

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.

23 February 1988

24. Helicopter Charters - Minister for Tourism

Mr SMITH to MINISTER FOR TOURISM

1. What is the total cost of helicopter charters undertaken by the Minister for Tourism in 1987.
2. What was the take-off point and the destination for each journey.
3. Who were the passengers, if any, on each of these trips.

14 February 1989

70. Myilly Point Development

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Has Henry and Walker, or companies or a consortium associated with Henry and Walker, been given development rights to Myilly Point. If so -

- (a) what are the terms and conditions of those development rights;
- (b) how long does Henry and Walker have exclusive rights over the land;
- (c) what is the value of the covenants placed on the land; and
- (d) what value has been placed on the land.

73. Excisions on Special Purposes Leases

Mr EDE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many excision titles have been negotiated under the current guidelines.
2. How many excision titles have been registered; when were each of these registered; and when were each of these agreements reached with each pastoral lessee.
3. When were excision agreements reached on the following pastoral leases: Amburla, Anningie, Atartinga, Derry Downs, Hodgson Downs, Humbert River, Jervois, Koolpinyah, Lake Nash, Loves Creek, Manbulloo, Middleton Ponds (Tempe Downs), Mistake Creek, Mount Riddock, Napperby, Newhaven, Tobermorey and St Vidgeon.
4. Was the area on Maude Creek Pastoral lease negotiated under the current excision guidelines. If so when; or if not, under what process was the area negotiated.

5. How many Special Purposes Leases have been converted to fee simple and what is the name of these excisions.
6. How many and which excisions are currently being prevented from being registered because of caveats placed over the leases.
7. How many excision titles are being held up because the applicant group is awaiting incorporation and what is the name of these excision groups.
8. Has your department formulated long term funding programs in relation to new excisions.

16 May 1989

76. Grants and \$1-for-\$1 Subsidies to Schools

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What was the amount of money provided by the NT government to each school for the financial years 1983-84 through to and including 1988-89 for -
 - (a) grants as a total amount and on a per student basis; and
 - (b) \$1-for-\$1 subsidy.
2. What are the criteria applicable to the granting of \$1-for-\$1 subsidies to NT government schools.

77. Cost of Student Education

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What is the total cost on a per student basis of providing primary and secondary education in -

- (a) urban; and
- (b) rural schools in each region of the Territory.

78. 1988 School Examination Results

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What were the PES and SABSA results for 1988 of Territory students involved in these courses on a school-by-school basis both public and private, and subject-by-subject in each discipline. From these results -

- (a) how many students started the course;
- (b) how many students pulled out of the course before the final examination or testing;

- (c) how many students finished the course;
- (d) how many students passed the course;
- (e) what was the pass mark as a percentage of the highest possible mark; and
- (f) what was the percentage of passes in the subject.

NOTE: If the word 'pass' is meaningless please choose the most suitable term, with explanation, in parts (d), (e) and (f).

80. Mathematics Teachers

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many maths classes in the Northern Territory Secondary Education Sector are being taught by teachers who are qualified in the area of mathematics and trained to teach the subject.
2. What proportion of mathematics classes does this represent at each year level of secondary schooling.

82. Liquor Act Offences

Mr EDE to MINISTER for TOURISM

1. How many complaints have been received by the Liquor Commission concerning breaches of the Liquor Act in relation to serving alcohol to people who are -
 - (a) intoxicated; or
 - (b) under age,each year for the last 5 years.
2. How many of these complaints resulted in -
 - (a) legal action being taken against the licensee;
 - (b) convictions; and
 - (c) forfeiture of liquor licences.

83. Primary School Students' Costs

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What was the average expenditure per student for primary schools in -
 - (a) the 5 largest urban centres; and

- (b) the balance of the Territory,
for each of the last 3 school years.
2. What was the expenditure per student of providing schooling in outstation schools during each of the last 3 school years.
 3. What is the retention rate through to Year 12 for students who received their primary education in schools outside the 5 major urban centres of the Territory.
 4. How many compulsory school-age children in the Northern Territory attend school less than 50% of the time.
 5. What is the percentage of Aboriginal students entering the Northern Territory education system at or before Year 8 who complete Year 12.
 6. What is the percentage of non-Aboriginal students entering the Northern Territory education system at or before Year 8 who complete Year 12.

86. Reserved Judgments of Supreme Court

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

What are the titles of any actions in which judgment has been reserved by a judge of the Supreme Court and where that judgment has not been delivered within 12 months of it being reserved.

87. BTEC Payments to Mr Dunbar

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

In the 'Letters to the Editor' section of the Sunday Territorian dated 23 April 1989 you stated that Mr B. Dunbar 'has received more than \$500 000 of BTEC funds to assist him in fulfilling the scope of his agreed program, as well as \$130 000 in low-interest BTEC loans'.

What were the -

- (a) various purposes under which these amounts were provided;
- (b) exact amounts involved;
- (c) works required from Mr Dunbar in respect of each of (a) and (b) above;
- (d) full details of the extent of the works carried out in respect of each of the above by Mr Dunbar as at 23 April 1989; and
- (e) details of outstanding works or moneys on behalf of Mr Dunbar or the Northern Territory government.

17 May 1988

62. **Hungerford Refrigeration Pty Ltd**

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

1. Did the Territory Insurance Office pay outstanding tax bills incurred by Hungerford Refrigeration or Rupert Hungerford; if so -
 - (a) were the payments for company tax;
 - (b) group tax; or
 - (c) an individual's income tax.
2. Is the TIO's investment in Hungerford Refrigeration secured; if so -
 - (a) in what ways is it secured; and
 - (b) what assets is it secured against.
3. Who first identified Hungerford Refrigeration as a prospect for investment in the Northern Territory.
4. Who made the first approach to Hungerford Refrigeration for it to transfer operations to the Trade Development Zone.
5. Why did the directors of Hungerford refuse to provide directors' guarantees to meet any debts incurred by the company.
6. What were the full terms agreed for the transfer of Hungerford Refrigeration to the Trade Development Zone.
7. What departmental evaluations were made of the Hungerford Refrigeration company; its prospects, its projects and its products.
8. What departmental evaluations were made of the reports prepared for the TIO and the TDZ on the prospects of Hungerford Refrigeration.
9. What is the full extent of public funding (including TIO involvement) in Hungerford Refrigeration.
10. Was a directive issued by the Hungerford Refrigeration Board for the company to pursue local orders rather than export orders; if so, why was this done.

ANSWER

1. Some time after Hungerford Refrigeration commenced operations at the TDZ, the newly-appointed accountant found that for a significant period prior to TIO's investment, the previous management had not paid certain tax liabilities of the company. These included group tax, payroll tax and sales tax. The existence of these liabilities was not revealed in the credit or accounting checks done on the company in the months before the TIO's involvement, nor did Rupert Hungerford disclose their existence.

In an endeavour to protect the company against the existence of undisclosed liabilities, the TIO followed normal commercial practice and obtained indemnities from Rupert Hungerford and George Stack (the previous management).

Hungerford Refrigeration was obliged to meet these liabilities when they became known. They were not paid by the TIO, nor has any such payment been made of any tax liability Rupert Hungerford may have had.

2. The TIO had security for \$627 500 in loans by way of a mortgage debenture charge over the assets of the company. A further loan of \$500 000 was provided by way of convertible notes and was unsecured at the time the company was placed in receivership.
3. Hungerford Refrigeration was first identified as a prospect for investment in the Northern Territory by an officer of Nortrade.
4. The first approach to Hungerford Refrigeration for it to transfer its operations to the Trade Development Zone was made by the above officer.
5. With regard to the TIO-appointed directors of the company, they were nominees of the TIO acting in that capacity in the course of their employment. It would be unreasonable to expect individuals, acting as nominees for the shareholder, to give personal guarantees. The TIO, as such, did not give such guarantees because it would have been ultra vires the TIO Act for it to give guarantees which were not in the nature of insurance.
6. Under the agreement with the Trade Development Zone Authority, Hungerford Refrigeration was given a rent-free period and offered financial assistance to a total value of \$150 000; \$130 000 of which was taken up by the company.
7. The Trade Development Zone Authority was provided with a detailed business plan by Hungerford Refrigeration. This included a marketing plan prepared in conjunction with Nortrade based on a survey of the South-east Asian and Pacific markets and a profile and financial strategy prepared independently by a major accounting company. The authority carried out an analysis of the company's financial projections and inspected the company's facilities and products.

In so far as the TIO was concerned, and because a considerable amount of work had already been done on the company and its prospects (which was made available to the TIO when it became involved in February 1987) it was only considered necessary for the TIO to arrange for a further accountant's report on the company and a technical report on its products and processes. Copies of these reports were also provided to the Trade Development Zone Authority.

8. As per response to question 7.
9. Trade Development Zone funding of Hungerford Refrigeration has been outlined in question 6 above.

The TIO invested \$301 206 by way of equity, \$627 500 as a secured loan and \$500 000 in the form of an unsecured loan. The TIO's investable funds were the source of the equity and loans to the company. These funds are derived through premium income, as well as capital gains and interest earnings on investments, and therefore do not constitute public funding or taxpayers' moneys.

10. An initial series of three (3) marketing trips to South-east Asia and Papua New Guinea was conducted by Mr Hungerford soon after the company moved to Darwin. Despite initial advice, these trips were unsuccessful and no sales were obtained, and because the company was then being exposed to outside financial pressures, it was necessary to take urgent action to get sales throughout Australia in order to support the company. This was to be a temporary measure and it was always the intention that when the financial pressures on the company eased, the overseas effort would be renewed. However, in spite of his confident predictions, Mr Hungerford was also unsuccessful in getting sufficient sales within Australia to support the company.

16 August 1988

64. Tenth Anniversary of Self-Government

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

Can the Chief Minister provide an itemised account of the expenditure on the celebrations for the tenth anniversary of self-government.

ANSWER

See tables on following 7 pages.

10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE

DATE	V/R	PAYEE	DETAILS	\$
1.6.88	7899	Neilson McCarthy Hare - Consult. Fees	Self Govt - Consultancy Fees/Expenses	10 000.00
1.6.88	7900	Neilson McCarthy Hare - Consult. Fees	Production of 2 colour brochures	7 108.79
8.6.88	8089	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Advertising - 10 Years Self Govt - 31/5	528.90
8.6.88	8090	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Advertising - 10 Years Self Govt - 30,31/5	3 874.30
8.6.88	8094	Mr R. Steele	Mr R. Steele - T/A - Self Govt dinner	475.00
16.6.88	8274	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Production/Supervision of Logos	15 993.63
16.6.88	8275	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Self Govt Advert. - Bougainvillea Festival	1 254.89
16.6.88	8276	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Creative & Production costs - TV commercials	43 860.00
16.6.88	8277	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Avenue of Trees - Self Govt	15 000.00
17.6.88	8303	Flag Raising - Nhulunbuy	Self Govt Flag Raising Ceremony	1 684.00
20.6.88	8440	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Bougainvillea Festival - Self Govt Float	5 000.00
24.6.88	8602	Flag Raising - Katherine	Self Govt Flag Raising Ceremony	2 000.00
24.6.88	8603	Flag Raising - Palmerston	Self Govt Flag Raising Ceremony	1 200.00
24.6.88	8604	Flag Raising - Jabiru	Self Govt Flag Raising Ceremony	1 000.00
24.6.88	8605	Flag Raising - Tennant Creek	Self Govt Flag Raising Ceremony	1 488.00
24.6.88	8606	Flag Raising - Yulara	Self Govt Flag Raising Ceremony	600.00
27.6.88	8629	Douglas - key rings	Self Govt - key rings - Protocol	3 728.20
SUB TOTAL 1987/88:				114 795.71

10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE

DATE	V/R	PAYEE	DETAILS	\$
14.7.88	169	Top End Sounds	Hire of backdrop - Modelling Academy Segment	594.00
14.7.88	170	Top End Sounds	Hire of P.A., lighting & Stage Management	4 500.00
14.7.88	187	Chateau Hornsby Wines	Red wine & port - Self Govt Dinner	780.00
14.7.88	193	City Florist	Floral Arrangements - Self Govt Dinner	1 050.00
14.7.88	259	Darwin Party Services	Hire of 170 chairs - Self Govt Dinner	232.06
19.7.88	404	The Hotel Darwin	Protocol Reception for Darwin City Brass Band	688.00
19.7.88	410	Katherine Times	Advertisement - 10 Year Celebrations	160.00
19.7.88	429	Balloon Inflation N.T.	Balloon drop at Beaufort Hotel	533.00
19.7.88	430	Balloon Inflation N.T.	Balloons/streamers	66.60
21.7.88	222	Darwin Youth Orchestra	Beaufort Hotel Performance	400.00
21.7.88	245	Darwin Modelling Academy	Production at 10 Year Celebrations	5 100.00
26.7.88	184	Wellmech Drafting	Names on invitations - Self Govt Dinner	75.00
26.7.88	185	Wellmech Drafting	Names on place cards - Self Govt Dinner	77.50
26.7.88	312	Bloodwood	Entertainment & Sound Equipment for Dinner	700.00
26.7.88	313	Mr Shade	Shade Canopy - Hire & Install for Dinner	120.00
26.7.88	409	Beaufort Darwin Centre	Banquet 270 persons at Beaufort Hotel	18 748.20
26.7.88	517	N.T. Government Tourist Commission	Airfare - R. Steele - Bne/Drw/Bne 28/6 - 4/7	820.00
SUB TOTAL 1.7.88 to 31.7.88:				34 644.36

10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE

DATE	V/R	PAYEE	DETAILS	\$
2.8.88	684	Australian Airlines	Agean Band Fares	841.00
2.8.88	684	Australian Airlines	Agean Band Fares	820.00
2.8.88	684	Australian Airlines	Agean Band Fares	820.00
2.8.88	684	Australian Airlines	Agean Band Fares	102.00
4.8.88	879	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Advertising, Consultancy Fees, Expenses	168 307.62
4.8.88	907	Hanna Match	Boxed matches including artwork	1 622.00
5.8.88	871	Ironstone Lagoon Nursery	Hire of plants - Darwin Oval	150.00
9.8.88	581	Mr Shane Hewitt	M.C. at Celebration Dinner	350.00
9.8.88	702	Long Tan Club	Long Tan Club Reception	129.00
17.8.88	804	Winner Poster Comp. - Dripstone High	10 Year Celebration - School Competition	250.00
17.8.88	805	Winner Poster Comp. - Parap Primary	10 Year Celebration - School Competition	250.00
17.8.88	806	Winner Poster Comp. - Gray Primary	10 Year Celebration - School Competition	250.00
17.8.88	807	Winner Poster Comp. - C.S.C.	10 Year Celebration - School Competition	250.00
17.8.88	808	Winner Poster Comp. - Ludmilla Primary	10 Year Celebration - School Competition	250.00
17.8.88	809	Winner Poster Comp. - Kath Sth Primary	10 Year Celebration - School Competition	250.00
17.8.88	810	Winner Poster Comp. - Marrara School	10 Year Celebration - School Competition	250.00
24.8.88	880	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Advertisement 30/6/88	525.56
24.8.88	1187	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Self Government - Public Relations	10 750.00
26.8.88	758	Australian Airlines	Mr Leo, Mr & Mrs Isaacs - Self Govt Dinner	1 812.00
29.8.88	821	Ansett Airlines of Australia	Agean Band Fares	820.00
29.8.88	1215	Mr Barney Foran	Entertainment Services - Sheraton A/Springs	200.00
29.8.88	1454	Queensland Government Travel Centre	Self Govt Competition - visit to Expo	728.00
29.8.88	1576	Darwin Party Services	Hire tressles/chairs - Judging Students Comp.	148.60
SUB TOTAL 1.8.88 to 31.8.88:				189 875.78

10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE

DATE	V/R	PAYEE	DETAILS	\$
6.9.88	1525	Sheraton Alice Springs	Self Government hospitality	28.20
6.9.88	1526	Sheraton Alice Springs	Self Government Banquet	11 406.00
6.9.88	1532	Tailormade Tours	Self Government Tour	120.00
8.9.88	1188	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Self Govt Promotion & Celebration preparations	50 920.29
9.9.88	1601	Mr D.R. Dempsey	Reimbursement of Petty Cash	533.53
9.9.88	1825	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Advertisements 22/6 - 29/6	200.17
26.9.88	2328	Contingency Fund	Costs of escorting winners of comp. to Expo	2 500.00
SUB TOTAL 1.9.88 to 30.9.88:				<u>65 708.19</u>

10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE

DATE	V/R	PAYEE	DETAILS	\$
20.10.88	3077	Australian Airlines	Winner of 'Be Creative' Self Govt Comp.	448.00
20.10.88	3077	Australian Airlines	Winner of 'Be Creative' Self Govt Comp.	434.00
20.10.88	3077	Australian Airlines	Winner of 'Be Creative' Self Govt Comp.	434.00
20.10.88	3077	Australian Airlines	Winner of 'Be Creative' Self Govt Comp.	434.00
20.10.88	3080	Australian Airlines	Winner of 'Be Creative' Self Govt Comp.	434.00
20.10.88	3080	Australian Airlines	Winner of 'Be Creative' Self Govt Comp.	702.00
20.10.88	3080	Australian Airlines	Escorting winners of 'Be Creative' Comp.	434.00
20.10.88	3080	Australian Airlines	Escorting winners of 'Be Creative' Comp.	434.00
20.10.88	3080	Australian Airlines	Winner of 'Be Creative' Self Govt Comp.	434.00
28.10.88	2936	Tuminello Pty Ltd	Self Govt Morning Tea for 30 persons	150.00
28.10.88	3243	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Advertising - 10 Years Self Govt - 1/7/88	134.38
SUB TOTAL 1.10.88 to 31.10.88:				4 472.38

10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE

DATE	V/R	PAYEE	DETAILS	\$
10.11.88	821	Ansett Airlines of Australia	Agean Band Fares	820.00
10.11.88	821	Ansett Airlines of Australia	Agean Band Fares	820.00
SUB TOTAL 1.11.88 to 30.11.88:				1 640.00

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE

DATE	V/R	PAYEE	DETAILS	\$
22.12.88	1469	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Advertising, Consultancy Expenses	1 722.15
22.12.88	4950	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Coordinate Hanging of Flag, Soundtrack and Banners in Beaufort Hotel Ballroom	132.22.
22.12.88	4951	Mattingly Woollard Cawrse	Schools Competition - Production	1 332.20
SUB TOTAL 1.12.88 to 31.12.88:				3 186.57
TOTAL 10 YEAR SELF GOVERNMENT CELEBRATIONS EXPENDITURE (1.6.88 to 31.1.89):				414 322.99

4 October 1988

67. Treatment of Ear Infections in Schools

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What are the number and percentages of school-age children, by rural school in the Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine areas, that have -
 - (a) glue ear;
 - (b) perforated ear drums; and
 - (c) educationally significant hearing impairment.
2. How many of the schools mentioned in question 1 above have Health Workers involved in full time campaigns at the school to treat the conditions.

ANSWER

1. The information requested does not exist in any accurate form. Results of hearing screening programs carried out by the Department of Health and Community Services in the past have been collated by the National Acoustic Laboratories (NAL), which is a Commonwealth body. In the future these results will be collated by an Audiologist within the NT Department of Health and Community Services.

A summary of NAL's hearing screening results for the relevant educational regions for the years 1986 and 1987 is attached.

The figures (insofar as they provide sufficiently accurate information) indicate the following referrals as percentages of enrolments:

<u>Region</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>
Darwin	2.7	2.6
Katherine	3.6	4.2
East Arnhem	3.2	2.4
Alice Springs	6.6	6.0

2. All Aboriginal Health Workers, nursing sisters and medical officers employed by the Department of Health and Community Services deal with ear problems and promote ear health on a daily basis in the treatment of Aboriginal patients.

As a joint commitment by the Ministers of Education and Health and Community Services an Aboriginal Hearing Program has been established and a jointly-funded Coordinator appointed.

Under this program grants have been made to a number of communities for the employment of part-time Aboriginal Health Workers who will work specifically on ear health programs.

REFERRALS TO THE NATIONAL ACOUSTIC LABORATORIES

Aboriginal School Children with Chronic Otitis Media
and Hearing Losses Greater than 25 Decibels in Both Ears.

Tested by Regional Nurse Audiometrists,
NT Department of Health and Community Services

REGION	1987		1986	
	SCHOOL	CHILDREN REFERRED TO NAL	SCHOOL	CHILDREN REFERRED TO NAL
Darwin	Peppimenarti	5	Peppimenarti	5
	Daly River	2	Daly River	1
	Maningrida	5	Maningrida	3
	Pularumpi	6	Pularumpi	6
	Oenpelli	1	Oenpelli	5
	Goulburn Is	1	Belyuen	2
	Port Keats	11		
	Palumpa	1	Total:	22
	Batchelor	2		
	Total:	34		
Katherine	Ngukurr	10	Ngukurr	5
	Kalkaringi	9	Kalkaringi	7
	Lajamanu	18	Yarralin	4
	Clyde Fenton, (Katherine)	4	Timber Creek	1
			Bulman	4
			Barunga	4
	Total:	41	Beswick	11
			Mataranka	2
			Duck Creek	2
			Urapunga	3
		Total:	43	
East Arnhem	Ramingining	5	Ramingining	2
	Angurugu	9	Angurugu	5
	Umbakumba	7	Umbakumba	3
	Elcho Island	7	Elcho Island	17
	Numbulwar	3	Milingimbi	9
	Lake Evella	2		
	Yirrkala	1	Total:	36
	Total:	34		

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

REGION	1987		1986	
	SCHOOL	CHILDREN REFERRED TO NAL	SCHOOL	CHILDREN REFERRED TO NAL
Alice Springs	Yuendumu	20	Yuendumu	5
	Santa Teresa	8	Santa Teresa	7
	Hermannsburg	8	Hermannsburg	7
	Maryvale	1	Maryvale	7
	Willowra	1	Willowra	4
	Amoonguna	3	Amoonguna	4
	Stirling	1	Stirling	2
	Ti Tree	5	Ti Tree	7
	Napperby	4	Napperby	2
	Finke	2	Jay Creek	1
	Neutral Junction	5	Finke	2
	Yipirinya, (Alice Springs)	3	Docker River	2
			Haasts Bluff	2
			Papunya	7
			Uluru/Yulara	2
			Mt Ebenezer	12
		Nyirripi	7	
		Mt Allan	4	
		Lake Nash	3	
		Kintore	14	
	Total:	<u>61</u>	Total:	<u>101</u>

TOTAL REFERRALS TO NAL, OVER NORTHERN TERRITORY: 170 Aboriginal Children with Bilateral Hearing Losses, from 32 Schools

202 Aboriginal Children with Bilateral Hearing Losses, from 41 Schools

14 February 1989

71. Excisions by Department of Transport and Works

Mr EDE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

How much money did your department spend on new excisions in the financial years 1986-87 and 1987-88 and how much money has been allocated for excisions for the 1988-89 financial year.

ANSWER

My department has only had carriage of works providing access to pastoral leases from late 1987. In the 1986-87 financial year the work was the responsibility of the Department of Community Development through the Office of Local Government.

During the subsequent period, my department had the following programs -

1987-88	Capital Works Program	\$ 99 000
1988-89	Capital Works Program	\$140 000
1988-89	Design List A	\$550 000

72. Water Exploration and Reticulation on New Excisions

Mr EDE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. How much money did the Power and Water Authority spend in the financial years 1986-87 and 1987-88 on -
 - (a) water exploration; and
 - (b) reticulation on new excisions.
2. How much money has been allocated for expenditure in the 1988-89 financial year on -
 - (a) water exploration; and
 - (b) reticulation on new excisions.
3. When will water exploration commence on the following excision areas: Aileron, Coniston, Pine Hill, Mount Cavenagh, Central Mount Wedge, Newhaven, Kirkimbie and Limbunya.
4. Why did it take 2 years for water exploration to be carried out for the Karrynjarra Community on Central Mount Wedge Station after the community had been advised by the Department of Lands and Housing in July 1986 that drilling would occur.

ANSWER

1. (a) 1986-87 PAWA was not in existence, however the Water Resources Division of the Department of Mines and Energy carried out investigation drilling and bore construction to the value of approximately \$200 000.

1987-88 expenditure \$104 120.

- (b) 1986-87 PAWA was not in existence.

1987-88 expenditure \$127 276.

2. (a) Program allocation \$360 000.

- (b) Nil.

3. Aileron

A successful bore has been constructed with a potable supply estimated at 3 L/s from initial air lifting tests.

- (b) Coniston

Alternative sites have been recommended for negotiation.

- (c) Pine Hill

Alternative sites have been recommended for negotiation.

- (d) Mount Cavenagh

Unsuccessful drilling was carried out in October 1988 intercepting only seepage water high in both nitrates and Total Dissolved Solids. An alternative area has been recommended for negotiation.

- (e) Central Mount Wedge

Unsuccessful drilling was carried out in October 1988 on both the proposed excision areas. Alternative sites have been recommended for negotiation.

- (f) Newhaven

Unsuccessful drilling was carried out in October 1988 intercepting only saline supplies. Alternative sites have been recommended, however, the likelihood of obtaining a potable supply at other than the area adjacent to the homestead is very low.

- (g) Kirkimbie

Drilling has been programmed for July-August 1989.

- (h) Limbunya

Drilling has been programmed for July-August 1989.

4. The proposed 2 areas for excision were advised to the Power and Water Authority (PAWA) on 28 October 1987. Funding for bore drilling was programmed on the 1987-88 Capital Works Program. Due to delays in resolution of the responsibility for funding investigative drilling between the Territory and federal governments and the availability of the private contractor's drilling rig, drilling was not carried out until early October 1988. This resulted in a delay of 12 months from the time PAWA was advised of the agreement on the proposed excision sites until the unsuccessful drilling was carried out.

16 May 1989

74. Cigarette Advertising on Government Buses

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. When does the current contract for advertising on Darwin buses run out.
2. Will the government undertake a review of its policy of advertising cigarettes on buses before that time.

ANSWER

1. 30 June 1990 although provision exists for an optional extension period of a further 12 months.
2. Yes.

75. Katherine Government Centre

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LABOUR, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES and LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In relation to the Katherine Government Centre -

- (a) what is the annual rental;
- (b) what was the previous annual rental of office accommodation for those public servants now accommodated in the Government Centre;
- (c) what has happened to those government buildings previously occupied by public servants now in the Government Centre; and
- (d) what was the cost of renovations and extensions to those buildings referred to in (c).

ANSWER

- (a) \$700 128 excluding fit-out costs.
- (b) \$83 640.

(c) The NT government owned buildings vacated by departments on relocation to the centre are being used as follows:

- Health Centre; St John Ambulance will continue to occupy these premises. Various community and government health support agencies will occupy the remainder of the building under the administration of the Department of Health and Community Services.
- Area Office (ex Transport and Works) - Giles Street.

The NT Conservation Commission is occupying portion of these premises on relocation from leased premises, thus achieving a rental saving of some \$45 000 per annum; additional space in the building may be required by the Conservation Commission shortly pending approvals for new initiatives.

It is intended that an existing stand alone building on the site be used as a sobering-up shelter, for which town planning approval has been obtained.

- Hospital (demountable); this facility is in the process of being recommissioned to accommodate Health and Community Services staff development unit and the hospital library.
- Giles/First Street premises.

The former Welfare Office building is vacant pending the development of a new courts complex on the existing law courts site. It is intended that this building will be used as an interim court house in the medium term.

