

## PART II

### THE QUESTION PAPER

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

Numerical references are to Question Paper page numbers.

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

NOTICE GIVEN ON DATE SHOWN

From 15 March 1983

Railway Electrification

817 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In view of his predecessor's statement in late 1982 about reticulating power from a gas-fired power station in Darwin to Daly Waters, and in view of the proposed gas-operated power station in Alice Springs, will consideration be given to electrifying the Darwin to Alice Springs railway?

Electricity - Outback Communities

820 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Accepting that consumers of electricity in major NT centres, including Aboriginal communities, are heavily subsidised, will the NT government consider extending this scheme to outback communities on cattle stations, tourist ventures and mining operations so that town rates are charged for power consumed, with a subsidy to cover the actual cost of power generation and maintenance?

From 22 March 1983

Crushing Mill - Darwin Power Station

832 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

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

From 24 May 1983

National Companies and Securities Scheme - Participation

855 Mr B. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Has a decision been made by the government to participate in the National Companies and Securities Scheme?

Electricity Subsidy

861 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Why do Territorians who have their electricity supplied by NTEC receive a handsome subsidy when (a) Territorians who have their electricity provided by the NT government pay nothing, and (b) Territorians living in remote areas on cattle stations, mining settlements and tourist camps pay full tote for their electricity requirements, generators, fuel and maintenance?

Mt Wells Battery - Payment

862 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. What is the reason for the delay in full payment by Jingellic Minerals to the government for the Mt Wells battery and associated leases?
2. When will this be resolved?

*From 31 August 1983*

Breaches of Hygiene Regulations

875 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and CONSERVATION

What breaches of hygiene regulations in meat processing establishments were reported in the Territory in 1983?

Slaughtering of Horses

876 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and CONSERVATION

1. How many horses were slaughtered in the Territory in 1983?
2. In which meatworks did the slaughters take place?

*From 11 October 1983*

Fish River Station - Acquisition

880 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT and TOURISM

1. What compensation did the government pay to owners of Fish River station for its compulsory acquisition?
2. What value was placed on the property by the Valuer-General at the time of the acquisition?
3. How long after compulsory acquisition was the owner asked to remove his cattle from the property; did the owner pay rent on the property for the period from compulsory acquisition to the date his cattle were removed; and what guarantees, if any, were given to the owner against the possible loss of income from the forced sale of cattle off the property?
4. Have all matters concerning the acquisition of Fish River station been resolved?

Employee Health

881 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. How many people did each of your departments (or statutory authorities under your portfolios) employ who identified themselves as disabled at or before the time of their appointment?
2. What was the total number of sick days these employees were entitled to?
3. What was the total number of sick days actually taken by these employees?
4. Were any of these disabled employees involved in a workmen's compensation claim?
5. If so, (a) how many days were lost, and (b) were the conditions related to aggravation of existing disabling conditions noted at the time of the employee's appointment?

Employee Health

882 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. How many people did each of your departments (or statutory authorities under your portfolios) employ who identified themselves as disabled at or before the time of their appointment?
2. What was the total number of sick days these employees were entitled to?
3. What was the total number of sick days actually taken by these employees?
4. Were any of these disabled employees involved in a workmen's compensation claim?
5. If so, (a) how many days were lost, and (b) were the conditions related to aggravation of existing disabling conditions noted at the time of the employee's appointment?

Employee Health

883 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and CONSERVATION

1. How many people did each of your departments (or statutory authorities under your portfolios) employ who identified themselves as disabled at or before the time of their appointment?
2. What was the total number of sick days these employees were entitled to?
3. What was the total number of sick days actually taken by these employees?
4. Were any of these disabled employees involved in a workmen's compensation claim?
5. If so, (a) how many days were lost, and (b) were the conditions related to aggravation of existing disabling conditions noted at the time of the employee's appointment?

