale of fees is likely to be struck?

ANSWER

Port charges are under review and a comparison is being made at the moment with port fees elsewhere in Australia. I have not had a copy of the review forwarded to me from the Chairman of the Port Authority. Once it is available, and before any decisions are made, the Port Authority will advertise its intention to see what reaction there is. We will probably have a look at that over a period of a couple of months. I understand from discussions with the Chairman of the Port Authority that some increases may be necessary.

Aviation Licences

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he outline the procedures he intends to follow in considering whether new aviation licences should be issued when the government moratorium on the issue of such licences expires at the end of this month?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in November last year the government announced that the policy on the issue of aviation licences in the Northern Territory would become much more liberal than it had been. In fact we referred to it as an open skies policy. I believe this policy will be a good move in that it will provide the consumer community with a better infrastructure of air charter operators. At the same time, it is not the intention of government to license willy-nilly charter operators who will not play a role in the development of that industry. For example, if someone residing outside the Territory, say in Melbourne or Sydney, purchased an aircraft as an investment and wanted a charter licence, we would not be interested in making that licence available. We would provide licences to those people who were going to help develop the Northern Territory aviation industry.

In answer to the honourable member's question, the government Aviation Advisory Council is temporarily in limbo because the aviation industry itself has set up its own advisory association. The Northern Territory government will accept the recommendations of that aviation advisory council, provided that its membership is a little broader than just aviators themselves. I understand that, when this aviation association is set up, it will try to encourage private enterprise to join the association so that it will not be one-sided. I will put a further paper to my Cabinet colleagues in the next month or so in relation to the steps that the Department of Transport and Works, through its aviation section, will take to provide information to people who seek licences in the aviation industry. Two circulars have been sent out by the aviation association. I understand a third is being prepared this month and will be sent to people in the industry. I would like to reiterate that, when we issue licences in an open skies policy framework, we will still seek to ensure that the holders of those charter licences will play a very important role in the development of the industry and will not try to put other established aviators in the Territory out of business.

Registration of Members' Interests

Mr D.W. COLLINS to Mr SPEAKER

When will the appropriate forms be available for members to register their interests?

ANSWER

Draft forms are being printed at present but there is no definite date for the legislation as yet.

Funding of Territory Superannuation Scheme

Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

Has he any information on the likely amounts of Commonwealth payments to the Territory with respect to the introduction of a Territory superannuation scheme and for subsequent transfer of Territory contributors from the Commonwealth scheme?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in relation to the transfer of funds from the Commonwealth superannuation fund to the proposed Northern Territory superannuation fund, negotiations have been continuing for quite some time with the Commonwealth government and the trustees of the superannuation fund. There have been discussions between officials of the Northern Territory Treasury, the Public Service Commissioner's office and, latterly, officials of the pro tem organisation established to gear up for the establishment of the Northern Territory superannuation fund.

A number of options have been canvassed. I think the Commonwealth proposed that we simply go along with it on the basis that it would not make any transfer of funds immediately but would provide funding on what might be described as an emerging cost basis. As payments made by the Northern Territory superannuation fund to superannuants build up the Commonwealth would be billed for the proportion rightfully due from it in terms of number of years served as against salary, contributions and so on. These funds would be paid into the Northern Territory superannuation fund to make good the Commonwealth's share of disbursements to superannuants.

I hope that I am correct because it is not something I have dealt with in the last couple of weeks and it is a fairly technical and complex situation. The Northern Territory government took the view that really the Commonwealth superannuation fund should pay the total amount of all contributions paid in the past by current members of the Northern Territory Public Service. That amounts to several millions of dollars. I cannot remember exactly how many but it is in the order of \$20m or \$30m. It is not as much as one might imagine but it is still quite a large sum of money and one that would not go astray.

The Commonwealth superannuation fund has tied up its money in all sorts of long term investments, property, government securities, debentures and all the rest of it, many of which are not worth their face value at the moment. I understand there would be some dubiety as to its status, were it to be registered on a stock market. The Commonwealth superannuation fund is rather unwilling to have to find this fairly large amount of money in one hit and hand it to us in one cheque. It has been resisting that proposal - not strenuously but it certainly has not been rushing into our arms. Therefore, we suggested to the Commonwealth superannuation fund that a compromise might well be that the Commonwealth invest an amount equivalent to the total contributions of Northern Territory public servants in projects in the Northern Territory and that we would perhaps accept those investments as representing the amount of funds transferred. The projects would be chosen by the Commonwealth super-

annuation fund and presumably would be of benefit to the Northern Territory and would return income for the new Northern Territory superannuation fund. At this stage, the matter lies there. There has been no firm conclusion in respect of those negotiations. I believe that I will be asked to raise the matter with ministers in Canberra when next I am there to attempt to seek some conclusion without too much more delay. The Commonwealth government has had other matters on its mind over the last month or two and I dare say that has not hastened the conclusion of arrangements such as this.

Access to Alice Springs Swimming Pool

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What was the outcome of the September meeting between the minister's department and the Alice Springs Town Council over the proposed one-way access from Telegraph Terrace to the town swimming pool?

ANSWER

Preliminary discussions have taken place between the Department of Transport and Works and the Alice Springs Town Council but, at this stage, nothing has been accomplished. The council is looking at other avenues of providing the infrastructure the honourable member requires. I believe that a report will be ready at the end of October. Once that report has been forwarded to us, we will be able to evaluate it and receive a recommendation from the department either to proceed or not to proceed.

Mental Health Act

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

A review of the Mental Health Act has been undertaken by his department this year. Can he advise the outcome of that review and does he anticipate amendments to the Mental Health Act being introduced in the Assembly?

ANSWER

About 6 months ago, I sought expressions of interest from anyone in the community concerned with the operation of the Mental Health Act. I asked for suggestions on how the administration of the act could be improved if that were thought necessary. Given that the act had been passed only a year or 18 months earlier and that the area was very sensitive, I wanted to ensure that it was operating in the best possible way. Regrettably, I have to advise honourable members that I received only 2 submissions from the whole of the Northern Territory community about the operation of the act. Both of these had very valid points that we had picked up from the department's side. There are some small administrative aspects of the act that we would like to correct. I would be more than happy to discuss these with the honourable member for Fannie Bay because I know she has a genuine interest in them. There will be some small amendments to the act. I cannot give her any detail on the timing but I reiterate that I am happy to discuss them with her and listen to any propositions that she may have.

Applications for Registration of Non-government Schools

Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

How many applications for the registration of non-government schools has he received since self-government?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot give any information on that at the moment. Certainly, all the schools which were operating under the Commonwealth system received registration. I think I already have an application from the committee which is proposing a Catholic high school in Alice Springs.

Demolition of Stuart Building

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has the investigation into the letting of the contract for the demolition of Stuart Building been completed and, if so, when will the government announce what action, if any, it intends to take?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, if my memory serves me right, a contract was let to John Holland for the demolition of the Stuart Building. John Holland subcontracted part of the contract to Whelan the Wrecker, who was also a contender for the job. Whelan the Wrecker missed out on the contract by some \$5000 or \$6000. The total contract was about \$170 000. The government does not intend to take any action because John Holland won the contract on a fair basis in a tendering system. It had won it by more than \$5000 on Whelan the Wrecker's price and associated works were also related to the exercise: the upgrading of the area by the provision of trees, planting grass, water reticulation and fencing. Whelan the Wrecker's main involvement was pure demolition. The whole contract was won by John Holland on a fair basis, and I do not intend to take any further action.

Interstate Trucks

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What surveillance is put on interstate trucks working in the Territory as regards their registration in the Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, constant surveillance is undertaken by transport inspectors and also by members of the Police Force. However, it is very difficult to pin down somebody from interstate because between 60% and 70% of our goods come in by road freight. If an organisation is moving goods between capital cities and Darwin, the only time we are able to find out whether vehicle registration meets the requirements of the state of origin is when an infringement is involved. However, yesterday I sent a letter to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles because we are concerned that not only interstate trucks but also interstate cars are being driven in the Territory for longer than the 3 months which owners are allowed before they must register here. We are losing a lot of revenue as a result.

I have asked the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to step up surveillance on those vehicles which appear to have been in the Northern Territory for more than 3 months. In fact, the Chief Minister reminded me of a prominent journalist in central Australia who has been there for quite some time and whose vehicle currently has eastern Australian plates on it. It is up to the community as well to ensure that it does the right thing by the Northern Territory. After all, we spend a lot of money maintaining and building roads.

I will send the honourable member a copy of the letter that I am forwarding to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles asking him to step up the surveillance and ensure these vehicles are registered as they should be.

Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

Part of the submission made by the Department of Finance to a Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Government Operations earlier this year reads: 'The submission confirmed that the Northern Territory government and a number of its authorities had not contributed to the Commonwealth scheme since gaining independent status in 1978'. Could the Chief Minister confirm or deny that report?

ANSWER

Whilst we are all still holding our breath, could the honourable member for Nhulunbuy, if he wishes me to confirm or deny the accuracy of this statement, tell me to what Commonwealth scheme it is alleged we have not contributed?

Mr Leo: The Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme, Mr Speaker.

Mr EVERINGHAM: Mr Speaker, I would have to seek details of that because I believe it is compulsory for every member of the Northern Territory Public Service - and there are probably some people around here who could tell me if I am right or not - to be a member of the superannuation scheme. I think, therefore, that the employee contributions would certainly have been made. I understand that our Treasury puts in the money direct rather than getting it from departments. I think a sinking fund is involved. As I understand it, at present funds are paid across on an emerging cost basis.

System-wide Testing in Schools

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What steps have been taken by the department to introduce system-wide testing in schools? Has he been advised yet of approximately how many people will be involved in implementing a system-wide testing system? How much extra will it cost the department and how much time is likely to be taken on the part of the professional staff involved?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I could deal with the first part of the question but I think it would be better if it was dealt with as a whole, so I request the honourable member to put the question on notice.

Tennant Creek Abattoir

Mr BELL to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Will the Tennant Creek abattoir operate again this season?

ANSWER

From the information available to us, I do not believe that the meatworks will open and operate again in 1982. Certainly, we would expect it to be operating by March 1983.

Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme

Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Is it a fact that the Northern Territory has not paid employee contributions into the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme since self-government in 1978?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not recall that the contributions that have been held in the Territory date back to July 1978 although that is a possibility. Certainly, those figures could be obtained for the honourable member. I understand that, by arrangement with the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme and the federal government, the Northern Territory has generally retained employee contributions to the scheme. Of course, the funds are invested and that is part of the arrangement we have been working on for the last couple of years. Rightly, the funds should be transferred to the Northern Territory holus-bolus, including past contributions by employees.

NTDC Loan to North Brick Industries Pty Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

In view of the government's failure to address this issue in the debate yesterday, will he inform the Assembly whether there is any other security for the \$600 000 loan by NTDC to North Brick Industries Pty Ltd apart from a fixed grant dated 27 July 1982?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will be happy to provide that information. I will seek it for the honourable member.

Seminar on Horticulture in Alice Springs

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Has he plans to organise a seminar on horticulture in Alice Springs involving ADMA, the Department of Primary Production, the Department of Lands, the Water Division and interested members of the public with a view to selecting and setting up a horticultural area for the Centre?

ANSWER

A horticultural workshop will be held in Alice Springs on 28 and 29 October. This is to devise a plan for the early development of horticulture in central Australia. Participants from DPP, the Department of Lands, the Water Division, the Department of Transport and Works, ADMA and the NTDC will discuss industry potential and take a hard look at the major constraints of land tenure, suitable soils, water availability, development funding and marketing services. I believe there is some potential for expansion of horticultural production in central Australia but the preparation of an industry development package requires close coordination between these arms of government and, consequently, a workshop of this type is most necessary. I shall await its findings with great interest.

Mr Roy Willoughby

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Has Mr Roy Willoughby represented at any time either the NTDC or the government abroad, either formally or informally?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have no knowledge of Mr Roy Willoughby representing the government in any way, shape or form.

Inscription of Speakers' Names on Mace

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to Mr SPEAKER

Mr Speaker, have you given consideration to the introduction of the practice of inscribing the names of Speakers on the Mace as is done in some parliaments in Australia?

ANSWER

No.

NTDC Loan to North Brick Industries Pty Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Did the stated purpose of the loan to North Brick Industries Pty Ltd include the purchase of plant and equipment for the proposed clay brickworks?

ANSWER

I have already indicated that I will provide the information that the honourable member requested. If she cares to add that to her questions, I am prepared to provide the additional information.

Poisons Act

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Has the review of the Poisons Act been completed yet and when will amendments to it be introduced into this Assembly?

ANSWER

The review has been completed. A consolidated bill has been approved by Cabinet for presentation to the Assembly in November and we should dispose of the matter in the new year.

Mr Roy Willoughby

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Has Mr Roy Willoughby received any payment or compensation of any kind from the NTDC or the Northern Territory government? If there have been payments to Mr Willoughby, will the minister inform this Assembly of their exact nature and precisely when they were made?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any payments made to Mr Roy Willoughby on behalf of government or on behalf of any statutory authority of government. There has been no Cabinet instruction for the employment of Mr Willoughby. I am not aware that he has offered his services to the government. As far as I know, we have never employed him and never paid him.

Rates for Palmerston

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has a rate been decided for the Palmerston area and, if so, what is it and how does it compare with rates paid in Berrimah?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would point out that the operation of the Palmerston Development Authority is not within my jurisdiction but, for comparative purposes, I have the information the honourable member seeks. A rate has been struck by the PDA at 0.75¢ in the dollar. The rate struck by the Darwin City Council, which is also the rate applicable to the outer Darwin area, is 1.02¢ in the dollar.

Once again, I think it is important to remind people - not so much people in this Assembly because they would be aware of it - that the rate in the dollar is irrelevant in terms of the rate actually paid. It is, of course, the unimproved capital value of the property which determines the amount that the ratepayer has to write on the cheque form. While there is a comparison between the Palmerston Development Authority's struck rate in the dollar and that of the Darwin City Council and therefore the outer Darwin area, that does not mean that people in the outer Darwin area would pay, in monetary terms, less than those who will buy land in Palmerston.

Representation of NTDC

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Has Mr Dalziel represented either the NTDC or the government abroad, either formally or informally at any time?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have no knowledge of Mr Dalziel purporting to represent the government. Certainly, there has been no formal arrangement for him to represent this government.

Connector Road in Alice Springs

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Why is the long-planned connector road from Stott Terrace Bridge to Undoolya Road being delayed? Can he estimate when the problems will be resolved and undertake to refund the project as soon as possible after the resolution of those problems?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can provide some information which the honourable member may care to transmit to his electorate himself. The Stott Terrace Bridge over the Todd River was built, obviously, to service both the east and west sides of the town of Alice Springs, particularly during times when the Todd River is flowing and there is no alternate access as a result. The roads giving access to the bridge have been planned but details of the design have not been completed because maximum protection of the box trees is important to Aboriginal people. Mr Speaker, those who are not familiar with Alice Springs will not be aware that there are a number of areas of claimed significance to Aboriginals on the side of the river to which the honourable member refers where the road is yet to be completed. Negotiations by the Department of Lands have been going on for a very considerable period of time concerning a group of trees in the area. Those trees are registered as a sacred site by the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority.

It is not possible to estimate when and if Aboriginal organisations will confirm that the road is acceptable. Last week the protection authority proposed a new alignment which avoids most of the trees in question but apparently introduces significant engineering costs and requires the acquisition of private land. These implications are being investigated by the Department of Lands. The road in question is on the capital works program and funds can be made available immediately a resolution is found. I believe that this matter has been going on for such a long time that funds were actually diverted from the project 18 months ago to be used elsewhere because resolution was not obtained at that time. We seem only slightly further ahead than we were then.

The second road in the area is also being delayed by sacred sites problems. That is the road to provide sealed access to the Alice Springs power-station and the southern end of the Sadadeen subdivision. It is impossible to say exactly when resolution will be found to these problems so I cannot give the honourable member a date for the construction of the roads in question.

Appointment of Mr Koh to NTDC

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

In view of the fact that the Chief Minister chose to release a letter by him to Mr Koh regarding his appointment to the NTDC, which of course is under the control of the Minister for Industrial Development, will the minister now make available the previous correspondence referred to in that letter and any

other papers and details of the negotiations leading up to Mr Koh's appointment and advise this Assembly when the terms and conditions of Mr Koh's appointment were settled by Mr Simpson on behalf of the Northern Territory Development Corporation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand that a paper was prepared for Cabinet to examine the suitability of Mr Koh's appointment as a representative of this government in South-east Asia. Cabinet subsequently decided to agree to an appointment and the decision was taken at that time. That is the position.

District Allowance for Aged Pensioners

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

He has been endeavouring to persuade the federal government to provide district allowance for aged pensioners in the Territory. What is the present position with that request?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member is perfectly correct. I have been endeavouring to have the district allowance extended to pensioner benefits in the Northern Territory. I guess that would apply to all northern Australian pensions received from the Commonwealth. The last letter I wrote to Senator Chaney on this matter was on 21 September and, in response to that letter, the senator has undertaken to keep the matter under review, which of course is a fat lot of good to Northern Territory pensioners. It seems that the Commonwealth has the attitude that it should not subsidise pensioners to come to the Northern Territory. Of course, that is not the issue. We are talking about pensioners who live here already. The higher wages paid in many respects to people who work in the Northern Territory obviously do not apply to people who are on a pension.

