

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 16 April 1985

King's Canyon Development

3. Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

In his press release of 20 February 1985 he said, in relation to the proposed tourist resort development at King's Canyon, that the Northern Territory government would "ensure that there is no repeat of Yulara where infrastructure for Aborigines was promised by the Commonwealth but not provided".

To what infrastructure is he referring?

Grants-in-Aid, Sporting Bodies

6. Mr SMITH to MINISTER for YOUTH, SPORT, RECREATION
and ETHNIC AFFAIRS

How much money has been given to sporting organizations over the last five years under the Grants-in-Aid scheme in (a) Nhulunbuy; (b) Katherine; (c) Tennant Creek; (d) Alice Springs; and (e) Darwin?

From 4 June 1985

Land holdings, Myilly Point

8. Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS

1. What are the details of the arrangements made with the Paspaley family and associated companies for the acquisition of their land holdings within the area of the proposed casino-condominium complex at Myilly Point?
2. What alternative land has been offered as part of those arrangements?
3. Have arrangements been made or are they being negotiated with other land holders within that area; and, if so, what are the details?

Travel outside Territory by Members

9. Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Since the beginning of 1984, how many trips, financed by the government, have been taken outside the Territory by non-office holding Members of the Legislative Assembly?
2. In respect of each of those trips -
 - (a) which Member was involved?
 - (b) what was the reason for the trip;
 - (c) where did the Member go; and
 - (d) what was the total cost?

Freight and Related Costs Inquiry

10. Mr SMITH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What action has been taken by the government on part 1 of the report of the Inquiry into Freight and Related Costs which was tabled on 1 March 1984?
2. What further action is being considered?
3. What action has been taken or is being considered in respect of part 2 of the report of that inquiry which was tabled on 30 August 1984?

Gardens Hill Development

11. Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS

1. How much will the Housing Commission pay for the pensioner units that will be constructed in Stage 1 of the Gardens Hill development,
2. When will the Housing Commission be taking over those units?
3. Who called for the tenders for the development?
4. What will be the developer's contribution to the upgrading of services in the area (referred to in the Minister's adjournment speech of 29 August 1984)?
5. What is the component of land cost in the total cost of \$1.985 million quoted by the Minister in his speech of 29 August 1984?

Electorate Office - Member for Elsey

12. Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What were the costs of (a) removal; and (b) new furnishings, fittings &c., for the recent change of office of the Member for Elsey to the new T.I.O. Building in Katherine?
2. What are the rental costs of both the old and the new premises?

Legal Representatives

1. Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Which legal firms and companies represent or are retained by Northern Territory government departments or statutory bodies and, specifically, how many departments or statutory bodies retain or are represented by Morris, Fletcher and Cross?

ANSWER

For departments, private legal services are provided through the Department of Law. Authorities obtain private legal services direct.

Details for departments are -

DEPARTMENT	FIRM USED	COMMENT
Industry and Small Business	Mr Les Kaufmann, Barrister	Counsel in ACOA/APSA Salary Anomolies Case & the National Wage Case
Primary Production	McCormack & Co	A one-off service for a libel action against N.T. News
Community Development	Nil	
Transport & Works	Mr R. Smart, Q.C. Mr B.S.J. O'Keefe, Q.C.	Previously retained for contract matters associated with construction activities
Treasury	Nil	
Lands	Mr Noel Hemmings, Q.C.	Has been occasionally engaged on an ad hoc basis
Mines & Energy	Clayton Utz (of Sydney)	Contract services for pipeline project
Youth, Sport, Recreation & Ethnic Affairs	Nil	

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

DEPARTMENT	FIRM USED	COMMENT
Public Service Commissioner	Morris, Fletcher & Cross	Retained for 1982-83 financial year to represent Commissioner in disciplinary action
	Mr Lou Wyville, Barrister	Retained for 1983-84 financial year to represent departments in disciplinary actions
	Mr R. Buchanan, Barrister	Briefed in 1984 to give a legal opinion on certain matters arising before the Grants Commission
	Various Counsel	Retained on occasion for appearances before Tribunals for hearings relative to the <u>Conciliation & Arbitration Act</u>

Auditor-
General

Nil

Health

McCormack & Co.

Engaged in 1981
concerning a coronial
matter

N.T. Teaching
Service

Nil

Education

Nil

Ports & Fisheries

Nil

Police

Nil

Correctional
Services

Nil

AUTHORITY

FIRM USED

COMMENT

Agricultural
Development
& Marketing
Authority

Nil

N.T. Liquor
Commission

Nil

AUTHORITY	FIRM USED	COMMENT
Araluen Arts & Cultural Trust	Poveys (of Alice Springs)	Engaged on ad hoc basis
N.T. Housing Commission	Lóftus & Cameron	Engaged for conveyancing & court appearances
Conservation Commission	Martin & Partners) (of Alice Springs)) Allen, Allen &) Hemsley (of) Sydney))	Separately engaged on a one-off basis
Conservation Land Corporation	Mildren, Silvester & Partners	Engaged from time to time
N.T. Tourist Commission	Poveys	General representation
	Coltmans (of Melbourne)	Engaged on ad hoc basis
	Tony Anisimoff (of Sydney)	Registered trade mark matters
Territory Insurance Office	Ward Keller) Mildren & Silvester) Cridland & Bauer) Poveys) Morris, Fletcher) & Cross)	Engaged at various times on an ad hoc basis
N.T. Development Corporation	Ward Keller) Mildren & Silvester) & Partners) Poveys) Morris, Fletcher) & Cross)	As far as possible, legal work is divided equally between these firms
Darwin Institute of Technology	Ward Keller & Associates	Engaged on a one- off basis
N.T. University Planning Authority	Nil	
N.T. Museums & Art Galleries	Nil	
Ombudsman	Nil	
N.T. Racing & Gaming Commission	Nil	

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

AUTHORITY	FIRM USED	COMMENT
J.T.D.A.	Abbott Tout Creer & Wilkinson (of Sydney)	No longer engaged
N.T.E.C.	Freehill Hollingdale & Page (of Sydney)	Engaged for the Channel Island Power Station project
	Mr R. J. Withnall	Retained for day to day advice
N.B.	The Yulara Group of Companies, which is neither a department nor an authority, retains Morris, Fletcher & Cross.	

Agent, TIO Building, Katherine

4. Mr SMITH to TREASURER
 1. In appointing a letting agent for the TIO Building in Katherine, were tenders called?
 2. If not, how was the letting agent chosen?

ANSWER

1. Tenders were not called for letting agents of the TIO building in Katherine as it is not usual practice to do so in the case of letting agents.
2. A list of letting agents operating in Katherine was obtained from the Real Estate Institute of the Northern Territory and of these it was considered that K.G. Young and Associates had the relevant experience in office letting and back-up facilities of their principal office in Darwin, and accordingly they were selected.

Aboriginal Staffing - Nyirripi School

7. Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Does the agreement with the federal government on funding for setting up Nyirripi school contain a section on Aboriginal staffing levels; if so, is it being adhered to; and, if not, why not and when will it be?

ANSWER

The short answer is no, but the following details are provided for information:

The Commonwealth government funding for 1985 and beyond for programmes in predominantly Aboriginal communities has been limited to the provision of capital resources required for schools. Previously, teacher accommodation could be funded. The current programme which was endorsed by FEPPi included a number of proposals which included both classroom and teacher accommodation. The Commonwealth advised at short notice that it was not prepared to fund teacher accommodation. This decision has seriously disadvantaged Northern Territory homeland centres and other small remote communities desiring their first permanent school programme.

Unlike schools in urban environments or schools in or near country towns teacher accommodation is not available in places like Nyirripi. As you know to provide mobile accommodation or alternatively materials for building on site often necessitates transportation over extremely long distances.

The Northern Territory government cannot accept this situation and is seeking a reconsideration of the Commonwealth decision.

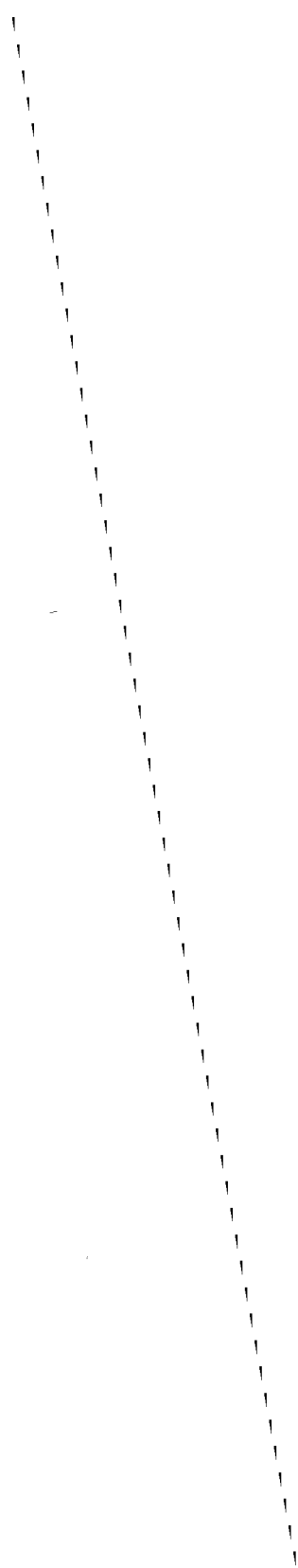
Under the present arrangements it is incumbent upon the Northern Territory government to provide the funds for the capital cost of teacher residential accommodation as well as recurrent funds for the following:

- o Classroom equipment and supplies
- o Maintenance of all buildings and resources
- o Cost of all wages, travel and other on-costs for local staff, excluding the salary costs for assistant teachers in outstation classes in homeland centres.

Actual staffing levels and costs incurred are dependent on:

- o the number of programmes in operation; and
- o the number of students presenting for courses.

The department's ability to appoint any or sufficiently trained Aboriginal staff to Nyirripi or similar locations, is dependent on the number of Aboriginal people willing to undertake training.



Radio Communications for Coastal Communities

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr Speaker, in 1983, a large local barge company requested an investigation into the feasibility of installing VHF or UHF radios in coastal communities to assist in direct contact between barges and those communities. I understand this request was agreed to but has not yet been actioned. Can he please explain the delay?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for Ludmilla has shown an interest in this particular issue over a period of time and I thank him for his tenaciousness in fighting for something that he really believes in. He has been involved in discussions with a large number of barge operators over a period. It appears that there is a light at the end of the tunnel and I just hope that it is not an oncoming freight train.

I would like to give the Assembly an example of how bureaucracy ran riot when we finally sought to have radios installed in communities as an alert system to communicate with incoming barges to ensure that people and equipment were at the unloading site. I will read from a minute that explained just where the application had to go. That will give the Assembly some idea of how the bureaucracy is running riot. It is prevalent in so many government departments, and particularly so in this federal government department. We have seen some examples of this in the last few weeks. The minute reads:

The Darwin-based representative of the federal Department of Communications has advised that the licence application from the relevant community has now been forwarded by him to the Adelaide office for assessment. From there it goes to the Department of Communications central office in Canberra and then to the Overseas Telecommunications Commission in Sydney which then requests the Darwin-based staff to visit the licence applicants.