Employee Health

884 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many people did each of your departments (or statutory authorities under your portfolios) employ who identified themselves as disabled at or before the time of their appointment?
2. What was the total number of sick days these employees were entitled to?
3. What was the total number of sick days actually taken by these employees?
4. Were any of these disabled employees involved in a workmen's compensation claim?
5. If so, (a) how many days were lost, and (b) were the conditions related to aggravation of existing disabling conditions noted at the time of the employee's appointment?

Employee Health

885 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many people did each of your departments (or statutory authorities under your portfolios) employ who identified themselves as disabled at or before the time of their appointment?
2. What was the total number of sick days these employees were entitled to?
3. What was the total number of sick days actually taken by these employees?

4. Were any of these disabled employees involved in a workmen's compensation claim?
5. If so, (a) how many days were lost, and (b) were the conditions related to aggravation of existing disabling conditions noted at the time of the employee's appointment?

Employee Health

886 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH and HOUSING

1. How many people did each of your departments (or statutory authorities under your portfolios) employ who identified themselves as disabled at or before the time of their appointment?
2. What was the total number of sick days these employees were entitled to?
3. What was the total number of sick days actually taken by these employees?
4. Were any of these disabled employees involved in a workmen's compensation claim?
5. If so, (a) how many days were lost, and (b) were the conditions related to aggravation of existing disabling conditions noted at the time of the employee's appointment?

Kargaru Bush Camp - Lease

795 Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT and TOURISM

1. Will he grant a special purposes lease to the Kargaru bush camp, Tennant Creek, to enable the provision of adequate ablution facilities?
2. Was an application for a special purposes lease for the Kargaru bush camp lodged with his department in January 1982 and rejected by him in October 1982?
3. On what date did he inform the applicants of his decision to reject the application?

ANSWER

1. The Tennant Creek Town Council has made application for land for the purposes of a camp, and this is currently under consideration.
2. No application was made. However, discussions involving the Department of Lands, Tennant Creek Town Council and Department of Community Development were held to ascertain the need to formalize tenure over this area.
3. There was no application and, therefore, no rejection.

Apprentices

800 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Is he aware that only 5 panelbeating firms in Darwin employ apprentices?
2. Do the Territory Insurance Office and other government authorities give preference to firms employing apprentices?
3. Are corporations such as Telecom encouraged to employ and apprentice local youths in their Northern Territory operations?

ANSWER

1. I am aware that there are 9 panelbeating firms in Darwin that currently employ 16 apprentices.
2. A preferential tendering system is being considered by the government. If such a scheme is adopted, future contractors will need to employ apprentices according to predetermined ratios to be eligible to tender for government projects.
3. Yes.

Aboriginal Land Claims

810 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it a fact that under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act (a) water is a mineral, and (b) river banks and river beds can be claimed?

ANSWER

It is a fact that Section 3 of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 defines a 'mineral' to include water. This does not mean, however, that the owners of Aboriginal land also own the water thereon, and nor does it mean that traditional land owners can control the usage and flow of water on or from their land such that the rights of other landholders are impaired. The Control of Waters Act generally applies to Aboriginal land.

In the Daly River land claim, the Aboriginal Land Commissioner (Mr Justice Toohey) held that the banks and beds of rivers were unalienated Crown land within the meaning of the Land Rights Act, and could thus be claimed. As the law now stands, his conclusion appears to be legally correct.

The short answer to both questions is therefore 'yes'.

Timber Creek - Land Claim

811 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is it a fact that the township of Timber Creek is under land claim?
2. If the claim is successful, will the houses and improvements become the property of Aboriginals?

ANSWER

The township of Timber Creek is not the subject of an Aboriginal land claim, since no township can be claimed under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act. There is, therefore, no question that houses and improvements within the township could become the property of Aboriginal claimants.

There is, however, a land claim with respect to areas which immediately abut the township. The claim includes certain areas of unalienated Crown land, and includes also a grazing licence.

Northern Land Council - Legal Advisers

813 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he able to say how many legal advisers are employed by the Northern Land Council?

ANSWER

The Northern Land Council presently employs 5 lawyers on its full-time staff. However, it also employs other lawyers on a casual basis to handle specific projects, such as individual land claims. The number of casual lawyers or legal advisers employed under contract varies from time to time.