It is not that we want to use this sort of federal assistance to bring pensioners here. We want additional assistance for those who already reside here, have spent their working lives here and want to retire here. Any question of encouraging pensioners to come here is one for the Northern Territory government. Indeed, this government has done more than any other government in Australia towards the assistance and benefits made available to pensioners. Those benefits range from assistance for government accounts to motor vehicle registrations and fares for air, bus, rail and sea travel.

If the federal minister wants to examine our attitudes to bringing people here, it is quite clear that we have spoken with everyone from Jennings Industries to the Baptist Trust to try to establish pensioner villages. Through the Department of Health, this government is providing assistance for the establishment of a pensioner or old timers' village in the rural area. The question of zone allowance recognition of the difficulties pensioners must face by living in the Northern Territory, or in remote areas of Australia, is something for which we will continue to press the Commonwealth. We cannot understand why the Commonwealth does not recognise it. Honourable members can be very much assured that the government will continue to press this matter with full vigour with the Commonwealth.

NTDC and Mr Dalziel

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Has Mr Dalziel received favours from the NTDC or the government, or any other type of compensation for assistance he may have provided? If there have been such payments to Mr Dalziel either from the NTDC or from its chairman, will the minister inform the Assembly as to their exact nature and when they were made?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I know of no payments made to Mr Dalziel by government, by the authority or from any other source.

Housing at Jabiru

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What is the position regarding the Housing Commission building reasonably-priced houses to let at reasonable rents to the private sector of the community at Jabiru?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the situation at Jabiru in regard to housing is interesting and certainly different to that in other areas of the Northern Territory. In most towns of any size in the Northern Territory, the Housing Commission has a program of purchasing land, or subdividing land in some cases, and constructing houses to house applicants for accommodation. Jabiru is in the Kakadu National Park. The covenants for the sublease on which the town sits require the provisions of the Plan of Management of Kakadu National Park to be applied to the town. I understand that the covenants stipulate that people are not permitted to live in the town unless their business is associated directly with mining or government or in providing services to people so involved. That presents a completely new situation for the Territory and possibly a new one for Australia. We have a limitation on Australians living in a particular town. They have to fulfil certain criteria before being allowed to live in the town.

The infrastructure at Jabiru has been funded largely by the Commonwealth and by other parties to the mining operations. The houses constructed by the Commonwealth are rented under a formula laid down by it. For any houses provided to the private sector there, the rent is established at an economic level. This is Commonwealth policy. The economic rent is very high as a result of construction costs in a place like Jabiru. Some people in the honourable member for Tiwi's electorate are concerned that, whilst public servants and staff of the mining companies have houses rented to them for a nominal amount, any other business in Jabiru that has to obtain accommodation for its employees is faced with a very substantial rental bill. There is clearly seen to be some inequity there.

To date the Northern Territory government policy is that it will not expend funds on capital works projects at Jabiru because it has an agreement with the Commonwealth that, as control over uranium mining has not been transferred to the Northern Territory, all infrastructure in the town should be funded by the Commonwealth. There would have to be a change in NT government policy before we would allow the Housing Commission to move into Jabiru and build up a stock of general public housing. If we did so, it would be leased out under the formulae which apply to rental of general public housing in the Territory. We will have to monitor demand in the area. This applies almost anywhere in the Northern Territory. The Housing Commission keeps an eye on demand for housing by monitoring applications. Whilst we are not always able to move to fulfil those housing needs in all small centres, we monitor the pressure by the numbers of applications received.

Apart from negotiating leases to build houses at Jabiru, there appear to be no other constraints on the Housing Commission moving out there. The cost of building would be very high and the costs would have to be amortised over a 40-year period because that is a condition of the sublease the town is sitting on. It is an unusual situation and I thought honourable members might find it interesting to learn those few facts about Jabiru.

Citibank Loan to Buntine Group

Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Has NTDC been advised by Citibank as to dates and the amounts provided by Citibank to Buntine Roadways Pty Ltd so that he is now able to assess the extent of the NTDC liability in the event that Citibank calls upon it under the terms of the guarantee?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this matter is complex and, as the Chief Minister advised the Assembly in the last sittings, such matters are of a companies nature and these questions should be directed to him. The situation has not changed. The matter is still complex. A receiver is assessing the situation surrounding the Buntine group and gathering more information each day. I understand that, to date, there has been no payment by the Northern Territory government of any government funds whatsoever under guarantees offered to the group.

NTDC's Appointment of Mr Koh as a Consultant

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

It follows a question I asked him just a few moments ago to which I did not receive a reply. I ask again whether he will agree to supply the Assembly or the opposition with a copy of the correspondence referred to in the letter the Chief Minister made public regarding details of Mr Koh's appointment as a consultant to the Northern Territory Development Corporation? In view of the clearly audible instruction to keep talking that we just heard from the Chief Minister to the Treasurer - obviously to restrict the questions that can be asked during question time this morning - perhaps he could keep his reply brief. Yes or no will do.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, before I could consider providing such information, I would have to examine the exact nature of the papers he is talking about. Therefore, I cannot provide a simple yes or no answer. Certainly, I will be looking at the papers that he asks about.

Alice Springs to Darwin Rail Link

Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the present position in relation to the Alice Springs to Darwin rail project?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I could keep talking if it were not for the constant interjections of my ill-mannered friends on the other side of the Assembly. The honourable member for Port Darwin is interested no doubt because the rail link from Alice Springs will have a tremendous impact on his electorate, comprising as it does the Port of Darwin. As I understand it, at present the Northern Territory government, working with Australian National Railways, has prepared a submission which will go forward to federal Cabinet in the course of the next 6 weeks seeking, at this stage, a firm commitment for funding from federal Cabinet towards the commencement of construction of the rail link during the course of 1983. I understand from the Chairman of Australian National Railways, Mr L. Marks, with whom I conferred yesterday, that if funding can be allocated during 1983 towards construction then it will be quite feasible to complete the rail link to Darwin by the bicentenary year, 1988. As you would know, Mr Speaker, the federal government's present commitment is for completion of the rail link by 1990. It has always been the position of the Northern Territory government that we should aim to seek completion by the bicentenary year and

the studies undertaken by ANR indicate that this is possible. In relation to the preliminary work, surveys are well on the way. A corridor has now been identified, I understand, all the way from Alice Springs to Darwin and more detailed surveys have taken place between Alice Springs and, I think, Tennant Creek and perhaps even somewhat to the north of Tennant Creek.

Mr Speaker, while this project is vital to the Northern Territory, it will also benefit the rest of Australia. It will facilitate the development of the hinterland of the Northern Territory in a way that has never previously been possible. It will also be important for the whole of this country at the present, particularly in view of the economic malaise. BHP, of course, has been laying off workers at its steel plants. I understand something in the order of 0.25 million tonnes of railway line will be required for the project. Obviously, that would bring a considerable number of people back into employment. You can imagine the tremendous amount of ballast that will be needed. Construction of the sleepers, which I understand are made of concrete these days, will obviously provide employment for a considerable number of people here and probably in South Australia from whence other supplies will be drawn. The project is very important for this Territory and for Australia. I repeat that I think that its cost, in the order of \$500m, is more meaningful to this country than the acquisition of a new aircraft carrier, even in strictly defence terms.

In view of the fact that the matter is to go before Cabinet in the course of the next few weeks, whilst I am down south later this week in connection with the Australian Fisheries Council meeting in Hobart, I shall arrange to meet with the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Transport, Minister for Industry and Commerce, Minister for National Development, the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance to raise the matter with them again to ensure that the Territory's point of view is put squarely before them. I hope that, with a united effort on the part of everyone, we can lobby sufficient support to get an out-of-turn allocation of funding so that construction can commence during the course of the next year.