A proposal for the long term use of this site is to establish a public park.

The demountable previously used by the Office of Local Government has been removed to Kalkaringi for use by the Daguragu Community Local Government.

(d) The cost of renovations and extensions to government-owned buildings referred to in (c) is rightly a matter for the Transport and Works portfolio but the Department of Transport and Works has advised that some \$361 784 has been expended on such works since 1984-85. However, of this amount, only \$45 680 has been spent since 1985-86, limited to essential building items only.

79.

Rural Dental Health Unit

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Which central Australian communities were visited by the Rural Dental Health Unit from 1 January 1988 till 31 December 1988.

ANSWER

RURAL DENTAL SERVICES 1988
COMMUNITY VISITS/DATE, LENGTH

Alcoota	-	March 1 day
Ali Curung	-	March 2 days, July 5 days
Ammaroo	-	March 2 days
Amoonguna	-	September 5 days
Docker River	-	April 3 days
Desert Bore	-	September 1 day
Elliott	-	February 2 days, July 5 days
Finke	-	May 4 days, July 5 days
Haasts Bluff	-	February 2 days, October 2 days
Harts Pange	-	February 2 days
Hermannsburg	-	March 3 days
Jay Creek	-	July 2 days
Kintore	-	March 5 days
Maryvale	-	March 2 days
Mbunghara	-	September 1 day
McClaren Creek	-	September 1 day
Mt Allen	-	September 3 days
Mt Barkly	-	September 1 day
Mt Liebig	-	October 2 days
Napperby	-	March 3 days
Neutral Junction	-	May 3 days
Ngkarlalanima	-	September 3 days
Nyirripi	-	September 2 days
Papunya	-	April 2 days
Rockhampton Downs	-	September 2 days
Santa Teresa	-	February 4 days, April 2 days, August 5 days
Stirling	-	May 2 days
South Barkly	-	October 12 days
Ti Tree	-	February 4 days, September 4 days
Utopia	-	March 2 days, April 5 days
Willowra	-	April 2 days, August 4 days
Yirara	-	February 3 days, April 10 days
Yuendumu	-	July 7 days, August 8 days, September 3 days, October 8 days

81. Myxomatosis

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

1. What is the general level of myxomatosis resistance in the Northern Territory.
2. Is it still economic to spread myxomatosis. If no, what other methods are being utilised to stop the spread of rabbits in the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

1. There is a moderate level of resistance to the original strain of myxomatosis in Northern Territory rabbits. Resistance to the Lausanne strain is minimal. Recent rains have resulted in active spread of myxomatosis by mosquitoes in the Northern Territory.
2. Yes. The principal additional method of control is deep ripping of rabbit warrens by landholders using crawler trailers. The Conservation Commission uses fumigation as an additional method on its holdings. Fumigation requires training for safe utilisation.

Vertebrate pests are the responsibility of the Conservation Commission and as such this matter may have been better referred to the Minister for Conservation.

84. Welfare Home at Alice Springs

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

With respect to extensions to the property at 29 Forrest Crescent, Alice Springs -

1. What type and number of additional rooms were added in the extensions.
2. Who was the principal contractor.
3. What was the cost of the work.
4. For what purpose will the property be used in the immediate future.

ANSWER

1. Extensions were made to enable staff employed at the facility some privacy when rostered on sleepovers. The extensions consisted of 2 bedrooms, ensuite and lounge.
2. The principal contractor was Kermit the Carpenter, 7 Hele Crescent, Alice Springs.
3. The cost of the work was \$74 128.05.

4. Forrest Crescent will be devolved to St Mary's Child and Family Welfare Service in the immediate future. St Mary's will be operating Forrest Crescent as a residential facility for adolescent children with behavioural/emotional difficulties.

85. Contraception

Mr COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

1. What is the law regarding the supply of contraceptive pills to girls under the age of consent.
2. What legal rights do parents have, if any, to be consulted by a doctor before he provides contraception to girls under the age of consent.

ANSWER

1. There is no Northern Territory statutory regulation of the supply of contraceptive pills to girls under the age of consent. I am also not aware of any decision of a Territory court on the issue. The honourable member is however referred to the English decision in Gillick v The West Norfolk and Wisbech Area Health Authority and the Department of Health and Social Security (1986) AC 112. The honourable member is otherwise reminded of standing order 112 of the Legislative Assembly. Any further comment would involve me giving a legal opinion.
2. There is no Northern Territory statutory pronouncement upon the legal rights of parents in this situation. The honourable member is again referred to the decision in the Gillick case. To comment otherwise would be to provide a legal opinion.

BTEC

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

I preface my question by noting the Chief Minister's refusal so far to appoint a judicial inquiry into BTEC in the Northern Territory. Given the mounting public concern right around Australia, given that he has now had 4 weeks to review police investigations and Crown Law opinions, and given that he has had possession of the relevant departmental files to which he has denied me access, has he reconsidered his position and will he now take the obvious course of setting up a judicial inquiry to carry out a full investigation into the operation of BTEC in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the decision that I took when this matter was first raised by the honourable member stands. There are no grounds for an inquiry. During the course of this sitting day, I propose to make a ministerial statement on the subject which I am sure will clarify all the relevant matters for the honourable member.

Stuart Auto Museum

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is the minister aware of speculation surrounding the future of the Stuart Auto Museum in Alice Springs and, if so, can he inform the Assembly what steps the government has taken to ensure this important collection of historic automobiles and other objects remains on public display in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. The government is aware of questions surrounding the future ownership and operation of the Stuart Auto Museum in Alice Springs and we are certainly concerned about them. In addition to containing various items of the Territory's pioneering history, the museum is the Territory's only motoring museum. As well as being an important historical record, the museum is also recognised as an important part of the Alice Springs tourist industry. For these reasons, I am very pleased to be able to inform honourable members that the Territory government has successfully negotiated an agreement to buy the museum complex for \$1.2m. The museum complex is comprised of the museum, which includes 18 motor vehicles and memorabilia associated with transport and communications, a souvenir shop, a bistro, a restaurant bar, a caravan park and a 3-bedroom residence. There is also ample vehicle and coach parking facilities.

In future, the complex will operate under the auspices of the Museums and Art Galleries Board. I believe that it will represent a significant commitment by the Territory government to the Alice Springs tourist industry. This action will also ensure that an important record of our pioneering history is preserved in its entirety. I should also point out that it is intended that the existing displays be expanded by the incorporation of appropriate displays of transport, communications and technology, including the magic spark collection which is already held by the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences.

It is also intended, at this stage, to lease the restaurant and caravan park to private operators. As a result of the decision by the government, the Museums and Art Galleries Board will have to increase its staffing in the southern region by 3 positions: a technical officer to maintain the collections and provide display maintenance for all museums within the southern region and 2 attendants to maintain adequate security and operate the souvenir shop at the Stuart Auto Museum.

I should point out also that it has been public knowledge that the Tangentyere Council was looking at the possibility of purchasing the establishment for the location of a club. The government is certainly in favour of the establishment of a social club for Aboriginal people in the Alice Springs area. I have directed my department to ensure that it does everything it can to locate or identify a suitable site or area for the establishment of such a club. There has been some land identified in the past which has proved to be unsuitable. However, I can assure honourable members that the government will be continuing to do its very best to endeavour to find a suitable location for such premises.

BTEC

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, I remind the Attorney-General that his government has stated that certain prosecutions relating to BTEC, prosecutions recommended by the Commissioner of Police, did not go ahead on Crown Law advice. Is the minister aware that both the Commissioner of Police and the head of his department advised me, at my first briefing, that the relevant Crown Law advice could not be found? Is he further aware that, during the following week, the commissioner advised my secretary that there was still no sign of that advice? Is he aware that I was informed at my second briefing, last Friday, and again this morning by the Chief Minister's press secretary, Peter Murphy, that attempts to locate the advice had come to nothing? I ask the Attorney-General when it was lost. How did it come to be lost from both police and Crown Law files and by whom was it lost?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have never heard a more ridiculous question. When was it lost? I can assure the honourable member that it cannot be located. In terms of the assertions of the member for Stuart, which are ridiculous in the extreme, I would like to advise honourable members that Hon John Kerin asked the same questions of the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister has given a written reply to the honourable minister and I will quote from that letter: 'Upon consideration of the matter by the Senior Crown Prosecutor and the then Crown Counsel, in consultation with senior police officers, it was concluded that no prosecution should proceed'.

Mr Smith: Where is the written evidence?

Mr MANZIE: 'The decision, which followed from detailed consideration of the evidence, took into account the following: (1) although prima facie evidence existed, there was very little chance of a successful prosecution; (2) there was almost a complete lack of corroboration of Crown witness testimony and the case pivoted upon the credibility of such witnesses; and ...'

Mr Smith: Good news of a judicial inquiry.

Mr MANZIE: '... (3) none of the 5 complainant pastoralists considered they had suffered any loss and did not wish to pursue the matter'.

Mr Ede: BTEC suffered the loss.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, we have had a few crazy interjections by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Smith: That is right.

Mr MANZIE: How do we know? I have been advised by the people concerned, and I can assure you ...

Mr Smith: Right. Why don't you get them to advise you where the opinion is?

Mr MANZIE: Any inference or insinuation by you that somehow or other those professional people behaved in an unprofessional manner ...

Mr Smith: Where is the opinions?

Mr MANZIE: ... will not be tolerated by me and I think it will not be tolerated by the professional people in the department or any other professional person. The insinuation you are making is that, somehow or other, the advice that has been given to me is incorrect. I refute that and I stand by the advice that has been provided to John Kerin, by the Chief Minister ...

Mr Smith: I bet you cannot find it.

Mr MANZIE: ... and by my department. Regardless of whether the file can be located, the personnel involved are still present and the advice remains the same. Mr Speaker, I am quite happy to table the letter that was written by the Chief Minister to John Kerin, which actually contains details of my answer.

The member for Stuart can make any accusation he likes, which he does all the time, but he must be very careful that he does not cast aspersions on professional staff of the Department of Law. I certainly will not sit here and let him do that.

Sanderson High School Newsletter

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The government has introduced a new assessment package for students in Year 10. This was criticised recently in the latest newsletter issued by the Sanderson High School Council. Has the minister seen the school council newsletter and what is his reaction to it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I am aware of a scurrilous document which is being circulated at present. I make it quite clear at the outset of my answer that the government will not reopen the debate as to whether or not we will continue with our external assessment package.

We have gone through a very lengthy process. I do not need to remind honourable members and members of the public that we have gone through a lengthy process of developing that particular direction. The process started in June 1987. The decision has been taken, based on the recommendations put forward by the Board of Studies, which carried out extensive surveys in relation to this issue, that we will have a 70% component which is school-assessed and externally-moderated, and a 30% component of external common instruments of assessment or, to dispense with the jargon, examinations. That has been decided by the government and that is the direction in which we are moving.

It is disappointing to note that Sanderson has taken this particular attitude. Originally, I had thought that the council was interested and sincere in its efforts to obtain information about certain aspects of the assessment package that was being proposed, particularly in relation to the vertical timetabling program which it has set up at the school. In fact, I asked the Chairman of the Board of Studies to attend a meeting with the council to talk about the issues and to address those particular problems.

As far as the effects of the package proposed by the government on the vertical timetable is concerned, the department is talking with the Principal of Sanderson High School to try to resolve some of the concerns. After reading this particular document, of which I have a copy, as I am sure other honourable members have, I am most concerned. It appears to be part of a campaign to try to have the government reverse its decision in relation to the assessment package that we are putting in place. I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that that will not happen. What is being promoted here is a scare campaign to try to have parents and students believe that, if we go through this process, students are going to be disadvantaged in some way. That is a load of nonsense and parents should not be frightened into believing it.

The document to which the honourable member refers is entitled 'Exams: The Threat to the Sanderson High School Program'. On the bottom of the front page are the words: 'An important message to all parents from the Sanderson High School Council'. When one starts reading the document itself, a major concern is its use of scare tactics. It starts off by saying: 'Members of your school council are parents too. We sat for external exams when we were children'. It then says, and this is underlined: 'We are opposed to external exams for Year 10 students because we know about their impact on the Sanderson High School program'. If one reads further, one sees that it really is nonsense. Without even waiting to be informed about it, the council has asked a whole series of questions. These questions are going to be addressed. There are answers to all of those questions. Indeed, the member for Stuart has written ...

Mr Ede: Gunna.

Mr HARRIS: It is not 'gunna'. During the course of these sittings, answers will be given.

The circular contains the words: 'We will lose'. This statement has been made by the council, a group of responsible men and women, including teachers. Under the words, 'We will lose', the circular refers to 'our program of developing self-esteem, success and excellence'. Goodness me, Mr Speaker! There will not be any reduction in the school's ability to proceed to develop programs along those lines. The circular also refers to losing the flexibility of individual programs at all levels in all subjects. The Year 10 examinations will not affect to any great extent the flexibility of

individual programs that are on offer at the Sanderson High School. In respect of the flexibility to extend very capable students and to assist low achievers, I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that there will be no impact in that particular area. The school council is saying that the result will be one goal at one point in time for all students irrespective of their ability. Honourable members who took part in the debate will realise that that is not the case at all. In respect of mathematics, 3 levels will be tested.

The circular talks about a concept of mass-produced factory product rather than the individual student's achievement. Again that is a nonsense. Every teacher is aware of individual differences in relation to students. That will continue to be the case. It will always be the case and has always been the case. There are differences and teachers are very much aware of that.

The circular also refers to a pass/fail mentality. Again, we have not mentioned that aspect at all. A grading system is being introduced. It contains a range of gradings from A to E. There is an assessment package at 70% and a 30% examination component which will be graded.

There is also a reference to student disillusionment and possible discipline problems. Goodness me, that is fantasy! Testing of one sort or another is carried out now. It has been carried out for many years and, if students are not being informed as to whether they are achieving, I would be most concerned and I am sure parents would be most concerned. Testing has been happening and there is no doubt about that.

I have made it very clear that the government is introducing the package. It went through a consultation process over a number of years and that process has involved every sector of the community. A number of questions have been asked in relation to the implementation and an issues statement was made by the council. I will be answering those questions in adjournment debates during these sittings and I hope that honourable members will listen. The government has a responsibility not only to strive continually to raise the standards of literacy and numeracy, but also to increase public confidence in results and qualifications. That needs to be made very clear. People are reading a lot of nonsense into this exercise. They are being stirred up by a number of people who have very strong views and who expressed their views during the course of the consultation process.

I will be quite happy to have the Chairman of the Board of Studies, Dr Harry Payne, speak with any member of this Assembly or to any groups in relation to the implementation. However, I make it quite clear that the government has taken a decision after a correct process of discussion with the community. I leave the Sanderson High School Council with this thought. The council should seriously consider whether a campaign against a properly arrived at decision might get out of hand and harm the school. We should be concerned about the students. The campaign could encourage divisiveness, inflame feelings, lead to disrespect for authority and set a poor example in terms of even-handedness. An excellent climate such as that created at Sanderson can be a fragile thing.

Upgrading of Stuart and Barkly Highways

Mr TUXWORTH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

My question refers to those sections of the Stuart Highway and the Barkly Highway to the north, south and east of Tennant Creek that have yet to be upgraded to the same standard as the rest of the highway. Are these sections

of Stuart Highway included in the bicentennial road program upgrading? If they are, has the Territory government been funded for the work? If the government has not been funded for the work, does it anticipate that funds will be made available to upgrade these areas of the highway? They are fast becoming a hazard because of their narrowness, the state of the road surface and the state of the edges of the road.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, for the information of honourable members, Australian bicentennial road funding no longer exists. It was terminated earlier this year with the introduction of a new program called the Australian Centenary Road Program. We have now gone back 100 years in road funding in this nation. When it introduced the bicentennial roads funding program in 1983-84, the federal government made the commitment that the national highway network would be completed by the Bicentenary. As the member for Barkly quite correctly points out, it is nowhere near completed. Statements made recently by the federal minister in regard to the highway program indicated that only a small section of some 60 km or 100 km remain to be completed. In fact, there is at least that distance on the Stuart and Barkly Highways, not to mention some 300 km on the Victoria Highway between Katherine and Kununurra, the link between the Northern Territory and Western Australia, which remain all but untouched.

The Barkly and the Stuart Highways are fast reaching completion. I forget the exact completion date but I believe that, within 3 more budget years, those 2 highways will be 100% complete. We have had to do a few things in respect of the standards. The honourable member would be aware that, in some of those sections on the shoulders of the Stuart Highway, where we have found it technically appropriate, as an interim measure, we have extended the narrow width by bitumen sealing the shoulders to bring the road up to a reasonable standard.

As for the commitments ahead, the highway program is obviously 100% the responsibility of the federal government, as it has itself declared. It sets the priorities, based normally on the recommendations of the host state. In the case of the Northern Territory, I have some fears following preliminary advice received recently in regard to programming for the forthcoming year, that there may be a shortfall of anything up to \$10m in terms of the amount requested by the Territory government as its fair share of Commonwealth road funding. I say 'as its fair share' because we have seen in this country a concentration of road expenditure into the heavily built-up eastern states. The federal government has turned its back on the progressive development of the more remote areas of Australia. That is quite contrary to its own policy and quite contrary to the interests of the nation.

I would call on members of the opposition to use whatever little influence they have with the federal government, for whatever little term it may remain in office, to get a fairer share of the fuel tax collection, some billions of dollars per annum, of which only some 20%-odd is returned to the road program. We talk about fuel prices in this country and the opposition makes great mileage about poor service stations which may have been charging up to 9¢ total operating margin on fuel per litre, as against southern margins of 5¢. That is an argument that the service stations would need to take up, but I say that is chickenfeed when we look at the 22¢ per litre that the Australian motorist has to pay ...

random circumstances of daily life. They are caused as a direct result of the veterans' service on behalf of Australia during wartime. I am pleased to be able to inform honourable members that the Territory government agrees with the association in this regard. As a result, Cabinet decided that, from 2 May, disability pensions received by war veterans would no longer be included in the calculation of their rents.

I would like to point out that the amount of money involved is not very great. I think it will only cost the commission about \$25 000 a year in rent forgone. Although the amounts are very small, I am sure that honourable members will all agree that they will mean a great deal to individual pensioners. I know that I speak for all my colleagues when I say that the Territory government is very happy to recognise, in this way, the sacrifices made by veterans in the service of our country.

BTEC

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I refer him to his answer to my previous questions in which he stated that all the major players in Crown Law are still present. Will he confirm that the only written advice was a handwritten note by a senior Crown Law officer, one Mr Tony Cavit, who in fact is no longer with us?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can confirm that all the major players except one are still with us.

Members interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: I find this juvenile.

Mr Smith: Well, why don't you apologise for misleading the House?

Mr MANZIE: I think the listening audience would also find the behaviour juvenile. It is pretty easy to understand. The major players in the Department of Law are still here. The advice given to me in the letter which I tabled stands. There is an inference that some handwritten advice is missing. If it is missing, we do not even know if it existed. Maybe the honourable member knows and maybe he has it. That would be interesting to find out.

Mr SMITH: So you have never had handwritten advice?

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I find it pretty hard to talk when there is a running commentary from the Leader of the Opposition. He does not like to hear anything which may interfere with his version of events. The members of the Department of Law who were present when this matter was assessed still work for the Department of Law. Their advice remains unchanged. I am sure that honourable members will hear more about this when the Chief Minister makes a statement later today.

Mr Coulter: What are you suggesting anyway?

Mr MANZIE: Exactly. There seems to be some suggestion that something has been done incorrectly. It is incumbent on the member for Stuart to stand up and say what he means instead of trying to imply that all is not well, that

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable minister was asked a fairly specific question about the progress of the highway redevelopment work in and around Tennant Creek. He is now getting into a philosophical dissertation on the question of excises. I cannot see that there is a connection.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order, but I ask the minister to relate his reply more closely to the question.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, my point is very simple: to build highways, a federal government responsibility, dollars are needed. The federal ALP government collects 22¢ per litre as fuel tax. Of that, it returns 6¢ per litre to the road user. The arithmetic is very simple. If the federal government increased payments on the road system, as it ought morally to do, from that lousy 6¢ per litre, we would be able to accelerate the program on the Stuart Highway and the Barkly Highway and eventually meet the federal government's 1983 commitment to complete the national highway system, not only in the Barkly region but throughout the Northern Territory. I again call on members opposite, who claim to have an interest in the Northern Territory and its development, to go to Canberra and talk some sense to the federal Minister for Transport and Communications and the federal Minister for Finance.

Housing Commission Rates for War Veterans

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Could he advise the House of the outcome of the request from the Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Soldiers Association that disability pensions received by war veterans not be treated as income for the purposes of fixing Housing Commission rates?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, all public housing authorities in Australia operate rental rebate schemes which are designed to reduce the rent payable by low-income earners to an acceptable level. The Northern Territory is no different from the rest of Australia in this regard, with the exception that our rental subsidy schemes are generally more generous than elsewhere.

In simple terms, the Territory's rental rebate scheme involves the use of a formula to calculate the rent payable from the tenant's gross weekly income. Some allowances which are paid for purposes other than to meet the general cost of living - such as family allowances, home nursing allowance and Legacy allowances - are excluded from the calculation of income. Some Veterans Affairs pensioners receive an amount in addition to their basic service pension for injuries or disabilities received during periods of service. This additional amount in the disability pension ranges from between \$8 to \$231 a week, depending on the severity of the disability. To date, the Housing Commission has not exempted that amount from its calculations of rent. Indeed, to our knowledge, only New South Wales and Tasmania do so.

The Territory President of the Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Soldiers Association recently asked the Territory government to review the situation regarding the assessment of income. The association argued that the disability pension is not paid to assist with the general cost of living but to compensate veterans for the disabilities they suffer and to enable them to live relatively normal lives. The association also points out that the disabilities suffered by veterans are not caused by individual choice or by

something shonky is going on or that something has been said which is untrue. If the honourable member wants to make such assertions, let him rise to his feet and make them. Let him put his mouth where his inferences are. Let him have the intestinal fortitude to say what he means instead of grubbing around trying to cast aspersions on people who are still employed by the government, on government members and, indeed, on all people involved in this matter. If he does not have the guts to get up and be specific, he should be quiet. If he has the guts, let him get on his feet and cast his aspersions. Mr Speaker, I can assure you that every one of them can be answered and will be answered in some detail, as will be seen later today.

Mr Speaker, the behaviour of the member of Stuart over the last few weeks has been most cowardly. He is aware of all the details in this matter. He has had full briefings. He had a barrister present who, I am sure, would have given him advice. Perhaps he will tell us, later in the day, exactly what that advice was. His behaviour has been mischievous and incorrect. The community should be aware of the way in which he behaves and of his past record. Mr Speaker, remember what he said over the last few weeks because, today, he will be forced to eat those words.

Northern Territory University

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Mr Speaker, several years ago, the Northern Territory government made a decision to locate the university at Palmerston. In the last few weeks, there have been some mumblings to the effect that the Northern Territory government has reconsidered that decision. Is the Minister of Education able to confirm that?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, all I can say to the honourable member is that the government has made a decision in relation to the siting of the Northern Territory University. That decision was taken by Cabinet at Jabiru on 9 May 1989. I will be indicating that decision to honourable members by way of a statement in the Assembly.

Flood Mitigation in Alice Springs

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is the minister in a position to report progress on the flood mitigation of the Todd River system?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am unable to do so at this time. I am expecting a further feasibility study to be on my desk within days. I have said many times during my discussions with custodians of sacred sites in areas that have been proposed for potential flood mitigation purposes that I would not make public the content of those discussions. I have held my own counsel on those issues for in excess of 12 months and I will continue to do so until a satisfactory resolution has been found. Immediately we come up with the solution to all the issues that have been raised, I will make that known to the House.

Manton Dam Public Recreation Facility

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Mr Speaker, there is considerable public interest in the conversion of Manton Dam into a public recreation facility. Is the minister able to advise the House when this facility will be opened to the public?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, certainly I am aware of the high level of public interest in the facility as well as the misconception that I intend to re-enact scenes from an old Tarzan film as part of the Manton Dam public opening ceremony. I must regretfully disassociate myself from any comparison with Johnny Weissmuller. I do not intend swimming the width of Manton Dam grappling barehanded with man-eating crocodiles despite the willingness of the media to put me to such a test. Indeed, there could be a whole range of other people who would be anxious to see me do that as well.

Mr Speaker, I understand that the Chief Minister, the member for Ludmilla and myself will be participating in water-skiing at the dam on the opening day. We will have to do a bit of practice to ensure that we are able to stay up for long enough. However, at no stage have I said that I would swim across the Manton Dam.

Mr Tipiloura: Why not?

Mr COULTER: I do not think that it would prove much except that I cannot swim across Manton Dam, Stanley. That is one of the reasons.

There are no salt-water crocodiles in Manton Dam, according to expert advice from the Conservation Commission, which has been monitoring crocodile activity in the dam for the past 2 years, and according to the crocodile farm, which has the contract to catch and transfer freshwater crocodiles. I am told that there are 2 very large freshwater crocodiles which are about 11 feet in length. These crocodiles have become very clever at disappearing from traps and spotlights. They could be called the bushrangers of Manton Dam because they have become very clever and adept at avoiding the contractors who are trying to catch them.

The Manton Dam public recreation facility will be opened on 22 June. As I said, the Chief Minister and I will be attending the opening day and we both intend to indulge in the dam's primary attraction - water-skiing - although we are a bit rusty in that regard. I understand that the Chief Minister undertook his apprenticeship in water-skiing at the Mindil Beach. When he was a young fellow, I understand that the skiers were towed by cars which drove along the beach. They could not afford boats. Skiing was only possible at certain times of the day. I do not know how the Chief Minister performs in deep water but we will see.

The facility is designed particularly to be used for power boating. The member for Koolpinyah asked about the Shoobridges. We have had that debate. It has been pointed out on many occasions that Lake Bennett was not suitable for powerboating. In fact, powerboating was damaging the wall at Lake Bennett. We should not deny that there is a substantial number of power boats. Indeed, the Australian Skiing Classic was held here just recently. There is considerable interest in the sport and I believe that providing the Manton Dam facility for these people will enhance their sport so that it will

grow and prosper at a proper inland facility. Mr Speaker, I look forward to seeing you at the official opening, together with the Chief Minister and the member for Ludmilla.

Funding of King Cobra Rod and Custom Club

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

Does the Chief Minister's reported personal release of some \$235 000 of taxpayers' money to the King Cobra Rod and Custom Club represent his brand of fiscal responsibility? Specifically, does this largesse represent his government's priority ahead of school libraries and child-care centres? Mr Speaker, I further ask whether this decision to distribute quite generous amounts of taxpayers' money was prompted by the Chief Minister's well-known interest in hot rods?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, since self-government the Northern Territory government has unashamedly assisted many sporting and cultural organisations throughout the Northern Territory and continues to do so. From memory, I think the amount of this assistance exceeds \$1.7m a year. That funding is used to assist various organisations, not only to obtain and improve their premises but also to send sporting people interstate, to bring coaches up from down south and so on. We believe that it is a responsible Northern Territory government policy. It has operated very successfully for many years and has allowed Territory sports people to achieve standards which allow them to compete nationally. In assisting organisations, our policy has been to have each sport in the Northern Territory achieve for itself, over a period of time, a facility of national standard. As I have said, we have spent many millions of dollars in this regard. In some cases, grants were made and in other cases loans were made to various organisations, usually on concessional terms.