2 km Drinking Law - Advertising

830 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

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

ANSWER

The total cost of the public information campaign in relation to the 2 km drinking law is as follows -

Television advertising	\$ 13 562.10
Radio advertising	\$ 3 601.60
Newspaper advertising	\$ 14 952.00
Pamphlets and leaflets	
Printing	\$ 9 256.42
Translations	\$ 672.00
Freight and postage	\$ 4 484.00
	(estimated) \$ 14 412.42
	<u>\$ 46 528.12</u>

As distribution was handled by various departments and agencies, it is not possible to accurately assess the actual amount of expenditure for freight and postage, especially as each agency accepted the cost as part of normal administrative expenses and individual records specifically related to the 2 km campaign postage were not initiated. The majority of the pamphlets were dispatched in bulk lots per departmental mail bags. The estimate is based on the assumption that approximately 85 per cent of the 105 500 pamphlets and leaflets were sent by mail. Whilst a few single copies may have been sent at \$0.24 each (charge as at June 1982) most were in consignments of multiple copies and were dispatched at the cheaper parcel rate. It is estimated that \$0.05 per copy should be an approximate overall average cost for freight.

Grants-in-Aid Scheme

837 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

How much money under the Grants-in-Aid Scheme was given to community service organisations in 1981-82?

ANSWER

A total of \$4 773 969 was provided to community service organisations under the Grants-in-Aid Scheme in 1981-82. Attached is a list which details organisations assisted by the Grants-in-Aid programs administered by the Community Welfare, Community Services and Correctional Services Divisions.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - GRANTS-IN-AID 1981-82

COMMUNITY WELFARE DIVISION GRANTS-IN-AID

ANNUAL GRANTS-IN-AID

Aputula Housing Association	\$ 2 330
St Vincent de Paul - Darwin	\$ 7 000
St Vincent de Paul - Alice Springs	\$ 15 000
Docker River Council	\$ 2 290
St Vincent de Paul - Giles Street Shelter - Katherine	\$ 6 000
Darwin Family Centres - "Fun Bus"	\$ 18 398
Northern "Y" Women	\$ 1 000
Family Planning Association	\$ 5 000
Alice Springs Senior Citizens	\$ 500
Playgroup Association	\$ 4 000
National Council of Women	\$ 475
Bindi Centre	\$ 4 009
Kurringal Residents Community Centre	\$ 1 300
Parents Without Partners	\$ 2 142
N.T. Spastics Association	\$ 15 300
Elliott Aboriginal Council	\$ 400
Docker River Community Council	\$ 8 240
Western Desert Council (Kintore)	\$ 8 130
Borroloola Council	\$ 3 470
Salvation Army	\$ 4 145
Tennant Creek Council	\$ 12 000
Finke River Mission	\$ 6 000

COMMUNITY WELFARE WORKER SUBSIDY SCHEME

Y.W.C.A. - Darwin	\$ 17 564
Catholic Parish - Alice Springs	\$ 17 077
Yirrkalala Dhanbul	\$ 12 071
Chung Wah Society	\$ 18 151
Catholic Parish - Darwin	\$ 17 279



FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES SCHEME PROJECTS

Aboriginal Women's Resource Centre	\$ 13 914
Salvation Army	\$ 15 468
Darwin Family Centres	\$ 21 348
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress	\$ 61 464
Y.W.C.A.	\$ 2 747
Evaluation	\$ 16 000

I.Y.D.P.