Citibank Loan to Buntine Group

Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

In the matter of a guarantee provided by NTDC to Buntine Roadways Pty Ltd, is he now in a position to assess the extent of NTDC liability in the event that Citibank calls upon the NTDC under the terms of the guarantee?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand that the Solicitor-General, who has the carriage of this particular matter at the moment, is seeking additional information. I have not had a report from him lately but my understanding is that it is not clear at this moment whether either the Territory government or the Northern Territory Development Corporation will, in fact, be liable under the guarantee. This, of course, will depend on the opinion of the Solicitor-General and perhaps the opinion of a court of law based on the information that the Solicitor-General can obtain and, of course, based on evidence given in relation to any action that is taken. I am not in a position to state that the Territory has any fixed liability under this guarantee or any liability at all. I do not deprecate the questions that have been asked this morning in relation to other matters, although obviously it is a fishing expedition, but I strongly deprecate questions such as this one from the honourable member for Sanderson which seek, in fact, an admission or denial of Territory liability from me in relation to a matter where the interests of Territory taxpayers are concerned. Whilst I am quite happy for taxpayers to know exactly what is going on, at this stage, it is certainly not in their interests that I, or anyone, on the part of the

Territory admit any liability whatsoever under any guarantee that we or the Northern Territory Development Corporation may have given in respect of the Buntine transaction.

Costs and Expenses of Mr Hagen S. Steher

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Were the professional costs and personal expenses of Mr Hagen S. Steher on all his trips to the Territory to investigate the tuna fishing industry paid for from the Northern Territory Fisheries Research and Development Fund or were those costs met directly by NTDC?

ANSWER

I do not have that information before me but I will obtain it and let the honourable Leader of the Opposition know.

Fuel Tank Farm in the City Area

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

The tank farm in the city area occupies a very valuable piece of real estate. Has the government given consideration to moving the tank farm to another location to allow that area to be developed for housing and other purposes?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question the honourable member raises has a series of complications to it. The tank farm, which adjoins his and my electorates, is on freehold land. I understand the land is owned by at least 3 fuel companies, possibly 4. It has been recognised for some time by government planners that, in the long term, quite obviously it is not desirable to leave a fuel tank farm in the heart of the city. It occupies what is clearly very valuable land for other purposes and plans should at least be laid so that over a period of time such an installation can be moved further away from urban development. I have issued instructions that the matter be investigated closely as to potential alternative sites for a fuel tank farm in Darwin having regard to a number of matters which have become clear of late. One is the siting of the new powerhouse for Darwin which will involve additional wharf facilities to take large vessels. Questions of this kind bear on the siting of a tank farm because it has to be within reasonable proximity of tankers that are brought in so that the fuel cargoes can be transmitted. Other questions which need to be addressed will be taken up with the fuel companies. These include the timing of a possible move, and expansion in the meantime assuming a move will take some years to complete. Expansion of a fuel tank farm needs to be considered. Already, at least one application is in for an additional tank or 2 to be constructed to meet the present demands of Darwin and the Northern Territory.

The whole question that the honourable member raises is being examined. In principle, we accept that the fuel tank farm should be moved out, having regard to reasonable lead times. In the near future I will be proposing to my colleagues a course of action to achieve that end over a period of time.

Home Loans Scheme

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to his answer to a question on notice in which he said that a person with a \$97 000 deposit received a loan through the concessional Home Loans Scheme. Does he consider this an appropriate use of such concessional funds?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not recall the particular answer the honourable member refers to. The general theme of his question is whether concessional funds should be used to assist people who are possibly building very grandiose and expensive housing in the Northern Territory. There are 2 lines of argument on this matter. One is that, quite clearly, the intention of the loans scheme is to encourage people to buy houses, or land and houses, and settle in the Northern Territory. Irrespective of the sums involved, if the loans scheme is encouraging that to happen - and it certainly is - then it should be a success. The other line of argument, of course, is that if persons can afford to put up a very substantial deposit - in the vicinity of the \$97 000 that the honourable member mentioned - then they have sufficient funds to settle themselves in the Northern Territory without government assistance.

I point out, Mr Speaker, that the loans scheme is a graduated one. Persons on the higher levels of income are entitled to a lesser sum from the government scheme and are required to pay a higher interest rate on it. At the upper level, only \$25 000 is available for persons under a second mortgage at a fairly high interest rate, as distinct from low-income earners. The scheme at present allows for persons building quite expensive homes to be accommodated within it. The government has not moved to restrict that in any way at present. My answer obviously has to be that such use of funds is supported.

Holmes Jungle

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise what action is being taken to protect Holmes Jungle?

ANSWER

The Conservation Commission, for which I am responsible, is taking steps to formalise the reserve status of Holmes Jungle. Recently, I received a submission from the Conservation Commission to establish a reserve over the area. I referred that submission to Cabinet and it was approved at a recent meeting. A reserve should be proclaimed in respect of Holmes Jungle in the very near future. Then it will come under formal Conservation Commission management whereas to date this has been on an ad hoc basis.

There are a number of other areas around Darwin in which the Conservation Commission has a hand. One is a forestry reserve in the honourable member for Tiwi's electorate. Preparation of a plan of management for a recreational reserve over this forestry area will be completed soon and that reserve, together with its management plan, will be proclaimed and made public. Black Jungle, another area in the Adelaide River region, is also under the eye of the Conservation Commission. It believes that this area must be protected and steps are being taken to attempt to acquire the land and prepare a submission so that a reserve can be proclaimed over it and, in due course, a plan of management promulgated. Areas of rain forest in the Northern Territory are not that common and it is government policy, wherever possible and bearing in mind the practicalities of each particular situation, to extend formal protection and management over such areas to ensure their preservation.

Stuart Highway Bus Depot Site

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In view of the proposed establishment of the Darwin bus depot at Armidale Street, what are the government's plans for the future use of the land on the Stuart Highway presently occupied by the bus depot?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, some alternatives were discussed as future potential for this land. I cannot remember the specific details for the honourable member. However, I will seek to have the matter examined and advise her.

Resignations and Dismissals of Executive Public Servants

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Will he provide the Assembly or the opposition with a list of employees in the E division of the Northern Territory Public Service who have been dismissed or have resigned in the last 2 years, together with a statement of public money spent in associated payments to each individual concerned with these resignations and dismissals?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, at this moment I am not in a position to answer in relation to various employees in the executive division of the Northern Territory Public Service who have resigned or whose services have been terminated, nor whether various payments have been made in respect of superannuation, golden handshakes or whatever. I will certainly take this matter up with the Public Service Commissioner. I will ask him for a complete report on the total number of employees who have resigned over the past couple of years. I will also ask for a report in relation to payments, if any, that have been made to these people. If I consider it to be in the interests of the people concerned that those reports should be made available to the Assembly, then I will do so. There is an element of privacy to be considered in respect of payments of superannuation etc made to people. I cannot see why public servants who receive payments to which they are entitled under the Superannuation Act from time to time should be pilloried in the press, even if these payments are relatively large. Judging from the opposition's fishing expedition yesterday in respect of the superannuation legislation, the Opposition Leader is trying to drive a further wedge between public servants and the public generally in relation to Superannuation entitlements of public servants which they have campaigned for over a considerable period of time. If the public is entitled to know about these payments, I will certainly make the information available. I am prepared to make the information available on a confidential basis to the Leader of the Opposition but I emphasise that it would be on a confidential basis.

Gunn Point Recreational Area

Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

My question refers to the Gunn Point recreational area. On 17 August, the Chief Minister said he expected a document soon from the Conservation Commission on the plans for that area which he would make available to members. Is it available yet?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, it is not yet available. I took the matter up with the Conservation Commission only a couple of weeks ago. I am assured that that paper should come to Cabinet very shortly. It consists of a management plan for the Gunn Point Recreation Reserve for approval by Cabinet and I assure members as soon as it is approved I will make it public even if the Assembly is not in session. I believe it will be of considerable interest to all people in Darwin and even further afield in the Top End.

Sadadeen Subdivision

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is he aware that Sadadeen subdivision stage 1 is filling up and has he any plans to call tenders for stage 2 in the near future?

ANSWER

We have been monitoring the situation. There are some 50 allotments left for sale in the Sadadeen subdivision and it is anticipated that these will last only a short time with the degree of interest in Alice Springs. The Department of Lands has had discussions with the Housing Commission on its future needs for land in Alice Springs for the construction of additional accommodation. In planning future lot turn-off in Alice Springs, it had to take into consideration the fact that there have been considerable delays in the expected turn-off of land as a result of a proposed private development over the Alice Springs Golf Course. Negotiations concerning alleged sacred sites have caused these delays.

At this stage we propose to call for any interest in further subdivision of the Sadadeen area. Documentation is being prepared for release for this purpose. This policy has been successful in the past and we will continue with it.