Over the past couple of years, as a result of the downturn in the Northern Territory economy, assisted to a fair degree by the federal government's \$250m chop over the last 3 years and the effect of that on our economy and population, a number of sporting and cultural organisations have found themselves in financial difficulty in terms of repaying government loans which have built assets for the entire Northern Territory community. The government has made a decision that a range of these loans will be written off. Naturally, we have been advising the respective organisations whose memberships, in every case, have made substantial contributions far in excess of any contributions made by the Northern Territory government. We are proud of our record of assistance to develop the social infrastructure to make this a better place to live. I confirm that the loan referred to by the honourable member was written off, along with many others involving not only sporting organisations but cultural and ethnic organisations.

Electricity Charges

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

The Chief Minister will recall his pronouncements on electricity charges in recent months. Is he aware that the Nhulunbuy Corporation has announced that it is lifting its electricity charges by 10.8%? Does an increase of that magnitude fall within parameters which the government finds acceptable?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as someone who has been a member of this House for a considerable period, the Leader of the Opposition should know that the question would more appropriately be directed to the honourable member who is responsible for electricity generation in the Northern Territory.

Mr Smith: You are the man who has been making all the statements about electricity charges.

Mr PERRON: The statements that I have made on the subject recently relate to a federal subsidy to the Northern Territory.

Expo in Hong Kong

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

In October this year, there will be a Northern Territory Expo in Hong Kong to promote the Northern Territory and the Trade Development Zone. Is the honourable minister able to advise the House whether the business community of the Northern Territory is supporting that expo?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, last evening, I attended a function at the Trade Development Zone at which industry groups offered their support for the Trade Development Zone and, in particular, the planned expo in Hong Kong later this year. When I was in Hong Kong 2 weeks ago, I had the opportunity to announce the proposed expo on prime time radio. We received considerable coverage during that interview. The excitement in Hong Kong has reached fever pitch and people are eagerly waiting for the Northern Territorians to turn up there. Part of the expo, of course, will be the crab-tying competition. We intend to take the world crab-tying champions from the Northern Territory to Hong Kong. That announcement created quite a lot of excitement there.

The response from industry representatives last night was also very heartening. About 50 business organisations responded to requests for expressions of interest in the 2 expos and attended a briefing at the Trade Development Zone. I say '2 expos' because it is also planned to have an expo at Shenzhen which is the economic development zone in China itself. It is anticipated that there will be about 20 stands featuring the Territory's private sector at the Hong Kong Expo and perhaps slightly less at Shenzhen. These expos will be among the most important trade and promotional events ever mounted by the Northern Territory. As a matter of perspective, it is forecast that 30 000 people a day will pass through the Territory's Hong Kong Expo and 50 000 a day at the weekend. This is several leagues above any previous Territory trade event, except perhaps the World Expo in Brisbane last year. Organisation for the 2 expos is now in full swing, as it needs to be.

The logistics are of giant proportions. For example, the Northern Territory University is keen to establish a vigorous presence at both expos. Any honourable member with experience in Asia will know that there is a high level of interest in Australian tertiary education facilities. Normally one might expect the university to take with it a box of brochures. In this case, make that dozens of boxes. More than 250 000 copies of each brochure will need to be produced.

Organisation of the expos is being conducted jointly by a committee, including private sector expertise in Darwin and the Trade Development Zone's representatives in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Expo will be held at the New World Centre in Kowloon from 1 November to 5 November and the Shenzhen Expo from 8 November to 12 November. Most Territory government departments and authorities will participate in conjunction with the private sector. On display will be the Territory's lifestyle, its investment and trade opportunities and its potential. I announced the expos in Hong Kong earlier this month. The announcement received good coverage in the Hong Kong media and already considerable interest has been generated.

The Hong Kong Expo, in particular, has to be viewed in a wider context. It will not necessarily be about writing Territory business deals on the spot. Rather, it will be pitched at lifting the profile of the Territory as an attractive place for Asian investment and relocation of Hong Kong business. The organisers are looking at more than just instant gratification. The Shenzhen Expo is planned along more direct lines. Shenzhen provincial authorities have welcomed the event and have given assurances that representatives of most Chinese provincial governments will attend following the annual Canton Trade Fair. These authorities are interested in trading links and opportunities with the Territory and, on early indications, will be keen to talk immediate business.

Mr Speaker, the design team that put together the Territory's highly commended exhibition at the Brisbane World Expo has the task of putting together the Territory's expo in Hong Kong and China. It will be informative, entertaining and purposely different from run-of-the-mill trade exhibitions. At the same time, seminars and conferences will be held specifically dealing with Territory trade and business opportunities. More details will be revealed as the organising committee gears itself up, but I am confident that these 2 expos will prove to be highly significant events of great importance to the Territory's economic future.

Electricity Package from Federal Government

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is he aware of a statement this morning made by the federal member, Mr Snowdon, and Senator Collins, which indicates that the federal government has agreed to the following electricity package for the Northern Territory: a recurrent grant of \$40m for 1989-90, with grants to be phased out over the following 3 years? The amounts payable will be \$30m for 1990-91, \$20m for 1991-92 and \$10m for 1993-94. Is he further aware that a key feature of the package is the decision to waive from 1 July the Northern Territory's electricity debt to the Commonwealth currently standing at \$39.9m and, in addition, that the first subsidy payment of \$40m will be made as a single payment before 1 July this year rather than as instalments during the year? Further, is he aware that the federal government has also decided to permit the Northern Territory to fund the Power and Water Authority's remaining operating deficits through special additions to its global borrowing limits and does he join this side of the House in welcoming that announcement?

ANSWER

Certainly, Mr Speaker, I am aware of this morning's radio interview with Senator Collins, in which he spoke of the tremendous amount of work which he and Mr Warren Snowdon had put into achieving the Cabinet decision which was announced yesterday. I am glad that he said that because it matches the press release issued some 2 weeks ago, on 28 April 1989, which stated that Chief Minister Marshall Perron and federal Treasurer Paul Keating had reached agreement on the future of the Northern Territory electricity subsidies. It is good to see that that agreement has not been overturned by Mr Collins and Mr Snowdon.

The electricity subsidy is welcomed. Bob Collins said on radio this morning that it is unique in Australia. In fact it is not. Special purpose payments are now made to Western Australia because it cannot take all the gas from the North-west Shelf and those payments have exceeded \$90m per year for almost 3 years. Honourable members will be aware, of course, that the debt which we took over was close to \$50m. I think the amount which has been written off actually relates to Stokes Hill Power Station. I thought that the debt on Stokes Hill Power Station was somewhere in the vicinity of \$36m. Of course, we have been paying that off at about the rate of \$6m a year and honourable members would be aware that we closed that station down some 2 years ago. It was therefore only just that the Commonwealth should write off the debt on the Stokes Hill Power Station, thus ending the sorry saga of a facility which contained the wrong equipment. No doubt the member for Barkly has had a few sleepless nights because of the power station, among other things. I am sure that he will be glad to see that the debt has been written off. It ends the saga of Stokes Hill.

I am running through the figures and the likely results of yesterday's Cabinet decision. Let us hope that we can get more gas up the pipeline and more projects into the Northern Territory so that we can at least hold electricity prices. Honourable members would be aware that we have not raised electricity prices in the Northern Territory since October 1986. In fact, we have not raised them since Ian Tuxworth was the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory. That is how long we have been able to hold down electricity prices. The last time they were raised was in October 1986 and we would like at least to maintain the current levels. The way to do that is, of course, to

establish more projects using gas from the pipeline. That is exactly what I am trying to do at the moment.

We on this side of the House join with the opposition in congratulating the officers of the federal Departments of Primary Industry and Energy and Treasury on their negotiating skills as well as our own Treasury officers who led the negotiations over a long period of time. These things do not just happen after a Cabinet decision and Senator Collins would be well aware of that. Negotiations have been continuing in relation to the electricity subsidy for almost 12 months, ably led by the Under Treasurer, Neil Conn, who has made many trips to Canberra to speak with federal Treasury officials. It is a job well done. The cost of electricity is crippling to the Northern Territory and I would like to congratulate all those people who were involved in negotiating the deal at the coalface, particularly the officers of the federal Treasury and the Northern Territory Treasury who have worked so hard on this matter over a 12-month period.

Nightcliff High School - Grounds Maintenance Contract

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I remind the honourable minister that, during the last sittings, questions were raised in respect of possible conflicts of interest in relation to the letting of a grounds maintenance contract at the Nightcliff High School. The minister undertook then to have the matter fully investigated by the Department of Education. I ask the minister whether that investigation has been carried out. Are any results available? If so, could the honourable minister advise this House of the current situation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Nightcliff for his question. The issue he raised was of great concern. Following his comments during an adjournment debate, I decided that it was necessary for the secretary of the department to carry out a full investigation. That investigation has now been completed and the conclusions are as follows:

- (1) There is no direct documentary evidence as to whether Mr Perrin was financially interested in the contract.
- (2) The minutes of the meetings of the council reveal that Mr Perrin did not disclose the financial interest in the contract at any meeting of the council.
- (3) Mr Perrin made a statement after a meeting of the council on 28 or 29 January 1988 which indicated that he knew that Territory Garden Services, the contractor, would be amalgamated with Darwin Irrigation Suppliers - his employer - and that he knew that at the time of that meeting and prior to the execution of the contract. It is considered that it would have been prudent for him to have made a statement to that effect during the meeting, as his failure to do so has occasioned the concern which was expressed by Mr Hatton.
- (4) There is no evidence that Mr Perrin was financially interested, directly or indirectly, in the negotiations, execution or implementation of the contract. It is considered that a financial interest in a contract involves the receipt of

personal pecuniary profit or reward which arises from the making of a contract, and which would not have been received if the contract had not been made. It is not considered that Mr Perrin had a financial interest in the contract by virtue of being an employee of Darwin Irrigation Supplies in the absence of any evidence as to his salary or emoluments before and after the execution of the contract or the amalgamation of the businesses.

Mr Smith: What about the recommendations to tighten up the system? Are you going to read those out?

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, there is definitely a need to tighten up the system.

Mr Smith: Thank you.

Mr HARRIS: It is very important that people who are actively involved in the consideration of contracts to carry out work on behalf of school councils declare any interest which they may have in such work. As a result of the situation which I have been discussing, I have asked the Department of Education to consider the drafting of regulations. If necessary, we will amend the act to ensure that councillors are required to disclose their interests and so that failure to disclose a financial interest in a contract being negotiated by a council would invoke a penalty. I think that will resolve this whole matter.

BTEC

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Is the minister aware of 2 separate Queen's Counsel opinions that elements of the Stock Diseases Act of the Northern Territory, the BTEC act, are unconstitutional? Is he aware that such an opinion, if upheld by the courts, would leave the government facing a bill of approximately \$45m for compensation to pastoralists? I ask the minister what he has done to protect the Territory taxpayer from this eventuality.

ANSWER

No, Mr Speaker.

BTEC

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

During the BTEC debate yesterday, both the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Stuart threatened to table a police report into BTEC and, further to that, claimed that the federal government had appointed a special investigator to come to the Northern Territory to investigate the operation of BTEC here. Is the minister able to confirm whether or not the federal government has appointed such an investigator?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. The member for Stuart made a statement to that effect yesterday. It was very emotive and dramatic stuff, and I quote from page 79 of the Daily Hansard of Tuesday 16 May: 'It is my understanding that there is an investigator on his

way to the Northern Territory, if he has not already arrived, to examine areas that the federal people are not satisfied with'. That is typical of the false presentation that we have grown to expect from the member for Stuart and the emotionalism that he has been using to present his arguments in relation to BTEC during the last few months.

This is a fine illustration of where the member for Stuart gets his information from and how inept the opposition is in pursuing the facts. I suspect that the information was gained from the ABC. The opposition and the ABC seem to be working in cahoots in this matter. I wonder if the ABC is a second arm of the ALP. On the 1 pm 8DDD FM news, broadcast on 10 May, a news item said:

The office of the federal primary industry minister in Canberra is gearing up for an escalating controversy surrounding the disease eradication program BTEC in the Territory. Larry Anderson reports that the minister, John Kerin, has appointed a special investigator from his Parliament House office to monitor the latest series of allegations involving rorts in the program. Anderson, the spokesman for the primary industry minister, John Kerin, said the federal government is anticipating that the allegations of fraudulent activity would hit the headlines around the nation next week after the Territory's Assembly sittings. He also said that the minister reaffirmed his commitment to cooperate in any judicial inquiry. The ABC understands that the shadow primary industry minister, Brian Ede, is preparing to name people in parliament investigated by police in 1984 who were allegedly involved in a series of rorts.

I think that is where the honourable members of the opposition get their information from. I went a little further than that. I made some inquiries and found that the federal minister has not appointed an officer of his own to monitor the BTEC program in the Northern Territory. As one would expect, officers of the federal department are maintaining a watching brief on events, and that is only to be expected. It is natural that they should take such action but no special investigator has been appointed from the minister's office. It is a load of rubbish and typical of the information that has been put forward by honourable members opposite and, of course, the ABC.

Let us look at the facts. Yesterday's allegations from the members opposite also stated that there had been no audit of the BTEC program in the Northern Territory. As I indicated in my response, that was incorrect. The Auditor-General has undertaken investigations into BTEC on an annual basis. As part of the federal government's continuing monitoring of BTEC, not only in the Northern Territory but throughout Australia, there is a process of continuing review. I will provide some advice for honourable members opposite because they might learn something from it.

As part of the supervision of BTEC nationally, an officer of the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy visits every state and the Territory each year to investigate specific areas of the campaign. That officer is presently in the Northern Territory reviewing the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries' BTEC files to which he has full access. I hope the staff of the ABC are listening to this because I would like them to record a few facts and the other side of the story.

Advice to date is that the officer is happy with the Northern Territory BTEC asset register and no problems are expected with perusal of the type D loan procedures. The officer presently undertaking the review is the same

person who has conducted these reviews over a number of years. As a result, he has obtained an intimate working knowledge of the department's BTEC program and, during the years that he has been visiting, has not recommended anything other than finetuning - minor recommendations which have been promptly acted on. This officer reports to senior officers in the federal Department of Primary Industries and Energy.

Given the concern that the member for Stuart has expressed in relation to this matter, it is worth while describing the hierarchy which oversees the BTEC program, not only in the Territory but throughout the states. In each state and the Territory, there is a BTEC committee overseeing the operations of the relevant departments. That BTEC committee answers to the National BTEC Committee which answers to the Animal Health Committee which, in turn, answers to the Australian Agricultural Council. The Australian Agricultural Council is chaired by no less a person than John Kerin, the federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy. There is more than adequate provision for the overseeing of BTEC programs, not only in the Northern Territory but throughout Australia, by those national committees which are outside of the control of the Northern Territory.

I would also remind honourable members that the BTEC program in the Northern Territory has passed with flying colours in court cases and investigations by the Ombudsman in relation to its activities during the past year. It has come out with very favourable reports and has been supported strongly by both the judiciary and the Ombudsman.

The member for Stuart has threatened to table the report, thereby naming people mentioned in it. I believe that would be an act of gross indecency. People who are mentioned by the member for Stuart, if he does it selectively or in any other way, will be found guilty by the judgment of the member for Stuart and no one else. They have been fully investigated by the police and it has been found that there was insufficient evidence for any action to proceed. It is worthy of note that both Senator Bob Collins and the federal minister, Hon John Kerin, consider that the report should not be tabled and that it would be improper to do so in any parliament. That is their view. Mr Speaker, I think that speaks for itself.

Yulara Airstrip

Mr FLOREANI to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

There has been considerable publicity regarding a proposal by Australian Airlines to extend the airstrip area at Yulara to cope with larger jets. Many Alice Springs small businesses are concerned about the proposal. Can the minister give an assurance that the strip will not be extended?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for Flynn is well aware that Australian Airlines has prepared, at its own expense, a report advocating some improvements and an extension to the Yulara strip. Might I say from the outset that, in the longer term as the demand on Yulara increases, it will be necessary to improve all the facilities. The first stage of those improvements is on the current program. It involves an extension of the terminal building and some additional hard-stand areas for the general aviation sector. These days, many light aircraft are operating in and out of Yulara, bringing visitors and also making flights around the Olgas and Ayers Rock itself. Whilst extensions to the strip are not on the government's current program, there will be a demand

for them in the long term. Growth in tourism at Yulara has been outstanding and reflects the very positive promotion by the Tourist Commission and by the Yulara Corporation in selling their wares.

The government is interested in hearing the views of the Alice Springs people, as it always has been. We do not run about scaremongering. I note that, in one of his press releases, the member for Barkly promoted the notion that the government had decided already to extend the Yulara strip. Like so many other statements that come from that quarter, that is not true. The government's last publicly stated position was put about a year ago. It was that we did not envisage, at that stage, that Yulara would be extended to 737 standard for approximately 3 years. That is still our view.

However, we are aware of a growing demand within Alice Springs itself. I am very keen to hear the views of businesses in Alice Springs because, in spite of the claims of the member for Flynn that businesses in Alice Springs are opposed to the extension of the Yulara airstrip, the feedback I am getting is that very few people are commenting adversely about the potential in the long term. In fact, I understand that the people of Alice Springs are more than happy to stand on their own. They are developing a great tourism marketplace of their own in Alice Springs. There is a view held in many quarters that there would be an advantage to the Alice Springs tourism industry if people were able to fly direct to Ayers Rock and come back via Alice Springs instead of having to stop when travelling in each direction. This government, of course, is about balanced decision-making. We want to hear what the industry in Alice Springs and at Yulara has to say and, in due course, we will come to a decision on what our future program will be.

BTEC

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

The honourable minister will recall that, in the debate last night and in a letter to the federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, 3 reasons were given for not proceeding against Mr Donald Hoar, or Mr Q as I called him last night, even though it was agreed that there was a prima facie case against him. Would the minister now confirm to this House that witnesses could have been subpoenaed to give evidence and that the major reason Mr Hoar was not prosecuted for his carcass reduction activities at Victoria Valley Abattoir was that it was known that he would fight through every court and use every avenue of appeal and, as a result, the case would have cost a lot of money?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I repeat what I said yesterday. The reasons for the advice were in the letter that I tabled. It was pretty simple and I do not think it is worth while repeating here. What we have to consider is the speculation that has been created in the media about the so-called lost file and the suggestion that there was some impropriety in advice given in relation to prosecution. The unfortunate aspect of the speculation is, of course, that it implies that the government does not know what that advice was or, if we do, that we do not want to reveal what it was.

I can state unequivocally that neither of those scenarios is correct. The government is aware of what the advice was. We are more than happy to say what it was and the majority of personnel who were involved in considering the file are still employed by the Department of Law.

Mr Smith: Today it is the 'majority of personnel'. Yesterday it was all of them.

Mr MANZIE: The Leader of the Opposition does not like to hear the correct information.

Mr Smith: I like to hear it at the first attempt, not the third.

Mr MANZIE: It was said quite clearly yesterday but the Leader of the Opposition was not in the House, which is pretty usual. If he stayed here and listened to the content of debates, he would understand what was going on. I am referring to the debate on BTEC yesterday, when these matters were very clearly and concisely stated. It would possibly be to his advantage to remain in the House when matters of ...

Mr Smith: You said that the personnel involved are still present ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the manners of the Leader of the Opposition are appalling. I have noticed no improvement over a number of years. There is a lot of room for improvement and hopefully we will see some in the future.

The Department of Law considered the file in 1984 and, in consultation with senior police officers, decided that no prosecution should proceed. The decision not to proceed was reached only after detailed consideration of the evidence. As the Chief Minister has informed the Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, Hon John Kerin, it was based on 3 main points. Firstly, although prima facie evidence existed, there was very little chance of a successful prosecution. Secondly, there was almost a complete lack of corroboration of Crown witnesses' testimony. The case pivoted on the credibility of such witnesses. Thirdly, none of the 5 complainant pastoralists considered that he had suffered any loss and none wished to proceed with the matter.

That is the advice and those are the 3 points on which it was based. There has been no change. The advice is still valid today. It is as valid today as it was in August 1984. Nothing has been revealed, as a result of what the member for Stuart so pretentiously refers to as his investigation, which casts doubt on what took place. It is worth considering who was involved in giving that advice. Much has been made in the media of the fact that a former magistrate, Mr Tony Cavit, who was then Crown Counsel, has left the Territory. However, members opposite have conveniently forgotten the fact that Mr Cavit did not consider the file in isolation. It was also assessed by the Crown Prosecutor, Mr Jack Karczewski, our Senior Crown Prosecutor, Mr Ray Minahan, and the present Secretary of the Department of Law, Mr Peter Conran, who were aware of the decision. The Chief Inspector in charge of the case, who is now the Commissioner of Police, also considered the file. All 4 of those officers are still employed by the government and they maintain that the advice was as I have outlined, and that it was correct.

I am deeply concerned about attempts by the member for Stuart to imply that there was something wrong about the fact that a prosecution did not proceed, never mind the fact that he has been alleging multi-million dollar fraud whereas the amount involved was actually just over \$4000. Members on this side of the House are used to his capacity for exaggeration and that sort of discrepancy is about par for the member for Stuart.

What I object to most strenuously is the slur that he has cast on the integrity and the capability of officers of my department. There can only be 3 interpretations of what the member for Stuart is saying and everyone should be aware of that. The interpretations are that the officers involved were professionally incompetent, that the officers involved bowed to pressure from political sources or that the officers involved bowed to outside pressure. Those are the only 3 scenarios. The matter was investigated. The results of the investigation went to Crown Law and advice was given. As a result of that advice, in 2 cases, there was no prosecution. The remainder of the cases were found to be totally without foundation. Remember that the allegation is that somehow there was a shonk. The only basis for that is that the officers involved were professionally incompetent, bowed to political pressure or bowed to outside pressure. There is no other way that the allegations from the member for Stuart can possibly be interpreted. Without exception, they are totally defamatory of the officers involved.

I have spoken to the officers involved and they flatly reject any suggestion that any of those scenarios occurred. They are more than willing to say just that to any member of this House, even the member for Stuart who, in my opinion, has so grossly insulted them. Unlike the member for Stuart, the honesty, integrity and professional ability of these officers is not in question. I challenge the member for Stuart to put up or shut up. He must unequivocally state his version of what occurred when the file was considered by the Department of Law. If he is not prepared to do so, he must retract his allegations and apologise to the officers involved. If the member for Stuart is going to persist with these allegations that something was wrong with the advice not to prosecute, I challenge him again to stop shovelling in this coward's castle and to have the guts to repeat his allegations outside this House.

The officers involved have nothing to hide. They know they did an honest and professional job and they are fed up to the back teeth with the garbage, the slur and the innuendo against their reputations which the member for Stuart has been spreading. I doubt very much if the member for Stuart will talk to any of these people simply because I do not believe he would have the courage to look them in the face. If he does not have the intestinal fortitude to talk to these people and retract his allegations, then let him make his allegations outside this Assembly. That would at least give those officers a fair chance to sue him out of existence. If he is unable or is unwilling to follow an honourable course, he will stand condemned before this House as a coward and a liar.

Air Traffic Control

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Mr Speaker, last year in this Assembly, I raised with the Minister for Transport and Works on several occasions the issue of the air traffic control facilities in the Darwin and Alice Springs area being relocated to the Adelaide region. What is the current situation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am well aware of the member for Ludmilla's interest in aviation. Of course, his electorate adjoins the airport and I am sure he is lobbied continually by constituents, not only by airport personnel but by RAAF people, over a broad range of aviation issues. From all reports, the civil aviation authorities are still intent on proceeding with this

rationalisation program, as they call it, utilising AUSSAT technology and bringing all of the various stations around Australia to 2 central points. It is intended that the Darwin and Alice Springs offices will be closed and the personnel there will be returned to Adelaide.

Given modern technology, it sounds all very fine to move all those 150 families back to Adelaide. However, the point is that they are being moved back to Adelaide. What the outcome of this rationalised program will be has me beat. The federal minister has not yet stated what the net economic value in this move is. As is recognised by officers of the civil aviation authorities, there are some down sides to the move. They are very concerned about some of the technical problems and the potential for outages as a result of storms, lightning strikes etc. They have outlined those concerns to the department and I believe they have not been properly addressed to date. There are many other issues which pertain to safety and a proper standard of service on the ground in Darwin, Alice Springs and Gove for the many people who travel by light aircraft. The great majority of people in the rural and remote areas rely entirely on light aircraft for their survival.

I understand that the member for MacDonnell is the second member of this Assembly to obtain his flying licence although I think he thought at one stage that he was the first. The question is whether I would fly with him. I am aware of a report to the Darwin Aero Club concerning the unserviceability of an aircraft. Perhaps I should not go into that. I think I will stick to flying by myself.

Mr Bell: Malicious slander.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, I am prepared to acknowledge that it may be malicious slander. One of the first things I was told when I was flying was that the first thing you do is to turn on the fuel.

Mr Speaker, to return to my point, there is a very genuine concern among light aircraft ...

Mr Bell: I will give you an explanation later.

Mr FINCH: ... users about problems on bush airstrips, particularly during the wet season. Sometimes outages occur and local knowledge of what is happening on the ground is very important for the pilot and, of course, the passengers. In a place like Adelaide, there is only a hi-tech communication system which does not allow communication with pilots as they come in from their flights and as they are going out. It is important to brief pilots with some local knowledge which is useful in an emergency. When there is an emergency, search and rescue procedures will be directed from Adelaide. I would hate to be sitting in the middle of the desert or maybe even at sea in those circumstances. I am well aware of the concerns of some operators in the growing offshore petroleum industry about search and rescue being controlled from Adelaide without the benefit of local knowledge and face-to-face contact. For example, if BHP has a problem with a chopper or an aircraft going down, it is necessary to make decisions pretty well on the spot. At such times, the trust developed in a person who is known personally at the other end of the phone or who stands across the counter is critical.

It is not simply the loss of the 150 families from the Northern Territory that I am concerned about. I am also concerned about the lack of evidence that there is a cost saving to the federal government and the very genuine concern of pilots and, I would hope, their passengers, that remote control is

in no way the best option as far as safety and search and rescue procedures are concerned.

Mr Speaker, I implore members of this House, including my flying compatriot from the opposite benches, to lobby the federal government with regard to ...

Mr Bell: Why don't you introduce a statement about the rationalisation, Fred? This is itsy-bitsy stuff, it really is.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, I am well aware of the sensitivities of the defenders of federal government policy, but I implore them to read Hansard and contemplate the impact of this decision on the Territory's future. I ask that we get together to bring about some action to prevent this appalling move to centralise.

Hepatitis B

Mr COLLINS to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Why did the Territory not take part in the Hepatitis B Awareness Week? How bad is the disease? What groups in the community are most at risk, how available is vaccine for hepatitis, and does the government intend to work towards a program for total immunisation of the whole community?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, Hepatitis B Awareness Week was a promotional activity of the pharmaceutical company Smith and Kline. It did not consult with or elicit the support or involvement of the Department of Health and Community Services. It promoted Hepatitis B vaccination as essential for everyone. The message that everyone is at risk is not entirely supported, at this stage, by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

This morning, I received a letter from Merck, Sharp and Dohme and the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories, which expresses some concerns about the implementation of the Hepatitis B Awareness Week campaign. Some media reports suggest that everybody is at risk and requires immediate vaccination, which could unnecessarily worry members of the lay public. It would be unfortunate indeed if this deflected attention away from efforts at prevention in high-risk groups. The Territory's position at present is that Hepatitis B vaccination is an important part of prevention for members of high-risk groups or those whose occupations place them at risk.