Handicapped Persons Association	\$ 300
Mr and Mrs Skandaliaris	\$ 1 410
Mr and Mrs Townson	\$ 495
Old Timers Alice Springs	\$ 9 085
John Double	\$ 174
Ron Wegert	\$ 740
Mr and Mrs Richards	\$ 205
Deafness Association of N.T.	\$ 816
Downs Syndrome	\$ 2 531
Cumberland College Foundation	\$ 2 000
Association Special Education	\$ 713
Meredyth Pettit	\$ 2 900
Pamela Brooks	\$ 2 800
Stephanie Cole	\$ 765
Mr and Mrs G. McShanag	\$ 352
I.Y.D.P.	\$ 1 000
N.T. Council on the Ageing	\$ 6 809
Tennant Creek Pensioners Association	\$ 316
Mr and Mrs Hourdas	\$ 705
Bindi Activity Therapy Centre	\$ 562
Jason Cooper	\$ 205
Alice Springs Special School	\$ 2 500
Darwin Toy Library	\$ 2 000
Arts Council	\$ 4 000
Marrara Christian School	\$ 4 680
N.S.W. Institute of Technology	\$ 5 134

OPERATIONAL SUBSIDIES

Handicapped Persons Association	\$ 13 000
N.T. Council on the Ageing	\$ 10 000
Bindi Residential Centre	\$ 36 238
Crisis Line	\$ 16 950
Old Timers - Alice Springs	\$ 12 500
Australian Red Cross - Old Timers - Katherine	\$ 8 000
Australian Red Cross - Noble House - Tennant Creek	\$ 2 000
N.T. Pensioner's Association - Tracey Lodge	\$ 12 500

RESIDENTIAL CARE

St Mary's Child and Family Welfare Services	\$ 173 715
N.T. Spastics Association	\$ 21 861

STATE GRANTS HOME CARE

Alice Springs Senior Citizens	\$ 60 000
Kardu Numida (for Senior Citizens Centre)	\$ 4 500
N.T. Council on the Ageing	\$ 17 547
Katherine Red Cross	\$ 7 937
Bamyili Council	\$ 2 500
Darwin Red Cross Home Help Services	\$ 36 000

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE - ANSWERS RECEIVED

Alice Springs Emergency Home Help	\$ 22 300
Lajamanu Council	\$ 5 000
Kardu Numida Inc., Home Help	\$ 10 000
Tennant Creek Home Care	\$ 6 000
Yuendumu Council	\$ 7 000
Dagaragu Council	\$ 5 018
Ngukurr Council	\$ 7 000

YOUTH SERVICES

Y.W.C.A. for Darwin Youth Refuge	\$ 91 230
I.Y.C.	

Araluen Arts and Cultural Trust	\$ 7 992
Elliott Housing Association	\$ 4 000

CHILDREN'S WEEK

Darwin City Council	\$ 2 500
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TOTAL: \$ 996 697

COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION

ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

OPERATIONAL GRANTS

Araluen Arts and Cultural Trust	\$ 91 100
Arts Council of Australia (N.T.)	\$ 99 800
Browns Mart Comm. Arts Project	\$ 59 750
Crafts Council of N.T.	\$ 64 920
Darwin Theatre Group	\$ 47 500
National Trust of Australia (N.T.)	\$ 43 951

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Australian Children's T.V. Foundation	\$ 3 733
Print Council of Australia	\$ 500

EQUIPMENT GRANTS

Alice Springs Film Society	\$ 518
Handspinners and Weavers Guild, Gove	\$ 500
Tennant Creek Theatre Group	\$ 5 000

FACILITIES

Araluen Centre	\$ 414 227
Darwin Centre	\$ 188 538
Kookaburra Memorial	\$ 35 000

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Alice Springs Art Foundation	\$ 3 500
Australian Association of Dance in Education	\$ 5 480
Ballet Association of N.T.	\$ 4 000
Boungainvillea Festival Committee	\$ 22 500
Cecchetti Society of N.T.	\$ 2 000
Community Arts Board	\$ 1 000
Darwin Ballroom Dancing Association	\$ 1 750
Darwin Community College	\$ 1 500
Darwin City Council	\$ 2 613
Library Association of Australia (N.T.)	\$ 930
Museums and Art Galleries Board	\$ 5 000