May I say that it is of concern that the development of Alice Springs has been slowed somewhat in certain areas. Construction of arterial roads has been deferred in the Sadadeen area because of problems in reaching a resolution over sacred sites, more of which seem to be identified each time negotiations are held. A few years back the Sadadeen area was examined by the Planning Authority and other people as far as sacred sites were concerned and negotiations were held with Aboriginal groups at the time. There were 2 or 3 sacred sites identified in the area of the Sadadeen subdivision. These were taken into consideration by government planners and engineers as far as roads were concerned. However, successive negotiations revealed more and more of them. The last map I saw of the area had sacred sites dotted right across it. This has caused many difficulties. Sacred sites identified fairly recently in the golf course area have caused many problems as far as that private subdivision is concerned and a holdup in the reconstruction of Barrett Drive in Alice Springs. Recently, the government deferred letting a tender on that road. A sacred site has been identified in the area in the form of a small rock hill which juts onto the existing road. I am advised that, at the present time, about \$2.5m worth of government capital works is held up in Alice Springs due to these problems. It is quite clear that the government will have to act on some of these matters fairly soon because it is untenable that this holdup of works continue year after year. These works are required for the development of a rapidly growing town like Alice Springs, where the government has responsibility to meet the needs of expected population in the area.

Petition Circulated by Park Rangers

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware that a number of tourists visiting some of our very fine national parks in the Northern Territory over the past week have been rather offended to have been approached by park rangers in uniform on the job and asked, not to put their litter in a bin, but rather their signatures to a petition opposing Aboriginal land rights. Could he issue a directive to the Conservation Commission that these officers be instructed to confine such practices to their own time?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as usual with the Leader of the Opposition, the statement in the question is a misrepresentation. The only such petition that I know of is

not opposed to Aboriginal land rights in principle at all. It is opposed to the conversion of the Katherine Gorge National Park to Aboriginal land. The tenor of the petition, which I have not seen but I have been informed of by officials, is simply that the people concerned with its formulation believe that the Katherine Gorge National Park should be available for all people and owned by the government on their behalf rather than by a certain small group of the private sector on behalf of that particular group's interests. I cannot say that I am really in opposition to those views if they are in fact the views of those people. I too believe that national parks should be owned by governments. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition would say that it would not be good enough for national parks to be on private land if it were pastoral properties or the like. However, it seems to be good enough in other circumstances. Mr Speaker, I am assured by the Director of the Conservation Commission that it had nothing whatsoever to do with the formulation or presentation of this petition.

I would like the Leader of the Opposition to provide me with written details of the names of people approached to sign this petition while visiting national parks. I will take action, through the Director of Conservation, if those people were approached by anyone on the staff of the Conservation Commission whilst that person was engaged on Conservation Commission business. Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge and understanding at present, any person connected with the Conservation Commission campaigning on behalf of this petition has been engaged in the matter on his own behalf and in his own time. I understand that when the Northern Land Council sought such assurances from the Director of the Conservation Commission, they were given.

Mr Speaker, I will be very interested to hear what the Leader of the Opposition has to say in the adjournment debate this afternoon. Again, I would prefer to receive from him a letter setting out the names and addresses of people who have been so approached to sign this petition together with the date and time, rather than vague generalisations which I have no doubt we will hear again from the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon. Such a letter would give me sufficient information to take action through the public service.

Registration of Schools

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Does he intend to amend that section of the Education Act dealing with the registration of schools?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as the honourable member is aware, there is a matter before the Supreme Court at the moment which relates to a decision I have taken in respect of Yipirinya Council. Even if I was contemplating such a thing, I certainly would not wish to make known any such intention because, quite obviously, that would have some impact on the attitude a judge would quite rightly have about any proceedings before him.

Auditor-General's Report

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

The report of the Auditor-General on the statement of accounts for the Government Printing Office for the year ending 30 June 1980 was received by the minister in late March. Can he explain why he failed to exercise his statutory responsibility under section 30(4) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act to table the report within 6 sitting days of this Assembly?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this report was circulated to members of the Assembly during the course of this sittings. I have asked the department for a full briefing as to why it was not circulated much earlier. The only explanation I can offer at this stage is that the previous Secretary of the Department of Transport and Works, Mr Unwin, resigned to go south for personal reasons. In the time between his departure and another person taking up temporary duty, perhaps it was overlooked. I apologise to honourable members for that oversight. Once I have the full briefing, I will provide it to the Leader of the Opposition and to the honourable member for Millner.

Land Subdivision in the Rural Area

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What is the position in the rural area regarding subdivision of land having regard to the current moratorium on it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, some 12 months ago, as a result of a preliminary advice to the government that there might be serious groundwater pollution problems in rural Darwin, a direction was issued to the Rural Planning Authority prohibiting it from processing applications for subdivision of less than 8 h. This was to apply for about a 12-month period during which time a comprehensive study was to be undertaken of the situation as far as ground water pollution was concerned.

Recently, reports have been made available as a result of those studies and show that there is fairly extensive ground water pollution in the rural area. As a result of these findings, the Rural Planning Authority passed a resolution that it would not process any subdivision applications at all, whatever the size. That is the position at present. We have had a number of meetings within government as a result of the reports made available to us by the consultants. A course of action has been planned by government which I will outline briefly to honourable members.

This matter is causing considerable concern to persons in the rural area who were proposing subdivisions. There has been a great deal of activity in that regard over the past few years as honourable members will be aware. The government has drawn up a set of guidelines and conditions with which future subdivisions in the area will have to comply. I have written recently to the Rural Planning Authority proposing that it proceed to process subdivision applications subject to their meeting these requirements. Broadly, these are that the developer will have to assure the Director of Water Resources that he has made adequate investigation and allowances for the construction of bores or wells on the property for the supply of water to each block that is involved in his subdivision. Also, he will have to satisfy the Department of Health that his proposals for effluent disposal are acceptable having regard to the particular blocks in question and their geography generally. This will no doubt involve some expense to developers in their preparation of subdivisions in rural Darwin. However, we feel that that is a cost penalty which must be borne by them. Obviously, it will be passed on and reflected in the price of land. But it will be in the interests of the health of people generally, not only in the rural area,

but also in Darwin itself, because some of Darwin's water supply is drawn from the various bores in the McMinns area. I hasten to point out to honourable members that there is no evidence whatsoever that the aquifer which comprises the McMinns borefield is in any way polluted.

The government proposes to encourage all people in the rural area to have government inspectors examine their property, give a report on their water quality and advise them generally in relation to their water supply and effluent disposal systems. In this regard, fairly shortly we will be stationing government officers on call in the rural area, probably for several months, to advise people and visit their properties. In addition, documentation is being prepared in lay terms explaining the problem to rural landowners and suggesting what action they can take themselves in regard to their effluent systems and to the maintenance of bores and wells. This will be printed and freely available. It will be posted to all major groups in the area and so dispersed on a wide basis. We hope that people will seek as much information on this matter as they can find and take rectification action themselves where it is deemed desirable.

Mr Speaker, what caused concern to the government was that, of 150 bores tested in the area, 95% showed varying degrees of ground water pollution resulting from malfunction or poor placement of effluent disposal systems. We need to encourage people to move as quickly as possible to rectify the situation. We will do everything we can to assist people to determine what needs to be done. If it proves to be quite an expensive process, the government is prepared to look at schemes whereby it may be able to assist. If any member receives approaches from people from rural Darwin concerning the problem, he may feel free to contact my office or the office of the Minister for Health or the Minister for Transport and Works for information on the subject. We want everyone to understand what must be done and to appreciate the seriousness of the situation so that people take action and do not simply say: 'Well, we have lived happily here for several years and we have been drinking the water with no problems, so obviously we can do it for a few more years'. I hope that they regard the matter as being quite serious.

Paper on School Crossings

Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

Following my adjournment debate remarks and subsequent questions at the last sittings, he advised that a paper on school crossings was being prepared by a group from relevant departments. Is the paper now available and, if so, will he make it available to the Assembly?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not sure whether a final decision has been taken by the working party that was established between the Department of Education and the police. Certainly, if the working party has prepared recommendations, these have not come forward to Cabinet. I will inquire into this matter and attempt to expedite the preparation of the relevant submission so that Cabinet can take a decision as to what action should be taken. I can assure the honourable member for Nightcliff that she and everyone else will be notified of this as soon as possible.

Warumungu Alyawarra Land Claim

Mr D.W. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the extent of the Warumungu Alyawarra Land Claim, its location within important pastoral areas of the Northern Territory and the fact that the South Barkly Stock Route has been in use in recent times for overlanding cattle from the Northern Territory into Queensland, is he able to assure the Assembly that stock routes and stock reserves within the claim area will retain their status as such?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, by way of explanation, let me first inform the Assembly of my understanding of the background to the Warumungu Alyawarra Land Claim. The bulk of this land claim lies between Brunchilly and Rockhampton Downs Stations in the north, McLaren Creek, Kurundi and Epenarra Stations in the south, the Stuart Highway in the west and Delmore Downs Station in the east. Within the land claim area falls the Tennant Creek pastoral lease and the town of Tennant Creek. The land claim lodged with the Aboriginal Land Commissioner in November 1978 included all unalienated Crown land within the boundaries described in the claim. There was no particular mention of stock routes, stock reserves, Territory parks or other public purpose areas at that time.