With regard to the honourable member's second question relating to how bad the disease is, studies in Australia and other countries indicate that adults affected with Hepatitis B may or may not experience signs and symptoms of illness. The majority will recover completely. However, some patients do not eliminate the virus and, as a result, can develop a chronic illness. 1% to 2% of patients can develop serious sequela such as cirrhosis or liver cancer.

As to what groups in the community are at risk, the answer is health-care workers, South-east Asians, Aborigines, intravenous drug users, sexually-active homosexual males, persons indigenous to Oceania, a regular sexual partner or partners of and persons residing with an individual with chronic Hepatitis B. How available is the vaccine? The vaccine is readily available in Australia. A complete vaccination series consists of 3 separate injections administered over 6 months. It is essential to have the complete vaccination course to ensure immunity.

Does the government intend to work towards a total community immunisation plan? Since February 1988, all infants of mothers who were in a high-risk group received Hepatitis B vaccine at birth. Hepatitis B vaccination is available to persons in high-risk groups or persons whose occupation puts them at risk of infection. Gradually, more groups are being defined or are requesting vaccination; for example, the lifesavers in Southern Australia. I would presume that lifesavers in New South Wales would also be on the list. 1465 persons residing throughout the Territory, whose occupations put them at risk, have been tested and vaccinated against Hepatitis B.

Offshore Supply Base in Darwin

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

The government is known to be interested in the establishment of an offshore supply base in Darwin to meet the growing needs of the offshore oil industry and to provide Territory business with greater access to that market and, in that respect, the honourable minister recently held discussions with Singapore Offshore Petroleum Services. Can he advise on the progress of these discussions and whether an offshore supply base will be developed in Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Jingili for his question. Honourable members will be as excited as I am about the hydrocarbon potential of the Northern Territory and the amount of activity that is occurring on and offshore in the Northern Territory. To add to that, I understand from Senator Cook that the Indonesian minister will be visiting Australia in July. Senator Cook announced at the APEA Conference in Hobart recently that the Timor Gap question may be resolved as early as December this year. He is on record as saying also that an estimate of the quantity of oil in that region could be as high as 7 billion barrels.

If all those things happen, we are really in for an oil boom in the Northern Territory. We wish Senator Cook well, together with Senator Evans, who will be involved in the negotiation of that agreement with the Indonesian government. It highlights the need to bring to Darwin such onshore facilities as will enable it to be a major regional base for offshore drilling activities.

Mr Speaker, there is no doubt that an offshore supply base will be developed in Darwin. However, I am unable at this stage to announce full details about the location and all the participants. Certainly Singapore Offshore Petroleum Services, which operates a large offshore base in Singapore, is very keen to become involved. It has indicated that it will be sending a draft heads of agreement to the Territory government by the end of this month. It is envisaged that Singapore Offshore Petroleum Services would lease the facility, employing local people and forming a joint venture with at least 1 Territory company.

Advance discussions have been held with a number of companies but it would be premature at this stage to name them. Singapore Offshore Petroleum Services has visited Darwin twice to examine likely sites and detailed investigation work has been carried out at East Arm in conjunction with local contractors. As well, the Department of Transport and Works was commissioned to design an interim facility at Stokes Hill and other possible sites are also under consideration.

It is now a matter of reaching agreement with the various companies wanting to participate in such a facility. I anticipate resolution in the next couple of months. There is no question that it will happen and there is likewise no question that it is needed. Offshore oil exploration and well development continues at record pace in the Timor Sea. BHP Petroleum is spending more than \$6m a week in the Timor Sea and Santos will be spending a similar amount once it starts its Darwin operation in July. In fact, I think that its drilling program will cost something like \$265m over the work period. At least 15 new wells are scheduled this year, and a further 16 next year.

Mr Speaker, just to bring the Northern Territory's hydrocarbon and mineral wealth into perspective, let me advise honourable members that my own personal goal for the Territory's development of its natural resources next year is development worth \$1700m. We believe it will top around about \$1500m this financial year, which is roughly equivalent to the value of the entire Australian wheat crop. That is not a bad effort for 150 000 Territorians, 1% of Australia's population, who are providing about 10% of Australia's export earnings. I am very proud indeed of the industry. There is huge potential for Territory businesses to be further involved in supplying it. This was first detailed at a government-sponsored seminar in May last year. Local involvement will be maximised through an offshore supply base and one of my highest priorities is to bring that facility into operation as soon as possible.

Giles House

Mr BELL to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I draw the minister's attention to the fact that a person with a prior conviction for assault has been employed at the juvenile detention centre at Giles House in Alice Springs. I ask the minister how the employment of this officer occurred and what guarantee he can give that such a situation will not arise in the future?

ANSWER

I will have to take that question on notice. I will provide an answer during the course of these sittings.

Yirara College

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

In last night's adjournment debate, the member for Stuart raised the question of Yirara College. I would be very pleased if the Minister for Education could explain to the House the situation regarding Yirara College.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, during the member for Stuart's speech last night, I interjected to invite him to ask me a question in relation to Yirara because I think the situation there needs to be spelt out very clearly. It is important to reiterate government policy in relation to that school. There are a number of people who would prefer to see Yirara operating differently and, obviously, the member for Stuart is one of them. I suggest to the honourable member that he talk with his Commonwealth counterpart, who would have a different view.

We are moving in the direction of giving equity to Aboriginal students and Aborigines in general. Yirara College is a government school and, as such, the council and others must work to strict government guidelines. Our policy has not changed. Yirara College will continue to play a vital role in the provision of Aboriginal education. It will also continue to be a college offering the link between the schooling provided in Aboriginal communities and schooling provided in Alice Springs. That was the original intention of Yirara College.

Mr Ede: You talk of JSSC.

Mr HARRIS: Yirara was established for a specific purpose. It is not a mainstream school. It should be pointed out that there are special units at Alice Springs High School which are able to cater to the need to come to grips with the real cultural differences that exist. Those special units are in operation. On this side of the House, we believe in integration not segregation. That needs to be made very clear. The previous Minister for Education made his views on that issue very clear in a debate in this House. We also acknowledge that the Aboriginal people believe that their qualifications should be equal to everyone else's.

Mr Ede: You know what they want. JSSC.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, the member for Stuart does not realise that you must have awards and certificates that are not only of high standing but are seen to be of high standing in the community. That is a major concern and I wish he would wake up to that. The post-primary certificate that was offered does not relate to anything. It had no real meaning. We were moving towards ensuring that the awards or certificates offered at Yirara were accredited and nationally registered. Its courses are similar to those on offer in some other states and students who do not wish to pursue the academic stream are able to take those courses.

The exercise carried out recently at Yirara caused some concern but, unfortunately, it was not allowed to get on with the job. The intention was to utilise the existing Yirara courses which were documented in 1986 and accredited by the NT Board of Studies in 1987. The purpose of the TAFE accreditation of these courses is to provide a credible educational pathway for secondary students which is an alternative to the academically-oriented Junior Secondary Studies Certificate. The net result will be the provision of an educational program that is credible for both employment and further education purposes and practically useful.

The Yirara College courses were selected for accreditation because the task should have been relatively simple, the principal requirement being a re-presentation to satisfy TAFEAC requirements and a further consultative process to establish academically credible courses. A group went there to carry out this process and to change the accreditation from a post-primary certificate into something that is acceptable and seen to be acceptable throughout the community and, indeed, throughout Australia.

Once accredited, the certificate in secondary studies courses will be a potentially valuable alternative to the JSSC, both for the less academically inclined students of junior secondary education age and for students who need or desire heavy emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy. The accreditation proposal requires parental and community support.

Unfortunately, at a meeting of parents and community representatives, the issue of offering JSSC at Yirara dominated and the real purpose of the meeting was lost. This was a disappointment.

A course advisory committee, comprising representatives from parents and communities, college staff, Aboriginal interests, private enterprise, the Alice Springs College of TAFE, the NT Open College, the secondary college, FEPPi, the Department of Education and the Department of Employment, Education and Training, was formed to re-present the courses for accreditation. That was its specific task. This particular group, or some members of it, attempted to commence work on 2 occasions but, on both of those occasions, Aboriginal members refused to participate unless the JSSC issue was given priority consideration.

Needless to say, that course advisory committee is no longer operational. There has been a breakdown. We will pursue the matter of accrediting those courses but we are looking at a different way of doing it. Two teams, comprised of 2 or 3 appropriate personnel, will be established and will be thoroughly briefed on this issue. They will visit Yirara's feeder communities to explain the policy of government and to clarify the respective roles of Yirara College and the Alice Springs High School. The school at Yirara College will continue to utilise its existing courses without modification and will again be instructed that it shall not purport to offer the full Junior Secondary Studies Certificate.

During the course of my review into Aboriginal education, I am specifically raising the issue of secondary educational opportunities in relation to both Yirara and Kormilda Colleges. It is important that, when we are looking at providing jobs for the Aboriginal people who go through our school system, they are able to study courses that can equip them for those jobs. We, on this side of the House, will be continuing our efforts to ensure that the Aboriginal people are not patronised and that they are able to take courses of study which have full accreditation and are nationally registered. We will also be looking at integrating Aboriginal students from Yirara College into the existing high school at Alice Springs. That will continue and the Junior Secondary Studies Certificate will be issued through the Alice Springs High School.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Upgrading of Stuart and Barkly Highways

Mr FINCH (Transport and Works): Mr Speaker, I would like to provide a very brief supplementary answer to a question raised by the member for Barkly yesterday. He asked about the program for the Stuart and Barkly highways in his region. In terms of allocations for both highways this current year, an amount of \$6.2m is already being spent, together with \$2.5m of maintenance to keep the road in good order. Over the period of the next 3 budgets, I understand that work to bring those highways to national standard will be completed at a cost of \$27.7m. Funding of those works, of course, will be subject to the federal budget. I mentioned yesterday that advice from the federal Minister for Transport and Communications has indicated that our 5-year overall road network program is to be cut by some \$18m. We are still awaiting advice from federal officers. They were due to come to see us before 12 May but that has not happened yet. We wait with bated breath to see whether the federal government will in fact meet its commitment to the north so that we can complete this long-awaited highway program.

BTEC

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

Is it a fact that officers of his department in Katherine were aware in 1983 that kill figures logged by Victoria Valley Beef Abattoir were suspect? Is it also a fact that orders were issued to the meat inspector at the abattoir to establish and maintain an independent set of figures for slaughter weights? Can he confirm, as I was told during my police briefing, that his department did not collate those figures with other returns available from the meatworks and pastoralists even though the then District Veterinary Officer Katherine had written to his headquarters - and I am quoting from the police report - 'indicating that Don Hoar's kill figures were fit only for the waste bin'?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the matter to which the member for Stuart refers has been fully investigated. He has a copy of the first police report into allegations. The answers which he seeks are provided in the second report from the full police investigation. The member for Stuart has received a full police briefing on this matter with his lawyer. He is aware of the answers.

Aviation Costs

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Mr Speaker, a great deal of concern has been expressed by general aviation operators in the Territory about the cost recovery system put in place following the creation of the Civil Aviation Authority in the Federal Airports Corporation. Given the importance of general aviation to the Territory, particularly in isolated communities, can the minister advise the House of what is being done to address concerns about general aviation costs as a result of this new cost recovery program?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can advise the member for Ludmilla that there has certainly been much lobbying, not only by this government but by members of the aviation community and some users of general aviation throughout the Northern Territory. There is no doubt, as I said the other day, that the light aircraft industry is incredibly important to the remote areas, particularly Aboriginal communities, which in many cases have no other transport options.

In September last year, I wrote to the then Minister for Aviation. Bear in mind that we have had 8 or 9 federal ministers responsible for aviation. It is a little difficult to obtain any consistency in responses from the federal government on matters which are of great concern to the Northern Territory, particularly people out in the bush. I received a response this week - some 8 months later. It was a rejection of my proposal that we ought to review the charges in various sectors of the aviation industry.

In particular, I was concerned about double dipping by the federal government in respect of its avgas charges. Some 4.4¢ per litre is charged to light aircraft industries for the use of avgas. On the basis of a brief attached to the minister's response, I believe that some \$24m is raised from that source. Some 2 or 3 years ago, the industry agreed to pay some 3.5¢

per litre on the basis that it would cover landing charges at secondary strips. In the case of Darwin, where there is only one strip, it was to cover landing charges and navigation fees.

Since the federal government has introduced the Federal Airport Corporation to look after the airports and hived off the navigation functions to the Civil Aviation Authority, both organisations charge separate fees. In fact, of the total funds coming from avgas, some \$2.7m goes to CAA and \$2m goes to the Department of Transport and Communications. When the agreement was made 2 or 3 years ago, it was envisaged that the revenue raised from that source would be \$3.5m. It is now \$25m with most of the funds going to CAA. None of them go to cover landing fees.

The FAC will not get any of that surcharge. It will collect its own fees. It has announced some fees recently for landing of light aircraft at Darwin. For example, a Cessna 402, a light aircraft used commonly for charters to Aboriginal communities, will attract almost \$8000 per annum for each aircraft on an RPT service. If it is used for charter work, the fee goes down to about \$1550 per annum. There are additional charges for parking the aircraft. There are also charges for having the aircraft in somebody's hangar while it is being repaired, despite the fact that the hangar is paying a separate lease charge to FAC. We are not talking about double dips; we are talking about triple dips. These figures might seem small to some but the people out in the bush are not exactly silvertails, which is the term the previous federal minister, Peter Morris, used to describe light aircraft users. Most of them are on social welfare payments and those who are not certainly could not be classified as high income earners. They are not the joy fliers. They are people going about their daily business. I think it is appalling that the federal government, which is supposed to show care and compassion for people in remote areas, intends to triple dip on aviation charges.

Once again, I ask the opposition to lend its weight to lobbying on these matters. Not only aero clubs around the Territory, but the aviation industry throughout the Territory, including the likes of Ossie Osgood and MAF, have made representations. The Aboriginal charter companies in Alice Springs lobbied the federal minister only to receive an offhanded slap on the face. The response was that they should not worry and that they would survive somehow. Mr Speaker, this is another sorry saga of the treatment of the aviation industry of the Northern Territory at the hands of the federal government.

Mammograms

Mr TUXWORTH to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I ask this question in the hope that the matter has been considered by the government as a whole and not just by the minister. Could the minister indicate whether the government has considered introducing free mammograms at Northern Territory hospitals and health centres? If the government has considered the matter, why has it not introduced mammograms into Territory health centres and hospitals for Territory women?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to advise the member for Barkly that the government has indeed considered testing of women throughout the Northern Territory. I would like to make a couple of points and I am sure the House will wait with bated breath until next week when the Chief Minister will make a ministerial statement on this subject.

Breast cancer is the major single cause of cancer deaths among women in Australia. The early detection of the cancer is the key to saving lives and minimising the trauma of major surgery. Breast self-examination, carried out properly, is a very useful screening process. Lately, of course, as was demonstrated by the member for Barkly last night in the adjournment debate, there has been increased interest in mammography as a method of screening. At present, that process is not catered for under Medicare. The government is concerned that this is not an option ...

Mr Finch interjecting.

Mr Bell: Oh, shut up Fred.

Mr Finch: Well, it is true.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister and the honourable member for MacDonnell will cease interjecting.

Mr POOLE: Mr Speaker, the government is concerned that this is not an option for women and is looking now at the possibility of providing free screening for all Territory women. Clearly, an expense would be involved, but this is not the major reason for the government's reticence simply to offer free screening. Radiation from this process is a major concern. Frequent screening could cause a build-up in the soft tissue of a woman's breasts. Of course, it is also imperative that mammograms are not taken of pregnant women. Obviously, if mammography is an effective diagnostic tool, women should have access to it as a backup to breast self-examination and I am pleased to advise that the Chief Minister will be making a statement to the House on this subject next week.

BTEC

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I refer the honourable minister to the 3 reasons that the Chief Minister has given for his failure to prosecute Donald Hoar. The letter from the Chief Minister to Hon John Kerin gave 3 reasons. These were: (1) although prima facie evidence exists, there was very little chance of a successful prosecution; (2) there was almost a complete lack of corroboration of the testimony of Crown witnesses, and the case pivoted on the credibility of such witnesses; and (3) none of the 5 complainant pastoralists considered that he had suffered any loss and none wished to pursue the matter.

With regard to point (2), does the minister accept that government meat inspectors had evidence to corroborate that of the principal witness? With regard to point (3), does the minister understand that it was BTEC, not the pastoralists, who suffered loss through activities at Victoria Valley Beef Abattoir? Given that these facts remove 2 of the 3 reasons given by the Chief Minister to the House for the government's failure to prosecute, does that leave the government's case resting on a 5-year old recollection of a piece of paper that is nowhere to be found?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, first, the assertion that the Chief Minister or the government failed to prosecute is indicative of the member for Stuart's ignorance regarding the prosecution process. I would like to remind the honourable member here and now that the government does not decide to prosecute.

Mr Smith: Tell Lindy Chamberlain that.

Mr MANZIE: That is a perfect example. The interstate colleagues of the member for Stuart may interfere with the judicial process but here in the Territory the executive is entirely separate from the prosecution process. I can assure the honourable member that the integrity of officers involved in prosecution is such that, if a minister of government or a government member tried to interfere and influence them in their decision-making, that minister or member would be before the courts immediately. The member for Stuart should withdraw his inference. It is totally and utterly abhorrent to me. The community needs to know that governments do not prosecute in the Territory. Evidence stands and falls on the professional integrity of the people involved.

The reasons tendered by the Chief Minister and by myself for not proceeding to prosecution were given on the advice of the appropriate professional people. It is not my role to go into the whys and wherefores of that or to argue the ins and outs of it. It was the advice of professional people. Either the honourable member accepts it as advice from competent people or, as I said yesterday, he implies that those people were incompetent, were influenced by government or were influenced by outside people before they gave their opinion. I can assure the honourable member categorically that my advice is that such influence did not occur.

I will say to the honourable member today, as I said yesterday, that if he wishes to make an issue of this he should go outside his coward's castle. Let him impugn the integrity of those professional people outside this House. If he does that, I guarantee that he will have a judicial inquiry so fast that his feet will not touch the ground. He will be before the court in a number of matters of private litigation. It is ridiculous that this person opposite should insinuate that, somehow or other, governments make up their mind about prosecutions. Any suggestion of that occurring is extremely serious. I can assure all honourable members and the community that the government does not become involved in deciding who is prosecuted and who is not. I repeat that, if it did, the professional integrity of officers in the Department of Law is such that the people who attempted to interfere would find themselves before the courts.

There is one last thing that I would like to say on this matter. The investigations were carried out by competent members of the police force who answered every allegation that the honourable member can raise. He is using a report based on unsubstantiated allegations which were investigated fully by competent members of a competent police force under the control of the then Commissioner of Police, Peter McAulay, who is now the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police. I would like to see someone interfere with the operation of justice through Peter McAulay. As Commissioner of Police, he would pursue his man to the ends of the earth if he thought there was the slightest chance of getting him. His whole approach to policing is based on integrity and he would brook no interference.

The inference the member for Stuart is making is that the investigations were incompetent - and he has not claimed that - or the advice given by officers was incompetent or it was influenced by government. If the honourable member can produce any evidence in addition to anything produced by the investigation, he should go immediately to the police and present that further evidence. If it stands up, I am sure prosecutions will be commenced. That decision has nothing to do with the government. We have an arm whose role is to carry out investigations. An arm of government has the role of

independently assessing whether it will prosecute or not. If the honourable member thinks he has fresh evidence, let him go to the appropriate people. That is the proper course of action. Does he have the intestinal fortitude to stand outside this House and malign officers? Of course not. If he did that, he would end up with a judicial inquiry which he does not want.

Aboriginal Non-government School in Tennant Creek

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is the minister aware of the move to establish an Aboriginal non-government school in Tennant Creek and what is the government's reaction to this proposal?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I am somewhat concerned about the proposal to establish an Aboriginal school in Tennant Creek. I am not questioning the intentions of the people who have put forward the proposal but there are very serious implications, not only in relation to funding but also in relation to the impact on existing schools. Schools in Tennant Creek already have spare capacity. The Tennant Creek Primary School has a capacity of 325 and the enrolment is 190. The capacity of the Kargaru school is 530 and its total enrolment at this time is 297. Obviously, there is a considerable capacity for enrolments at those schools.

I believe that the concerns that the people have raised in relation to the education of Aboriginal people in Tennant Creek could perhaps be addressed in another manner, perhaps by setting up a special unit or by talking to the department about ways of making use of the spare enrolment capacity in the existing schools. Normally, the federal government would also be most concerned about this. As honourable members would know, a 2-year lead time is required when a non-government school is to be established. That is a sensible lead time because it enables officers of the Department of Employment, Education and Training to look at the schools in the area to ensure that funds will not be wasted if a new school is established. There is a process which ensures that we move responsibly in the development of our schools. I understand, however, that in this case the Commonwealth has given the proposed Aboriginal school approval for recurrent funding by waiving the 2-year lead time. That is a matter of concern.

I am not denying that there are problems in Aboriginal education. Honourable members would be aware that I have been moving throughout the Territory, looking at the very real problems Aboriginal people are facing. However, I do not consider that the reasons put forward for the establishment of an Aboriginal school in Tennant Creek stand up at this time. The problems in Tennant Creek are similar to those being experienced by many other communities.

I want to make it clear that the government is in favour of the establishment of non-government schools. We have very clear policies in relation to assistance, with interest subsidies and capital repayment assistance. However, we are not in favour of a private school which caters for only one race of people. I make that quite clear. We are looking at integration, not segregation. I want to help the people in Tennant Creek and I believe that we should do so by looking at the capacity we have in existing schools and by establishing special units in those schools to address the problems.

I believe that, if we were to have an Aboriginal school established in Tennant Creek, that would create terrible problems. In fact, it would be totally irresponsible. There is a huge capacity for enrolment in existing schools and I would urge the people who are putting forward this proposal to have discussions with the Department of Education to try to come to grips with the issue in terms of responsibly addressing the issue of providing Aboriginal education in that region.

Needle Exchange Program

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

If the Country Liberal Party government sees itself as an honest, law-abiding government, why has it encouraged the breaking of its own laws for nearly a year? I refer to the government-condoned free needle exchange program for drug addicts which contravenes section 12 of the Criminal Code and section 64 of the Poisonous and Dangerous Drugs Act. If individuals have broken the law in this regard, why haven't they been apprehended and treated as law-breakers?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as the honourable member knows, the government has a clear intention in relation to the needle exchange program and, in fact, there is a bill before the House which will implement that intention. If the honourable member feels that she can pursue this matter alone, she is free to do so. I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that the government has no intention of prosecuting for breaches of a law which is to be changed by a bill before the House. The Minister for Health and Community Services explained to the House that interim procedures had been put in place to enable needle exchange to occur. Many people have a personal abhorrence of the needle exchange concept but, whether we like it or not, the government has made a decision, on the balance of what is best for the community, to proceed with the legislation. That is the situation.

BTEC

Mr HATTON to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, I ask the Attorney-General if he is now able to clarify the member for Stuart's claim yesterday that the BTEC scheme may be unconstitutional.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I must admit that my answer to the question is not so much a matter of clarifying the member for Stuart's claim as a matter of pointing out that it is yet another furphy in his campaign to destroy the BTEC program. From his performance so far, honourable members would have to agree that this is fairly normal behaviour for the member for Stuart.

Mr Ede: \$45m. Come on, it is a serious matter.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the member for Stuart asked me yesterday if I was aware of the opinions of 2 QCs that the BTEC scheme was unconstitutional and that the Territory government may face a large compensation bill. Obviously, if the BTEC scheme is unconstitutional here, it is also unconstitutional throughout the country. My answer to that question was no and it remains no today.

Mr Ede: It is the Self-Government Act.

Mr MANZIE: I am not aware of such opinions. Mr Speaker, there is presently an action before the courts, Turner versus the NT of Australia and Others, relating to Jinka Station, in which questions have been raised as to whether or not the BTEC program and actions taken under the Stock Diseases Act are unconstitutional. The member for Stuart might like to consider the fact that a decision has yet to be made by the court on the matter and it is therefore sub judice. The member for Stuart has brought a sub judice matter before the Assembly in an attempt to score cheap political points. Mr Speaker, I cannot discuss the details of the case in this forum and the member has acted quite inappropriately in raising it.

I can inform honourable members, especially the member for Stuart, that the Territory government will be vigorously defending the action. As a point of fact, we too have taken advice from senior counsel. It is the opinion of the Solicitor General - and I should point out that he is also a Queen's Counsel - that there appears to be no substance to the allegation of unconstitutionality. I hope that this information will lay the matter to rest, at least as far as this Assembly is concerned, until it has been properly considered by the courts.

BTEC

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

The minister has claimed that the police completed a full inquiry into BTEC. Nevertheless, the police themselves have said, and I quote from the first police report: 'The task was made exceedingly difficult in many cases due to inconsistencies, improper filing and general carelessness and lack of collated information'. That relates to files from the Department of Primary Production. In fact, during my first briefing, the Commissioner of Police, Mr Palmer, complained of the same fact.

Mr Coulter: He was the investigating officer. He was the Chief Inspector in charge at the time.

Mr Smith: That is right. He had a very good reason to complain about it. He was in a good position to complain, wasn't he?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr EDE: As I said, the police themselves have complained that the investigation was severely hampered by the chaotic and incomplete state of the DPP files. We now know that that chaos extended to the Crown Law files. My question is: how can the Attorney-General be satisfied with the investigation in view of the police's expressed dissatisfaction with the files vital for their inquiries?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member has quoted from the first report again and we know it contains unsubstantiated claims and allegations.

Mr Ede: That is not an unsubstantiated allegation.

Mr MANZIE: He has quoted a factual situation. As all members are aware, and as was pointed out in the Chief Minister's statement, the funding for the BTEC program was ...

Mr Smith: This is the sound of a drowning man!

Mr MANZIE: ... suspended while a proper audit was carried out by the appropriate federal officers as well as the Territory officers. There is no secret about that fact. The Leader of the Opposition really behaves in a most childish fashion. He cannot keep his mouth closed. He dribbles away like a little child. It would be interesting if he listened for a while because then he would not have the problems that he has in understanding what is said.

As the Chief Minister pointed out in his statement to the House, which obviously neither the Leader of the Opposition nor his deputy listened to, the problem with the operation of the BTEC was such that the funding was suspended while an entire audit was carried out, new procedures were instituted and the whole of the administration was tidied up. It was tidied up to such an extent that the national BTEC group, when it does its annual audit, actually congratulates the Territory on the way it administers the BTEC program.

Mr Speaker, that sort of thing is a furphy. Again, the member for Stuart has not been able to produce any new evidence to substantiate any of his claims. Everything that he alleges has been totally and completely investigated. Either it has been investigated properly or it has not been investigated properly. If he says it has not been investigated properly, let him produce some new evidence to show that that is the case. At this stage, nobody has suggested that it was not investigated properly.

Mr Ede: The police.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, isn't that marvellous! If he can produce a statement from the police to show us that, at the end of the day, they reckon the bottom line is that it was not a proper investigation, good for him.