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE - ANSWERS RECEIVED

North Australian Eisteddfod Council	\$ 8 000
N.T. Toastmistress Club (Alice Springs)	\$ 615
N.T. Toastmistress Club (Tennant Creek)	\$ 730
Sole Brothers Circus	\$ 15 000
Weavers' Workshop Guild	\$ 3 800

TOTAL: \$ 1 133 455

HERITAGE PROJECTS

CONSERVATION WORK (TRANSPORT AND WORKS)

Audit House	\$ 54 055
Old Airport - Katherine	\$ 1 170
Pine Creek	\$ 6 085
Old Hamilton Downs Homestead	\$ 5 000
Katherine Railway Station	\$ 41 000
Pine Creek Repeater Station	\$ 5 000
Powell Creek Repeater Station	\$ 3 945
Fannie Bay Gaol	\$ 40 000

GRANTS TO HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS

Central Australian Aviation Museum	\$ 2 985
Aviation Historical Society (N.T.)	\$ 2 000
Araluen Cultural Trust (Gardeners Cottage)	\$ 3 800
Historical Society	\$ 300
National Trust, re: Fannie Bay Gaol	\$ 4 033

HERITAGE SURVEYS, RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

Museums and Art Galleries Board:

Archaeological Survey - Central Australia	\$ 9 500
Archaeological Survey - Macassan sites	\$ 8 000
Wartime/Military sites	\$ 7 950
Register Archaeological sites	\$ 20 000
Agrarian Survey	\$ 8 000

N.T. Conservation Commission:

Coburg Peninsula/Port Essington	\$ 16 000
Arltunga Reserve	\$ 27 650

National Trust of Australia N.T.:

Fannie Bay Gaol	\$ 1 837
Pine Creek Heritage	\$ 9 500

Queensland Conservation Council:

Wildman River Environmental Study	\$ 12 000
Anthony's Lagoon and Powell Creek Police Stations (Gary Hunt and Associates)	\$ 6 000
Douglas Lockwood's Cottage (Troppo Architects)	\$ 400
Church of Christ the King, Tennant Creek (De Traine Agencies)	\$ 1 450
Old Courthouse/Town Hall - Darwin (V.T. O'Brien)	\$ 1 600
Old Airport Building - Katherine (De Traine Agencies)	\$ 1 412

TOTAL: \$ 300 672

COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION

YOUTH, SPORT AND RECREATION

Ali Curung Council	\$ 4 914
Alice Springs Amateur Cycling Association	\$ 9 430
Alice Springs Cricket Association	\$ 2 550
Alice Springs Gliding Club	\$ 1 560
Alice Springs Pistol Club	\$ 10 750
Alice Springs Pony Club	\$ 300