An amended claim was lodged in August 1980 and the following areas were added to the claim: a stock reserve within Brunchilly Station at the western end of the South Barkly Stock Route, NT Portion 1754 known as Phillip Creek Bore, a travelling stock reserve on that part of the South Barkly Stock Route which lies on the eastern boundary of Rockhampton Downs Station, a water conservation reserve at Bonney Well, the Devils Marbles Conservation Reserve and the Wauchope Commonage. The only stock routes which appeared to be under claim were those portions of the South Barkly and North South Stock Routes which actually pass through unalienated Crown land in the land claim area. It should be noted that these additional areas fall outside the boundaries of the original claim and in most cases are separate pieces of land. In the most recent map received by the Department of Law, there have been additions to the August 1980 claim in that an area at Whistle Duck Creek and NT Portion 716, both of which fall on Kurundi Station, have now been included. In addition, a stock route which crosses Banka Banka Station from the North South Stock Route to the stock reserve adjoining Brunchilly Station has been added.

Mr Speaker, the Northern Territory government has always taken the view that areas which have been set aside or classified for the passage of travelling stock and for stock quarantine purposes and, for that matter, other public purpose areas, should not be able to be alienated except by a deliberate decision of the government after taking the needs of the public and the Northern Territory generally into consideration. Unfortunately, the law is such that it has been possible to lodge claim to stock routes and stock reserves, Northern Territory parks and other public purpose areas. You will be aware that this has been a cause of considerable concern to the wider public. In about March 1981, the Northern Territory government commenced negotiations with the Commonwealth and the land councils for amendments to both Commonwealth and Territory laws relating to the future ownership of land by Aboriginals in the Northern Territory under special and preferential conditions. Part of the negotiations required an agreement by the parties concerned that traditional claims by Aboriginals for stock routes and stock reserves would not be allowed and that the Northern Territory would develop legislation and take other action to provide living areas for Aboriginals in pastoral and other areas and thus eliminate the need to claim stock routes. During the course of those negotiations, the Central Land Council lodged claims for stock routes in central Australia, in particular across Ammaroo Station which, if successful, would have had the effect of providing narrow strips of land to Aboriginal claimants and dividing that pastoral property into 3 separate areas.

I consider that particular claim was provocative and unnecessary in the circumstances and caused anxiety to people in central Australia. I informed the Central Land Council of this. Because of the general philosophy of the Northern Territory government as to the future of stock routes, a philosophy reinforced by the action which the Central Land Council took, I introduced legislation into this Assembly in November 1981 which was aimed at preserving stock routes for their proper purpose, at least until such time as the Northern Territory government decided that they were no longer required for that purpose.

A simple explanation of this legislation was circulated widely amongst Aboriginal communities. Following representations by the land councils, discussions on the stock routes issue and, in particular, verbal and written undertakings given that the land councils would not proceed to hearings of stock route claims until our negotiations were either completed or abandoned, I undertook not to proceed with the stock routes and related legislation. Members will know that this bill has remained on the notice paper without further debate since it was first introduced. The recently heard Mount Allan Land Claim included a stock route which in fact was not gazetted but was part of the pastoral lease. Although the Northern Territory government did not protest to the Central Land Council prior to the hearing, it was submitted to the commissioner that this stock route should be excluded from the claim. The outcome of that submission is not yet known.

The Warumungu Alyawarra Land Claim includes part of the North South Stock Route which was gazetted on 17 August 1933 and part of the South Barkly Stock Route from Brunchilly to Rocklands in Queensland which, although not gazetted, is marked on the map as a stock route. It should be noted that this particular stock route has been used in the last 12 months. I understand that 20 000 head of cattle were moved along it from the stock reserve under claim at Rockhampton Downs and facilities on the stock route, such as watering points and dip yards, had to be used. This stock route and the North South Stock Route may well be important links for the overlanding of cattle for short distances when the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link is completed. Because those stock routes and stock reserves remain in the land claim, I have exchanged telexes with the Chairman of the Central Land Council reminding him of the undertaking given and suggesting that the Central Land Council stand by the undertaking. The replies which I have received up to date, in my view, have been unsatisfactory. If the claim to parts of these stock routes and stock reserves continues there is a risk that they will cease to exist. This position is untenable so far as the Northern Territory government is concerned and I have instructed officials to put in train necessary action to ensure that these stock routes can be alienated. They must retain their present status in the interests of the Northern Territory and its people.

Loan to Government Printing Office

Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Why were the terms and conditions of the government loan of \$3.5m to the Government Printing Office not established at the time the loan was made and have the terms and conditions of that loan yet been settled?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have that specific information. I would be happy to obtain it and pass it on to the honourable member or she could place the question on notice.

Palm Leaf Beetle

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

I understand that tests on the virus to control the palm leaf beetle have been completed successfully. Can he advise the timing of the introduction of the biological agent to control the palm leaf beetle?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the last safety test on the parasite is being conducted in quarantine laboratories in Brisbane and the results of all tests will be submitted to Canberra. Subject to Commonwealth approval, release of the parasite from quarantine in Brisbane is expected by mid-November. The parasites will be brought to Darwin, multiplied by the Department of Primary Production at

Berrimah laboratory and then released. Existing facilities will allow the breeding and the release of 500 of the pinhead-size parasites each week. A stand of palms has been selected for special observation and detailed monitoring of damage was commenced in September. Monitoring will continue up to parasite release and subsequently at monthly intervals to assess the effect of the parasite. The public is advised not to expect improvement in the condition of their coconut palms overnight as it may be some months before any effect of the parasite will be visible even after the insect has become established. Consequently, people should continue their spraying programs to control the palm leaf beetle.

Government Printing Office Ledger

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What action has the minister taken to ensure that the Government Printing Office operates its general ledger on a normally accepted commercial basis?

ANSWER

In the last 12 months, steps have been taken by the Department of Transport and Works in conjunction with a private firm of accountants to oversee, and provide guidelines on, how the Government Printing Office accounts should be run. The report we circulated this week was not really a good one for the Government Printing Office. I accept the responsibility. However, as soon as these particular deficiencies were known, steps were taken to ensure that proper auditing and accounting procedures were undertaken. Once again, since the tabling of this report, I have asked the department for information regarding the report and an update of the recommendations received from that private firm of accountants.

Mr Speaker, yesterday the honourable Leader of the Opposition made great play of his belief that ministers should trust their departments and should not oversee everything. I believe that, in this instance, there has been an oversight by the department. I am not blaming the department because I am responsible. However, until this report hit the deck, I was not aware that it was late.

Mr Smith: March.

Mr DONDAS: The honourable member for Millner says 'March'. A letter was received from the Auditor-General by the then Secretary of the Department of Transport and Works, Mr Unwin, on 28 March. At this stage I cannot give honourable members any reason for that delay. There was no reason. We have had several Assembly sittings since March and really there has been no reason why the report should not have been tabled. I shall provide honourable members with more exact information at a later date.

Katherine Rural Education Centre

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

In light of the Tertiary Education Commission's agreement to expand the physical facilities at the Katherine Rural Education Centre, what expansion to these courses is being contemplated?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in answer to the honourable member's question, I ought to give details as to the nature of the Tertiary Education Commission's physical facilities proposal. I understand now that the Katherine Rural Education Centre is to be placed at the top of the national priorities of the Tertiary Education Commission. It has clearly grabbed the imagination of quite a number of people in that organisation. Design work for the first stage of the program has already been started. Construction should be complete by the end of 1983 at a cost of

about \$2.2m. The first stage involves accommodation for 30 units, a learning resource centre, lecture room, dining room, kitchen, a training butchery and 2 staff houses. Additional developments are planned for the second and third stages which will ultimately provide accommodation for up to 90 students.

Mr Speaker, the honourable member's question is a perfectly reasonable one. It is not much use spending that sort of money without following it through with programs that match. As this is a Commonwealth initiative, I would draw the Treasurer's attention to the need, in any future discussions with the Commonwealth, to follow up with increasing expenditure for future years. It will be now necessary to talk to the Commonwealth about additional funding in the technical and further education area to provide the staffing and teaching resources necessary to carry these programs through.