Mr Ede: 'The task was made extremely difficult, in many areas, due to inconsistencies, improper filing and ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member asks a question, the least he can do is afford the minister the courtesy of an opportunity to reply.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, obviously, the minister can answer in relation to the details of DPP files, but I point out again that it is obvious that the task was made difficult. It is obvious that the problems with the files were sufficient to lead to a decision to suspend the funding of the campaign while the problems were rectified. Everyone knows that. Who is denying it? What is the matter with the member for Stuart? It is public knowledge. It was clearly stated in the Chief Minister's statement. It is also worth looking at remarks which the Northern Territory Cattleman's Association addressed to the member for member for Stuart in the NT News of 2 November 1988. Regarding his allegations of impropriety, the association said:

It is unfortunate and most regrettable you did not first discuss these matters with this organisation in order that you could be properly briefed. Your actions have placed a cloud over the disease eradication program and momentarily placed in jeopardy interstate industry and government support for that program. It is imperative that you immediately put before the Northern Territory BTEC Management Committee all documentation and evidence in support of the allegations of impropriety and mismanagement in respect of the Territory's disease eradication program. If you are unable to perform this task, we call upon you to publicly withdraw your

allegations on the grounds that: (1) they cannot be supported with factual data; and (2) failure to correct the public perception of BTEC mismanagement will jeopardise the successful conclusion of disease eradication in the Northern Territory.

That was published in November 1988 and I am sure the Cattlemen's Association is still waiting, as is the whole community, for some form of fresh evidence.

The member opposite has been talking about allegations that were made. He knows there was an investigation. He knows the investigation was conducted by the police. He knows it was conducted in parallel with the financial management and audit reviews initiated by the Commonwealth, and he knows it was all reviewed by the federal Attorney-General's Department and by the federal police. He knows the federal minister's office. He knows that whole investigation ended with 2 possible problems involved and that the Crown Law advice was not to proceed with a prosecution.

Mr Speaker, I say once again, if there is any fresh evidence that would enable a prosecution to commence, let the member for Stuart take it to the appropriate authorities so that the appropriate action can be taken. If he has nothing further to add, for goodness sake, he should think about the people of the Territory, the disease eradication program and the industry, because he is doing nobody any good. His allegations reflect on either the integrity of police officers or the integrity of Crown Law officers. These are senior officers and professional people. His inferences are outrageous. If he cannot come up with anything factual and anything to substantiate his claims, I appeal, not to the better nature of the member for Stuart because it does not exist, but to the Leader of the Opposition. I ask him to think about what is going on. I ask him to think about innocent people. In our community, people are presumed innocent until proven guilty. I ask him to think about the damage that is being done and to direct the member for Stuart to make his allegations specific and, if he has any concrete information to back them, to take it to the proper authorities. If the member for Stuart has nothing except the muck that he has been digging up continuously for the last 6 months, for goodness sake, let the Leader of the Opposition do the right thing and act like a decent citizen and say to the member for Stuart: 'Stop making your stupid allegations until you get something factual'.

Mr Coulter: Why do you think he flick passed it to the member for Stuart?

Mr MANZIE: Yes, that would be right.

AIDS Patients at Alice Springs Hospital

Mr COLLINS to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

How many AIDS patients are being treated in Alice Springs Hospital? Are staff advised that these patients have AIDS so that they can take the extra care that is necessary?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, like the member for Sadadeen, I am aware of some of the rumours that seem to float around the community from time to time. The bush telegraph in Alice Springs, like that in every other community in the Territory, is pretty good. Despite the rumour that there are 6 AIDS patients in Alice Springs Hospital at the moment, I am able to say categorically that

no AIDS patients are being treated in that hospital. In response to the second part of the honourable member's question, I am able to inform him that staff are advised of AIDS patients on a need-to-know basis.

Master Media Contract

Mr SMITH to DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, an item on last night's 7.30 Report stated that, on 3 January, the Secretary of the Country Liberal Party, Mr John Hare, wrote to the Managing Director of Mattingly Woollard Cawrse Advertising (NT) asking the agency to submit an application for the CLP account and stating that it would receive favourable consideration and, I think, Mr Hare's endorsement. Subsequently, on 21 February, 6 weeks later, the government announced that the multi-million dollar government advertising account had been awarded to Mattingly Woollard Cawrse. Can the minister see the obvious risk of a conflict of interest arising if the same agency is in charge of both the government's account and that of the political party in government? Will the minister assure the House that the agency handling the government account does not also handle the account of any political party?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will take the Leader of the Opposition's question on notice. I am sure that the restrictive trade practices that he suggests we implement would not go down very well with his federal colleagues. I could talk about that issue at some length, but I will not bore the House. I will provide him with an answer later.

BTEC

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

Mr Speaker, during debate in the House on 16 May 1989, the Leader of the Opposition stated that the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association did not share the concerns of the ALP on the subject of BTEC. Since then, the member for Stuart has named the person mentioned in police reports. Can the minister advise the House of the present attitude of the Buffalo Industry Council to BTEC and to the naming of people in this Chamber?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as the Attorney-General has just indicated, the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association wrote to the Leader of the Opposition on 10 October 1988 on matters relating to BTEC. The concluding paragraph of that letter said: 'We remain, as always, available to meet with you and/or your colleagues and representatives to discuss matters of importance to the Territory's beef cattle pastoral industry, the majority of which we represent'.

It is interesting to note that it took some months for either the Leader of the Opposition or his deputy to take up that offer and find out what the industry's view is in relation to the BTEC program. It is also worthy of note that neither the Leader of the Opposition nor his deputy has accepted my offer to go to my department to have a full briefing in relation to BTEC and the operations of the department so that they might avail themselves of the facts and learn a little of what is going on.

On 16 May, in response to an interjection from myself asking whether he had been to the Cattlemen's Association, the Leader of the Opposition said: 'As you ask me, I will tell you what they said. They said that their major concern was to get in place a viable cattle industry in the Northern Territory. They said that they did not share our concerns'. The concerns of the opposition, the ALP, and its policy on rural affairs are not recognised by the major pastoral association in the Northern Territory. 'They do not share our concerns'. That was after the Cattlemen's Association had waited 7 or 8 months for the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow spokesman on primary industry to speak to it.

The Leader of the Opposition has made references to the Buffalo Industry Council being concerned about the destruction of the industry and he has stated that the opposition seeks to ensure that we will have a viable buffalo industry in the future. I would like to inform honourable members of some information that has been received from the Buffalo Industry Council. I will refer to excerpts from a policy document that was passed unanimously at an extraordinary general meeting of the Buffalo Industry Council on Friday 12 May.

The document includes procedures and policy of the Buffalo Industry Council. It clearly indicates that the Buffalo Industry Council accepts the Morrell Report which describes the problems facing the industry in a clear and concise way. I commend both the Buffalo Industry Council and the officers of my department who, over the last few months, have spent considerable time together endeavouring to put in place a mechanism to help the buffalo industry through the BTEC program and to ensure that we have a viable buffalo industry after 1992.

Procedures outlined by the Buffalo Industry Council include the gamma interferon test which is currently being trialed. The council states: 'Gamma interferon tests are to be trialed on buffalo in controlled herds as well as feral de-stockers as the stress situation is different between these 2 and it is understood stress is a critical factor in this test'. That factor was brought out in the Morrell Report, as I recall. It is an indicator that both the department and the industry have the ability to get together and address the concerns of the industry.

Item 8 of the document states that the president of the BIC should attend meetings of the Northern Territory BTEC Committee as an official observer. I have no hesitation in approving such a request. I think it would considerably assist liaison between the BTEC Committee in the Northern Territory and the Buffalo Industry Council.

Mr Speaker, item 1 of the council's policy states that 'the BIC supports the national BTEC program and the impending-free target date of 1992 provided that it can be demonstrated that there will be a viable buffalo industry post-1992'. I emphasise that the BIC supports the target date of 1992.

Item 2, referring to properties without existing deferrals, states that 'bush destocking be deferred on infected properties until the 28 September 1989 where a genuine commitment to testing and the aims of the national BTEC can be demonstrated'. That point has been agreed to by officers of the department and people in the industry and, of course, it is a matter that is open to negotiation. If pastoralists do not wish to meet that 28 September date and wish to enhance their program by getting it through earlier, they have the option to do so.

Item 5 of the policy reads: 'Every effort must be made to retain the monitored negative status of buffalo wherever such status occurs. This includes fencing and monitoring the herds involved'.

Item 13 says that 'the industry supports the formation of a joint buffalo industry NT government working party on buffalo to include the Buffalo Industry Council, NT government, federal RTEC and ANPWS, to ensure that the disease TB is eliminated. The NT government must include animal production officers with experience and knowledge of good buffalo husbandry practices'. The industry group has virtually been formed.

Those points clearly illustrate the degree of cooperation between the department and the Buffalo Industry Council. They clearly show just how out of touch the Leader of the Opposition and the opposition spokesman for primary industry and fisheries, the member for Stuart, are in relation to the buffalo industry and the pastoral industry generally in the Northern Territory.

On the question of naming people in this House, as the member for Stuart did yesterday, I think that that is a deplorable action to take. These names, as he has clearly illustrated this morning ...

Mr Smith: Tell Alan Perrin that.

Mr REED: I am coming to that shortly. The names were mentioned in a preliminary police report. They were mentioned in allegations that were subsequently investigated thoroughly by Commonwealth and Territory authorities, as the member for Stuart is aware. I quote from a letter of 5 May from Mr John Kerin, the federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, to the Chief Minister: 'The police investigations were conducted by the Northern Territory government in parallel with financial management and audit reviews initiated by the Commonwealth'. The concerns held by the member for Stuart are not held by the federal minister.

Mr Ede: Rubbish.

Mr REED: Mr Speaker, over the last few weeks, we have heard some disgraceful comments from the member for Stuart. He has made unfounded allegations. In particular, he has made suggestions about people who were mentioned in the report containing allegations which were not substantiated in the second police report. He has suggested that the people mentioned in the report are big fish and prominent members of the CLP. The line-up now includes the member for Stuart. He has adopted the disgraceful practice of naming people and he now has to tell us the rest. He has to tell us who the big fish are. Yesterday, he named Mr Hoar. Is he a big fish? Are the other people that the member for Stuart intends to name big fish? What about the prominent members of the CLP? Are the people who are to be named prominent members of the CLP?

The member for Stuart has to come out with all the facts. He has made allegations about big fish. He has alleged that they are prominent members of the CLP. When he names people in the shelter of this House and does not have the guts to name them outside it, he has to give us the facts. When he names people, he has to give us the rest of the information. He cannot continue to hide behind the shelter that is provided by this House.

Mr Speaker, I have a special request to the member for Stuart. Last week, he attended another police briefing in relation to this matter. On that occasion, he chose to take his lawyer with him. I ask the member for Stuart

to table the advice that his legal adviser has provided to him in relation to this matter. Let us see what his lawyer has said to him. Let us get to the bottom of it all now rather than dragging it out for 5 or 6 days. Let him come up with the facts now. If he has written advice from his lawyer in relation to these matters, let us see it. The member for Stuart is clearly in the line-up now. He has to have the guts to come up with the facts. He has to tell us who the big fish are. He has to tell us who the prominent members of the CLP named in the reports are. When he names people, he has to give us all of the facts because they are the allegations which he himself has made and which have not been tested. If he does not do so, he will be branded as a coward and a liar forever. That is the clear implication which the member for Stuart faces. He now has the opportunity to clear his name.

The Leader of the Opposition interjected earlier in reference to a debate last night about Mr Alan Perrin. I took particular interest in that debate last night. The Leader of the Opposition was very upset. He accused the government of making a political attack, of selective use of documents and all sorts of things.

Mr Smith: Yes, I did.

Mr REED: He did not realise that what the opposition has been doing for the last 6 months exactly parallels what he accused the Minister for Education of doing in last night's debate.

Mr Smith: There is a basic difference.

Mr REED: It was the most gross case of doubletalk that one could come across. The Leader of the Opposition stood here and said that an investigation had been undertaken and Mr Perrin must now be cleared.

Mr Smith: That is right. He was.

Mr REED: The Leader of the Opposition failed to say that, as the Minister for Education explained, processes had been put in place subsequent to the investigation. Mr Speaker, exactly the same thing happened with BTEC.

The member for Stuart referred to files in the department. The review took into account the fact that the processes had to be upgraded. That is what happened. Exactly the same criteria apply to the comments of the Leader of the Opposition last night. He cannot have it both ways. He cannot use that argument in the case of Alan Perrin in one instance and ignore what the member for Stuart is doing in relation to BTEC. The actions are in direct conflict. I again challenge the member for Stuart to come up with the facts or to be branded as a coward and a liar forever.

Family Planning Clinics

Mr COLLINS to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I ask this question on behalf of a couple of very concerned parents. What right in law do family planning clinics have to put 14-year-old girls on the contraceptive pill without their parents' consent or knowledge?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, firstly let me state that family planning clinics are not staffed by public servants. Of course, doctors employed at these clinics are

bound by the usual ethics of their profession. Whether or not doctors prescribe the pill to young ladies without parental consent or knowledge is entirely up to the doctors concerned. Whilst the Department of Health and Community Services contributes to the funding of the clinics, they certainly are not in a position to dictate to medical practitioners how they should go about their work.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Master Media Contract

Mr COULTER (Deputy Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, in response to the Leader of the Opposition's question regarding the master media contract, I have been advised by the general secretary of the CLP that the management committee of the CLP has not appointed Mattingly Woollard Cawrse as its advertising agency. Mattingly Woollard Cawrse was successful several months ago in securing, through competitive tender, the Northern Territory government's master media contract. This is designed to create cost-saving efficiencies in media buying and hence savings to the taxpayer. The agency's contractual relationship with the government is not, and never will be, contingent on any other business relationship that the agency has or may enter into.

I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper. In doing so, could we send a cheerio to Donald Dale in the hospital. Once again, we hope he gets well soon.

Members: Hear, hear!

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Giles House

Mr POOLE (A/Health and Community Services): Mr Speaker, I rise to answer a question that was asked by the member for MacDonnell yesterday with regard to recruitment of staff for Giles House. The suggestion by the member for MacDonnell that a person with a prior criminal conviction was employed at Giles House is not correct. Clearly, the member has received false information.

Let me say, however, that a person was employed as a casual worker in Giles House in February and was later found to have had a case against him proven without any conviction being recorded. Prior to that person commencing duties, the police had been requested to perform a check for any record of prior conviction. The person's previous supervisor was contacted for a recommendation and advised that a police check had not discovered prior convictions. The person was highly recommended by his previous employer who comes from a reputable Alice Springs organisation. An interstate fingerprint check initially indicated clearance. It was later found that, while a conviction had not been recorded against the person for a charge laid in 1982, the offence had been proven and the person was placed on a 12-month good behaviour bond. Due to the circumstances of the offence, the person's casual employment - and I stress the word 'casual' - was terminated on 20 April 1989.

Procedures will not be changed but action has been taken to arrange for speedy name checks with the police. It is often necessary to do that when there are sudden staff shortages and casual staff need to be employed. Certainly, no permanent staff are employed until all checks are fully completed.

Beatrice Hill Rehabilitation Project

Mr SMITH to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Does the minister accept that the go-slow unit at Beatrice Hill Rehabilitation Project is a throwback to convict days and is a completely inhumane facility and will he today order that it be demolished forthwith?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not accept the comments of the Leader of the Opposition at all. I think that he is quite aware, or should be aware, that the minister will be returning to work on Monday. I have asked for a full report from the department. I suggest that one of the first things the minister will do when he returns to work is to investigate the allegations regarding Beatrice Hill and study the report requested from the department.

Berrimah Road Intersection

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Some of my constituents have commercial operations near the Berrimah crossroads. The increase in traffic in that area during the last 6 months has been such that they have drawn it to the attention of the Darwin City Council.

Mr Coulter: I blame the Trade Development Zone.

Mr FIRMIN: Yes, it is too good. It is going so well.

Has the minister's department arrived at a solution to the problems and has it requested the Darwin City Council to rearrange the parking under its control to alleviate the potentially dangerous situation that has developed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the fact that the Berrimah Road Stuart Highway intersection is somewhat congested is all good news. As the minister responsible for the Trade Development Zone will acknowledge, much of that good news is that things are starting to happen in that region. This is not only a result of the additional activities through the zone itself. The Berrimah light industrial area contains a large number of operators who, over the last 6 months, have become increasingly busy. I spent a day or so down there in the last 3 or 4 months visiting various businesses and the response from most of them was: 'It is great to see you, but I am a little busy'.

As a result, there has been a fair bit of pressure of traffic at the intersection of the Stuart Highway and Berrimah Road. During the last 3 months, various people have made representations in relation to the traffic congestion. Officers of the department have a long-term plan for the major upgrading of that intersection and we envisage that it will be on the program during the next few years. That is a major upgrading exercise which will cater not only for the industrial area but also the traffic between Palmerston, the northern suburbs and the city.

The immediate solution is that, at a cost of approximately \$100 000, we will be introducing a left turn out of Berrimah Road to the Stuart Highway, heading towards the city. That will be a controlled left turn, giving much

greater access to traffic coming around that corner. Because of potential conflicts from other traffic directions, it is not possible to implement a turn left at any time arrangement. However, I am led to believe that the solution will alleviate a great deal of the congestion.

One of the honourable member's constituents, who has a shop adjacent to the intersection, has had considerable trouble with traffic backing up in front of his property. Much of that problem will be eliminated by this left turn. At the same time, there is a need for some work to be done on his car-parking area. An inspection by Darwin City Council and Transport and Works officers indicated that much of the work that had been done previously resulted in further problems. The proprietor of the shop is looking for some reversal of the parking situation - nose-in parking as opposed to nose-out parking - and there is a need to remove a section of footpath in front of his shop to provide sufficient space. There is a need for some 'Keep Clear' or 'No Standing' signs. All that is the responsibility of the city council. Officers of the Department of Transport and Works are more than happy to provide technical advice to the city council in regard to those matters. We will be monitoring the situation and the council's response over the next few weeks to ensure that the good news story of the Berrimah area does not result in disadvantage to the proprietor of the shop adjacent to the intersection, Mr Yuen.

Beatrice Hill Rehabilitation Project

Mr SMITH to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I refer the minister to my previous question and his response, which was a blatant cop-out. Will he at least provide a guarantee that nobody will be placed in the go-slow area at Beatrice Hill until the minister, who I am sure will be prepared to make a decision, returns to work?

ANSWER

I will not provide that guarantee to the Leader of the Opposition. I do not think it is my role to interfere in the administration of Beatrice Hill.

Mr Smith: What is the point in being a minister?

Mr POOLE: Mr Speaker, I will wait ...

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr POOLE: I will wait for advice from the department before I consider the subject and, if there is a decision to be made, I will make that decision.

Uluru - Returns to Aboriginal People

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

This question could equally be directed to the Minister for Tourism. In asking it, I trust that the member for MacDonnell will refrain from his compulsion to interject in a matter that deals with his own electorate.

Is the minister aware that the Central Land Council has commissioned a study by 2 economists from the University of Sydney into the financial returns

available to Aboriginal people at Uluru from the tourist boom of recent years? Is he further aware that, according to southern newspaper reports, the Northern Territory government is being apportioned blame for those returns not being at the level expected by Aboriginal people? Does the minister accept the premise that Uluru traditional owners have somehow been diddled out of their rightful returns through actions and policies of the Northern Territory government at Yulara?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer is no. I most certainly do not accept that view. It is outrageous that such a proposition can be put forward. As all honourable members and most Territorians will know, the Uluru traditional owners flatly rejected any association with the Territory government in connection with Uluru arrangements. Our position was, and still is, that the federal government rode roughshod in 1985 over Territory interests in dealing directly with Uluru traditional owners and vesting ownership of Uluru with the traditional owners. All Territory efforts to participate were rejected out of hand. The traditional owners decided to go exclusively with Commonwealth administration and to make all their arrangements with the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Included in the total rejection package was an offer by the Territory to set up a Yulara entrance station in 1984 to act as an information centre for Yulara visitors and as a collection point for fees set by the traditional owners. They did not want to know about it and we were told, in firm terms, to keep our noses out of their business. That is exactly what we were told. Now it seems that the Central Land Council is complaining that the traditional owners are not getting their fair share from the visitors at Uluru and Yulara. It is claimed that many visitors are evading paying Aboriginal fees. The traditional owners, advised by the Central Land Council, made their own bed and now they must lie in it. We told them at the time that we could do it better than the ANPWS, but they chose not to accept our views.

I can say, however, that there were some members of the Mutitjulu community who wanted the Conservation Commission there. I happened to be Minister for Conservation for 14 days at the time, and they were very proud of the uniform which the Conservation Commission people were to wear. They were extremely proud of the eagle badge which was to be worn on their sleeves and it would appear today ...

Mr Bell: Oh, come on.

Mr COULTER: They were. That came from them. The honourable member opposite may like to go and ask them.

Mr Ede: You are still handing out candies.

Mr COULTER: They have been given the green shirts of the ANPWS and they want to swap them because they are being diddled. They were done in the eye. This is a laughing matter for members opposite. It is good to see the member for MacDonnell in hysterics about it. I will send the Mutitjulu people a copy of this question and answer so that they can ask him some questions about it. He might like to address them about the extent to which they have been done in the eye by the ANPWS and the federal government and how they are stuck with them because of the advice which the Central Land Council gave them, which was to stay away from the Territory government.

It is good to see that common sense has prevailed in the Katherine Gorge area and that the people there have come up with a good deal. Maybe, just maybe, we had to have the example of Uluru so that people could understand. That provides an example of the Commonwealth model operating in the Territory and how it compares with the way the Territory government works through the Conservation Commission. All is not lost in this fiasco. People can see how the Commonwealth has got at the Mutitjulu people at Uluru with its many promises. We told them what would happen. The Commonwealth promised us that \$70m would be spent on development in Kakadu and all we got was 3 barbecue plates. We told the Mutitjulu people: 'Don't trust this mob because they are not men of their word'. They replied that they had the opposite advice from the Central Land Council. We said: 'All right, do it your way'. The Central Land Council has now commissioned a study to find out how it has been shot in the neck. Its members are all surprised. They were told from the very outset that that is what would happen.

I wonder how much advice the Mutitjulu people received from the member for MacDonnell in terms of which way to go, in terms of the Northern Territory or the Commonwealth model. It would not be difficult to check the Hansard to see what contribution the member for MacDonnell made in terms of his advice to the Mutitjulu community. I will be doing that in due course and it may be the subject of a speech in an adjournment debate.

Mr Bell: I will have a chance to talk about it too.

Mr COULTER: It is outrageous that the Central Land Council seeks to blame the Territory's success with the Yulara resort, which is not even in the national park, for the less than satisfactory circumstances it is complaining about. The Territory has made a success out of Yulara in the face of continued opposition from the Central Land Council and without any cooperation whatsoever from it. If the traditional owners are dissatisfied, they must deal directly with the Commonwealth and the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. We have no part in Uluru National Park arrangements, at the specific request of the traditional owners. If they want to ditch those arrangements and renegotiate terms with the Territory government, I can assure them of much more satisfactory terms and a better deal.

The member for MacDonnell might like to take that information back to his electorate and try again to get it right for the people whom he represents. That is our offer to them. To say that the Territory government has done anything to disadvantage the Mutitjulu people is a total falsehood which we reject outright. We offer the opportunity for those people to come back and speak to us again and to get it right this time. As we have proven in the case of the Jawoyn people, we can get it right.

Comics Distributed in Aboriginal Communities

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The minister is no doubt well aware of an article in Bushranger which alleges that some comics of a rather disturbing nature are being circulated in Aboriginal communities. Would the minister confirm whether such comics exist and, if they do, will he advise whether they have been printed or distributed by staff of schools under his control. If so, what action will he take against people who have been involved?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Indeed, there is such a document circulating throughout the Aboriginal communities and it is a disgrace. I am sure that honourable members would also agree that it is a disgrace. I wish to take this opportunity to distance the government and, in particular, our school system from this publication. I am holding up a copy of the comic that is being distributed widely throughout Aboriginal schools. On the back, it says: 'Black Australia is one. Who are you to question our heritage when you yourselves are descendants of whores, convicts and others? There is no white Australia'. I will read out some of this nonsense:

IT'S ABORIGINAL! - WE HAVE SURVIVED

° So tell me who put this comic together?

Aboriginal people, of course!!

° True, you mean by themselves, not funded!

Yeh, I sure do, just goes to show, we can do anything!

° Looks great, who was involved?

Well, Kathy Kum-Sing took it on to get around a bit, you know how it is, here, there and everywhere. She talked to a few Kooris who then yarned to some others who in turn let some Murri mob know, you know, Vine stuff!

° Yeh, sure do! Listen, how about Aboriginal organisations - were they contacted?

Yeh, Kum-Sing said she talked to people from the AECG, ABC, Radio Redfern, Gullama, Murrawina (Redfern), Gujaga, Blackbooks, AMS, ALS, TUCAR, Dance Theatre, Tranby, some land councils, and I guess a few others.

° Well, I reckon it's just too Deadly and you mob should be proud of yourselves!

Gee, thanks bud, enjoy reading it, and let other blackfullas know too, it's free for us - \$2 for Gubbas!!

Mr Speaker, I understand that this load of nonsense is funded entirely through donations. Words such as 'koori' are foreign to us in the Northern Territory. It sounds like Michael Mansell and his crowd from the other states ...

Mr Bell interjecting.

Mr HARRIS: Do you support this sort of nonsense? I am surprised.

It says: 'This comic was funded entirely through donations and it proves that Kooris can do it the way they want, without the burden of losing control through funding. Streetwize Comics is owed lots and lots of special thanks for their total support throughout the whole project'. We are told that: 'Streetwize Youth Rights Comics is a Redfern Legal Centre Publishing Ltd project in conjunction with Marrickville Legal Centre and the Legal Aid

Commission of New South Wales'. It goes on: 'Eric Aarons and Spot Press are also owed a heap of thanks for their belief in Kooris and the project. Special thanks to all those contributors who also made this comic possible'.

A list of groups which assisted is attached and it makes very interesting reading. The groups include the Barkly Aboriginal Language Centre, the Australian Coalition of Disarmament and Peace, the Electrical Trades Union of Australia (WA Branch), the Feminist Bookshop, Midnight Oil, NSW Teachers Federation, People for Nuclear Disarmament (Balmain), Tennant Creek Peace Group, Jo Vallentine (Western Australian Senator for Nuclear Disarmament), the WA branch of ACOA, and so on. A range of other groups and individuals have also contributed to this disgraceful document.

In answer to the honourable member's question, it appears that the comic itself has had wide distribution and most Aboriginal schools have received copies. Can I say that there has been some violent reaction on the part of some teachers. For example, Finke received some 30 to 40 copies of this document and the head teacher immediately burned the lot. At Ti Tree, copies were confiscated by the principal and kept in his office. The department is still investigating the situation in other schools. It is about 3 or 4 weeks since the comic was circulated.

Mr Speaker, I can assure you that the general response from schools is that the teachers were very concerned and appalled by the contents of this comic. The normal 'Streetwise' comic holds little interest for Aboriginal students as it is directed at urban and city teenagers. The comic is a disgraceful publication and I am sure that all honourable members of this Assembly would be totally opposed to its contents. I emphasise, once again, that the government distances itself totally from such a document and all of those who are distributing such comics or information here in the Northern Territory. I wish they would keep their garbage to themselves and to the territories or states they come from and keep out of the Northern Territory, because we do not want any of that nonsense here. I can assure all honourable members that I will be making sure that that publication is not able to be used in the schools and does not go into the schools.

Members: Hear, hear!