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE - ANSWERS RECEIVED

Alice Springs Tennis Association	\$ 8 000
Alice Springs Town Council	\$ 90 000
Alice Springs Youth Centre	\$ 11 380
Arnhem Four-Wheel Drive Club	\$ 510
Arnhem Gun Pistol and Rifle Club	\$ 3 906
Australian Council of Health, Physical and Recreation	\$ 694.32
CAT Association of N.T.	\$ 956
Central Australian Sporting Car Association	\$ 1 000
Citizens Radio Emergency Service Team	\$ 6 755
Country Women's Association of N.T.	\$ 865
Darwin Baseball Association	\$ 4 083
Darwin Gun Club	\$ 40 000
Darwin High Plain Speaking Comp.	\$ 185
Darwin Junior Tennis Association	\$ 1 438
Darwin Motorsports Council	\$ 83 520
Darwin Pistol Club	\$ 1 250
Darwin Police Citizens Club	\$ 14 000
Darwin Rifle Club	\$ 4 000
Darwin Sailing Club	\$ 5 000
Darwin Sub Aqua Club	\$ 6 000
Darwin Sun Club	\$ 5 000
Darwin Trailer Boat Club	\$ 30 000
Deutscher Club	\$ 21 500
Ethnic Community Council (N.T.)	\$ 465
GAP Neighbourhood Centre	\$ 16 375
Girls Brigade	\$ 348
Gliding Association of N.T.	\$ 1 610
Gove Country Golf Club	\$ 9 500
Gove Peninsula S.L.S.C.	\$ 14 627
Greek Community of North Australia	\$ 70 000
Hamilton Downs Youth Camp	\$ 16 375
Iwupataka Housing Association	\$ 3 396
Katherine Amateur Swimming Club	\$ 5 922
Katherine Brownies of the Air	\$ 350
Katherine Cricket Association	\$ 2 238
Katherine Guides, Scouts and Brownies	\$ 4 500
Katherine Junior Baseball Association	\$ 3 107
Katherine Town Council	\$ 4 587
Legion of Frontiersmen - Darwin	\$ 3 000
Lyappa Congress	\$ 4 750
Milikapiti Council	\$ 18 410
Milingimbi Community Council	\$ 4 911
Multilingual Broadcasting Association N.T.	\$ 674
Nationwide Workers with Youth Forum	\$ 1 544
Nhulunbuy Amateur Swimming Club	\$ 3 200
Nhulunbuy Police Citizens Youth Club	\$ 2 250
Nightcliff Football Club	\$ 23 000
Noonamah Horse and Pony Club	\$ 265
North Australian Gliding Association	\$ 500
N.T. Aerobatic Chapter	\$ 1 492.50
N.T. Amateur Athletics Association	\$ 5 759
N.T. Amateur Cycling Association	\$ 7 166
N.T. Amateur Gymnastics Association	\$ 2 840
N.T. Amateur Judo Association	\$ 10 683
N.T. Amateur Swimming Association	\$ 16 870
N.T. Amateur Water Polo Association	\$ 8 871
N.T. Area Scout Association	\$ 36 775
N.T. Australian Football Council	\$ 2 776

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE - ANSWERS RECEIVED

N.T. Baseball Association	\$ 15 532
N.T. Basketball Association	\$ 3 000
N.T. Cricket Association	\$ 6 328
N.T. Darts Association	\$ 2 425
N.T. Game Fishing Club	\$ 963
N.T. Girls Marching Association	\$ 4 000
N.T. Hockey Association	\$ 28 557
N.T. Junior Soccer Association	\$ 6 812
N.T. Little Athletics Association	\$ 7 645
N.T. Netball Association	\$ 8 230
N.T. Pistol Association	\$ 6 488
N.T. Region Girl Guides	\$ 60 655
N.T. Riders and Drivers Association	\$ 638 645
N.T. Rugby Referees Association	\$ 265
N.T. Rugby Union	\$ 1 441
N.T. Schools and Junior Rugby Union	\$ 3 214
N.T. Soccer Association	\$ 4 708
N.T. Softball Association	\$ 11 660
N.T. Squash Rackets Association	\$ 2 209
N.T. Table Tennis Association	\$ 2 174
N.T. Tennis Council	\$ 2 629
N.T. Tenpin Bowling Association	\$ 7 917
N.T. Touch Football	\$ 5 032
N.T. Volleyball Association	\$ 3 000
N.T. Water Ski Association	\$ 2 939.05
N.T. Womens Soccer Association	\$ 6 149
N.T. Yachting Association	\$ 4 888
Polocrosse Association of N.T.	\$ 5 821
Ramingining Community Council	\$ 11 000
Red Centre BMX Club	\$ 2 000
Resource and Settlement Centre	\$ 2 000
Rural District Netball Association	\$ 28 000
Somerville Community Services	\$ 82 704
Sporting Shooters Association of N.T.	\$ 1 058
St Mary's Football Sporting and Social Club	\$ 2 651
Tennant Creek Amateur Swimming Club	\$ 3 645
Tennant Creek Bowling Club	\$ 200
Tennant Creek Cricket Club	\$ 800
Tennant Creek Golf Club	\$ 21 134
Tennant Creek Saddlehorse Club	\$ 500
Tennant Creek Show Society	\$ 9 500
Tennant Creek Town Council	\$ 16 630
Ti Tree Progress Association	\$ 10 000
Top End Aerial Sports Academy	\$ 9 990
Yirrkala Dhanbul Community	\$ 12 750
Y.M.C.A. Amoonguna	\$ 3 396
Y.M.C.A. Central Australia	\$ 176 563
Y.M.C.A. Darwin	\$ 248 114
Y.W.C.A. Darwin	\$ 43 128
Yuendumu Council	\$ 5 018
Life Be In It	\$ 22 000
Vacation Care Program	\$ 85 944.79