Mr Speaker, you would be aware that most of the people in the eastern sector of the pastoral industry and the Barkly region still look to Queensland, in particular, for most of their supplies. Of course, they also look to that area for skilled and semi-skilled staff to work on the pastoral properties. I have had extensive discussions with a number of pastoralists, particularly the big corporate groups, and they have made it very clear to me that they would be more than willing to consider, on merit, graduates of the Katherine Rural Education Centre equally with those of, say, Longreach, provided that the course structure standards were equivalent for their purposes. We have seen fit to introduce a 2-year, full-time certificate course in rural studies at the Katherine Rural Education Centre. It is proposed that those students who complete the 1-year certificate course in 1983 will automatically be able to enrol for a 2-year certificate course commencing in 1984. We would hope to commence the actual program for the 2-year course in 1983, but the second year of it would not be available until 1984. The 2-year course will bring the Katherine Rural Education Centre into line with similar colleges interstate, thus making the product of our college just as acceptable as any other. Hopefully, an increase in employment can be obtained by graduates of that college.

It is worth pointing out, Mr Speaker, that properties like Alexandria employ in excess of 60 people. Victoria Downs employs near enough to 60 people. Obviously, the pastoral industry is a very significant employer of people. Why should it not become a very significant employer of young Territory people?

Mr Speaker, the course will offer a greater in-depth understanding of the basics of the pastoral and rural industries generally and lead to management skills. It will prepare students for increasing technology in the rural occupations. You know also that it is no longer just a matter of saddling up the horse at dawn. The running of a pastoral property is now a multi-million dollar business although, Mr Speaker, you may not think that yours necessarily is. The course is designed to meet what we see as the demands of the pastoral industry now, particularly the bigger and more sophisticated properties. The old image of the ringer may have been good enough in the 1950s and 1960s but certainly it is not now. The thrust will be for a far more sophisticated residential course at the new facilities proposed at the Katherine Rural Education Centre. It is going to be expensive, but I believe it will be an expense well worth committing.

Continuation of ANL Fortnightly Service

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

We are aware that \$1.5m is available in the federal budget for the continuation of the eastern seaboard Darwin shipping service and we also know the Darwin Trader will probably finish in November. Has he received from ANL confirmation that the fortnightly service will continue and, if so, with what type of vessel?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, we received correspondence from the Australian National Line to say that it will provide a fortnightly service on the eastern seaboard to Darwin. However, we have some problems which are being resolved at this very moment. One is that the Port Authority has ordered a crane through IHI Sumitomo Australia which should be constructed, delivered and installed in the port mid-1984. The vessel that the ANL is recommending as a substitute for the Darwin Trader does not have the same lifting gear. Without lifting gear, we are faced with 2 alternatives. One alternative is to purchase or hire a crane for the period that we need it. The cost to purchase a crane is in the order of \$400 000 and rental is about \$40 000 per month.

Officers of the Department of Transport and Works are holding discussions with ANL to see if it is in a position to provide an interim service with lifting gear and thus save us having to invest a lot of money in that area for the short term. Discussions will also take place with the federal Department of Transport and Construction through its minister, Mr Hunt, to see if he is able to encourage ANL to provide the right type of vessel. The Darwin Trader is to be put on another run. If we have to wait for ANL to make a decision to install the type of vessel we will need for this fortnightly service, we will be faced with the problem of having to invest that \$400 000. If we can convince ANL to put on the right type of vessel, we will overcome that problem.

Certainly, there are problems in that area that have only come to light recently. Discussions between the Department of Transport and Works, the federal Department of Transport and Construction, and ANL will take place in the next week or so. I have instructed an officer of the department to ensure that we are in a position to make some kind of decision within the next week to 10 days because it will take ANL a certain amount of time to schedule shipping into the area. The Darwin Trader operates on a 28 to 30-day monthly service and the new service will be fortnightly. It will be a boon to Northern Territory residents. If the cost of \$400 000 in the initial stages cannot be met by this government, I am unable to advise the honourable member which direction we will take.

Tennant Creek Population

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is the recent newspaper report that Tennant Creek has lost 17% of its population accurate?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I was somewhat concerned when I saw the report in the newspaper yesterday written by Richard Muddimer who seems to have muddled some of his figures. He said: 'There was the chilling fact that the population has slumped from last year's count of 3100 to 2500 in contrast to the Northern Territory boast of growth'. Officers of the Treasury who handle the Territory's statistics and information advised me that the population projection group undertook a count of people at Tennant Creek on 30 June 1981. At that time, in Tennant Creek there were 3118 people. A more recent count on 21 July 1982, which is exactly the period the reporter was speaking of, revealed there were 3170 people in Tennant Creek. In fact, there has been an increase over the 12 months of 52 people, or 1.6%. I am concerned that reports like that appear in the newspaper.

Mr Bell: The meatworks has closed.

Mr PERRON: The honourable member for MacDonnell interjects that the meatworks has closed. That does not mean that 17% of the town's population has packed its bags and left. We are talking about the population of the town.

The meatworks closes every year at about this time. The report in the newspaper, as seems to be the case all too often, is grossly inaccurate.

Government Printing Office Accounts

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has a statement of accounts for the Government Printing Office for the year ended 30 June 1981 been transmitted to the Auditor-General and, if so, when? And has the Auditor-General's report been received by the minister? If not, has the period for submission of this statement been extended?

ANSWER

As I said earlier, I have asked the department to give me an up-to-date briefing regarding the report by the Auditor-General. When I have that information, I will provide it to the honourable member.

Uranium Enrichment Plant

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Recent comment in the media implies that the Territory government has missed the bus as far as siting of the uranium enrichment plant in the Territory is concerned. Can he advise the Assembly of the government's position in this matter?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am happy to advise of the government's extreme interest in this matter. The proposition put by the popular press, that because it does not know what is going on nothing is happening, is not quite credible.

Mr Speaker, for the benefit of honourable members, I will review the history of the Uranium Enrichment Group of Australia study. In 1979, the federal government, in consultation and with the cooperation of several large Australian companies - BHP, Western Mining Corporation, CSR, Peko - set up a group to investigate the feasibility of enriching uranium in Australia. This was a very farsighted approach taken on behalf of the government and the companies involved because there is no doubt that it is a major industry in any terms and one that needs a lot of planning and support from both industry and government to become feasible. Mr Speaker, the UEGA investigation was conducted and we learnt, quite off the record, earlier this year that the Northern Territory sites put forward were not acceptable to the group. I believe there was more self-interest than pragmatism in the assessment of the Northern Territory's position.

It is common knowledge that last week UEGA's report was released and, in fact, the Northern Territory did not get any consideration. Sites in Western Australia and Queensland were considered to be better than the Northern Territory sites and for that reason we were put aside. Several criteria were applied to consideration of the Northern Territory sites and we lost out because we lack industrial infrastructure. I guess we cannot argue with that because it is a reality. We also have a climate that is perceived not to be conducive to the good operation of an enrichment facility. I am not quite sure that I understand that. Maybe an area 10 feet deep in snow is required. That point has not been explained in any detail. Another important point that was held against us was the capital cost of construction. Operating costs in the Territory are very high and it was considered that these costs would be a disability in overall consideration of the program.

So far as I am concerned, too little importance has been placed by the UEGA on political, socio-economic considerations that should be given to the Territory. These should weigh heavily in the capital construction and operation of the plant. To labour that point, I think that it is a fact that, if the uranium

industry in this country is to go forward, it needs a fair amount of public support. In the Northern Territory we have the only 2 mines operating now and we have a great deal of public support. In Victoria and New South Wales, there is no political or public support for the proposition of a uranium industry. It could not go ahead in Queensland, where there is public and political support because there are no uranium mines as yet. There is a mine in South Australia where public support is 'line ball' so to speak, and the South Australian government and the operators of the Roxby Downs project are certainly taking their time getting their proposed mine into the starting blocks. I think it is very important that these considerations of public support are taken into consideration by UEGA. That is the point that the Northern Territory needs to ram home.

If you want to see how lack of public support can undermine projects, I think the Omega facility in Victoria is a fine example. That project has been blown out of all proportion in terms of cost because of antagonistic attitudes within the community. It is clear in the Territory that community and industrial support is heavily in favour of the uranium industry, and the extension of it. It is no news to anybody here that the uranium mining industry is important to us. If it were not for the uranium mines, I think we would be hard put to find a miner operating in the black this year. They are doing very well and it is important that we get other mines going to join the 2 operating at present because they are very profitable projects once they are running.

It is not unreasonable then that we have additional processing of the uranium in the Northern Territory. I have spoken before in the Assembly about the possibility of a hexafluoride plant. I am not shy about saying that I believe we should look to the long term and see whether we can have an enrichment plant too. I accept that the cost disabilities are a real factor in any consideration of an enrichment plant. On the other hand, public support for the project might help to reduce capital costs in the long term.