BTEC

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

Given that the honourable minister has now had 5 weeks to examine files and documents, he will have recognised that Mr A of Station B, in my speech last Tuesday, was in fact Mr Warriner of Newcastle Waters Station.

Mr Perron: What a hero!

Mr Hatton: Gutless wonder.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Nightcliff will withdraw that remark.

Mr HATTON: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Mr EDE: I now ask the honourable minister if he can confirm that approval for the BTEC program on Newcastle Waters was rammed through in the face of solid opposition from all the BTEC staff and, as a result, a program that was estimated originally to cost \$42 000 over 2 years had run up costs of \$1.2m

by mid-1984, an overrun in excess of \$0.75m. Would the honourable minister advise why the program was pushed through in the face of such opposition?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have told the member for Stuart on a number of occasions that the matters which he is raising have been fully investigated. He has copies of both the first police report in which allegations were made and the second police report which fully investigated those allegations and found that there were no grounds for prosecution. I have knowledge of the matters that the member for Stuart raises and I cannot provide him with any further assistance in the muck-raking he is engaged in.

Year 10 Assessment Package

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is the minister aware of the motions passed at the COGSO meeting in Alice Springs last weekend on the subject of the Year 10 Assessment package and does the minister intend to reconsider his decision to introduce that package later this year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware of the motion passed by COGSO at the recent conference and I make it clear, as honourable members are aware, that the decision to introduce the assessment package was taken following extensive consultation. The decision will remain. It is very disappointing to note that some people are putting a great deal of energy into an effort to reopen the debate on the Year 10 Assessment package. I listened with interest this morning to comments made on radio by the President of COGSO, Richard Creswick. I was disappointed that, firstly, he failed to acknowledge the very lengthy process of consultation on this issue since 1987 and, secondly, that he failed to acknowledge that the actual external testing component really only relates to 30% of the English and mathematics assessment. The main point that needs to be stressed is that the decision was reached in a correct manner. No one can deny that. I can recall the 1986 split into junior and senior high schools when the same thing applied. The government took the decision to introduce secondary colleges after lengthy consultations and, a few months later, everyone started to really kick and scratch.

It is also interesting to note that, in his comments this morning, the President of COGSO mentioned that the secretary of the department, Mr Geoff Spring, addressed the conference, together with Dr Harry Payne who is the Chairman of the Board of Studies. I make the comment here that officers of the department are responsible for implementing government policy. Their role is not to discuss the philosophy of whether an approach is appropriate or not. The government has made its decision in relation to policy and the department is implementing that policy. Officers of the department will continue to provide information in relation to the procedures and processes to be followed in relation to implementation. I again urge members to take the opportunity, if they have queries, to contact myself or the department to arrange a briefing.

Mr Speaker, the other point that the President of COGSO did not mention was that the President of the Northern Territory Teachers Federation, Mike Bradley, also addressed the conference and, after giving me a considerable spray, promoted his campaign for a review of the decision to

introduce the external assessment package. Mr Speaker, I can assure you that that will not occur. It is also interesting to note that, during the course of this morning's interview, Mr Creswick mentioned that several motions were put forward relating to the Year 10 assessment package. There were 2 motions relating to that issue. The first ...

Mr Ede: There were 3.

Mr HARRIS: Well, I have 2 here. Perhaps, during the adjournment debate or at some other time, the honourable member can inform me of any others.

The council asked the Minister for Education to reverse the government's decision to introduce external examinations in mathematics and English for Year 10 students in 1989. Secondly - and I am totally disgusted by this, as were the parents at that particular meeting - a motion was moved that the council should advise parents of students in Year 10 to take steps to frustrate the attempts of the Department of Education to introduce external examinations in mathematics and English. COGSO was to provide specific advice on action for parents to take. Goodness me! Who was to inform them on how they would frustrate government? Mr Speaker, is it any wonder that I am most concerned about the operations of COGSO at present?

Mr Ede: Hang on. The motion was defeated.

Mr HARRIS: It was defeated and so it should have been. It should not have come up. I think the member for Stuart is missing the point and so is the Leader of the Opposition. If he wants to be seen as a leader of government at some stage, he should listen to what I am saying and take those points up.

It is interesting to note that the person who moved that particular motion is one of the people who is actively trying to stir up trouble at Sanderson. Fortunately, as the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Stuart have mentioned, the parents at the meeting were concerned and said: 'Look, we are not in this business. This organisation is not for that sort of thing'. I totally support their views in that regard.

We are now talking about the process and procedures to be followed. The decision has been taken and I make that very clear. Because a load of nonsense is being spread around at the moment, I have written to all councils along these lines:

During recent weeks, there have been misleading comments regarding government policy on Year 10 assessment. You would be aware the decision to introduce the new Year 10 assessment package was made only after an extensive consultation process which began back in 1987. That decision to introduce a system of assessment recommended by the Northern Territory Board of Studies stands.

In order to clarify the process of implementation to be followed by the Department of Education, I have asked the Chairman of the Board of Studies, Dr Harry Payne, to arrange to meet your council to clarify any matters regarding the testing process. I emphasise that school programs will not be disrupted. No students will be disadvantaged. The existing moderation process will not be threatened and the school year will not be shortened.

This is a serious matter and I view it with great concern. The incorrect information being distributed by various groups and individuals could disrupt the work of students. During the next few weeks, I will be circulating an information paper to all parents to clarify this point. If, after receiving this pamphlet, you have any further questions, please contact the Department of Education or Dr Harry Payne on 89 6020.

Yours sincerely,
Tom Harris.

Mr Speaker, together with those letters, I will be enclosing a copy of the Year 10 external assessment regulation booklet. I will be giving the same package to all honourable members so that they will be able to get right across this issue. The external assessment regulation booklet gives all the details about assessors, confidentiality, conflict of interest, research, control of information, country participation by students out in the bush, grade determinations for recording on the JSSC, special provisions for impairment and misadventure and a range of other matters. They are all covered in the booklet, which has already been distributed to the principals of high schools, secondary colleges area schools and other management groups.

I will also be sending out the format of the external assessment papers in English and the format of external assessment papers in mathematics. In addition, I will also be circulating special provisions in Year 10 external assessment. All of that information is available and a great deal of work has been done by the department. I wish to thank all people who have been involved, particularly the members of the Board of Studies. It has been a very difficult exercise and it is not being made any easier by people who are carrying on with a load of nonsense about how the decision will disrupt the whole system.

Mr Speaker, I make it very clear that the decision was taken after extensive consultation. The government has made that decision. I also emphasise the point that the exams will be appropriate for all students and they will test only those items ...

Mr Ede interjecting.

Mr HARRIS: Just sit down and listen instead of spreading all this nonsense.

Students will be tested only on those items which they have in fact studied. I make that very clear. The reason for September being the scheduled time for the examinations is to allow sufficient time for the gathering of all the information so that it can be provided to students for their use at the end of the year. The way people are carrying on at the present time is a load of nonsense.

I know that there are people who are philosophically opposed to external examinations and assessment. I reiterate that we have had a great deal of support from parents, industry and others. I repeat that the examinations will not disadvantage anyone. In fact, I believe that they will advantage many people. The decision has been taken and I urge all honourable members who have queries to take up my offer to have a full briefing with the Chairman of the Board of Studies, Dr Harry Payne, and to stop all this nonsense. Otherwise, the only ones to be disadvantaged will be the students.

Duties of Public Service Commissioner

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LABOUR, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES and LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Does the Public Service Commissioner have the responsibility of reporting to parliament his activities as described under section 14(2) of the Public Service Act? For the minister's benefit, section 14(2) of the Public Service Act refers to the Public Service Commissioner's responsibility for 'the efficient and effective management of non-human resources within the public service'.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer to that question must necessarily be very similar to the answer I gave to the same question at about this time last year. I suppose there is something that prompts the member for Nhulunbuy to ask this question at about this time every year. In fact, the responsibility for the management of both human and non-human resources is delegated to chief executive officers, as it has been for many years. Indeed, that is what occurs in most public services and most governments throughout this country.

Mr Leo: Well, you are in breach of your own legislation.

Mr McCARTHY: Mr Speaker, there is no breach of the Public Service Act. I have been through this ad nauseam with the honourable member in the past. If he can come up with something which indicates that the Public Service Commissioner is not performing his designated task, I would be happy to talk to him about it at some time. I point out, however, that we have delegated authority in our public service. The responsibility for 'non-human resources', to use the phrase used by the member for Nhulunbuy, is in the hands of chief executive officers.

Trade Development Zone

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Mr Speaker, all members will be aware of the recent advertising campaign conducted on behalf of the Trade Development Zone. Can he advise the House of the rationale behind that campaign and whether or not it was considered to be successful?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. He has indeed raised an interesting topic. Honourable members will be aware that, at the last sittings, the Trade Development Zone certainly was not the flavour of the moment. Censure motions were moved. The member for Barkly suggested that, in relation to the Trade Development Zone, and in particular its consultant K.K. Yeung, large amounts of money were being misappropriated. We had arguments about when an audit was not an audit and all sorts of other pedantic rubbish. The Leader of the Opposition has been a critic of the Trade Development Zone for a long period of time but, all of a sudden, there was dead silence from the benches opposite. People move out of the room at the very mention of the Trade Development Zone. He wants to distance himself from it at 100 miles an hour and he is probably just passing through Katherine at the moment.

The Leader of the Opposition has acted for some considerable time as if it was certain knowledge that the Trade Development Zone was a political liability for the government and a political asset for himself. As in many other matters, his political judgment is faulty. He may well have realised that himself by now. The Labor Party conducted a public opinion poll this year and it is likely that the Trade Development Zone issues were canvassed in that poll - they certainly should have been. The Leader of the Opposition's polls, of course, are a matter for him, just as our polls are a matter for us.

However, for the benefit of honourable members, I will table the results of a survey of 400 people in the Darwin area conducted by the national advertising company, Mattingly Woollard Cawrse.

Mr Leo: Who paid for it, Barry?

Mr COULTER: This survey was conducted on 5 April and 6 April.

I thank the member for Nhulunbuy for his interest. I know that he is leaving us; he could not get preselection for his seat. I know that he is very pedantic about costs. Soon he will be off to Queensland and we thank him for his presence. The fact is that the truth costs and you have to go out and find it. The real answers are in the truth. If he is prepared to sit there and listen ...

Mr Leo: Table it.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, it was part of the advertising campaign that was recently conducted. It was the follow-up to determine the success or otherwise of that campaign. That would be normal with any advertising campaign to see if it was effective or whether we had wasted our money.

Mr Leo: Publicly funded.

Mr COULTER: Publicly funded, Mr Speaker. I intend to table the document so that the member opposite can read it thoroughly. He might like to pass it to the Leader of the Opposition who has just returned and who will see in it another reason why Brian might get up in 2 months' time. The member for Nhulunbuy might add a postscript: 'P.S. I will not be voting'.

The survey was conducted on 5 and 6 April purely to test the reaction to the Trade Development Zone advertising campaign. It contains some very interesting data. 'Question 1: Did you see the Trade Development Zone commercial on television?' The answer is that 73% of the people had seen it. 'Question 2: Did you hear the TDZ commercial on the radio?' 61% of the people said they had. 'Question 3: Do you think you should be told about the Trade Development Zone?' Remember that the Leader of the Opposition requested that we remove the commercial because it was politicising the Trade Development Zone. The member for Barkly said that it was disgraceful and he used phrases like 'down the gurgler'. It will be no surprise to this side of the House that the people whom he represents did not agree with him.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Despite the fact that some members present might not want to hear the reply of the minister, I am certain that people in the public gallery and those residents of Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Darwin and Katherine who listen to the radio broadcast and contact my office would like to hear this minister's response and, indeed, the response of all ministers to questions. I ask all members to listen in silence.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, 82% of these 400 people said that they should be told about the Trade Development Zone. They wanted to know more about the Trade Development Zone. 10% said no and 8% said they did not have an opinion on the matter. 'Question 4: What did the commercial say to you - the TDZ is good for Darwin, the TDZ is not good for Darwin, or it does not matter?' The answer was that it was good for Darwin. 78% of them said that it was good for Darwin.

Mr Speaker, I draw the close attention of the Leader of the Opposition to this question. 'Question 5: Do you think that the Trade Development Zone has had a fair go?' 35% of the people said yes and 65% said that it had not had a fair go.

Mr Smith interjecting.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, he can make as many interjections as he likes because I have always said that the success of the Trade Development Zone would be another nail in his coffin. Unfortunately, it appears that those nails are going in at an alarming rate.

I repeat that 65% of the people interviewed did not believe the Trade Development Zone had received a fair go. 'Question 6: Would you like to know more about the Trade Development Zone?' 61% of the people said yes and 28% said that they would not. 'Question 7: What were the commercials about?' 48% said jobs and 18% said that they were about money spent in Darwin. The people agree that the TDZ is about jobs, which is what we have always said.

The man who was much maligned by the Leader of the Opposition was none other than Ray McHenry. He has suffered from personal attacks and being named in this House by the Leader of the Opposition. Just as our judge, the member for Stuart, today named Mr Warriner as a villain in our neighbourhood, Mr McHenry has been named by the Leader of the Opposition. 18% of the people said that the commercial was about Ray McHenry. I am grateful that Ray McHenry is the man that he is. I returned recently from a trip to Asia with Mr McHenry. Many Asian people think the Trade Development Zone and the Northern Territory is about Ray McHenry. I am proud to travel with that man as he goes about his job of providing jobs for the Northern Territory. It is interesting to note that our unemployment rate of 4.9% is the lowest in Australia. We will have problems next year. We will embark on a campaign to lift our population by 5% in order to overcome such problems as an inability to find a large enough work force for the zone. It is a problem that we relish and we will solve it by recruiting people to the Northern Territory. However, we need an industrial base to enable us to do that. We cannot go on building houses for the sake of building houses. We need a viable industrial base and the Trade Development Zone is the key to that.

Our survey, of course, does not have the status of a Morgan Gallup Poll. I stress, however, that it was conducted by a private company and not by the government. The government had no prior knowledge that it would be conducted. It certainly indicates general trends and it indicates that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Barkly have been barking up the wrong tree. I think that tree has been subjected to a number of other indignities by the member for Barkly.

The Trade Development Zone is not wet in spite of what the member for Barkly has tried to do to it. It will be a success story that he will regret forever and a day. It is no wonder that the Leader of the Opposition is being questioned and judged by his colleagues. He got it wrong. I have been

telling him and his colleagues for 18 months that their campaign against the TDZ has been misplaced. The opposition has only 2 courses open to it in this matter: either it comes onside with the government and helps to promote the zone, its obvious benefits to the Territory and its rapidly increasing work force or it continues to snipe from the sidelines and suffers the inevitable electoral backlash. Better still, the opposition could just shut up about it and leave the Trade Development Zone to the experts.

Strip Shows on Licensed Premises

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TOURISM

I ask the minister about the hoteliers' self-imposed code of ethics in relation to strip shows in hotels. How is the code working? Have there been any infringements and, if so, what is the Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission doing about them?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, with regard to the rules and regulations regarding strip shows, the government has taken strong action through the Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission. In response to media comment and comments made in this House during the last sittings, the commission took the decision on 13 February 1989 to submit to me a set of guidelines which were to be incorporated as part of the licensee's licence conditions.

The guidelines were prepared in 2 parts. Signage is to be displayed and the format of media advertising is to be agreed on. That is to say, where an establishment advertises a strip show, there must be a warning that the show might offend. There is a set of conditions under which shows are to be conducted. They are much the same as the conditions talked about previously in this House and they include specific references to the standards which are to be adhered to by establishments. For example, the shows must not be held in public bars. They have to be in areas that are closed off. There must be signage displayed on all doors that lead into the area warning people that the show might offend them. People then have the choice of entering or not. There is to be no audience participation. The entertainers are not allowed to touch members of the audience in any way. Various other matters are included in the conditions, as I believe the honourable member is aware.

At the end of the day, these terms and conditions mean that, if the commission receives complaints from the general public and those complaints are substantiated, the licensee will forfeit his licence. Certainly, the commission intends to enforce those conditions most rigidly. At the moment, no complaints have come through to me about the breaking of these rules and regulations by any establishment. We are determined to ensure that performances of this sort are conducted in a regulated manner. We will ensure that the industry plays its part by keeping in line with what could be called current moral standards.

Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to Order of the Day No 1 on the Notice Paper, the Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill. I ask the honourable minister to advise the House on how he intends to proceed with the amendments to the bill.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I seek your direction in respect of questions about a bill that is before the House today.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr DONDAS: Mr Speaker, I will rephrase the question. Is the honourable minister able to tell me how he intends to proceed with the amendments to the Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill, Serial 146?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, on Friday, I gave written advice to members opposite on how the government intended to proceed with the amendments to the Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill. In short, I intended to consolidate a number of proposed amendments into a freshly drafted bill. I then intended to move the suspension of standing orders to withdraw the present bill and replace it with the amended version. My intention in taking this course of action was to clarify the government's objectives in relation to amendments to the legislation and to allow a thorough and effective debate. Unfortunately, my proposal to deal with the bill in this manner has become, in itself, an issue of debate. In fact, the member for MacDonnell even wrote to me, asking me not to proceed with the course of moving the suspension of standing orders. I believe that this will only serve to cloud the more important issues relating to the bill which are to be considered by this parliament. Accordingly, I would like to advise honourable members that it is my intention to proceed with the bill presently before the House and, as a result of consultation with a range of Aboriginal communities and organisations since last October, I will be introducing a number of amendments during the committee stage of the bill later this week.

Mr Bell: You are joking!

Mr MANZIE: I intend to circulate the amendments to honourable members ...

Mr Bell: That was a wasted weekend on my part, wasn't it? Good grief!

Mr MANZIE: ... along with a copy of the consolidated bill. I expect the second reading to take place today.

Mr COULTER (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper. I also table the document I referred to earlier in responding to the question from the member for Karama regarding the Trade Development Zone.

Legislation on Containers

Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Will the government again consider the possibility of introducing deposit legislation on containers, along the lines of that in South Australia, as a means of keeping the Territory tidy?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this question should probably be directed to the Minister for Health and Community Services. I can say, however, that my understanding is that, as a matter of government policy, there are no proposals before us or being drawn up to introduce legislation along the lines suggested by the honourable member.

Effect of Rains on Territory Roads

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is the minister able to advise the House concerning the extent of damage caused to Territory roads by the recent rains?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, some early reports on damage to roads in central Australia indicated that our total repair bill might be \$3m or \$5m. The latest information from the department puts the total damage bill in the last 6 months in central Australia and in the Top End, where we have had an extensive wet season, at \$10.4m. That is a horrendous amount of money to find out of a limited road budget. Naturally enough, the Northern Territory government will be aiming to obtain the maximum possible return from the Commonwealth State Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements.

The damage has been so extensive that, in central Australia, we have utilised every available contractor and item of hire plant to start work on the repairs. It is anticipated that we will be able to complete only approximately half of those repairs this financial year. That means there will be some \$4m of repairs to be completed next financial year and, as a result, the return to the Northern Territory government from the federal scheme is likely to be less than half of the amount required. The necessity of finding an additional \$5m out of an extremely tight budget heightens our concern about road infrastructure and funding of road infrastructure from the federal government out of its 22.5¢ per litre fuel levy. The presumption on which most of the funding has occurred is that our existing road network is already in a satisfactory and adequate state. That is quite clearly not the case.

As the member for MacDonnell pointed out last night, in his electorate and other electorates people are still waiting for their roads to be brought up to a reasonable standard that would minimise outages as a result of flooding. The honourable member referred to the situation at Kulgera where tourists, freight forwarders and coaches were stranded for some considerable time. Local people in that area report that they have not seen a flood in Karinga Creek for 57 years.

Mr Bell: 25 years.

Mr FINCH: The honourable member says 25 years. I think he is probably not discriminating between relative sizes of floods.

The honourable member made great play about the technical feasibility of building a bridge over that creek. He said that a railway bridge had been constructed across that creek. He uses the term 'creek' fairly loosely. Obviously, in that area, the defining of creek beds and flows of rainfall is very difficult. The railway bridge was not constructed over what turned out to be the principal flow of the creek. In fact, it was some 100 m or 200 m off line. It is all very well for the honourable member to try to simplify these technically complex matters.

The department is looking at appropriate levels of flood protection on our main arterial roads and on some secondary roads. It is all a matter of balancing priorities. From memory, the total vote for works in the Top End and the Centre is \$10.4m, with \$8.6m for works in the Centre. That is a horrendous amount of money out of a capital works program which is normally in the order of \$40m.

Mr Speaker, I pay a great deal of credit to staff of the Department of Transport and Works who were on the job right from the start, moving equipment down by rail from Alice Springs. I understand that some of the fellows went for 48 hours or more without sleep trying to get the roads reopened. Thoughtless behaviour by some transport operators, who have driven on closed roads, has led to an aggravation of the damage. The honourable member made great play about roads being declared closed when they should have been open. It is a very vexed question. What may appear to be a perfectly trafficable road in a technical sense may not be so in a practical sense because of the saturation of the sub-grade. On the Yulara road and the Stuart Highway, a great deal of damage is done by coaches and trucks proceeding beyond 'road closed' signs. We are now examining the option of cost recovery in instances in which people deliberately and maliciously damage public assets. It is a matter of great seriousness.

I can assure honourable members that the matter of flood damage in central Australia is still very prominent. I commend the efforts not only of the Department of Transport and Works but the Minister for Tourism who, in his capacity as minister assisting the Chief Minister on central Australian affairs, moved quickly to ensure that tourists were assisted in evacuation either by rail or, in the case of some people at Yulara, by air, and ensured that people were inconvenienced to the minimum extent possible.

Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill

Mr LANHUPUY to CHIEF MINISTER

Given that the Chief Minister knows that Aborigines from all over the Northern Territory are now moving towards this Legislative Assembly, and given that they will demand of the Chief Minister full consultation on matters now before this House, what arrangements has he made to consult with them when they arrive and, if the Chief Minister has not made those arrangements, will he give this House full assurance that he will consult with them?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware of rumours and press reports that a large number of Aborigines have been encouraged to come to Darwin at this very time in order to participate in some sort of rally today. The sad part about it all, of

course, is that they appear to have been persuaded to come here by a couple of lies. That is most unfortunate because, if ever there was an area in which we wanted people to understand the situation clearly, it would be in communications between ourselves and Aborigines. It is a shame that various parties involved in this matter are trying to whip up emotional feeling on a false basis. I am sure that much more will be said about that during the next few days, both in the media and in this House.

I think that it is unfortunate that this action is being taken, although that is not because I believe that we will doubtless see something of a circus in the street as demonstrations proceed. I accept that as part of the democratic process in a free country where people can use many peaceful means to lobby to get their point across. The unfortunate aspect of this matter is that people who are participating in the protest have not been given the facts about the government's proposals in relation to the protection of sacred sites. They are coming here on the basis of a bunch of lies which have been peddled to them, and I am sure that they will be given that message during their stay here.

It is a fact that the protection of Aboriginal law and tradition depends significantly on European law. The present law governing these matters in the Northern Territory is the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act and, as honourable members are aware, what we are proposing will significantly improve that act. That view has not been put to Aborigines ...

Mr Lanhupuy: Are you going to tell them that when they come?

Mr PERRON: Mr Speaker, if the opportunity arises, I will address the group.

Mr Smith: Why don't you make an opportunity?

Mr PERRON: I will tell people the facts as I see them.

Freight Costs in the Northern Territory

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer the minister to continuing comment and debate about the relatively high cost of living in the Northern Territory and the contribution of freight costs and taxes to that cost. Can the minister outline the extent to which taxes and government charges contribute to freight costs in the Northern Territory and advise the House of what the Northern Territory government is doing to address this matter and achieve some alleviation of the cost disadvantages suffered by Northern Territory consumers?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, recently the Department of Transport and Works and a consultant prepared a submission to the Commission on Interstate Registration Charges. The report and review carried out by the department and its consultant covered a wider range of matters than simply registration charges. We felt that there were many components of the freight costing system which needed to be highlighted and, in fact, the report identified some extremely alarming statistics. For example, federal charges and taxes of one sort or another comprise 25% of the cost of operating a road train. When one appreciates that the federal government taxes those taxes, by applying a sales tax to goods on the supermarket shelves which have already been subject to the tax on road freight, one appreciates that the costs are even more horrendous.

More than a third of the total cost of transporting freight from interstate is made up of federal or Territory taxes and charges. I mention Territory charges deliberately because, when Northern Territory taxing and charging systems are measured against those of the federal government, there is a great disparity. Some of those charges are very well hidden by the federal government. They take the form of import levies and other charges on components and vehicles, not simply the registration system.

It is a well-known fact that Territory registration charges for motor vehicles are much lower than those which apply interstate or under the federal system. From memory, by comparison, a truck bringing goods up the Stuart Highway would suffer a federal or interstate registration fee of \$3500 to \$4500 compared with Territory registration fees of \$500 or \$600. That is the result of a deliberate policy adopted by this government, which is interested in seeing development of the north and wants charges on residents and developers to be reasonable. We need to be looking more closely at what the federal government system is.

The average cost per tonne of freight transported by road train from Brisbane to Darwin is something like \$305 all up. Of that \$305, \$113 is made up of federal and Territory charges. Some 92% of that \$113 comprises federal government charges and taxes. The other 8% represents Territory registration fees and the Territory fuel levy. I mention that deliberately, because when we look at the return to road funding from the horrendous amount charged by the federal government, we see that only 6% of the total charges associated with transport and freight goes back into the road system. On the other hand, Territory spending on the road system is 3½ times what it collects through transport and freight charges. The 2 contributions are worlds apart. Given such a disparity, I question the truthfulness of the federal government's claims that it is interested in the development of remote areas, the development of Australia's natural resources, and the welfare of people in remote areas, Aboriginal communities and communities up and down the Track. This report reveals a great deal and we will be participating in a national campaign to address this irresponsible attitude of the federal government.

State Square Project

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

The government has consistently stated the State Square project would be developed through a fixed price arrangement. In fact, in answer to a similar question on 23 November 1988, the minister advised that a fixed price would be arrived at within 2 to 3 months. In other words, a fixed price should have been arrived at in February or early March. Has the government arrived at a fixed price? If so, what is it? If not, why not, and when will we see a fixed price?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as I outlined to the House in November last, the methodology used to arrive at a fixed price was that the project manager's fee was based on a percentage of all of the subcontract packages. The same applied in the case of the on-site construction manager.

Mr Smith: So it was not a fixed price.

Mr FINCH: If the honourable member would like to wait, as he is unaccustomed to doing, I will clearly explain how the fixed price is arrived at.

Mr Speaker, my recollection is that the project manager's fee is 3.75% and the construction manager's fee is 3.3% of the value of the packages. Those packages are mainly being put out to local contractors. Only where materials or equipment are not available locally will packages even be offered to people outside the Territory. To date, of course, we have seen every package go to a Territory-based company. Tenders on those subcontract packages are assessed by a project control group in terms of their localisation and the validity of dollar amounts, to ensure that they are within the budget. To date, there have been difficulties with some of the packages, particularly in the case of precast concrete. The explanations for the difficulties are very plausible.

Mr Smith interjecting.

Mr FINCH: If the Leader of the Opposition would like to open his ears instead of his mouth, I will explain.

The government's advisers proposed that the structure should consist of a combination of in situ concrete, steel and precast concrete, not necessarily because that was the most economic and appropriate approach but because it provided the best balance to suit local contractors. This project, as I keep emphasising, is all about local jobs.