TOTAL: \$ 2 330 644.66

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Association Inc. (Alice Springs)	\$ 7 000
N.T. Rehabilitation Association (Darwin)	\$ 5 500
TOTAL:	\$ 12 500

Employment Studies - Aboriginal Communities

867 Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Has the Department of Community Development carried out any studies of salaries, wages and employment on Aboriginal communities, or is it in the process of doing so?
2. If so, will he provide details of these studies?

ANSWER

The Department of Community Development has not carried out any such studies. However, the Department has been concerned for some time over the confusion which exists in a number of Aboriginal communities in relation to what awards and conditions are applicable to their council operations. In order to address these problems the department has canvassed all Aboriginal Community Councils asking if they wish to apply for membership of the NT Confederation of Industry and Commerce. The confederation, as an employer group, has the appropriate expertise to assist Aboriginal councils with these matters.

Vocational Training Commission - Staffing Review

868 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What are the reasons for a staffing review being undertaken of the Vocational Training Commission?
2. Why is it necessary to have 2 reviews of the commission within a 12-month period?
3. Did the instruction for the staffing review come from the Chief Minister and, if so, why not from the Minister for Education?

ANSWER

1. Amendments to the Industries Training Act were enacted on 4 February 1983. The current review is to ensure that the Vocational Training Commission is adequately organised and staffed to carry out its new responsibilities under the Vocational Training Commission Act.
2. Because of the amendments to the Industries Training Act it is necessary to ensure the Vocational Training Commission is properly organised and staffed.
3. The decision for the staffing review was made by the Cabinet Subcommittee on Establishment which comprises the Chief Minister and the Treasurer assisted by the Public Service Commissioner and the Under-treasurer.

NTDC Loan - Corkwood Bore Abattoir

870 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has Corkwood Bore abattoir received an NTDC loan and, if so, what was the purpose of the loan?

ANSWER

Yes. Two loans, one for a mobile abattoir in 1977 for \$30 000 and a second for a chiller in 1979 for \$30 000. Both have been fully repaid. A further loan of \$328 000 was approved in 1982, for the reconstruction of an abattoir for domestic kill. This loan has yet to be taken up and is under consideration for withdrawal.

NTDC Loan - Edward Souery

871 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What is the status of the NTDC loan of \$858 000 to Edward Souery's for the construction of the Tennant Creek meatworks?
2. Was (a) a second loan of some \$110 000 made by NTDC to Edward Souery and, if so, (b) for what purpose was the loan made, (c) what is the security for the loan, and (d) what is the present status of the loan?

ANSWER

1. Souery's are in receivership. The abattoir has been leased to Gilbertsons. The receiver is making payments. The loan is still current.
2. (a) Yes. A second loan of \$120 000 was made available at the time of construction.  
(b) The loan was for roadworks within the abattoir.  
(c) Security is a third mortgage over property.  
(d) The receiver is making payments.

NTDC Loan - Point Stuart Estate

872 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has an application been made for an NTDC loan of \$500 000 by Point Stuart Estate for a buffalo domestication program and, if so, has such a loan been granted?

ANSWER

Yes. An application was made for \$500 000. It has been declined.

NTDC Loan - Moudal Consultants

873 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Has an application for an NTDC loan been received from a Hong Kong based company called Moudal Consultants to establish a horse meat processing operation at Tennant Creek and, if so, has the loan been granted?
2. Has land been made available to Moudal Consultants for the establishment of a horse meat processing operation at Tennant Creek and, if so, on what terms?