Mr Speaker, by the time it has gone to Adelaide, across to Canberra, over to Sydney, then back to Darwin where it came from in the first place, a considerable time period will have elapsed. This is just another example of the bureaucracy stalling a vital service by preventing barges from communicating with the Aboriginal settlements. Honourable members who represent those settlements will have experienced the difficulties of communication in those areas. Other bureaucratic stumbling blocks must be overcome, including licensing of operators and the use of the right frequencies. I guess that we must protect against crowding the air waves with a lot of undue talking. Perhaps this Legislative Assembly needs to address that problem also.

However, I would like to inform the member for Ludmilla that the Department of Community Development will now arrange for the purchase of the required equipment and the training and testing of persons to operate the radios and will obtain radio operators' certificates from the Department of Communications. This is in hand at the moment. I hope that, within the very near future, barge operators will be able to notify the Aboriginal communities along the Arnhem Land coast that a barge is on the way, that there will not be any waste of time and that they can expect greater efficiency in the use of the facilities which are available to them. All the communities along the coast will benefit.

I would also hope that, with the introduction of licensed operators and the use of this particular communication medium, our seas will be a lot safer than they are today. Operators will spread right around our coastline. It needs that type of protection. I believe that these people will form an integral part of our communications system in the Northern Territory not unlike the coastwatchers system which is available in some other countries. I am sure that the Aboriginal communities will welcome this new development within their communities. I apologise to all those people concerned for the delays but I have outlined clearly the cause of the hold-up in this particular area. I look forward to an early resolution of this problem.

Government VIP Jet Aircraft

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

He placed before the Cabinet a proposal that the government should equip itself with a private VIP jet aircraft. What is the status of that proposal?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I think it is important that I address the matter comprehensively for the Leader of the Opposition because again he has taken a little bit of licence with the truth, which is his wont from time to time. I would like to set the record straight today. This is a very important issue and it has been raised so often that one could even believe that it has some truth to it. I have not put a proposition to anybody in the Cabinet or considered with any other people in the Northern Territory the concept of the Northern Territory government buying a VIP aircraft, as the Leader of the Opposition termed it. I would like to say that over the years this matter has been raised publicly but it has never been picked up by the government as a serious issue because we had had the experience of inheriting 6 Nomad aircraft from the Commonwealth that were so terrible to have on the government's books that just looking after them nearly drove us out of our financial wits. This government has always held the view that it should charter aircraft from time to time and that there is no need for the government either to own or foster in any way under a government contract particular use of a particular aircraft.

Mr Speaker, the honourable Leader of the Opposition made a statement a moment ago.

Mr B. Collins: It is fact.

Mr TUXWORTH: He claims that it is fact but I ask the honourable member to produce anything that suggests that I or my colleagues have put before Cabinet a proposal to buy an aircraft. Mr Speaker, I can say to you that, some years ago when we were trying to solve the problem of the Nomad aircraft which were costing the Department of Health \$4m a year, \$400 an hour, for operating costs, that department came forward with a proposal to try and obtain some aircraft. That proposal was not even considered at a ministerial level let alone at any other level.

Union Action against Abattoirs

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

What action is he taking or going to take to combat the detrimental effects on the meat industry of the actions of militant union members in the meat industry in their action against certain abattoirs in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in answer to a question during the last sittings, I expressed some concern about the potential threat to the abattoir industry in the Northern Territory because of my knowledge of the history of an industrial dispute that existed between the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union and Northern Territory abattoir operators. I am sorry to say that my fears were well founded. As anyone who has read the papers will know, since the last sittings, the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union has embarked on a campaign of attack on Northern Territory abattoir operators and, in particular, the Mudginberri abattoir, which is an export abattoir, and the Victoria Valley abattoir, which is a local-kill abattoir.

It is important to note that, on 3 May this year, a new award was handed down by the Arbitration Commission, which provided amongst other things that employees would be paid by the week. There is an option in that award which states that the employer and the majority of employees or their representative may negotiate a payment by result system provided that the payments that were received under that exceeded by at least 20% what the employees would receive by way of the wages clause of the award. The abattoirs at Mudginberri, Victoria Valley and Meneling have all negotiated contracts with their employees. They are written contracts, I am advised. In fact, the employees are trying to work but the union, using employees from other areas within that work force, has mounted picket lines, particularly at the Victoria Valley and Mudginberri abattoirs. Victoria Valley has not lost any production as a consequence of those picket lines but, because of the refusal of the export inspection service inspectors to cross the picket lines, I am advised that the Mudginberri abattoir has operated for only one day. That was because of the distress of animals in the holding yards at the abattoir. I found it quite amusing that it was thought to be in the best interests of the animals to kill them. Those animals were boned out.

I have taken the matter up with the federal Minister for Primary Industry to try to get him to honour the undertaking that he made publicly that, where there was no threat to employees, his department would instruct its inspectors to cross picket lines to carry out their obligations. That was done for one day and, through a series of manoeuvres, the inspectors were removed back to Katherine. They continued to be paid without having to carry out their duties and the abattoir continued to operate. The facts are that the trade union in this case is fighting not only the employers but also the employers' employees. It is a most unusual situation for a trade union to allow itself to be brought into. I have been in constant contact with the industry and with the federal minister. There is a hearing today down south in respect of an injunction against the union by the employers and their organisation. The results of that injunction hearing will determine the course of action that we will adopt. We will have more information on that this afternoon and we will take appropriate action as a result. But it is most important, particularly with the drought situation that is developing in the Northern Territory, that we ensure that there is some procedure in place whereby Northern Territory cattle being turned off can be slaughtered in the Northern Territory.

Development of Jabiru Oilfield

Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Following the recent announcement of the BHP consortium for the development of the Jabiru oilfield in northern Australian waters, has that consortium made any proposal or given any indication that it will establish an oil refinery in Darwin?

ANSWER

The very good news that BHP is actually taking steps to produce oil from the Jabiru field was received by us all just a month or so ago. However, the oil at Jabiru is a very light crude oil which is unlikely, I am advised, to be in demand in Australia in the short term. Certainly, the demand in the top end of Australia would be insufficient to support a local refinery. Also, there is a world-wide surplus of refinery capacity and, therefore, it is very unlikely that any major refinery will be built on our northern coast in the foreseeable future.

However, I am pleased to advise honourable members that, as a result of the cash flows that will be available to BHP from its stationing of a tanker at Jabiru A-1 and its use of a number of tankers to shuttle oil from there to the markets, quite a number of new jobs have been created in Darwin. I understand that some 70 new jobs can be attributed directly to the development of the field. BHP is continuing its exploration in the area and, in fact, it is upgrading its exploration there generally to prove up the field fully. At the present time, the company believes that the proven recoverable reserves are in the vicinity of 200 million barrels of oil. That is very comforting to us. On 7 June, applications close for exploration permits over 3 areas very close to the Jabiru discovery. A further 5 areas are set to be released by the federal government, with this government's assistance, in the near future. We should see quite a lot more activity in that region over the next couple of years, particularly with the level of interest that has been expressed by various companies around the world in getting a piece of the action in this highly prospective area.

As honourable members would be aware, the federal government proposed that the very first of its cash-bidding releases of high prospect offshore areas should take place in this Jabiru area. Unfortunately, however, the Senate thwarted its aims in that regard. But that is how highly regarded this area is in respect of the prospects of finding further oil. We all hope that, over the next few years, enough wells can be drilled to demonstrate that we may have another Bass Strait or something even more exciting off the northern coast, which will certainly benefit Darwin significantly.

Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Act

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS

Is it the government's intention to amend the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Act to bind the Crown by the terms of that act?

ANSWER

There were proposals to amend the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Act last year. They have since been withdrawn. Discussions are being held with the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Authority. Any matters of that nature will be raised in consultation with that organisation.

Truancy Officers

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Recent publicity in regard to the truancy campaign has indicated that the Department of Education will be employing truancy officers both in Darwin and Alice Springs. When will these truancy officers be appointed?

ANSWER

During the last sittings, I indicated that truancy officers would be appointed in Darwin and Alice Springs and would be in operation from the beginning of the second semester. After I made that announcement, there was some concern in some sections of the community in relation to conditions of employment. As a result of those industrial implications, it has been referred to the Labour Relations Section of the new Department of Industry and Small Business which will examine the particular issues that were raised. The Department of Industry and Small Business is examining this matter. A report is being prepared and the department will be in receipt of that report in the not-too-distant future.

It is still the intention of the government to employ truancy officers. There are 7 weeks before the beginning of the next semester. I hope the issue will be clarified in the very near future.

Seanorth Joint Fishing Venture

Mr LEO to MINISTER for PORTS and FISHERIES

What benefit has or will accrue to the Northern Territory as a result of a recent agreement for a joint fishing venture and, more specifically, will any of the products from this venture be processed in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I believe that significant benefits will flow through to the Northern Territory as a consequence of this latest joint venture which is to be operated by a company known as Seanorth. It is a combination of Northern Territory businessmen and a Thai company, Saichon Marine. The joint venture agreement was signed in Canberra on 23 May this year by the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry and the Chairman of Seanorth, Mr Gus Trippe. The heads of agreement are for 3 years with operation on licensing arrangements to be renegotiated every year. That agreement provides for the entry of 6 Thai stern trawlers and 6 Thai gill-net vessels with a catch quota of 6000 t of demersal fish and 2000 t of pelagic fish respectively. In addition, 2 carrier vessels will be deployed to service the fleet.

There is an Australianisation program with respect to vessels and crews in the gill-net fishery which will require the replacement of one of the Thai vessels with an Australian vessel each year. Thus there will be a gradual conversion of that fishing effort across into Australian crews, which will provide a significant stimulus to the development of the Australian offshore fishing industry. There is also a requirement to purchase a minimum of 600 t of Australian-caught product if it is available. In addition to the joint venture obligation of 300 t per annum from the Kailis Kaohsiung joint venture, that will provide an opportunity to sell fish far beyond the current catch capacity of the Australian fishing effort at the moment.

Mr Speaker, already there have been informal discussions with Seanorth. It will establish its administrative and operational base in Darwin in the East Arm area in conjunction with the old Leprosarium area. It will develop that site to meet the needs of its operations. I have been approached informally about its desire to establish a fishmeal operation in the Northern Territory. That will be a most significant development in the comprehensive development of our fishing industry. With appropriate arrangements for the collection and distribution of the catch, it will provide a major additional source of revenue from what is often referred to as 'trash fish' but which has a significant value. For example, it can enhance cash resources in the prawn fishery if we can define a procedure to take the trash fish catch from the prawn fishery and bring it to such a processing plant. We have had some discussions with the Fishing Industry Consultative Committee. I have asked it to examine ways in which we may be able to provide additional cash in some of the hard-pressed areas of our industry and also provide onshore jobs. I must say that I am particularly excited about this development. This is the best joint venture agreement that has been reached so far in Australia. It will provide an excellent opportunity for the Northern Territory to launch into significant development of its fishing resources.