The first stage of the building has now been totally priced, that comprising the basement up to the ground floor level. Approximately half of the prices for the balance of the building have been received. The remaining few have been delayed because of complexities and are expected within a very short period. When all of those subcontract prices are received, they will be measured against the budget. To date, they are coming in marginally under budget, which is very encouraging. When all of those subcontract prices are added up and the percentages of the project manager and the construction manager are added, that will represent the fixed price.

Mr Smith: Oh. A fixed price that ...

Mr FINCH: If the Leader of the Opposition would like to open his ears, he would recognise that there is no other way of ensuring the maximisation of local content, local labour and local supplies. Under a fixed price system based on a set of drawings done 6 months ago, there is no way of achieving that ...

Mr Smith: That is not what you were telling us then.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, this system has not been changed since day 1. In his announcement of the fixed price system, the Chief Minister indicated the same thing. When we add up the final prices on each of those packages, that becomes the fixed price of the contract. There is no further room for the project manager - who, as I have emphasised, is only on 3.7% - to take any more from the construction packages. He will not get 1¢ more.

Mr Speaker, you cannot have it both ways in the contract world. I dare say that the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues do not understand the real world of construction and contract. In this case, the government has adopted a most appropriate strategy which, as I have said, is working extremely well. I was horrified to hear the member for Barkly suggest the other day that we should stop work right now, leave the hole in the ground and turn our backs on those hundreds of Territorians who are working on site or working in supplies offices and concrete plants, those hundreds of Territorians who are beginning to believe that they might be able to survive

this slump because they are able to see a future for themselves and their kids. They believe that they are now able to retain their homes and continue to live in the Northern Territory. Shame on the member for Barkly.

Mr Tuxworth: Do not blame me.

Mr FINCH: He would walk over the bodies of those contractors, those good, honest, hard-working Territorians. I can tell you that he has not won a single friend in the Winnellie area.

Mr Tuxworth interjecting.

Mr FINCH: His only friend will be Jamie Robertson, the President of the Trades and Labor Council. I am wondering where Jamie Robertson will end up in this whole mess, holding hands with the member for Barkly. What a double!

Mr Tuxworth: You lot voted with the Labor Party last night.

Mr FINCH: I am wondering how Jamie Robertson will get on when some of the unions which represent the workers on site take up their petition.

Mr Tuxworth: Tell everybody what the cost of the project is. Tell them what the debt is. Let me see the plans. When are we going to call a tender?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have been fairly tolerant with the member for Barkly. Due courtesy demands that the minister's final remarks be heard in silence.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, it is amazing to see that, after Jamie Robertson's visit to Moscow, there is a regeneration in his communism and he has taken up a partner in crime in the form of member for Barkly.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister will withdraw that reference.

Mr FINCH: My humble apology. I withdraw, Mr Speaker. Since Jamie Robertson came back with his enthusiasm for communism rejuvenated, he has taken up a strange partnership with the member for Barkly. There is no doubt in my mind that both of them will get their comeuppance in regard to State Square because the workers involved are now beginning to be able to feed their families and pay their bills. They are not interested in this nonsensical stop-go, 'walk over the bodies of workers' approach. Let me say that the nonsense put out by the member for Barkly will be put to rest.

Mr Tuxworth: Well, tell us how much. What is the price? That is pretty simple.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the member for Barkly did not listen. I do not intend to repeat myself. In regard to his claims about drawings, of course the drawings have been done ...

Mr Tuxworth: Made up as we go along. That's right.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the member for Barkly consistently displays the vacuum between his ears. If he would sit back and open those ears - and that should not be too difficult - he might learn something. If he does not want to listen now, I suggest that he be given this small information brochure on State Square which is currently being distributed. In fact, he may be able, at his leisure, to read the truth about State Square and dispel many of the

nonsensical myths that have been put about by himself and his colleagues on the opposition bench. I call it coalition in opposition. That is what it is all about. He may be able to advise his constituents of the real value and the real intention of State Square.

There are now procedures in relation to the second stage of the project. The fast track development process which has been used for the first stage, the Supreme Court, will not be used. For the second stage, drawings will be totally completed in Darwin. With the exception of approximately 3 people, these drawings will be produced by Territory draftsmen, architects and engineers. People are coming from all over the Territory to work on this project. Even an Alice Springs contractor is among them. The normal process will be used and timing will be far more flexible. I am sure that all Territorians, particularly workers in the construction and consulting industries, will reap the benefits. They will be absolutely delighted that this government is ignoring the nonsensical call of the member for Barkly and ...

Mr Tuxworth: Yes, it is going to spend money even though we do not have much. Well done! Just spend away.

Mr FINCH: ...his colleague returned from Moscow.

Beatrice Hill Rehabilitation Project

Mr FIRMIN to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

In question time yesterday, the minister indicated that he had requested a report on conditions at the Beatrice Hill Rehabilitation Project as well as complaints mentioned in Monday night's 7.30 Report on ABC television, which centred on so-called inhumane treatment meted out to a prisoner. I understand that the minister has now received the report and I ask him whether the allegations can be sustained. I also ask him to comment on conditions at Beatrice Hill.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have received an interim report from Correctional Services on this matter. The complaints and allegations were investigated by a senior officer, a superintendent with more than 20 years experience in correctional institutions throughout Australia. Monday night's 7.30 Report on ABC television broadcast a series of allegations made by an ex-prisoner now calling himself 'Mr Patt'. Mr Speaker, that is not his name. The man claimed that he had been refused medical treatment, that he had suffered inhumane conditions, and that he had been held in a dog box awash with raw sewage for 36 hours before being sent to hospital for an operation on his kidneys.

The interim report shows that prison staff have been able to confirm that this person was an inmate in the Territory system during 1988 and 1989. He was released earlier this month. The report contains important information which I am sure the ABC was not aware of. I would like to run through this. On reflection, I am sure that the ABC would have treated the original allegations made by this former prisoner differently if it had been aware of all the relevant facts. Certainly, the Leader of the Opposition might have allowed his appropriate shadow minister to take the public running on it if he had known a little more about the matter.

The 2 cells at the Beatrice Hill Rehabilitation Project, referred to as the 'go slow' in the ABC TV report, are known as the segregation unit. They are the only single-cell accommodation at Beatrice Hill.

Mr Smith: Single-cell accommodation?

Mr POOLE: Keep going because you will talk yourself in deeper.

They are used in a range of circumstances in which a prisoner needs to be held separately from other inmates. That covers occasions when individuals might require protection - and, in many instances, prisoners have asked to be placed in single-cell accommodation - as well as instances when a person requires close supervision and care, or when an individual is held in isolation as a disciplinary measure. The cells are of cement concrete block construction. They have a thick, reinforced concrete ceiling covered by galvanised iron and a concrete floor. In the light of allegations that prisoners had virtually to crawl into these cells, their dimensions are interesting. The interior height is well over 2.1 m, more than 7 ft. The width is 2.5 m or 4 ft 6 in. The depth is 3.6 m which is 11 ft and each cell actually contains a 6-ft bed. Inmates are not forced to sleep as suggested by the report. Prisoners are supplied with adequate supplies of mosquito coils, to deter mosquitoes. In the past, flywire screens proved vulnerable to constant damage and misuse. Allegations such as those made on the 7.30 Report have not been made before. The following detail outlines the true circumstances behind the incident used as the basis for the ex-prisoner's complaint.

On 1 February this year, the prisoner referred to was placed in 1 of the segregation unit cells after he had complained of stomach pains and asked to see a doctor. He was in no obvious pain nor was his condition regarded as serious or an emergency. A prison officer, skilled in first aid and emergency medical care, was assigned to supervise him. The prisoner in the unit was checked every half hour overnight, and this is normal procedure with medical complaints. The following day, he was taken to the Royal Darwin Hospital where he was examined. He remained in the hospital, under observation, overnight. Doctors determined that he did not require any medical treatment and, on 6 February, he was returned to Beatrice Hill where he recommenced work.

This prisoner who, I repeat, provided a false name to the ABC's film crew, also failed to provide his full prison medical history. The official record presents a very different perspective on the care and treatment this prisoner was able to take advantage of while he was in custody. The prisoner first arrived at Beatrice Hill in early December 1988. On 16 December, he complained about a sore, possibly arthritic toe, on his right foot. He claimed the pain prevented him taking part in normal work duties at the prison farm. He was taken to the Royal Darwin Hospital where the allegedly injured foot was x-rayed. No injury was detected and no treatment was required.

On 29 December, he complained of pains in the stomach and kidney which also prevented him from undertaking normal work duties. He claimed to have a history of renal colic before arriving in the Northern Territory and suggested that the pain was associated with kidney stones. Again, he was transported to the Royal Darwin Hospital for an x-ray examination. Again, doctors could find no ailment requiring treatment. Doctors recommended that he come back in 6 months for another checkup of his possible renal condition and he was returned to Beatrice Hill. On 11 January, he again reported that he was unfit for work because of a corn on his right little toe. A nursing sister at Beatrice Hill examined and treated this debilitating injury.

On 19 January, the prisoner complained once more of intermittent pains in his stomach which prevented his attending to his work duties. Arrangements were made for another visit to Royal Darwin Hospital on 24 January but the hospital deferred this examination report for a short time because of overcrowding. On 1 February, the prisoner again complained of stomach pains sufficient to stop him carrying out his work duties. An escort could not be arranged until the following day, and he was held overnight in the segregation unit where officers could keep a regular half-hourly check on his health and well-being without disturbing other prisoners in the dormitory accommodation. He was admitted to the Royal Darwin Hospital on the following day and underwent a standard examination for kidney stones. No kidney stones could be detected and he required no further medical treatment. He rejoined his work-mates at Beatrice Hill 3 days later.

On 22 February, he discovered some pain in one eye which he claimed was severe enough to prevent him working. The visiting medical officer recommended that he be taken to hospital for specialist examination. An examination at Royal Darwin Hospital could detect no physical cause for the alleged eye pain. The specialist found that the prisoner suffered some small measure of short-sightedness but deemed that this affliction was not sufficiently serious to prevent his return to work.

Despite the claims which he made on the ABC 7.30 Report, the prisoner did not require or undergo any medical treatment for kidney problems whilst in the care of Northern Territory Correctional Services. However, as this short medical history of an individual indicates, all prisoners receive a very high level of medical and health care from prison officers during their time in custody in the Northern Territory. The factual situation contrasts sharply with claims of inhumane treatment made by the ex-prisoner and backed up so readily by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Smith: I would have thought that the go-slow unit was pretty inhumane.

Mr POOLE: The man regularly claimed to have indeterminate pains during his incarceration which prevented his participation in the Beatrice Hill rehabilitative work program for at least 4 days of every fortnight during his stay at the prison farm. Apparently, he chose not to tell the ABC current affairs team how this pain defied the best efforts of nurses, doctors and specialists to determine any physical cause, except when it manifested itself in a corn on the little toe of his right foot.

If the ABC's current affairs team had been aware of the efforts concentrated on easing this fellow's alleged suffering, borne out by his medical records, I am sure that its approach would have been different. The dimensions of the cells in the segregation unit compare more than favourably with single-cell accommodation in prisons anywhere else in Australia. Quite possibly, the ABC's current affairs team was not aware of that.

Mr Smith: What about the temperature, the humidity and the mosquitoes?

Mr POOLE: Mr Speaker, on behalf of the minister, I extend an invitation to either the ABC or the Leader of the Opposition, who have demonstrated such inspired concern for the welfare of Northern Territory prisoners this week, to seek a briefing from the minister's office to ensure that they have their facts right.

As far as the cleanliness of any prison cell in the Northern Territory is concerned, inmates under prison officer supervision are required to clean all

accommodation on a daily basis. In situations in which portable toilets are used, they are emptied and cleaned on a daily basis. Where a prisoner is too ill to perform this work, it is done by other prisoners.

The report indicated that the claims made by this prisoner about water and raw sewage on the floor of the cell were untrue. It also indicated that his claims about 14 prisoners held in the segregation unit were false. Unfortunately, the ABC current affairs team failed to verify with the department the truth of any of the claims made by this former prisoner before broadcasting the story. Nor did the team apparently determine that their main source of information was a man who had come into the care of the Northern Territory custodial system after having been convicted on a range of 39 counts of false pretences and making false statements. It is likely that the ABC did not uncover this information during its research on the program.

On the basis of the facts that have been presented here today, I can advise honourable members that the segregation unit at Beatrice Hill will remain in operation for the time being.

Mr Smith: For how long?

Mr POOLE: I am very confident that the Northern Territory's prison officers, despite the lack of trust displayed in them by the Leader of the Opposition ...

Mr Smith: Are you going to put in place proper solitary confinement accommodation?

Mr POOLE: ... and in spite of poorly researched TV programs, will continue to perform in a very professional manner what is probably one of the hardest jobs in our community. Those people work under very trying conditions and have been doing so for many years. I commend the efforts of the prison wardens in the Northern Territory who are doing a very good job, sometimes with the dregs of our society.

BTEC

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

Mr Speaker, the honourable minister would be aware that Mr Warriner of Newcastle Waters attempted to settle his BTEC over-claim by offering \$25 000 after the initial corruption allegations were made. Will the honourable minister confirm that an additional \$26 000 to cover outstanding over-claims had to be sequestered from other amounts owed to Newcastle Waters? Was this amount secured in the face of threats of legal action by Mr Warriner against BTEC and its staff? If so, why were Mr Warriner's actions described as voluntary and why was that false description used in order to justify dropping all charges?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his very dramatic presentation of the question. Once again, his inference is that the BTEC program has been a dismal failure. We have heard it all before from the member for Stuart. During the last couple of years, the member for Stuart and other members opposite have oscillated all over the place in relation to the BTEC program. They have supported it at one moment and totally opposed it the next. There is no better example of that than some of the comments made by

the member for Stuart. Page 1566 of the Hansard of Wednesday 30 November 1988 records him as saying that the 1992 deadline for BTEC should come to an end.

Mr EDE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The minister obviously has no intention of answering the question. He is referring to a debate in this House which occurred quite some time ago. I asked the minister very specific questions regarding the contents of reports which are in his hands. He is referring to debates in this House which took place quite some time ago and which have no bearing whatsoever on the subject of the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr REED: It is curious to look at that statement by the member for Stuart - stop the BTEC program - in the context of the ALP policy on primary industry at that time. The policy was to 'actively promote and inject further funds to assist BTEC'. I refer to that because it illustrates how the opposition oscillates, not only on this issue but on a range of other issues, and fails to concentrate on the real issues. The program has been a success. We are aware of the fact that it has had its problems. Again today, we heard the member for Stuart raising a series of allegations made by a person and which were investigated subsequently by the police and by officers of the Commonwealth government.

The outcome of those investigations was that there was no action that could be taken in relation to the matters referred to by the member for Stuart. Following those investigations, mechanisms and procedures were put in place so that the campaign was run to the satisfaction of both the Northern Territory government and the Commonwealth government. That is what has happened since those reports were brought down. The answers to the honourable member's question lie in the second police report of which he has a copy.

Mr Ede: They do not.

Penalties for Juvenile Offenders

Mr SETTER to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

In cases where juveniles are charged and convicted with offences such as break and enter, stealing, vandalism, assault and car stealing, can he advise the range of penalties commonly applied by the courts and do these include community service orders?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. In cases where juveniles are charged and convicted of such offences as breaking and entering, stealing, vandalism, assault and car theft, there is a range of penalties commonly applied by the courts. These include, firstly, no further trouble orders, which adjourn the matter for a period not exceeding 6 months. If, during that period, the juvenile does not commit a further offence, he or she is discharged without penalty. Secondly, the juvenile can be discharged without penalty. Thirdly, a community service order can be imposed, with conditions relating to the place of residence, associates, supervision and participation in a project or program or any other conditions the court thinks fit. There is also detention and imprisonment. Juveniles attaining the age of 15 years can be sentenced to terms of imprisonment. They can also suffer a suspended sentence of detention or imprisonment. Normally, juveniles are not sentenced to imprisonment. Currently, there is one only juvenile on remand at

Berrimah Prison. There are, however, 43 juveniles currently detained in detention centres in the Northern Territory.

Further to that, I had the pleasure of having a look around Giles House some 12 days ago, as did the member for MacDonnell. An interesting change in patterns is occurring. More and more interstate juveniles - I guess you could call them street children - are currently coming to the attention of the courts of the Northern Territory. In talking to some of the people who work in detention centres and a couple of the juveniles, I was disturbed to learn of the lack of support these young people get from the community, particularly from their own family groups. I was told that, during a 15-month period, there were less than 15 visits to inmates of Giles House. Between Christmas and the day of my visit, only 8 visits had been made to the 20 or so juveniles detained there. That is a shocking indictment of our society and it is a problem that we must look at.

The community service order is very commonly used as a sentencing alternative in the juvenile courts in the Northern Territory. Of course, probation is also commonly applied by the courts to juvenile offenders.

Territory Wildlife Park

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Is the honourable minister able to tell me when the Territory Wildlife Park will be opened?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is probably an appropriate time for me to answer a question such as this because it enables me again to sing the praises of what is occurring with the Territory Wildlife Park. It will be a magnificent facility. I thank the honourable member for her question. I am sure that she keeps in close contact, not only with the people who are working to develop the park, but with the progress of the development itself. It will certainly be an absolutely magnificent venue which will be recognised throughout the world. At this stage, I have firm advice from officers that the opening will be on 1 October.

Members interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the member for Barkly is certainly a very rude person. I am sure that radio listeners will agree with me after hearing his antics this morning. One would think that, after his period here, the member would have learned how to behave himself in the House. Obviously, he is a very slow learner. We can only hope that his manners improve.

As I was saying, Mr Speaker, this is a most worthy project. I certainly hope that the projected opening date of 1 October can be met. However, if shortcuts were required to meet that deadline, they would not be taken. The park will be properly completed before it is opened. The quality of the premises is paramount and if ...

Mr Coulter: And the care of the animals.

Mr MANZIE: Yes, the care of the animals and the whole structure. If shortcuts needed to be taken to meet a deadline and those shortcuts would be detrimental to the park, I would certainly recommend that they not be taken.

The member for Koolpinyah says that it is 4 months late. Given that the project has taken a number of years, is a world first in many respects and has many unique problems to overcome, a 4-month delay is not a bad effort. The finished result will be magnificent. All Territorians will certainly appreciate it. I certainly will give all encouragement to the people involved to ensure that high standards are maintained and also provide all mechanisms to enable the progress towards the opening to be carried out as efficiently and as effectively as possible.

Solicitor General

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I refer the Attorney-General to the numerous applications between 1976 and 1986 by or on behalf of the late Stan Brown for the exercise of a Crown prerogative of mercy in respect of what Mr Brown believed to be a wrongful conviction for cattle duffing as long ago as 1926. Is it a fact that the Solicitor General who provided advice to the Attorney-General's predecessor, namely the member for Fannie Bay, had previously acted on Mr Brown's behalf before he held the office of Solicitor General?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have no knowledge whatsoever of the innuendo that has been suggested. I can only say that I will examine the matter again and provide the information to the honourable member. To my knowledge, there has been no change in the circumstances which existed when Hon Paul Everingham was the Attorney-General or when the present Chief Minister was Attorney-General, and I do not expect that there will be any change.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

Duties of Public Service Commissioner

Mr McCARTHY (Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government): Mr Speaker, I rise to clarify an answer that I gave to what was essentially a misleading question from the member for Nhulunbuy yesterday.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I am quite sure my question was not misleading. I require the minister to withdraw the word 'misleading'. It implies a lie in the question. In fact, no lie was intended in the question. It was quite open and quite honest.

Mr SPEAKER: Does the honourable minister wish to speak to the point of order?

Mr McCARTHY: Yes, Mr Speaker. While I accept that the member for Nhulunbuy may not have desired to mislead me through the framing of his question ...

Mr Leo: Or this House.

Mr McCARTHY: ... that is what happened.

Mr LEO: I have not misled this House, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: There is a point of order, and I would ask the minister to withdraw that reference.

Mr McCARTHY: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the word 'misleading'.

Mr Speaker, I believe that the question put to me yesterday was inappropriate in terms of the answer that I now find was sought by the member for Nhulunbuy. In my view, it is stretching a pretty long bow to suggest that section 14(2) deals with non-human resources only. Section 14(2) says:

The commissioner shall take such action as he thinks necessary to ensure that all transactions by each department and prescribed authority involving public moneys are accountably made within the budget approved for the department or prescribed authority by the Legislative Assembly out of moneys appropriated, or out of moneys that the Legislative Assembly estimates will be appropriated, for the purposes of the government of the Territory.

The section deals solely with the financial transactions and was inserted in the act to cover the activities of the Internal Audit Bureau. Originally the bureau was attached to the commissioner's office but it has now been attached to the Department of the Chief Minister for several years, since October 1985 in fact.

Section 16A of the act provides:

The minister may, in writing, direct an employee to take any action or step that the commissioner may take by virtue of section 14(2) or (3) and, on being so directed, the employee shall take that action or step in accordance with the direction and has, in relation thereto, all the powers and obligations of the commissioner under sections 15 and 16 and the power of the commissioner under section 60(10) to give directions as if he were the commissioner.

The Secretary of the Department of the Chief Minister has been directed in accordance with that section. The upshot of all this is that the Public Service Commissioner no longer has any responsibility at all under section 14(2) as that responsibility has been effectively transferred to the Secretary of the Department of the Chief Minister. For this reason, I would contend that the member for Nhulunbuy's question was based on a misconception.

The member for Nhulunbuy has been making an issue of this for 2 years. Last year, through the Public Accounts Committee, he questioned the then Public Service Commissioner in some detail. He also questioned the present Public Service Commissioner in some detail and was provided with this answer when he did so. The Public Service Commissioner does retain a responsibility to report under sections 14(1) and 14(3) and, because of the policy of delegation which I referred to yesterday, the Public Service Commissioner will be reporting on the effectiveness and efficiency with which CEOs have been exercising those delegations. He will make that report to me later this year.

Mr LEO: Mr Speaker, I seek your clarification on a matter. In fact, I raise it as a point of order. Again, as he has done in the past, the minister has referred to matters raised and indeed questions asked and answers given within a committee of this House, the Public Accounts Committee. That committee has still not reported to this House on any of those matters that have been raised or the answers given. I do not know where the minister is getting his information. I certainly treat the information that is derived from sessions of the Public Accounts Committee as privileged information. I want to know where the minister got that information. If I am not satisfied with his response, I will have to move that the matter be referred to the Privileges Committee because it is the second time that this has occurred.

Mr McCARTHY: Mr Speaker, the member for Nhulunbuy well knows that this matter was discussed in the House last year. It was reported to me both from inside and outside the committee that the member for Nhulunbuy was pursuing this issue. Obviously, he will pursue it to his retirement on the Gold Coast.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Gardens Park Development

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Given that Mr Luke Butler has failed in his bid to undertake the Gardens Park development, given that Mr George Milatos has established his inability to put a development deal together, given Mr Butler's claim that Mr Milatos has inflated the price of his pastoral land from \$420 000 to \$2.2m because of its connection with the Crown land block, will the minister now not make future development on the Crown land contingent on the purchase of Mr Milatos' property and, secondly, will he put any proposal for development of that piece of Crown land to open tender so as to ensure Territorians obtain the best deal possible?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, isn't it marvellous that the Leader of the Opposition is now the champion of Mr Butler. It is funny how the world goes round and round. The Leader of the Opposition is fully aware of the direct sales scheme. I can assure honourable members that I will not be deviating from the principles underlying the direct sales scheme. If a person shows interest in an area and the government considers that it meets the criteria, an offer is made under the rules set down by the direct sales scheme. If that offer is met, the process goes forward. If the offer is not met or if it lapses, it can be withdrawn, bringing the process to an end.

The gardens block has been zoned by the Planning Authority to include both the market blocks and the Gardens Park site. The Planning Authority has approved a development on that site. Mr Butler was interested in that development but I am advised that he has withdrawn his application to purchase. The next step will be for me to make an assessment as to what we do next. I can advise honourable members that I believe there are further applications for direct sale. If we decide as a government that it is in our best interests to make an offer to the next person on the direct sale list, that will occur. If it is decided that our interests appear to be best served by doing something else, so be it.

I can assure honourable members that the rules of the direct sale scheme will be adhered to. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to suggest that I contravene the Planning Authority's approvals or bend the rules in some way, that is fine. I can assure honourable members, however, that I will not be doing that. As far as Mr Butler is concerned ...

Mr Smith interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition is suffering again. He does not want to listen to the facts. All he wants to do is make comments. That is fine. He can make as many comments as he likes, but I reiterate that I certainly do not intend to break the rules. His method of operation may be to bend rules and break rules. That does not concern me. However, I suppose it should concern the community because it shows what his attitude is. He is always ready and willing to accuse the government of incorrect dealings. He criticises us when we act properly and follow the rules but he is the one with the problem. He needs to take a look at his own personal values in terms of how he believes government should approach things. The community needs to be made aware of his attitudes because, every 3 or 4 years, he stands up and says: 'I am the alternative government. Elect me.'

You can trust me'. He has shown, however, that what he would do is bend the rules to suit himself. If there is a need to change the operation of the direct sale scheme rules, that will be done. At this stage, the government does not consider that to be necessary ...

Mr Smith: We are talking about private land. How does that apply to the direct land sale scheme?

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, there we go! How does it apply?

Mr Smith: Yes, tell us.

Mr MANZIE: If he listened, he would understand.

Mr Smith: You are not giving me an answer that I can understand.

Mr Hatton: Read the landowner rules, read them for a change.

MR MANZIE: Mr Speaker, at the last sittings, the Leader of the Opposition asked me a question about the direct sale scheme. I provided him with a copy of all the rules and regulations regarding the direct sale scheme. He could have obtained it at the public counter of the Department of Lands and Housing although he obviously did not want to do that. Clearly, he has not read them.

One of the criteria for the direct sale scheme is the purchase of an adjoining block for the purpose of carrying out a significant project. The Planning Authority has given approval for a certain development to occur. That development was considered to be good in terms of providing construction activity and jobs, as well as being an asset for the tourist industry. It is fine for somebody who has just arrived in this part of the world to suggest that we should change the rules. Of course, I do not have to accept that. I certainly hope the Leader of the Opposition does not accept it.

One of the other requirements which apply under the scheme is that the developer, in this case Mr Butler, provide evidence of financial capacity to carry out the work proposed. No member of government received any evidence of that financial capacity. I certainly do not consider anything in the offer as having been accepted. I intend to ensure that taxpayers' assets are protected.

Mr Smith: Milatos' assets are being protected too.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition just cannot understand. I wish he would do a little homework and read what was given to him - the criteria for the direct sale scheme. What a person charges for a block is his own business. The operation of a socialist-type government is that it would like to control everything except the rules.

The Planning Authority approved a certain proposal. Mr Butler came into this project with his eyes open. He knew what it was about. He has now changed his mind and that is fine. To suggest that the government has something to do with that, as the Leader of the Opposition is doing, is patently ridiculous. He has become the champion of Luke Butler. He has become the champion of a person who came to this town and was going to fix everything. He is now saying that the government has interfered with his process. Possibly we have because we have set guidelines for the direct sale scheme. Those will be adhered to. I will not change those rules regardless of any suggestion by the Leader of the Opposition. I will not be placing price controls on any land that is available for sale.

As I said, there is a process to go through. I will be going through that process. I will be assessing where we go next and whether it is appropriate for us to accept any application for a direct sale, and then making any offers that proceed from that. I certainly do not intend to deviate from the procedures laid down.