Mr Speaker, there are several other aspects that I think honourable members should be aware of. We are not looking at something that will happen in the next 2 to 5 years. Enrichment will take some 12 or more years to become a reality in Australia. To start with, no legislation is available in this country at all for such a program to go forward under. Honourable members would be aware that our mining operations in Australia are conducted ...

Mr LEO: Point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr LEO: Mr Speaker, Standing Orders say that an answer to a question must be relevant to the question. Perhaps the minister could be reminded that time is provided for ministerial statements. I think it is a waste of question time. It is the last day of the sittings, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mrs O'NEIL: Point of order, Mr Speaker! When you call a member to speak, Sir, it is required that other members resume their seats. I notice that the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy has shown you the discourtesy of standing while other members have the call and I would ask you to bring that to his attention.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I also wish to speak to the point of order because of a matter I raised yesterday. Mr Speaker, I am afraid I did not hear your ruling. During question time yesterday the opposition heard a clear direction, sotto voce though it was, from the Chief Minister to the Treasurer to keep talking to take up as much of question time as he could. This is the last day of this week's sittings. A number of members have questions still to ask. The minister will have an opportunity to make a ministerial statement. He does not need to make it now. It is not an answer to a question at all.

Mr SPEAKER: I rule there is no point of order for the member for Nhulunbuy. However, I uphold the point of order of the member for Fannie Bay that the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy should have resumed his seat when the call for a point of order was made.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, I apologise to the Assembly and in particular to the honourable member for my discourteous behaviour in failing to resume my seat. I shall refrain from such action in future. I feel too, Mr Speaker, that the opposition might find the whole answer this morning quite distasteful because of its bitter opposition to this industry. The less said about it the better as far as it is concerned.

The point that I was moving on to when I was interrupted by that point of order is one of legislation. Throughout Australia mining activities are conducted under the federal government's Atomic Energy Act which is not really an ideal piece of legislation for the sorts of activities that we are involved with. In fact, if the uranium industry in this country is to develop, then I believe state and federal governments need to come together to look at the whole uranium cycle and work out which state and federal agencies are to be responsible for what. In turn, each of those governments must legislate accordingly to cover the sections of the uranium cycle that fall to them. In practical terms, that legislative program between states and Commonwealth could take 2 to 3 years, which is a fair lead time. I would also think that there are at least 2 more years of study to be done by UEGA before it can come to a final conclusion. I make the point that the final decision relating to the siting of an enrichment plant in Australia must fall to the Commonwealth, despite any aspirations the states have.

Mr Speaker, I think there are several things that the Northern Territory must do. We must show UEGA that we have positive factors going for us for enrichment in the Northern Territory. Also, I believe that we should look at the bigger picture and see how the Territory might fit with other people in the world so far as an enrichment process is concerned. Honourable members are aware that South Australia has sought to be included with the Urnco Centec group in the process in that state. There is no doubt in my mind, after my recent visits to Japan and Korea, that both those countries will become more heavily involved with the uranium cycle and will, as a matter of national security and interest, become involved in enrichment. Perhaps one of our options is to become more closely aligned to those 2 countries ourselves and seek their support as partners in a program in the Northern Territory.

In conclusion, I do not believe that we have missed the bus by any means. The game has just started. There is a lot of support to be organised on the Northern Territory's behalf. My colleagues and I will be pursuing the matter very heavily in the days to come because, if there is one thing that is likely to give us the impetus to carry on the growth that we have at the moment, I believe the extension of the uranium cycle in the Northern Territory is it. I would commend that all members of this Assembly join with us in the exercise so that we are not divided by a partisan approach.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members may find relief in Standing Order 95.

Government Printing Office

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has he an explanation for the accumulated loss of \$223 918 incurred by the Government Printing Office in the year ending 30 June 1979?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will have to obtain information and provide it to the honourable member at a later date. As I said in response to earlier questions, Mr Speaker, in fact, in another form, that information has been requested by me already from the department. As soon as I have it I will provide it to the honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Plastic Bottles

Mr D.W. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has he taken any action on my suggestion to encourage the use of plastic bottles instead of glass bottles in an effort to reduce litter clean-up costs related to broken glass and to reduce the availability of offensive weapons?

ANSWER

I have referred the proposal put forward by the honourable member for Alice Springs to the Conservation Commission for its consideration and a report to me.

Old Arafura Hostel Buildings

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In view of recent publicity about the dangerous state of the old Arafura Hostel buildings, will he have both the buildings, which are on government land, demolished?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I certainly do not have information available at the moment that would lead me to say yes to that question. Whilst some parts of the buildings appear to be in a rather poor state of repair, it does not necessarily mean that they should be completely demolished. It may be worth while to renovate them. The land in question was put up to auction not very long ago. It did not attract a bid. Since that time I have withdrawn the land from sale over the counter. If it had been left there, it would have had to be sold at the reserve price and on the conditions that it was put to auction for. The purpose was to enable negotiations for sale of the land to a developer and those negotiations are nearing finality. In regard to the unfortunate accident recently where a person was injured in the buildings, I will receive a report from the Building Board and see whether some action should be taken to try to prevent any reoccurrence.

Rum Jungle Rehabilitation

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Could he advise if any progress has been made on the rehabilitation of Rum Jungle? In view of the very scant information he has provided me in the past, could he please give me a full and complete answer, Mr Speaker?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I hate to disappoint the honourable member. I have made the point before that the rehabilitation of Rum Jungle is being organised through the Chief Minister's office by the Co-ordinator-General. The Department of Mines and Energy has not advised me. I believe the Minister for Transport and Works and his department have the carriage of it. If he is happy, I will read out this briefing note for his benefit.

The Commonwealth government is funding a 4-year rehabilitation program at the total cost of \$16m. The 1982-83 allocation was reduced to \$800 000 in lieu of the \$4m anticipated but the work is currently being rescheduled so that completion by the due date can still be achieved provided funds are forth-

coming. The first contract is expected to be advertised early in 1983 and will be for earthworks in the areas of white stockpile. The preferred approach for design, purchasing and construction of the water treatment plant is also being investigated. It is proposed to award contracts for this towards the end of 1982-83 with the construction phase the following year. Possible use of the old Aboriginal teacher education facilities at Batchelor for project accommodation and messing is being negotiated with the Department of Education. The Commonwealth Department of National Development and Energy has submitted a draft memorandum of understanding. There are a significant number of issues which need to be discussed further at officer level and the Co-ordinator-General's office has advised the Commonwealth of the need for further discussions. At this stage, Mr Speaker, no date has been set for these discussions. The Department of Mines and Energy is happy to cooperate and work in any way possible for the early rehabilitation of that site.

Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme

Mr LEO to TREASURER

What institutions are holding those funds which would normally have been paid to the Commonwealth superannuation schemes from NT government employees' contributions?

ANSWER

The particular institutions, which I think are government statutory authorities, do not come readily to my mind. I would be happy to seek the information for the honourable member and provide it to him or he could place the question on notice.

Berry Springs Zoo

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

What progress has been made so far regarding the establishment of a zoo at Berry Springs?

ANSWER

Cabinet some time ago approved the establishment of a zoo at Berry Springs. Eventually this zoo will replace the present Yarrowonga Zoo which is in pretty good shape at present and is a great credit to those members of the staff of the Conservation Commission who are maintaining it. Mr Speaker, if you have not had the opportunity to visit Yarrowonga Zoo recently, I recommend it to you and all honourable members. I understand that it is one of the leading tourist attractions around Darwin and certainly it is well worth a visit.

I think that the land has now been acquired at Berry Springs. There were problems with acquiring all the land but, to the best of my knowledge, they have now been overcome. I think from memory that it is in the headwaters of Berry Creek that the aggregation of land has been achieved. An open range zoo is planned which will run out at a total cost of around \$3m. I think that a small amount of money is allocated in the budget towards the first stage for clearing and fencing. It must have been a couple of hundred thousand dollars. When it is finally established, the zoo will have a format that more or less sets out a typical sample of Territory habitat and the wildlife of the Top End of the Territory. There will be a billabong, a water course, buffalo, crocodiles, water fowl and other wildlife. I think that we will try to keep the wild pigs out of this one, Mr Speaker. Generally speaking, it will be a microcosm of bush so that people can go for walks on the long trails that will be provided. Visitor facilities will be provided and an information centre, where films and other educational-type activities will be carried out for the edification of visitors,

similar to the facility at Katherine Gorge National Park. In all, I think it is a most pleasing concept and it has the full support of the government. It will be staged over about 3 or 4 years and should be ready by 1985 or 1986.

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