Pine Creek School

Mr McCARTHY to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Earlier this year, the Pine Creek School was promised a third teacher to commence at the beginning of semester 2 but the appointment was delayed due to a freeze on recruitment of new staff. Where does the promise of a third teacher for Pine Creek stand in light of recent new commitments in various Territory schools?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am afraid there has been some misunderstanding on the part of the member for Victoria River. I attended the Pine Creek School recently and discussed this issue with a number of people. The concern that we had was that the department was finding it difficult to position teachers to meet formula growth in a number of other schools. A freeze on staff recruitment was put in place. At the time that Pine Creek School was looking for an extra teacher, it did not have the enrolment numbers to warrant the appointment. That is the reason why it was not given an extra teacher at that time. I want to make it quite clear that the freeze on recruitment does not relate to formula growth. If there is a need for extra teachers in schools, those teachers will be recruited and positioned accordingly. In relation to Pine Creek School, the numbers have grown recently and a new teacher will be positioned there as quickly as possible. I make it quite clear that the freeze on the recruitment of teachers relates only to areas where they are not required under formula growth. Formula growth positions will still be filled.

Anzac Hill Campus of Old Alice Springs High School

Mr HANRAHAN to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has a decision been made on the future use of the Anzac Hill campus of the old Alice Springs High School and, if not, when will this decision be made?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, a decision has not been made. The issue of senior colleges is presently under consideration by this government. I will be putting a paper to Cabinet within the next 2 weeks in relation to this particular issue. The reason a decision has not been made on the Anzac Hill campus is that, if it is decided to proceed towards the establishment of senior high schools in the Northern Territory, then the campus itself may need to be upgraded to cater for additional junior high school students.

Operation of Grants Commission

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

In a recent radio interview, he made a comparison with the Grants Commission's recommendations for a \$12.6m cut for the Territory and a \$63m cut for Queensland. In that statement he referred specifically to the timing of the cuts in that the Territory suffered its cut in 1984-85 and Queensland faced its cut in the subsequent year. Is he aware that the recommendations were made in 2 separate reports of the commission, the Territory being part of the claimancy review report which had to impact in 1984-85 and Queensland being subject to the relativities review which could not impact until 1985-86 and subsequent years? Could he inform the Assembly whether this confusion was deliberate on his part or whether he simply does not understand how the Grants Commission works?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am only too happy to elucidate the facts behind this matter because they are very important for Territorians to understand. The points that I made still stand: first, the Northern Territory was affected by the tearing up of a written agreement that it had been working under for some years and, secondly, we were given treatment that was totally different to that meted out to states.

In the Memorandum of Understanding, clause 33 specifically says that, in the year 1984-85, the Northern Territory will receive a \$5m increase or that amount of money that is recommended by the Grants Commission, whichever is the greater. We were not to get less than \$5m. That was very deliberately written into the Memorandum of Understanding at the time the former Chief Minister negotiated it because we did not really know what the effects of the Grants Commission's findings would be 6 to 7 years down the track. We did not want to find ourselves in the situation where our top up grants were coming steadily down as they were programmed to do in the memorandum and, in the last 1 or 2 years, we would have a negative finding that would take \$10m, \$15m or \$20m out of the Territory's budget. With our very small base, it is very difficult to adjust to that sort of step down of Commonwealth government commitment to the Northern Territory.

Mr Speaker, 1984-85 is covered in the memorandum as that year where we will receive at least \$5m. The Grants Commission recommended a reduction of \$12.6m.

Mr Speaker, you and I know that \$5m is more than minus \$12.6m. Under the terms of clause 33 in the memorandum, we were to be entitled to \$5m in 1984-85, and that is what we built our budget around. If the federal government had said in previous years or this year that it did not believe in the agreement and would not abide by any of the conditions in it, we might have had sufficient time to withdraw our claim before the Grants Commission or to be better prepared for what the Commonwealth was likely to do.

There is another interesting aspect of this, Mr Speaker. In previous years, when the Grants Commission has brought down a negative finding against the states, in the interests of being reasonable and to enable the states to manage their affairs properly, arrangements have been made by the Commonwealth to enable the states to take account of the reduction over a period of time. Sometimes it is spread over a quarter, sometimes it is written right off and sometimes it is subsumed in the funding over a period of 2 years. Previously, a state has never been deprived, in the financial year that it was operating in, of any amount of money as recommended by the Grants Commission. That is what is so unfair about the treatment we have received. We acknowledge that there was a negative finding on the Northern Territory. We acknowledge that the Commonwealth could have tailed that away over the next year or 2 years. To take it out of the 1984-85 budget when clause 33 specifically says that we will receive \$5m is to tear up the memorandum.

Mr Speaker, I know how Finance and Treasury think. They would not stick to one word of any agreement if they could get out of it. I sought a special audience with the Treasurer to ask him if he was aware that what he was proposing would set aside clause 33 of the memorandum and effectively destroy the whole memorandum. The Treasurer said that he understood that but they had had a lot of discussion on it and they did not see that there was any need to change.

At that stage, and this is important and interesting, the Treasury officer who was present said: 'Of course, Chief Minister, the people who wrote that agreement are not around any more. Nobody really knows that that clause 33 says exactly what people meant it to say. You cannot expect the federal government to be bound by a written agreement. That is not the sort of thing that federal governments ought to have to do'. I was able to say to the Treasury officer: 'I happened to be around when the document was written. Clause 33 was put in there very specifically at that time on the recommendation of a Treasury official, Mr Ashley, who was advising the Treasurer and the Chief Minister at the time, because he could see what Treasury and Finance could and would do in the years ahead when things were out of sight'. Clause 33 was written into the Memorandum of Understanding so that bureaucrats and politicians in Canberra could not manipulate the findings of the Grants Commission unreasonably and affect the interests of the Northern Territory adversely in its formative years.

Mr Speaker, as it turns out, the finding of the Grants Commission is now well known. There was a traditional method for the Commonwealth to deal with the handling of that finding and the Northern Territory could have said that, that being the case, it would try to absorb that into its financial arrangements and make the most of it. But to deduct it in the 1984-85 year, to do it in the knowledge and good conscience that you are tearing up the Memorandum of Understanding, and then to go further into the 1985-86 year and take another \$15m on the basis of the recommendation of the Grants Commission is the sort of political vindictiveness that I have been talking about for the last week. In the last 2 or 3 months, we have seen it on a scale that we have never seen before in this country.

Implementation Date for Oil Levy

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

With reference to yesterday's disclosure of the proposed oil levy, when is it proposed that this oil levy will take effect, how will it be implemented and who will it affect?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the details of the oil levy are simple. An oil levy of \$1 a tonne will be applied to those consumers who consume more than 10 million litres of bunker, heavy distillate, heavy fuel or diesel per annum. It is designed as an energy conservation measure to try and encourage heavy users of fuel to keep their use of imported fuel to a bare minimum and to ensure that there is no more waste than is necessary. The other added advantage to the Northern Territory of this additional income is that we believe that every effort should be made by the whole community to start to use the indigenous resources that we have available to us. The introduction of an energy fuel tax of this nature ought to be one measure that will help people move to that position.

Araluen Art Centre

Mr VALE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has any financial agreement yet been reached with the Alice Springs Town Council concerning funding for the Araluen complex? Could he advise also the reason why Alice Springs Town Council delegates can attend Araluen meetings, whilst not contributing financially, and why they are not allowed to report back to council on matters pertaining to Araluen meetings?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question of funding to the Araluen Art Centre has been raised on a number of occasions in the last couple of weeks. This afternoon, I will be meeting with Jonah Jones who has resigned from the Araluen Art Centre to take up employment elsewhere in Australia. We will discuss some of the issues regarding funding for the centre. Funding for the centre has reached a stage of considerable magnitude and I believe it is time that this government looked at the total funding in light of budget announcements made in this Assembly yesterday. There may be a need to review the total funding of the Araluen Art Centre. Informal discussions have taken place with the Alice Springs Town Council. In 1984, there were discussions with a view to the transfer of responsibility for the centre to the council. Unfortunately, the council was not very receptive and considered that the cost burden of the centre would be an excessive impost for ratepayers in the Alice Springs area. The total funding at the moment is somewhere in the vicinity of \$400 000. That is a lot of money to run an art centre of that kind although I am sure that members from central Australia will agree that the centre is a magnificent one.

I will meet with Jonah Jones this afternoon. I will be able to give the member for Brainting more detail of the direction in which this government is heading in regard to the Araluen Art Centre and funding arrangements for the coming financial year.

Student Assessment in High Schools

Mr DALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

There appears to be some confusion regarding the difference between school assessed subjects, previously called the Secondary School Certificate, and the Public Examination Board subjects at Year 12 level in Territory high schools. Could the minister please explain these differences in layman's terms?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. A number of school councils and students have asked that the situation be clarified. Northern Territory students who complete Year 12 are provided with 2 certificates. I would like to take the opportunity to explain in more detail exactly what that process consists of.

One of those certificates is the Northern Territory Senior Secondary Studies Certificate which gives the results obtained in all NT accredited and registered courses as well as simply listing the South Australian courses which the student has studied. The Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia issues a certificate of attainment showing the SSABSA courses studied and the marks and or grades awarded. The confusion faced by students and councils is concerned with this latter certificate. Much of the confusion comes from the changes in the terminology used by the former South Australian Public Examination Board which provided a matriculation certificate, and the South Australian Education Department which issued a separate secondary school certificate for Year 12 students. These 2 have now been combined under the Senior Secondary Assessment Board which provides a single Year 12 certificate recording results in all SSABSA of South Australia approved Year 12 subjects. Most NT Year 12 students choose from a range of SSABSA approved subjects after counselling from school staff which includes parental consultation. These subjects are examined by the South Australian board and NT students have equal status with South Australian students in all respects.

Mr Speaker, I wish to expand on that introduction with more specific detail. The former SA Public Examination Board matriculation subjects are now called publicly-examined subjects; that is, PES. In these subjects, student achievement is assessed by external examination at the end of Year 12 plus an internal assessment component. The ratio of external examination to school assessment is 50-50 except in drama and arts. In arts, one third of the marks are allocated to each of the 3 components: practical work; theory examination; and special study. In drama, the same allocation is made to a theory examination, a production and a special project. Marks in all subjects are awarded on a scale of 1 to 100.

Former secondary school certificate subjects are now called school-assessed subjects. These terminologies are changed from day to day in the field of education. Student achievement is assessed by the class teacher but moderated by an expert external moderator who determines across-school comparability and who approves the final grades. Grades awarded are A, B, C, D or U. The grade of U indicates unsatisfactory performance in a subject. Students completing 1 or more SSABSA subjects satisfactorily receive the SSABSA certificate of attainment which lists the subjects taken and marks and or grades awarded, plus a short description of each subject listed. The certificate does not indicate whether a student has matriculated to a university.

As far as the 2 South Australian universities are concerned, a separate statement is issued to the students by them. Students wishing to attend universities in other states have their SSABSA scores ranked against scores by students from those states. This is done using a comparative scale developed by the tertiary admission authority in each state.