Motor Vehicle Encumbrance Systems

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WOPKS

In recent years, there have been a number of well-publicised cases in which Territorians who bought motor vehicles in good faith have had those vehicles repossessed because debts owed by previous owners of the vehicles were still outstanding. What is being done to protect Territorians from finding themselves in this situation in the future?

Mr Bell: We have asked that for the last 3 years.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for MacDonnell suggests that nothing has happened for the last 3 years. Of course, he is totally incorrect. Honourable members are well aware, of course, that he is always wrong in these matters. Never have I heard him to be correct in any matter that he has brought before the House in my 5 short years as a member.

As honourable members will recall, my previous advice has been that there were considerable difficulties in negotiations with the organisations responsible for motor vehicle encumbrance systems interstate. The first problem was in establishing the most appropriate scheme for the Northern Territory and the second was coming to appropriate arrangements with the relevant government. A number of schemes were looked at including that which operates in Victoria and even some stand-alone schemes. It was found that a stand-alone scheme for the Territory would be neither the most efficient system nor the most cost-effective.

In the end, a year or more ago, the New South Wales scheme was identified as being the most appropriate. Unfortunately, though understandably, with some 9000 inquiries per day in New South Wales, that scheme had reached saturation point. Extensions to the computer system were required before additional work could be dealt with and it has taken some time for those extensions to be put in place. At the same time, New South Wales was considering the possibility of privatising the system.

I am able to advise, however, that the requisite decisions have now been made and that I recently received advice from Mr Peacocke, the Minister for Consumer Affairs in the Greiner government in New South Wales, that he is more than delighted to accommodate the Northern Territory in the New South Wales scheme. That is excellent. Indeed, I would see the New South Wales scheme extending to become a national system in due course. I was successful at the last Transport Ministers Conference in having all state and Commonwealth ministers agree that it is in everyone's interest to work towards a national system.

At present, the New South Wales people are running seminars within the Northern Territory. They ran seminars 2 days ago in Alice Springs. The purpose of these seminars is to make people in the industry aware of what the encumbrance system is all about and what sort of data will need to be

collected. During the ensuing months, industry will be able to start collecting and collating data so that, later in the year when I put the appropriate legislation before the House, we ought to be in a position to commence at the earliest possible time. I emphasise 'earliest possible time' regardless of the member for MacDonnell's distress.

Certainly, the government has been aware of the need for this system. We have worked as expeditiously and constructively as possible to put it in place. I trust that it will be in place by early 1990 and that it will enable members of the public, potential purchasers and car sales people to have access to a database to enable them to determine whether particular vehicles are subject to any financial encumbrances. Naturally, finance companies which fail to register with the system will have to carry the bag themselves instead of the poor old customer.

The vehicle identification number system which was recently introduced in the Motor Vehicles Amendment Act passed in this House has already been adopted nationally. I recently noticed in the newspaper a call by a sector of the community for the introduction of such a system. It is already in place, Mr Speaker. From now on, all new motor vehicles will have to carry a special identification number in 5 positions on the vehicle. A specialised series of numbers will identify that the vehicle belongs to a set so that people cannot replace engines or other parts of a car to defraud the public, as occurred in a recent Queensland stolen vehicle saga. This government has been moving deliberately and constructively to ensure that purchasers of motor vehicles have the best possible opportunity to get a fair deal.

Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

My question relates to a statement the Chief Minister made on air this morning about sacred sites. The Chief Minister said that, if custodians said a site was a site, that was all there was to it. It was a site. I ask the minister what protection the wider community has against bogus custodians and bogus sites?

ANSWER

Mr Bell: That happens often, doesn't it, Denis?

Mr Collins: We do not know, Neil.

Mr Bell: Go home, you dill.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister will resume his seat.

The member for MacDonnell is ad libbing after each question is asked. I ask that he extend to other members the same kind of courtesy that he would like extended to himself, and that he withdraw that reference to the member for Sadadeen.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, I unreservedly withdraw any reference to the mental capacity of the honourable member for Sadadeen.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for MacDonnell will withdraw that reference without any smart ad libbing.

Mr BELL: I withdraw unreservedly.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I thought that the answer to that question was clearly explained in the second-reading debate. However, I will say again that it is quite clear that the new proposed bill ...

Mr Smith: Isn't this a matter before the House?

Mr MANZIE: It is a matter before the House, but the new bill does provide a mechanism for the registration of sacred sites which involves Aboriginal custodians, through the processes of the proposed authority.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I ask for your ruling. This matter is before the House and is to be the subject of a substantial debate today.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. Standing orders were reviewed in 1984 and that particular standing order was removed.

Mr Leo: So we can continue to debate bills in question time? Ludicrous!

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, under the amended legislation, the minister will have no role in deciding what is or what is not a sacred site. I have been quite clear about this. Of course, the facts of the situation contrast with what the Northern and Central Land Councils have been telling Aboriginal people. Those people are being caused a great deal of unnecessary distress and that will continue until they realise that the operation of the legislation is such that what they have been told will not occur or, secondly, until the personnel of the land councils tell them the truth.

Registration of sites will be left entirely in the hands of an Aboriginal-dominated authority which will make such decisions in consultation with the custodians of the sites in question. The processes are such that the legislation will ensure that the owner of the land on which a site is located is advised of the application for registration and invited to make representations to the authority regarding it. Should the landowner claim that the registration will affect him adversely, the authority has to advise him to apply for an avoidance certificate or authority certification to resolve questions regarding the use of the land. The applicant then goes through the processes outlined, including those which relate to the resolution of conflict.

A site is a site and nobody can change that. However, the legislation allows owners or developers of land to apply for a site avoidance certificate. There are processes which apply in the case of work that could be done on or around a sacred site. Those processes involve discussions with guardians, assessments by the authority and recommendations in relation to site avoidance procedures. If those procedures cannot be resolved, the matter can be referred to the minister, who may require the authority to go through that process again. At the end of the day, the minister makes the final decision to resolve the conflict, bearing in mind, of course, that the minister cannot make any decision which will contravene federal legislation. Under those circumstances, people have the right to appeal to the federal minister or the right to take appropriate action in the courts.

As the honourable member pointed out quite clearly, the registration of sacred sites is a process in which the minister has no involvement whatsoever. The Chairman of the Northern Land Council knows this very well. He has been

at meetings, over a number of months, where it has been clearly explained, and I certainly hope that he will be responsible and inform Aboriginal people that what he has been telling them is totally incorrect. It is causing them great concern and the sooner he does it, the far easier it will be to resolve the sort of conflict he is creating in the community.

BTEC

Mr EDE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

The minister will be well aware of his own comments in this House yesterday about the relationship between Mr Warriner of Newcastle Waters and the member for Barkly. Given that the member for Barkly was the Minister for Primary Production from 1 December 1982 and throughout the balance of the period covered by the police reports, I ask him what further information he is prepared to provide to this House to support his implication that the member for Barkly and Mr Warriner had a special relationship.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question is ludicrous. I will attempt to bring some sort of reason back into the discussion. I simply suggested yesterday that I did not know whether or not Mr Warriner was in fact a member of the CLP until I checked yesterday. I found that he was a member of the Tennant Creek branch and that he had joined it in 1985, having been introduced, as I understand it, by the member for Barkly. I said that the friendship between the honourable member and Mr Warriner went back over some time and that I had thought that Mr Warriner was a member of the National Party. That is all I said.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for MacDonnell will withdraw that reference.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, I withdraw any reference imputing any motives to any member of this House or otherwise.

Business Employment Census

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for LABOUR, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES and LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mr Speaker, my question refers to the unemployment census that has been circulated recently. A number of my constituents have advised me that they have received a census form from the Department of Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government and I have in fact received one of those forms myself. Apart from what is obvious from the questions asked on the form, can the minister tell the Assembly why his department would embark on such a wide-ranging census of Territory business?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the census to which the honourable member refers is not in fact an unemployment census but a business employment census. It has been distributed to all businesses in the Northern Territory that are on our records. We have sought to distribute that census form as widely as possible. The purpose, of course, is to gain information about the shape of the present work force and future work force requirements.

When the Department of Labour, Administrative and Local Government was formed, we inherited a range of employment initiatives, mainly the apprenticeship system, which has been in place in the Northern Territory for some time, and the school leaver program which has been greatly modified. These programs, of course, were designed to respond to the demands of industry for people to be trained. It became very obvious to me that, rather than responding to needs on a day-to-day basis or a year-to-year basis, we really needed to know what our requirements would be 5 or 10 years in the future so that we could now start training the people who would be required in 5 years time. As honourable members will know, it takes 4 to 5 years to train an apprentice. Of course, that system is changing and I very strongly support the change to competency-based training and shorter terms of training, the types of training which industry training committees are now providing to people in the Northern Territory and throughout Australia. The fact is, however, that we really need to look well into the future to know what our needs will be.

We sent out well over 8000 census forms to businesses around the Territory and we were expecting a response rate akin to the ABS response rate which, I understand, is less than 50%. In fact, Mr Speaker, to date we have had a return rate of in excess of 90% of the census forms, which is very pleasing. It indicates to me that industry sees the need for this census. The directions we will obtain from the census will put us in a good position to recognise the needs in the future. Because we need to look beyond training needs in terms of direct employment, we have asked in the census form for ideas about what types of material are purchased by companies and where they are purchased from because, obviously, we have to look beyond the particular industries sending in the forms. We have to consider where materials are coming from so that we can respond to the training needs in the manufacturing area as well.

I believe that the initiative of the Department of Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government in seeking this information is a good one. The Territory clearly needs the information and, hopefully, it will be updated on a 2-yearly basis. Obviously, things will change. We are seeing dynamic growth in the Territory. With developments in the Trade Development Zone and at the airport, and with future developments in respect of the railway and the port, needs will change on an annual basis if not on a monthly basis. As a consequence, we will update that information every 2 years and we will be in a position, for the first time, to identify the ongoing needs for training in the Northern Territory.

Disappearance of Norman Lawson

Mr TIPILOURA to CHIEF MINISTER

Can the minister offer any comfort to Henry Lawson and his wife Val after what would have been the nineteenth birthday of their son Norman last week? As we all know, Norman disappeared from Kakadu National Park. Has the minister any discretion which would allow him to seek a coronial inquest into Norman's disappearance given that the police think he was taken by a crocodile and his parents believe he was murdered?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is indeed an awkward and sensitive matter. I have met with the Lawsons to discuss the matter with them. I have also held discussions with the Commissioner of Police on the matter. The honourable

member said that the police believe that the missing person 'was taken by a crocodile'. I do not believe that that is so. The police do not know what happened to this person who is officially listed as a missing person. I appreciate that the parents of the boy are firmly of the belief that he is dead and was murdered.

I have discussed with the Commissioner of Police whether or not we can refer the entire matter to the coroner, with all the available evidence, and ask him to inquire into the matter so that he can make a ruling. Whilst I am uncertain about the terminology that I should be using, I can say that that matter was investigated. I am informed that the matter cannot be referred to the coroner under the law as it stands at present. To answer the honourable member's question, I am unable to refer it to the coroner. I can assure him that I would be pleased to do so in an effort to have this matter cleared up. I understand that that cannot be done. It is not a matter of will.

Year 10 Examinations

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can the minister clarify the situation regarding the Year 10 external examinations? The editorial in the Northern Territory News of 24 May 1989 stated that the external component would be worth 50% of the final assessment for Year 10 students. This conflicts with previous advice given by the minister. Could he clarify the matter for the benefit of this House?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question because the point does need clarification. The actual percentage that appeared in the editorial was incorrect. The external examination component in relation to English and mathematics, as all honourable members and the public would be aware, is 30% and not 50%. There are some members of this Assembly and many in the community who would prefer it to be 100%. I want to make it very clear that the percentage of 30% for English and mathematics has been accepted by the government. It was a recommendation that was put forward by the NT Board of Studies and the government has accepted it. The decision has been made. I make that very clear, although I thought I had done so previously in this Assembly. We should all now be talking about, or looking at, the implementation process that will be followed. We should stop carrying on in the way that we have been because the only ones who will be disadvantaged are the students.

Mr Speaker, in line with a commitment that I have given to the Legislative Assembly, I would like to inform honourable members that a briefing will be made available to them.

Mr Ede: Come on. You were going to make a statement.

Mr HARRIS: Just sit down and listen.

Mr Ede: All right. But don't you back off.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, there will be a briefing, which was originally for one member of the Assembly, tomorrow at 10 am. If other members are able to attend that briefing session to ask questions in relation to the implementation process, Dr Harry Payne, the Chairman of the Board of Studies, will be available. That briefing will take place in the Legislative Assembly

precincts. If honourable members are unable to attend because of the short notice, their electorate secretaries may attend. If further briefings are required, I will make the necessary arrangements so that members will have the opportunity to have the Chairman of the Board of Studies answer any questions in relation to the implementation process. It is not a matter of debating, Mr Speaker, and again the member for Stuart is starting to raise the issue of whether or not there should be external examinations.

Mr Ede interjecting.

Mr HARRIS: I make it very clear here that there were 2 years of consultation and discussion before we arrived at that decision.

Mr Ede: They said 'common assessment task' not 'external examination'.

Mr HARRIS: The member for Stuart should be ashamed of himself. He knows the process. We are going back over old issues. A similar thing occurred in the case of the secondary college split. I remember that, after we made the decision following a long period of consultation, people came back and started up the debate again.

Mr Speaker, the government has gone through an extensive consultation process. The government has no intention of climbing back from the decision that it has taken. I would urge people in the community to ensure that they now start to look at the implementation process. I again make it clear that there is a lot of misinformation going around in the community. No student will be tested on areas which he or she has not covered. I make that very clear.

Mr Speaker, I again urge honourable members to take up my offer in relation to briefings. As I have indicated to honourable members, the Year 10 external assessment regulation booklet and other information will be made available at the briefing. I wish people would realise that there is nothing underhand in what has been proposed. It is not a stupid process. It is responsible. I wish the member for Stuart would wake up to the fact that we need to take account of what industry is saying and what parents are saying.

Mr Ede: The parents are against it.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, that comment is very interesting. I can assure you that many parents do not agree with what he is saying.

Mr Ede: Your own secretary tabled those figures at COGS0.

Gunn Point Prison Farm

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to ACTING MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

In view of the extensive development planned for the Gunn Point and Shoal Bay area, are there plans to move the Gunn Point Prison Farm? If it is to stay where it is, given that the area around it has already been encroached on, will the area around the farm become smaller and smaller?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there is no intention at this time to move the prison farm. Obviously, in the longer term, as the area develops, it will have to be moved. We will have to determine a suitable location. The answer is that the prison farm will be moved in the long term but not in the short term.

Proposed Alice Springs Bus Service

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

The member for Flynn recently expressed some concern regarding the proposed Alice Springs bus service. Is the Minister for Transport and Works able to give the House a report on the state of that particular service?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have been waiting for a fortnight to hear from the member for Flynn despite a number of suggestions to him that he ought to follow up on his fairly outrageous article in the NT News of 29 April when he rather shamefully promoted, as only members of the opposition or crossbenches can do, the notion of the Berrimah Line.

Mr Floreani: With absolute truth.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, I suggest that the member for Flynn's definitions of 'absolute' and 'truth' need some inquiry, particularly in terms of his allegations regarding communications and correspondence between myself and the Alice Springs Town Council and, of course, my officers and council officers, regarding implementation of the bus service. Of course, the honourable member is in rather an awkward position because it seems that he is advised by a council alderman who is a kindred spirit.

Mr Tuxworth: Wash your mouth out.

Mr FINCH: I would understand from that interjection by the member for Barkly that perhaps there is some substance to rumours regarding one Alderman Kennedy. That, however, is a matter for another day. Let me say, however, that the argument being put by the honourable member is identical to that promoted by Alderman Kennedy, who is the chairman of the relevant subcommittee of the council. That argument is that the very first communication in relation to bus services came from the council to the NT government. That is totally untrue.

As for 'absolute truth', if the honourable member had responded to my recorded telephone message of Saturday the 29th and taken the trouble to reply to my call, I could have enlightened him as to the actual chronology of communications between council and government. It seems, however, that the member for Flynn is extremely shy when it comes to direct communication. I am well aware that, following the same article, the Minister for Mines and Energy also made a number of attempts to contact him. The problem was that he was not at home and he was not in his electorate office. Mr Speaker, what is the member for Flynn doing for his electorate?

Mr Speaker, the story of the Alice Springs bus service is fairly simple. On 31 January, Cabinet made a decision to fully fund the operational costs of an Alice Springs bus service. In fairness to the people of Alice Springs, let me enlighten them as to what that really means. Whilst that figure may only be in the order of \$200 000 per annum, on a passenger kilometre basis that amount is dramatically greater than that which applies in the only other urban bus system that operates in the Northern Territory - in Darwin. The decision was deliberately taken by this government following strong representation from members of the Alice Springs Town Council but, more importantly, from the member for Araluen. The conditions of the offer were outlined in detail on that same day to members of the Alice Springs Town Council. Whilst I

acknowledge that that was not a formal council meeting, the details of the decision were relayed to the council in writing 2 weeks later.

Mr Floreani: You didn't send any correspondence.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the member for Flynn would not know what correspondence has occurred between us. All he had to do was ask, but he would not know.

In addition, a meeting was held in Darwin at which officers of the department outlined all the details to Alderman Kennedy and the Town Clerk. At that meeting, the council representatives expressed the desire to formalise a set of contract documents in their own format. The department agreed to that provided that they complied with the general basic criteria of the Cabinet decision. What did the Alice Springs Town Council do at the behest of 1 of those 2 people? It came back with an outrageous penny-pinching demand on this government. I was outraged, not only because of the penny-pinching attitude but because of the delays that I could foresee resulting from that procrastination.

All of the negotiations have been in the hands of officers of the Department of Transport and Works who now have an agreement with the Alice Springs Town Council. They have agreed to a request from the council that the implementation of the scheme be deferred to 1 August. The reason is that the council is concerned that it might not have the few thousand dollars that are required to help implement the system.

The honourable member talks about the Berrimah Line. Let it be known that the only line that exists in the Northern Territory in regard to funding ought to be called the Kulgera Line. I say that with respect to the member for MacDonnell. I hope that he does not have too many residents south of Kulgera. This government is about fair treatment of all Territorians. When you look at the capital works program on a per capita basis, the people of Alice Springs received 50% more in the budget this year for capital works, maintenance and other works programs than did the people in Darwin. The figures speak for themselves. The claims made by the opposition and members on the crossbenches at the time of the Flynn by-election about expenditure for central Australia were wrong. The figures prove that Alice Springs receives 50% more on a per capita basis than Darwin. The promotion of this Berrimah Line by members of the opposition is nothing more than shameful and divisive.

CLP Submission to Remuneration Tribunal

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

I remind the Chief Minister of the size of urban electorates in the Northern Territory. They are commonly referred to outside the Northern Territory as pocket handkerchief electorates. Each of us who has an urban electorate knows that we can walk around it in half a day and cycle across it in an hour. I remind the Chief Minister also that he is currently tackling severe problems in the economy and balancing whether we should increase taxes and charges or cut services or whether we can get away with doing neither. In that context, can the minister confirm that the Country Liberal Party submission to the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal asked that government vehicles be provided to backbench members of parliament in urban electorates?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not sure that it is appropriate in this House for information in regard to such a submission to be released. I am somewhat unclear on the matter of our submission. The matter was handled by other members of the parliamentary wing because the Chief Minister has plenty of other things that he is paid to do.

Mr Coulter: Tell us what is in yours.

Mr Smith: By all means. I am happy to table it.

Mr PERRON: If the honourable member wishes to table the ALP submission, he can go for his life.

Section 155 of the Criminal Code

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for LABOUR, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE and LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The minister will be aware of concerns which have been expressed to me by people undertaking occupational safety and first-aid courses. Those concerns focus on the fact that, on completion of those courses, they become liable to the provisions of section 155 of the Criminal Code. Can the minister advise whether the Work Health Authority is seeking clarification of an individual's responsibility and liability in relation to section 155 of the Criminal Code?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for Karama brought to my notice his concerns in this matter. I understand that representatives of the Work Health Authority, in providing training for St John Ambulance, have drawn to the attention of attendees of those courses the fact that section 155 of the Criminal Code provides fairly severe penalties if people who could reasonably be expected to provide help to somebody injured in an accident do not do so. Frankly, that is a very reasonable position to take. If you are providing training to people, it should be made quite clear to those people that there are penalties for not providing treatment at a scene of an accident. I understand also that St John Ambulance provides that sort of information to its own trainees. It is similar to the sort of information that the Public Service Commissioner would give to public servants in respect of the penalties for releasing confidential material without authorisation. Certainly, the Public Service Commissioner makes all public servants aware of their responsibilities under the Criminal Code.

I believe that the concern that the member for Karama had was that members of the Work Health Authority may have cast some doubt on whether that provision is a reasonable one. In fact, on investigating that, I have found that there is no substance to the claim that any member of the Work Health Authority has cast any sort of doubt on the reasonableness of that provision of the Criminal Code.

As I understand, to date, there have been no instances of people being taken to court for passing an accident. Of course, it would be difficult to ascertain whether a person had unreasonably bypassed an accident and not provided treatment. I am assured that members of the Work Health Authority are in fact doing their duty reasonably in providing that information to trainees attending any courses that they deliver. I would certainly support them in their efforts in that regard.

Private Medical Practitioner for Groote Eylandt

Mr LANHUPUY to ACTING MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I ask the honourable minister whether the department received any suitable applications following the advertisement for a full-time private doctor at Groote Eylandt? Has a doctor been appointed and what financial package, if any, has been offered?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Northern Territory government had an agreement with Gemco that there would be 2 medical officers based at Groote Eylandt - a departmental officer grade 2, and a general practitioner. We encountered problems because the locum general practitioner was involved in a single vehicle accident and was taken to Royal Darwin Hospital because of a depressed skull fracture. Apparently, he was to return to Groote Eylandt. In such circumstances, we offered a replacement medical officer to stand in and provide health services. I understand that the remaining officer will continue to see the injured doctor's general practice clients.

On 27 February, we advertised for doctors to provide the necessary services in the area. We ran the advertisement again on 1 April and on 8 April in an effort to secure someone to fill the position on a full-time basis. I believe that there were a number of applications and 5 phone inquiries were received from within Australia. The position was also advertised in New Zealand but no inquiries came from there. Information was forwarded to 5 medical officers and, up to 24 April, no written applications had been received. Follow-up phone calls have been made to the people who showed initial interest, without any success.

Mr Norman, the secretary of the department, was contacted, and Dr John Edgar visited Groote Eylandt on 4 May to assess the situation. Interim arrangements are in place to provide medical officers up until August 1989 and, of course, consideration will be given to recruiting an additional departmental medical officer to fill the position at Alyangula full-time if a general practitioner cannot be allocated to the area.

Aboriginal Areas Protection Bill

Mr TUXWORTH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In directing this question to the minister, I refer to the legislation before the House. He would be aware that it is possible for the existing Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority to set itself up under the federal act and continue to be involved in the administration of sacred sites in the Northern Territory with the support of the 2 land councils. Is it legally possible that that could happen? Has the minister investigated that possibility and, secondly, has he the capacity to stop another organisation from becoming involved in the administration of sacred sites in the Northern Territory when his proposed legislation passes through this House?

Mr SPEAKER: Part of the question asked by the honourable member of the Minister for Lands and Housing sought a legal opinion. I do not believe that that part of the question should be answered by the minister.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, obviously it slipped the mind of the member for Barkly that there is a standing order which prohibits me from giving an opinion.

Mr Tuxworth: I did not ask you for an opinion.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, in relation to the formation of an incorporated association, I think everyone is aware that anyone at any time can go through the processes of forming an association. Those are the facts, and there is nothing wrong with that. There are a number of associations in the Territory, incorporated under federal legislation and under Territory legislation.

The honourable member has had the proposed bill long enough to be able to look through it, and I presume he would have done so. There is a clause which points out the powers of prosecution under the act. I think it is in section 30 in the consolidated bill. I think section 39 refers to it, and I will read it out: 'A prosecution for an offence against this act or the regulations shall not be brought except by the authority'. That is pretty plain.

It is worth while noting that, if any organisation collects information from custodians relevant to any site in relation to Aboriginal areas, if that information is correct, that is fine. It can do no harm because the processes under the proposed bill involve the custodians and involve obtaining information from the appropriate people. There are mechanisms to ensure that that information is tested and that there is a determination of what the area concerned is about. If appropriate people are organised by someone else as well, it can only reinforce that process. If they are not the appropriate people, their opinions do not matter because the custodians are the only ones who can give the advice.

A second authority would be limited in terms of prosecution and therefore there will be no effects on anyone in that respect. Any association will have the same powers as any individual in relation to the ability to take out writs in the court and to do things. Under the legislation before the House, there is no ability for 2 sacred sites authorities to operate. The federal government is able to look at the options available to it and to act accordingly. Honourable members are aware that we cannot prevent the Commonwealth exercising its power in this respect. If it wishes to act, it can do so and neither the Territory nor any state can prevent that.

Under the provisions of the proposed bill, only 1 group has the ability to operate in terms of prosecutions under the act. I am not concerned about any organisation which will promote the involvement of custodians because, as I said, we have no problem with that. That would reinforce what is going on. If the wrong people are involved in trying to promote a bogus sacred site, it would not matter. It would contravene what the custodians of the area say and therefore it would be neither here nor there.

The member for Barkly is peddling the notion that, dear oh dear, we are going to set up 2 bureaucracies and 2 of this and 2 of that. The notion has no basis except the fact that anyone can form an organisation at any time. It would be possible for 10 sacred sites authorities to be formed. We would certainly not be paying for them and they would not have the power to prosecute under this act. As the Chief Minister pointed out, this legislation is the most comprehensive in Australia. It is designed specifically to protect sites but it is also designed to allow maximum consultation with the

appropriate people to allow work to be carried out around and on sacred sites. I think that the honourable member should really have a look at the issues in detail before he tries to create a widespread impression that there will be more disasters with regard to sacred sites and ...

Mr Tuxworth: If we have 2 authorities, there will be.

Mr MANZIE: We can have 10 authorities or 20. Anyone can form an incorporated association. I hope the honourable member is not suggesting that we should change the law to prevent that occurring. Mr Speaker, only 1 group has the power to prosecute under the legislation. The federal act is there and ...

Mr Tuxworth interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the member for Barkly lives in fairyland. It is a bit of a shame because, since he has become a bitter man in politics, he has not formally contributed anything positive to our community. He certainly likes to jump on the bandwagon to try to get a headline. Mr Speaker, I ask him to look at what can occur in the world today. We do not have the power to stop people forming incorporated associations.

The people of Tennant Creek and the people of Elliott can form associations. People can form associations to play tennis. They do not set the rules for tennis but they control the game in their own area. There is nothing we can do about that and I hope that the honourable member is not suggesting that we should try. Another sacred sites authority could be formed now or at some time in the future, but it will have no powers under this legislation. People who want the protection of this legislation will have to operate through the authority set up under it. Anybody can act under the federal act but, Mr Speaker, it certainly does not have the ability of this legislation to protect and involve custodians.

Mr COULTER (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, in asking that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper, may I point out to honourable members that there have been 5 questions from the government and 5 from the opposition. On this side of the House, we have been under instructions to sit down for the last 15 minutes which just goes to show the effectiveness of the opposition and the issues in which it is interested.

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