In relation to the admission requirements for the Darwin Institute of Technology, the entry requirements for Bachelor of Education and or Diploma of Teaching courses at the Darwin Institute of Technology ensure that students are not disadvantaged in any way. Applicants must have a score of 295 points based on 5 subjects. The subjects may be all publicly-examined subjects or school-assessed subjects or a combination of publicly-examined subjects and school-assessed subjects. The mark awarded for PES will be the mark used to calculate the score. For SAS, the following conversion applies: grade A - a score of 76; B - a score of 63; C - a score of 53; and D - a score of 47. A conversion grade of an E or an F is also applied to students who study professional typing. These conversions are 38 for an E and 15 for an F. They do not apply to any other subjects. All students are required to study 5 SSABSA subjects, either PES or SAS or a combination of both.

Following are the prerequisites for a Bachelor of Education. For students who take 5 PES, there are no prerequisite requirements. However, such students are encouraged to take English and mathematics. For students who take 2 or 3 SAS, then English or mathematics units must be included. For students who take 4 or 5 SAS, the prerequisite requirements are English and mathematics. However, for 1985 only, current Year 12 students taking 4 or 5 SAS, but who have not included either English or mathematics or both, may still apply for admission. Such students will be required to submit an argument as to why they are suitable to enter the degree or diploma. For Bachelor of Business, requirements remain at matriculation with PES English and maths. The content of the degree programs places heavy emphasis on quantitative analysis, which is the reason for a prerequisite in maths. In the Bachelor of Business, as in other programs, matriculants who do not have prerequisite subjects can take a qualifying examination or undertake extra qualifying courses as part of their first year program at the institute. Students, parents and other interested members of the community who require further information in relation to these issues can contact the Assistant Principal Curriculum or the Assistant Principal Senior Studies at their nearest high school offering Year 12 courses.

Mr Speaker, I read that into Hansard because there are a number of concerns. It is a confusing issue. I would direct to Hansard anyone who has a problem with the situation, particularly the school councils and the students who are concerned about their exams in the future.

Semi-government Borrowing Program

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

In his mini-budget speech yesterday, he stated that the government had sought authorisation for a semi-government borrowing program of \$87m and that this had been limited by the federal government to \$75m. Can he confirm that the semi-government program last year was only \$50m and that in fact \$10m of that authorisation was not used and is currently available for use in the 1985-86 financial year, bringing the actual total available to \$85m or only \$2m less than the Northern Territory government bid?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is typical of the sort of fiddle that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is wont to use to try to cover up what the Commonwealth has done to us. I do not mind if he wants to apologise for what his colleagues in Canberra have done but I think to use the figures in the way he has used them is totally dishonest. Yes, we did have a borrowing last year and we did not use it all. That was related to the progress that we were able to make with the power-station. The borrowings that we were seeking this year we believed we needed to keep the Northern Territory's rate of momentum at the current level. There was not any fat in it. We believed our approach was perfectly reasonable. I say again that part of the \$87m was the \$15m that we sought by way of loan to try and offset NTEC's enormous problems because we lost \$37.5m in the NTEC budget during the Treasurer's mini-budget 6 or 8 weeks ago. There is a limit to just how much you can take out of the system before it starts to hurt.

The other thing that was very interesting from the Northern Territory's point of view was that all the states received what they sought. In fact, when Queensland made its loan bid, the Queensland Premier was asked what his loan would be this year and he said it would be \$100m less than last year which was the same as the year before. When they asked him how much that was, he said that it was none of their business and that it was Queensland's business. That is how the states are able to organise their loans. However, the Northern Territory is tied in with the Commonwealth which makes the bid for us. In the past, we have not had a lot of trouble but this year the Commonwealth decided arbitrarily that we would be getting about \$10m to \$12m less than we sought.

As I said earlier, we do not like going out and borrowing money to pay off operating deficits that have been forced on us because of arbitrary cuts and the breaking of agreements that relate to our electricity supply. We did it and we did it with some distaste and displeasure and we did it because we believed \$87m was the minimum amount of money that we would need to get through this year. For the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to try to suggest with a fiddle of the figures that we are just pumping ourselves up to get a few extra bucks is just another cover up for the Commonwealth.

Transfer of Functions Related to Rural Loans from NTDC

Mr McCARTHY to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

What progress has been made with the proposed transfer of functions related to rural loans from the Northern Territory Development Corporation to the Department of Primary Production and to the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, earlier this year the government decided that responsibility for many of the rural loan schemes that we operate would be transferred from the Northern Territory Development Corporation and brought under the auspices of the Department of Primary Production. These particular schemes are the crop contract scheme, the bull purchase incentive scheme, the rural adjustment scheme and B-TEC part D assistance measures which relate to loans for improvements on pastoral properties. The aim of the transfer is to centralise under the control of the one body responsibility for functions related to rural assistance. The result will be a one-stop-shop system which has proved helpful to the public in connection with other matters such as lands matters. Ongoing discussions are taking place between NTDC and other organisations to ensure a smooth transfer of those functions.

Given that DPP and ADMA have neither the expertise nor the resources to administer financial dealings such as loans, a handover takeover date of 1 July 1985 has been determined. Such a date will allow the development in DPP and ADMA of a group to handle the new functions. It will also allow these people to be trained as necessary to establish procedures and then to undertake investigations, assessments and reviews of rural adjustment schemes and B-TEC part D loans. Using 1 July 1985 as the transfer date will also enable DPP to canvass advice as to how the mortgage documentation can be transferred from within NTDC. Documents relating to these loans will need to be amended to record the government as the mortgagee.

In view of the proposed transfer date being 1 July 1985, the following interim arrangements have been put in place to ensure that industry does not suffer through loan applications being held up until the transfer is finalised. Although the NTDC will continue to undertake the preliminary investigation and assessment of applications at this stage, these activities will be undertaken in consultation with appropriate officers from the Department of Primary Production. Secondly, when a recommendation has been prepared by NTDC, the appropriate documentation will be forwarded to the Secretary of DPP for advice and comment. NTDC recommendations together with DPP advice and comment will be forwarded to a 3-person subcommittee of the NTDC board for decision. When the NTDC recommendation and DPP advice and comments are to be considered by the subcommittee of the NTDC board, the Secretary of DPP or his nominee will be invited to be present. Advice on the decision will then be forwarded through to the applicant.

The government believes that the transfer will work to the benefit of pastoralists and, in particular, will help to coordinate moves to support industries through the life of B-TEC. There are a number of statutory restrictions on NTDC affecting its lending role. That is right and proper and should be maintained. Unfortunately, those lending criteria were not consistent with the available flexibility that exists in many of the rural-type loans to reflect the nature of that industry, such as the duration of loans, interest rates, possibilities of holidays before capital repayments and a number of other matters. This transfer is taking place only after in-depth discussions with the pastoral industry. All sectors of the rural industry have welcomed this approach by the government. There was some early concern that there might have been delays in the processing of loans but I can assure members that all actions have been taken to facilitate the smooth transfer of loans. I am not aware of any holdups that are occurring in the process, particularly with B-TEC funding arrangements. When the full transfer to the Department of Primary Production takes place, there will be a far more consistent interrelationship between the lending, the nature of the lending and the progress, particularly for B-TEC.

Araluen Art Centre

Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It follows on a previous question about funding of the Araluen Art Centre asked by the honourable member for Braitling. I am quite sure he is anticipating this. How great was the loss of revenue to the Araluen Art Centre caused by the actions of the member for Sadadeen in seeking to prevent schoolchildren attending the production at the centre of the internationally-renowned Greenthumb Theatre Group?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have here a letter to Mr N. Bell, MLA, member for MacDonnell. As part of the budget cuts, we are cutting down on stamps and I intend to hand it to him in a few moments. He made an assumption that there was a loss of revenue as a result of children not being able to travel to the Araluen Art Centre to watch a play that was put on by the Greenthumb Theatre Group. I have had brought to my attention newsletters from a couple of schools within the Alice Springs area that in fact say that they did not intend going to the Greenthumb production anyway. The school fees entitle students to attend one art performance per year and that had already taken place as the result of another theatre group travelling through the central Australia area. I would refer the member for MacDonnell to the Braitling newsletter. No doubt, he reads those types of newsletters. Therefore, there was never any question about whether those children would be attending the Araluen Art Centre to see the Greenthumb production anyway.

Mr Bell: There is more than one school in Alice Springs.

Mr COULTER: I am not suggesting otherwise. The fact is that the member went to great pains to conduct a media campaign before ringing anybody or seeking information which are basic courtesies. But then the member for MacDonnell is well known for forgetting that type of approach to finding out information. He travels off and conducts these media campaigns from time to time and the whole issue becomes totally confused. What he started out to seek information on ends up something like world war III.

One thing that he mentioned was freedom of speech and freedom of expression. Surely the member for Sadadeen has that right as well, although it may be denied under the philosophies of the member for MacDonnell. I am not sure. I have not discussed that with him at any length. I assume that there is freedom of speech for members. If the member for Sadadeen wants to reflect on a particular philosophy, that is his right. In terms of being representative of his electorate, the member for Sadadeen has been returned consistently to his seat with something like a 78% majority. I think it must be an Australian record. A lot of things are said about the member for Sadadeen but I am quite sure that they are all good. In fact, he does represent his electorate. If the member for Sadadeen was expressing a concern from his electorate, I am sure that 78% of his electorate would share his views.

I might point out to honourable members opposite that their majority in their electorates is somewhere between 52% and 56%, with the exception of the member for Stuart who has 70% and did not make any comments about the Greenthumb Theatre Group at the Araluen Art Centre. In summing up, I believe that there was no loss of revenue to the Araluen Art Centre as a result of the member for Sadadeen's approach to express his concern on this issue. In fact, many of the schools had no intention of going there anyway.

Development in Coconut Grove Area

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for LANDS

What is the government doing about the development of the light industrial area in my electorate at Coconut Grove? In particular, what is happening with the construction of De Latour Street which is so important to the existing development in that area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member has expressed, particularly over the last 2 to 3 months, quite a high degree of interest in this particular section of his electorate, and quite rightly because there have been a number of comments from people within his electorate about it. With the intended start of the development of the new air terminal on McMillans Road, it was considered that there would be a growing interest in serviced commercial properties in this vicinity. However, as a result of the uncertainty engendered by the Commonwealth's announcement of a review of the airport plan, the proposal to develop and turn off remaining vacant Crown land in the area was deleted from the 1984-85 capital works program. During this last year, the Department of Lands explored the possibility of private development packages incorporating all the remaining Crown land between Totem Road and Nation Crescent. Indications were that this would only be possible with government underwriting in the order of \$250 000. However, recently, discussions have been taking place with a prospective developer to construct part of De Latour Street and part of the service road in exchange for some vacant Crown land in the area. The company is involved in negotiations with the Department of Lands and initial plans are being revised at the moment. I expect to be able to make some decision on this revised proposal within the next few weeks. If the proposal is not approved, the project is still on the design list for 1985-86 and is programmed for consideration in late 1987. I should say that that is dependent on budgetary considerations. In view of the recent savage budget cuts imposed on the Territory by the Commonwealth, that timing would be subject to quite extensive review to see whether we can afford to do it.

Delays in Court Hearings

Mr FINCH to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Would he advise members if progress has been made in addressing the earlier criticisms relating to delays of up to 6 months in people gaining court hearings?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, we certainly had a flurry of activity a couple of months ago when a number of magistrates, including the Chief Magistrate, had to take some sick leave. Indeed, at least 2 of those magistrates are still on sick leave. At present, Miss Thomas is performing the duties of Chief Magistrate. We have appointed Mr Cavit as a stipendiary magistrate and we have Mr Hannon as an acting magistrate at present. We took whatever action we could to fill the gaps that resulted from those gentlemen having to take sick leave unexpectedly. In addition, the Chief Magistrate has organised a number of JPs to consider minor matters on a regular basis thereby allowing the magistrates to deal with the more serious matters.

I am advised by the Department of Law that a hearing can now be set down within about 3 days of a person committing an offence. Magistrates are coping with the situation quite well at present. When we have news of the future of those magistrates on sick leave, we will be able to reorganise and perhaps use fewer JPs as soon as we are able to. All efforts will be made to keep the court list as short as possible to minimise the effect on persons who have committed offences and must be brought before the court.

Reticulated Water for Atitjere Community

Mr EDE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Given the high trachoma, middle ear infection, dysentery rates and so on suffered by people living without reticulated water, and given that funds were made available for water drilling at Atitjere more than 5 years ago in the first instance, when will he honour the promise made over a year ago by his predecessor and provide reticulated water to the more than 100 people who live at Atitjere without it. For his information that community is at Harts Range.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand that work commenced at Harts Range a week ago, on 30 May. It is expected that the work will be completed in August. There have been some problems with this particular program and many of them stemmed from land tenure and clarification of who owned the land so that we could proceed with this particular work. I am well aware of the concerns of the member for Stuart and, in line with those concerns about the provision of water wherever possible to these communities and outstation areas, an accelerated water drilling program has been under way in central Australia for the last month or so. It must be completed by 30 June. However, there are not enough drilling rigs in central Australia to undertake all the necessary drilling work, and we have spoken to the Hon Clyde Holding to see if we can expend some of that money on bore equipment, tanks and so on as well in order to meet the 30 June deadline. We will be moving in this area to ensure an adequate supply of water to these people wherever possible in the areas mentioned by the honourable member for Stuart. It is not easy, Mr Speaker. There have been cases where some communities, even within your own electorate, Mr Speaker, have demanded compensation for the supply of water where we have had to travel across their land. Such action does not make it easy to supply essential services in areas such as this. There have even been some cases where we have been asked to compensate for putting down teachers' residences. However, I understand that the delay at Harts Range in particular has been in relation to land tenure. I will supply the most current briefing to the honourable member for Stuart. It outlines the work that is progressing at Harts Range, but once again this was the subject of a media campaign. In fact, I was contacted yesterday by the ABC on this particular issue. It seems that this is now the way the opposition operates. It is prepared to go straight to the media every time there is a concern in a particular area. Members of the opposition do not know what is going on in their electorates. Work has commenced in the area and things are proceeding quite well. Perhaps it would help the honourable member if he moved around in his electorate a little more often.

Mr Ede: It is not in my electorate.

Traffic Hazard at McMillans Road and
Rothdale Road Intersection

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Traffic travelling west along McMillans Road and turning right into Rothdale Road must edge forward in anticipation of a gap in oncoming traffic and then complete the turn unable to view any traffic lights, thereby increasing the risk of collision with vehicles turning right out of Rothdale Road. What action will his department take to alleviate this dangerous situation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I travel daily through the intersection of Rothdale and McMillans Roads. I am aware of the situation with the traffic lights there. I am afraid that I cannot offer the honourable member for Jingili very much joy in respect of that particular intersection and the traffic lights there. At the moment, the traffic flow is constricted by the movement of oncoming vehicles. I think that it is probably a far safer situation that traffic is only prevented from moving because there is oncoming traffic. Drivers in that position will make sure that the way is clear before they move. Whereas, if we install a control through a mechanical device, it will probably go wrong far more times than human driving abilities and skills will. There has been a linkage of signals between Bagot Road and the intersection of McMillans and Rothdale Roads to try to enable a smoother traffic flow and to regulate the amount of traffic that moves up and down McMillans Road. Experts in my department assure me that, at the present time, the safest method of passage through the intersection is through driver attention focused on traffic rather than on auxiliary lights. However, I can assure the honourable member for Jingili that the situation will be monitored continually. I am sure that the honourable member is aware that no accidents have resulted from the problem that he has brought to the Assembly's attention. That does not mean that such a situation may not arise. The intersection will be monitored to ensure that the people of the northern suburbs have the best traffic flow that it is possible to provide within the limits of fiscal controls and circumstances.

Details of Departmental Budget Cuts

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

When will government ministers be in a position to advise the Assembly of the details of the budget cuts in their departments announced by the Chief Minister yesterday?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, further announcements in relation to that matter will be made after Cabinet decisions on financial arrangements for the next financial year.

Education for Deaf Children

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he assure me that educational facilities offered to deaf children in the Top End are being maintained and that no detriment will result to the children from the recent reduction in the number of teaching staff engaged in that area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, recently there has been a reduction in the number of teachers in this area. That reduction occurred when a teacher who was on accouchement leave was not replaced. The school at which that occurred is Stuart Park. I can assure the honourable member for Koolpinyah that, when the student numbers are up to the formula required for an additional teacher, we will do everything in our power to position an additional teacher in the school. In the case of hearing impairment, the formula is 5 to 1. This has been one of those cases - very similar to the situation at Pine Creek - where the student numbers did not quite meet the formula.

At present, the staffing for students with hearing impairments at Stuart Park Primary School is one band 2 teacher and 2 band 1 teachers. I reiterate that, if student numbers meet the formula required, we will add an extra teacher if possible. The recent cuts that have been announced by the federal government have not made it easy.

All members would be aware that the recruitment of staff is very difficult and there are situations in the Territory which differ from those in the states. We have been told, particularly in recent times, that we have to make efforts in relation to certain matters because the states do so. One of the things that upsets us most in the Northern Territory is that we have been progressing towards determining our own affairs. We have self-government and eventually we will become a state. We must have agreement and plans to reach that position. We understand the problems that we have in attracting people to the Northern Territory. We need air fares, we need housing for teachers in isolated communities and we need air-conditioning. As a result of the Commonwealth's reduction in funding to the Territory and the variations of the formulae on which we must make our budget determinations, the increase in costs for electricity in my department alone is \$1.3m. We need air-conditioning for students and teachers. If we are going to recruit teachers to the Territory, we need these arrangements. Only then can we facilitate their coming to the Territory. As I said, we must have organised planning. We are developing and we must move in that direction in an orderly fashion. It is very difficult for us to recruit teachers. We do not have our own university. The states have their own universities. We need to progress in an orderly fashion. I believe all Territorians are quite willing to pay their way in relation to these issues. But we must examine our own situation of isolated communities. I think it is up to the Territory to make decisions on where charges should be equal to the states or where they should not be equal because we have to recruit those people. I believe that we will eventually get on our own 2 feet. Wherever possible, we will continue to make sure that those special areas of hearing impairment and speech therapy are addressed by this government and we will position teachers when the student numbers require them in those areas.

Ferry Terminal in Darwin Harbour

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for LANDS

What is the current situation regarding the construction of a new ferry terminal and marina in Darwin Harbour?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, our government gave an undertaking during the last election campaign to construct a ferry terminal in Darwin and the government has been proceeding towards that objective since the election. The proposal was to construct the ferry terminal near an area which is becoming known as Parliament Park in the bay immediately below where the Legislative Assembly is currently situated. The plans have been completed. There is a capital works provision of \$4.5m for stage 1 of that terminal. Recently, we had a proposal from a Mr Hans Vos in respect of the construction of a facility in Cullen Bay which incorporates a marina, some residential and tourist development and the construction of a breakwater to create a protected bay. The proposal put forward by Mr Vos is that we construct the ferry terminal at the end of that breakwater. That proposal would enable that venture to be more viable and would reduce the cost of the construction of the ferry terminal substantially if it were to proceed.

The government will not call for tenders for the ferry terminal until we know exactly what is happening in respect of the Cullen Bay proposal. That matter should be resolved in the not-too-distant future. It may be that, by combining government and private enterprise, the community can end up with less cost imposed on it and a better facility to meet the needs of both the boating community and those who wish to transport themselves across the harbour in a facility that I believe holds great promise. The proposal has been the subject of discussions with the Darwin City Council although firm proposals have not been brought officially before the Department of Lands and, therefore, it has not gone through the necessary environmental and planning procedures. The matter is really on hold until such time as we can assess the most appropriate direction to take.

Review of the Public Service

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRY and SMALL BUSINESS

About 18 months ago, the government announced that it was undertaking a complete review of the public service. When can we expect a report on that review?

ANSWER

Recently, the Public Service Commissioner has given me some documentation regarding that review and I am evaluating it. Hopefully, I will be in a position to make an announcement by the end of July.

Offshore Gas

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

My question relates to his recent overseas trip to Korea and Japan with the Minister for Mines and Energy. Can he advise what market possibilities have arisen for Northern Territory offshore gas as a result of that overseas trip?

ANSWER

Honourable members would be aware that the offshore deposits that are adjacent to the Northern Territory coast are probably the most significant resource potential that we have for development in the Territory. Over recent years, while the drilling and proving-up program has been going on, many people associated with the projects have been looking at ways to ensure that they ultimately develop.

The amount of gas reserves we have in the Tern and Petrel fields is sufficient to drive the Darwin power-station for about 140 years. They are about 185 km off the coast and they are not in deep water. In terms of providing engineering to get the gas onshore, they are not the most expensive fields in the country. Certainly, they are not as expensive as the North-West Shelf and the reserves are not so enormous that we would have to develop a project like that at the North-West Shelf. However, the engineering and the economics of our offshore gas reserves in Tern and Petrel are such that we would need to have fairly major use of the gas either onshore in the Northern Territory or by way of sale to overseas ports to ensure that the project was able to be viable for the very simple reason that a platform is going to cost in the order of \$1000m. To bring natural gas onshore to Darwin for use could take in the order of \$1500m by the time the exploration program is complete, the platform is in place, the pipeline is down and the shore facilities are in place. I am talking at the moment about getting the gas onshore without doing anything substantial with it. People often ask why we would bring gas from Alice Springs when it is 185 km offshore. The very expensive cost of that platform makes it more economic to use a pipe from Alice Springs to Darwin in the initial years.

If we bring gas onshore by way of the platform, obviously we have to get our volume up to make the economics of the project work. It is our view that the only way that that is likely to happen is if the Northern Territory can tap into one of the gas windows that will develop in the market in South-east Asia between 1992 and 1996. Given that we still have some proving work to do and that the project could take 7 years to build and cost up to \$3500m to finance by the time we build in an LNG facility onshore in Darwin and finance the shipping arrangements that are required, the project starts to take on enormous dimensions so far as a small community like ours is concerned. The Minister for Mines and Energy and myself have a quiet determination to make sure that the Tern and Petrel fields become producers for Australia and for the Northern Territory in the 1990s. For that to happen, we need to take steps today in the Northern Territory. Given that we had a market today, the money today and the gas today, which we have, it would take us 7 years to get ourselves into a position where we could turn a tap on and actually sell the gas. So it is not too soon for the Northern Territory to start its trek down this long road.

We also believe that the sale of gas to South-east Asia is our best export opportunity. There are certain things going for us in those markets. They are peculiar to the market and perhaps complementary to what the Northern Territory is doing. I will deal with Korea first. Korea is a developing country in the true sense. To give members an idea of minimal use that the Koreans make of gas at the moment, Seoul has a population of 10 million people and only this year it has started to reticulate gas into their households. The people live in sub-zero temperatures. Seoul is suffering from an environmental problem caused by 10 million people burning little wooden bricks. The smog hangs over the city for up to 6 months at a time. That is presenting quite a problem for the community. They see gas as a way of overcoming the pollution by using a very clean energy source.

Korea's potential expansion in the use of gas is very large compared with that of Japan. The amount of gas that the Northern Territory would be looking to sell through its producers to Korea is about 2 million tonnes a year for 20 years. That would not make us a major producer. I think the North-West Shelf project must get rid of 6 million tonnes a year just to keep its nose in front. When you are looking to sell 6 million tonnes a year to finance your project and the markets are 8 to 10 years out in front, you need to have a very big heart or very big pockets to be able to sustain the risk. Mr Speaker, our potential for selling 2 million tonnes a year in the 1990s is much greater than that of those people who are selling much larger quantities just to make their projects viable. Certainly, the Dome project in Canada, and the Russian's project that is being developed at the moment, are so enormous they will be looking for 6 million to 10 million tonnes a year in any market just to make their projects viable. We are not looking for that sort of consumption and there is a chance that the Northern Territory, by working with Korea and or Japan, could sell its 2 million tonnes a year to get access to the market without increasing the price to our consumers.

Mr Speaker, one of the facets of this industry is that both the seller and the buyer must be able to look 10 years ahead, project an energy consumption use, and then be sure that there will be a demand for the supply of energy and that it can be paid for. That way the seller can finance his project without going broke. That is the most difficult part of the gas equation for all people concerned. We accept that there is a problem for the people on the other side, the consumers. Rather than finding ourselves in a position which some gas producers in the world today have found themselves in, where countries like Japan have signed up for agreements and then decided they only wanted to take 75% of the take and expected the producer to absorb the loss, what we are saying to people in Korea and Japan is that, if only because of their nature, we need participants to help us develop these projects. To have participation from people in Korea and Japan, by way of equity contribution and engineering and fabrication component commitments up front, in return for a guaranteed take of product at the end, we would be putting together a finance arrangement that would suit the type of development that we have facing us and would suit the development potential of Korea and Japan who are looking to sell offshore their technical, financial and engineering expertise. All of this is in very early days. After our visit to Korea, my colleague and I felt that the Territory's opportunities in that country were very good. We need to follow them up with strong representation. I intend to make an announcement about that later in the year.

The situation in Japan was not quite as encouraging for the Northern Territory as we would have hoped for the very simple reason that the Japanese are committed at the moment. They do not envisage any future increase in production that would warrant extra orders of gas being places. Only on the basis of such orders would we carry out further development. The Japanese community is very keen to become involved. In fact, 2 companies came forward and said: 'We are major traders. We have customers who would take gas. We have engineering contacts who would like to be involved in this sort of thing that you are talking about. We would like to put a proposal to the Northern Territory government that would be considered both by the government and the oilfield producers as one that could possibly be put into place in the years ahead'. Again, it is a necessary exercise because the nature of the project requires \$3500m up front. We cannot just rush into it. We need to get the sums right and, because we are dealing with countries overseas which are very cautious, it will take some time.

On the home front, there are tremendous advantages to be gained for Australia and the Northern Territory through getting the offshore gas landed and

into an international market as soon as possible. The domestic benefits will be considerable. Mr Speaker, we have built the financial arrangements for the Alice Springs to Darwin pipeline around a field life in central Australia of 20 to 30 years. Clearly, any field has a limit. It is a finite resource and it will not go on forever. We believe that, once the Alice Springs to Darwin line is in place, the economics of the Territory will change tremendously. We should get economies of scale that would enable us to develop more quickly, and the need for offshore gas to come onshore to supplement local Territory supplies will only be increased by that.

Mr Speaker, the provision of offshore gas to the Northern Territory mainland coast will give us an opportunity to look at manufacturing possibilities that have never been available to us before under our commitment to oil-fired generation in our powerhouses. Currently, we have people reviewing the opportunities that will be available to the Territory in terms of using offshore gas for major manufacturing purposes in the Top End. Once the gas comes onshore, and the central Australian fields are depleted, the potential to send gas down the line and supply Alice Springs and central Australia for the next 50 to 100 years is there. It is something that we ought to consider.

Further, I believe that we are now within sight of the realisation of the famous national pipeline dream of Rex Connor. Once the Alice Springs to Darwin line and the Alice Springs to Cooper line are in place, Cooper will connect with Eromanga, Adelaide will connect with Melbourne, Melbourne will finalise the 20 miles between the pipes that service New South Wales and Victoria and the offshore gas from Darwin will go back down the line to supply the whole of Australia as well as the people of the Northern Territory and, hopefully, the people of South-east Asia.

Hotel Development for Myilly Point

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRY and SMALL BUSINESS

Some weeks ago, he said in a public statement that the government would be announcing the final development plans for Myilly Point and that the government was torn between the 2 options of a '400-bed or 600-bed hotel'. When will these plans be announced?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this morning the Chairman of the Northern Territory Development Corporation showed to me some drawings of the future Myilly Terrace development. This will be news to my ministerial colleagues because they have not had a chance to see those drawings. I am the only person who has seen them. He only brought them back from overseas in the last couple of days. It is my intention to exhibit these plans for appraisal by my ministerial colleagues at Cobourg next week. On 19 and 20 June, the architects will come to Darwin to explain the concepts further. Mr Speaker, once the government has made a decision on the direction it will take with regard to the development at Myilly Terrace and that is known, I will then make a public announcement. However, I will not be rushed by the Leader of the Opposition. About a month ago, I said I would announce the decision within 4 to 6 weeks, and I still have a couple of weeks up my sleeve.

Trainee Staff at Laboratory Facility

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What does the government intend to do with trainee staff presently employed at its laboratory facility when private industry takes over?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as honourable members would be aware, the government has been negotiating with a company that is regarded as a private company, even though it has some interstate government involvement in its shareholding, for some time now with a view to its taking over some laboratory functions currently operated by the Department of Mines and Energy. There are 2 trainees involved in that laboratory under a fixed tenure. I think tenure is 4 years for trainees in the government. We have told them that their future tenure with the government is assured and we propose to have them continue with their work in that laboratory after it is taken over by new management.

Hotel Development for Myilly Point

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRY and SMALL BUSINESS

Can he confirm the content of the press statement, which he released voluntarily without being provoked by me at all 4 weeks ago, that the 2 options which the government is considering for Myilly Point are a 400-bed and a 600-bed hotel?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, what I said 4 weeks ago was that I was hopeful that I would be in a position to make an announcement about the direction the government would take in relation to Myilly Terrace in about 4 to 6 weeks time. At the time, I said there was an option of looking at a 400-room hotel development against a 600-room hotel development.

Staff Cuts in Department of Education

Mr DALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The staff review that has been carried out by the Department of Education has indicated that 50 positions will be abolished. When will this occur?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is a very important matter and I had expected a question on it before this. The review that has been carried out by the Department of Education is in its final draft form. Honourable members would be aware that the public service arbitrator's determination requires that people involved, such as union members of the Teaching Service and the Office of the Public Service Commissioner, be given the opportunity to comment on the review. That is the situation that we have at present. The review will be implemented progressively over a period of time and, hopefully, it will be in full operation by January 1986.

Mr Speaker, I might say here that confidentiality is supposed to surround these issues. They are delicate issues because they involve people. I am afraid that, in this case, confidentiality has not been respected in relation to

some aspects of this particular review. It was announced that 50 positions would be cut. The way that it is coming across to the community is that those people will be thrown out on to the street. That is not the case at all. Those 50 positions are being abolished from within the Department of Education. The people in those positions will be repositioned by the government. Positions will be created as well as abolished.

Mr B. Collins: Why didn't you say that?

Mr HARRIS: I did not have the opportunity to say it. I am trying to get it across to you now.

Mr B. Collins: I was right about that speech being thrown together.

Mr HARRIS: All the positions that are to be abolished are being looked at in a great deal of detail and with sensitivity. The department is looking to placing all the people whose positions are to be abolished. As I said earlier, positions are being created. They will be able to apply for those new positions as well. I think that the Leader of the Opposition and others should realise that the Professional Services Branch was seen by the community as an area that could afford to lose a great deal of fat. Personally, I did not agree because I happened to feel that the professional development services that were provided were necessary to a degree. However, there was a need to rationalise the whole situation. That is what the department is doing at the present time. The people in those positions will be spoken to by the department in relation to those positions. It is unfortunate that someone has contacted all those people and not respected the confidentiality of that particular document. Whoever did that should be ashamed of himself.

Hermannsburg School

Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer to his previous answer in which he said that he would be creating positions in certain places within his department. Will he give an undertaking to create a teaching position and to increase the number of classrooms to meet educational needs during the second semester of this year at the government school at Hermannsburg?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for raising the issue of Hermannsburg. The member for MacDonnell has done nothing to try to put pressure on the government to have a school created in that community. I spoke to Gus Williams some time ago about the possible establishment of a government presence at Hermannsburg itself. For years the Finke River Mission operated the teaching services in that community. It provided a very worthwhile service which the government has been grateful for. Hermannsburg itself had 18 outstations. It is interesting to note that Gus Williams was trying to indicate that people were moving back from the outstations into a central position - which is against the outstation movement. Gus Williams and I had discussions and we spoke to the community. It was agreed that there was a need to have a school facility that provided the range of services that were provided in other Aboriginal communities. I decided that I would allow the establishment of a government school in Hermannsburg for a trial period this year. I indicated to Gus Williams that that school would cater for 50 students. He agreed and the community agreed that it would be done on a trial basis to see how it would go. The contact that has been made with me through telexes, including the telex that the honourable member read out in part

last night, made the point that there are 70 or 80 children there and they need extra facilities.

Mr Speaker, the agreement that I had with Gus Williams - and I respect agreements with people - was that we would try it out with 50 students. The community was to be told that. You do not just go into an area and create a government school and throw to the wind what has happened in the past. It is a delicate situation that must be addressed and take into account the Finke River Mission, the feelings of the people in the communities and the Department of Education as well. That is what is being done. A review has been carried out. I am still considering what is to happen in relation to that particular school. I will be in touch with Gus Williams and his people again on this issue. I might say that the honourable member for MacDonnell has not contacted me once about the concerns of people in his electorate in relation to setting up and establishing a government school presence at Hermannsburg.

Fowl Plague in Victoria

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

What ramifications, if any, does the current outbreak of fowl plague in Victoria have for the Northern Territory poultry industry?

ANSWER

By way of background, I would advise the Assembly that there has been an outbreak of fowl plague in Victoria and some honourable members may have noted that in recent press reports. Fowl plague is an exotic disease which is highly contagious and it can cause a high loss of birds of any age. It is a very virulent form of influenza. I hope that the Minister for Transport and Works has not been in Victoria recently. I note that he has fallen victim to the fowl disease of influenza and we miss his presence today. I trust my honourable colleague, the member for Jingili, is not suffering a similar fate.

Mr Speaker, on 31 May an outbreak of the disease was confirmed at a property near Bendigo. The property is a mixed farm which produces eggs and broilers. The property concerned and the contract grower's farm have been quarantined and the slaughter of poultry has commenced. Approximately 100 000 birds will need to be slaughtered on that property. I might indicate, Mr Speaker, that, as of yesterday, the decision was taken to quarantine properties in the vicinity of the affected property and a requirement has been put in place for the birds on those properties to be slaughtered. I believe that involves a further 200 000 to 400 000 birds which will need to be slaughtered to prevent the spread of this disease. The Northern Territory Department of Primary Production has notified all growers of the outbreak. Farmers have been asked to monitor their flocks carefully and field staff will be keeping the matter under close surveillance. The Victorian Department of Agriculture has requested assistance from other states. The Department of Primary Production has sent an experienced biology technician to aid in testing for the disease and a veterinary pathologist to assist at the outbreak area. The outbreak will attract compensation to the farmers of approximately \$1m. That figure applied prior to this additional extension and that is likely to spread to other farmers. Under an existing agreement through the Australian Agricultural Council, all states will be expected to contribute on a basis proportionate to the size of their poultry industry. Mr Speaker, there was an outbreak of this disease in the United States last year and the cost to the United States was \$64.5m.

Staff Cuts in Department of Education

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

To my astonishment, in answer to a previous question, the minister complained that the revelation that a departmental review was to result in 50 people being sacked was a disgraceful breach of confidence. I refer the honourable minister to page 18 of the Chief Minister's budget speech where he said: 'A departmental review is currently under way which will result in at least 50 administrative positions being abolished'. In view of the considerable distress that the 2 words 'at least' have caused unnecessarily in the Department of Education, what will be the extent of the staff positions that are to be abolished?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has not understood the answer to the previous question. What I was saying was that the people in the 50 positions listed have been rung up and told that they do not have a job. As was indicated in the Chief Minister's statement, 50 positions have been abolished within the Department of Education. That is fact. What I am saying is that that matter is under review and that review document is being examined by the unions, by the teaching service and by the Office of the Public Service Commissioner. That is a requirement. Before that situation came about, those people were contacted by someone and told that they had lost their jobs. I apologise to those people who have been put through this trauma. They will not be thrown out on the street; they will be fitted into positions within the Department of Education structure. The answer to the question is that 50 positions have been abolished. The breach of confidentiality relates to the fact that those people whose names have been listed against abolished positions were contacted by phone before the department contacted them on the matter.

Buffalo Industry

Mr McCARTHY to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Mr Speaker, the buffalo industry which is based in my electorate is set to become a major earner for the economy. What plans does the government have to assist the development of the buffalo industry?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have been particularly concerned at some developments that have occurred in the buffalo industry over recent years. Part of that has arisen out of the necessity to control the herd through the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign and because of the quite extensively developing markets which have led to an extensive shoot-out of buffalo in the feral herd in some areas and the export of large numbers of live animals in addition to those that have been taken for pet meat and for the smallgoods industry for human consumption.

Mr Speaker, I had the opportunity a couple of weeks ago of meeting with the Buffalo Industry Council and raising some of these concerns with it. We have agreed to form a specialist team whose aim will be to prepare a comprehensive plan on the buffalo industry to ensure its long-term development. This is a unique potential industry for the Northern Territory. All of us recognise that buffalo flourish in the Top End, often in country that is marginal or unsuitable for cattle. There are quite excellent markets and potential markets for buffalo

meat in Europe, particularly with the export potential of some 2500 t which stand outside the beef quota arrangements of the EEC. In addition, there are potential developments for live exports to the Indonesian market, particularly with their transmigration programs, and developing markets for the Australian smallgoods industry. The buffalo industry people are very keen to have the industry developed further and to promote the use of prime cuts for human consumption. I note in passing that a restaurant in Darwin is featuring marinated buffalo in its menu. I refer to the Rock Oyster. I had the pleasure this week of having a meal there and sampling some of it and I must say that it was some of the tastiest meat that I have eaten for many a year. I would encourage honourable members to take the opportunity to find out how good buffalo meat can be.

Mr Speaker, the task force will include representatives from the Department of Primary Production, the Department of Lands and the Conservation Commission. Its terms of reference include: the assessment of long-term markets for both export and domestic use of buffalo; the availability of land for buffalo raising with particular regard to suitability of location and size of blocks; breeding stock for a controlled TB-free herd; the availability of finance for buffalo farming; adequacy of existing production technology and management expertise and the need for research development and training; likely effects of the reduction in the total buffalo herd on the viability of the various sectors of the industry, particularly abattoirs; and constraints which may affect the orderly development of the industry.

Mr Speaker, as I mentioned, the herd has suffered a considerable decline and it will be essential under the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign to remove the feral herd of buffalo. We must move forward into a properly managed domesticated buffalo herd and these aspects are addressed specifically under the terms of reference. I should note that the President of the Northern Territory Buffalo Industry Council, Mr David George, who is also a task force appointee, described this initiative as 'a unique opportunity to develop and implement a long-term plan because of the small number of properties that are now involved in domesticating feral buffalo herds for local and overseas markets'. Mr Speaker, I would expect to receive at least a preliminary report later this month. Obviously, due to the nature of the study, more detailed assessments will extend beyond that.

Closure of Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for HEALTH

What was the background of a petition that was canvassed in The Mall during the week regarding the closing of the Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre at the Royal Darwin Hospital?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I should be ready for this. Mr Speaker, I noticed that the same issue was addressed in a copy of the Midweek Territorian. I think there has been a gross misunderstanding by elements of the community of precisely what is proposed in relation to drug and alcohol rehabilitation as it applies to the present Royal Darwin Hospital. At the moment, patients who are acutely ill as a result of what one might describe as alcoholic poisoning are taken into the normal ward situation for immediate treatment and later transferred to what is called the detoxification unit located in Ward 4 at the Royal Darwin Hospital. Some time ago, a task force was set up of people from the Drug and Alcohol Bureau and people who were involved in this matter in the community.

We sought advice also from the most highly specialised centre for alcohol treatment, which is located in St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney. We sought the assistance and advice of a Sister Pederson, who is regarded nationally as being a leading authority, particularly on the rehabilitation side, and a Dr Alex Wodak who is regarded equally highly.

The upshot was that it was deemed to be highly desirable to remove the rehabilitation side - the long-term transition from severe alcoholism - back to a community-based setting. Obviously, that will involve a great deal more expenditure than the way we are doing it currently. However, far from lowering the standard of rehabilitation services, it will increase it. The present rehabilitation unit will be used for crisis intervention - that is, the medical side - and the rehabilitation side will be shifted into the community. As I have explained in relation to psychiatric services, it is easier for the patient to make the transition back into society from a community-based organisation. The other fear which seems to have arisen in the minds of people, particularly ex patients, is that there will be a hiatus between the community-based organisation coming on stream and the closure of the rehabilitation centre at the Royal Darwin Hospital. In fact, the opposite is the case. Not only do we not expect there to be a break in the rehabilitation side of the program, both sections will probably operate contemporaneously for a period to ensure that no patients are disadvantaged by the transition from a hospital-based rehabilitation program to a community-based rehabilitation program.

I spoke with 2 young ladies who were handing out petitions in The Mall the other day and I think they were reasonably satisfied after that conversation. One of the things they seemed to have a misapprehension about was lack of consultation with the staff. When one looks into the matter, one finds that one of the senior staff members of the present rehabilitation unit at the Royal Darwin Hospital was in fact a member of the task force which made these very recommendations. Each and every one of the staff has been involved through that staff member as a member of the panel. They have all spoken with the Director of Nursing about it and senior staff of the hospital administration have spoken with those staff members.

Mr Speaker, it seems to me that the petition was based on a misunderstanding of what we were doing and how the recommendations came about. For my part, I would have been quite happy to see the unit remain at the Royal Darwin Hospital except that the best experts in this area in this country have advised us that the new way of going about it is the most appropriate and effective way to facilitate rehabilitation.

Power-stations in Darwin

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What stage has been reached with negotiations and discussions with the relevant unions on the subject of commissioning the Channel Island Power-station and the decommissioning of Stokes Hill Power-station?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, under the former Minister for Mines and Energy, now the Chief Minister, a decision was taken that the transfer to gas technology in the Northern Territory as far as electricity generation was concerned should be done on a very open basis with the unions concerned on behalf of their members. It was quite obvious that gas technology would involve significantly fewer people in electricity generation than is the case at present. The minister

established a working party chaired by a Commissioner of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. It has union representation as well as NTEC management representation and has been meeting from time to time to consider the various issues involved. I believe it is due to hand down a report shortly. In the meantime, we have continued the flow of information relating to the progress of the new project to build the gas powerhouse at Channel Island to that working party and to the unions involved. We have kept them up to date with information on the pipeline negotiations because, to some degree, those negotiations will have a bearing on the timing for the gas powerhouse to be able to commission its first generating set.

Channel Island Power-station currently plans to have 180 MW of turbines installed and the first set operating either in December 1986 or January 1987. Over the subsequent 12 months, further sets will be installed and tested. At the same time, Stokes Hill Power-station will have to continue running to supply Darwin's electricity needs until such time as the sets in Channel Island Power-station are regarded as having the level of reliability necessary to start progressively shutting down Stokes Hill.

For a period during 1987, we will need to run and staff both power-stations. That will cause some problems. The problem of maintaining the level of expertise at Stokes Hill to keep it running and, at the same time, transferring and training staff to operate the new turbines at Channel Island is being examined. The Public Service Commissioner has been brought into the negotiations relating to the fact that we will have some staff that are surplus to requirements once the Stokes Hill Power-station is shut down. As positions become available in the Northern Territory Public Service that could be suitable for personnel who are currently at Stokes Hill Power-station, they are brought to the attention of Stokes Hill Power-station staff, together with advice on what is involved in other jobs and what training options are open to them. In some cases, we may have the Public Service Commissioner allocate personnel to fill positions temporarily so that we can keep people at Stokes Hill until such time as the station is shut down. We must keep it running yet we want to have as many of these people employed elsewhere in the public service as we possibly can.

Another way we can help keep Stokes Hill running whilst letting staff move to other areas of employment is to borrow people from interstate electricity authorities. Discussions have been held with at least the Victorian authority and perhaps other authorities on whether we could borrow persons who have expertise in operating powerhouses when staff at Stokes Hill seek to leave for other employment. I believe we have taken a responsible open approach to this whole question and we will continue to keep the unions fully informed of progress on all fronts so that nobody is left with any doubts as to what opportunities are available and no stone is left unturned in finding positions for any persons who may otherwise find themselves redundant in the long term.

Laboratory Employees

Mr EDE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is it correct that the government handed over the names and addresses of its laboratory employees to Amdel without the consent of the employees? What is the government's policy on releasing personal information on employees without their consent?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot confirm at the moment that the government provided a list of names and addresses of employees. Last Friday week, from recollection, a senior executive of Amdel was in Darwin and held discussions at the government laboratory with all the staff involved in the leasing arrangement that the government is proposing. Following that discussion with all staff, at which officers of the Department of Mines and Energy and union representatives were present, the executive from Amdel invited staff members to discuss with him privately offers of employment from the company. These offers were to be followed up by formal written offers to each employee. I cannot advise whether or not the department provided the name and address of each employee to facilitate the dispatch of those subsequent written offers.

RB Land Between Freshwater Road and Rapid Creek

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for LANDS

Is a review of the land zoned RB between Freshwater Road and Rapid Creek under way? If so, what is the purpose of the review?

ANSWER

The government has no plan or intention to review the zoning of the land between Freshwater Road and Rapid Creek. The area provides a valuable green belt for Darwin. I could not support any proposal to put it into more intensive use. I hope that answers the honourable member's question.

Statute Law Review Committee

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

My question concerns the operations of the Statute Law Review Committee. It will require a little explanation. There is an official committee in the Northern Territory, known as the Northern Territory Law Reform Committee, which is chaired by Sir William Kearney and made up of the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, the Chief Magistrate, lawyers and the Parliamentary Counsel. In respect of this question, I forfeit the papers I was reading belonging to that committee. I have since been disabused of that. The Statute Law Review Committee has issued 2 papers, one on prostitution and one on the sale or supply of tobacco to children.

I have just discovered that this committee is a Country Liberal Party committee. On it are 3 backbenchers: the members for Wanguri, Sadadeen and Jingili. I am not suggesting that they are doing bad work. However, I am confused entirely as to why a Country Liberal Party committee is being serviced by senior government officers and is issuing papers under the letterhead of the Parliamentary Counsel and where it sits in relation to the proper committee that should be looking after law reform matters in the Northern Territory, that committee which is chaired by Sir William Kearney.

Could the Chief Minister explain why this committee is operating and why it has been given access to senior government officers, including the Parliamentary Counsel? Will he give me an undertaking that any ad hoc Labor Party committees that we decide to set up will be given the same degree of assistance, not that I am suggesting that that is desirable? Could he also advise why the Northern Territory Law Reform Committee, chaired by Sir William Kearney, is not doing this work?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, about half a dozen issues were raised by the Leader of the Opposition. Let me say to him at the outset that I believe that it is quite proper for a committee of the party in government to be serviced by officers working for the government in respect of supplying whatever information the committee requires.

Mr B. Collins: It is not a select committee. It is not a committee of the parliament.

Mr TUXWORTH: I am not arguing that it is a select committee or a parliamentary committee. If it is a committee of the government and it needs assistance and advice so that it can make recommendations to ministers and government, then that is perfectly reasonable. Over the years, the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues have sought assistance on all sorts of things. Where requests have been reasonable, they have been granted. That will continue. If the Leader of the Opposition would like to provide me with the papers that he is talking about, I will be able to address the matter in its totality.

Lead-free Petrol

Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What is the current status concerning the introduction of lead-free petrol to the Northern Territory? Is he aware of recent press reports which indicate that, by 30 July next year, less than 15% of Australian motorists will have converted to lead-free petrol, which is way below the original estimation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, unleaded petrol is being distributed in the Northern Territory at the present time. The first bulk shipment arrived in Darwin in early May and is being delivered to service stations around the Territory where it will replace standard petrol. Officers from the Departments of Mines and Energy, and Transport and Works drove recently from Darwin to Alice Springs deliberately to talk to service station proprietors, car dealers and distributors of internal combustion engines to ensure that those people were well informed about the introduction of unleaded petrol and what it meant. They found generally that the oil industry had already advised its various agents and most service stations were quite familiar with the system and were modifying their equipment or putting in new equipment to handle unleaded petrol.

By the end of this year, unleaded petrol will be widely available along the Stuart Highway. I am advised that it will be sold by more service stations than presently sell standard. That is understandable because I think it will be very much in demand if not very popular. New car dealers are also getting ready for the introduction of unleaded petrol. Generally, servicing staff are looking forward to the arrival of the first unleaded petrol cars because of the simplified tuning procedures required for them. Such cars are likely to be on the market later this year. After 1 January next year, all cars must be manufactured to standards which require unleaded petrol. One saving grace for motorists and mechanics is that all the anti-pollution junk currently on car engines, which makes them monsters to tune properly, will be done away with and the internal combustion engine will, by and large, go back to what it should be. The anti-pollution process will take place in the exhaust system only rather than in the exhaust, sump, tappet cover,

carburettor etc.

Apparently, companies in the Territory which are selling 2 and 4-stroke engines, such as motor mowers, generators etc, are not as well informed about unleaded petrol. The visit by officers down the track cleared up quite a few misconceptions. I would encourage companies involved in the selling of small motorised equipment, which are not aware of the implications of the introduction of unleaded petrol for their equipment, to obtain the information quickly. Certainly, it is readily available from the Department of Mines and Energy and all fuel companies.

Officers reported that, whilst the introduction of unleaded petrol can be expected to go fairly smoothly, there may be slight inconvenience at some service stations during the changeover because tanks currently carrying regular petrol must be drained, flushed and filled up with unleaded petrol. This process can take a day or 2 and there may be a small degree of inconvenience in that regard. Members of the public requiring supplies of standard petrol or its replacement ULP should check their service station as to when the changeover is likely to take place and whether this might mean a temporary disruption to supply.

The newspaper report that, by 30 July next year, less than 15% of cars will be using unleaded petrol is obviously speculation. There has been a great deal of controversy about the degree to which motorists will take to unleaded petrol over the next few years. I had a talk to the Australian Institute of Petroleum in Melbourne a couple of months back. It is quite convinced that, in a few years time, super grade petrol will be as rare as regular is today. We are currently selling something like 95% super and 5% regular in Australia. Based on the rate at which people renew their cars, in about 10 years time the situation will be reversed - 95% of cars will require unleaded petrol and only 5% of cars on the road will still take super grade petrol. I am not sure whether it is a good idea or not for Australia to move to unleaded petrol. It is certainly a decision that was taken in the interests of Sydney and Melbourne residents, possibly at the expense of Australians elsewhere. It depends a little on one's view about whether to allow cars to emit from their exhausts all those nasty chemicals or to take steps to introduce unleaded petrol or some other measure.

Community Centre in Sadadeen

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has the government any plans to provide a community centre in the Sadadeen area of Alice Springs and, if so, has a site been chosen?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Sadadeen for asking me that particular question because I know it is of some concern to him. I have had the opportunity in the last several weeks to travel around the Sadadeen area and look at the rapid growth and development which is occurring there and the need for infrastructure such as community or neighbourhood centres. The people whom I travelled with favoured a neighbourhood centre similar to that being developed in Palmerston. It has a school, a child-care facility and a community hall. I understand that there is a steering committee, known as the East Side Neighbourhood Centre Steering Committee, and currently it is looking at applying for capital and recurrent funding through the Commonwealth Department of Community Services for the establishment of a neighbourhood

centre incorporating such a child-care facility. The Northern Territory Department of Education has been approached also and I believe that the availability of land adjacent to the community college in Sadadeen has been considered by the steering committee as an ideal site. The Department of Education has no objections to this proposal to date. However, I understand that the final site is yet to be decided on and no doubt the honourable Minister for Education will contact the East Side Neighbourhood Centre Steering Committee to have that confirmed.

The steering committee's proposal is to be considered by the Northern Territory's Children's Services Planning Committee in August. If the committee gives its endorsement to the development of such a facility, naturally the location of the site will have to be decided upon by all those people who are concerned with its development. It is interesting to note, Mr Speaker, that the Alice Springs' representatives on this particular committee include the Mayor, Mrs Leslie Oldfield, as well as representatives from my department and the federal Department of Community Services. Consultation between all those departments is necessary for the development of a neighbourhood centre because it involves getting together all the various groups within the community and bringing them to one location. I would just like to tell the honourable member for Sadadeen that this method has been very successful in the Palmerston area where we have had a facility operating now for almost 12 months down there.

This proposal will be considered in the light of the total federal budget allocation for children's services in the Northern Territory and other Northern Territory child care priorities, but it is being looked at. The East Side Neighbourhood Centre Steering Committee and the committee which looks at children's services planning right throughout the Territory will address this problem within the next couple of months and I hope to be in a position to get back to the honourable member for Sadadeen and inform him of the findings of those various committees for the development of such a facility.

Nightcliff Planning Study

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS

Could he provide a progress report on the Nightcliff planning study and provide particularly information on the stage at which and the time when public input to that study will be given?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I shall be happy to answer that question, and I am particularly pleased to see that one of my constituents shows a high interest in that study. The study in respect of Nightcliff was initiated last year as a consequence of representations made by myself, as the local member, to the then Minister for Lands. It was with some pleasure that I had the opportunity subsequently to deal with it. The first stage involved a traffic planning study to deal particularly with the problems associated with the intersection of Dick Ward Drive and Progress Drive and around the Nightcliff Shopping Centre area and areas related to that. That has been the subject of considerable debate between the consultant who carried out that study and the Department of Lands. At this stage, a series of options have been proposed and those options will be placed on display in Nightcliff next week. There will be a period for people to look at them and make public comment before any decisions are made as to the direction we will take. There are difficulties with each of the options that have been proposed and I more than

anybody, Mr Speaker, am very concerned to ensure that the residents of Nightcliff have a good opportunity to examine the various options that have been proposed by the consultant and the department so that there can be community input to that before final decisions are proposed to the community.

To answer that part of the question from the honourable member specifically, the process of community consultation will start next week with a series of options and constraints being provided and made available to the community so that it can make assessments of the needs in that area. I might add, Mr Speaker, that the second stage of the Nightcliff study, which covers the whole of the Nightcliff and Rapid Creek area, is being carried out by consultants and I would anticipate that the same procedure will be adopted there. The objective would be to obtain a series of options and proposals to take to the community from which comments would result. We would receive as much comment as the community might wish to give and those comments would then be considered and final proposals put to the community. There will be a process of community consultation throughout. There is a high degree of interest in this particular study in the Nightcliff area and, as the local member, I have received a number of suggestions and representations over the last 12 months all of which have been forwarded through to the consultants and the department.

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