ANSWER

1. No. Moudal Consultants has not applied for a loan but are consultants to an applicant, Miliss Pty Ltd for such a loan. The application was rejected but a new application is under consideration.
2. A check made with the Department of Lands on or about 7 September 1983 revealed that no offer of land had been made up to that time.

Tennant Creek Meatworks - Purchase

874 Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Was the Northern Territory government approached by any parties interested in the purchase of the Tennant Creek meatworks for assistance with respect to information about the operation?
2. If so, (a) who were those parties, and (b) what assistance did the government provide to them?

ANSWER

Any enquiries made to the NTDC have been referred to the receiver as he is the only person with any authority to negotiate.

Tennant Creek Meatworks

877 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the value of (a) land, (b) electricity, and (c) water supplied to the Tennant Creek meatworks to 30 August 1983?

ANSWER

I will be happy to detail the value of services provided by my department to the Tennant Creek meatworks, should the honourable member care to be a little more specific with his request.

Perpetual Pastoral Leases

878 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT and TOURISM

1. How many applications for perpetual pastoral leases have been (a) received, and (b) approved?
2. In considering applications for perpetual pastoral leases, does he have the full reports prepared by field officers of the Conservation Commission on areas of special interest or does he receive summarized reports from the Conservation Commission?

ANSWER

1. As at 3 October 1983, a total of 21 applications had been received by the Department of Lands. Two applications have been approved.
2. The Conservation Commission summarizes the reports of all field officers to produce a composite report embracing all disciplines. This report is submitted to the Land Board and the minister for consideration of the application.

The full reports may be called for if this is considered necessary.

In addition, the lessee is advised of the recommendations of the commission prior to the hearing and to date the Conservation Commission has been represented at the sittings by the appropriate officer.

Housing Commission - Electric Hot Water Systems

879 Mr SMITH to MINISTER for HEALTH and HOUSING

1. How many houses and flats owned by the Housing Commission and rented to tenants have electric hot water systems?
2. How many of the tenants in such dwellings receive rent rebate?



ANSWER

1. A total of 2499 rental houses and flats owned by the commission throughout the Territory have electric hot water systems.
2. A total of 1219 tenants of the abovementioned dwellings are in receipt of rental rebates.

Shareholdings for Myilly Point Development

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

The prospective developers of Myilly Point are the Northern Territory company, Henry and Walker, and the Korean company, Life Construction. Can he advise the shareholding that the Korean company, Life Construction, will hold in the proposed development and what shareholding will be held by Henry and Walker?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the situation in relation to proposals for the development of this area are, as I understand it, that Henry and Walker, in association with an Australian consortium, is putting together a more detailed proposal for the Department of Lands, and subsequently the government, to consider. As far as I am aware, the proposed consortium between Henry and Walker and Life Construction Co of Korea is not proceeding. I understand that Henry and Walker terminated the negotiations with Life Construction some months ago. I must say that my knowledge of the negotiations is somewhat limited but, to the best of my knowledge, Henry and Walker has been negotiating to put forward a detailed proposal to government in consultation with an Australian group which, I understand, includes some South Australian interests with which Henry and Walker has been associated previously.

However, another group has also expressed interest in the site and I understand it is also preparing a feasibility study for a proposal incorporating a hotel. From memory, it is to be of not less than 600 rooms together with a commercial and residential-type development. That is an American corporation. Unfortunately, I am not aware of the details but I understand that that corporation has Australian partners although, apparently, the American corporation is taking a lead in preparing the feasibility study. I think that some details of this were announced publicly perhaps 2 months ago now at the time that the representatives of this group first visited the Northern Territory and inspected the potential for tourist development in Darwin, Katherine, Alice Springs and Yulara respectively. Since then, to the best of my knowledge, negotiations have been going forward between them, the Northern Territory Development Corporation and the Department of Lands with a view to preparing a feasibility study.

I am sorry that I do not have a name for the other group but it is a bit early for me to be taking a very grave interest in what is happening. At this stage, it is better left in the hands of officials. These people were introduced briefly to me when they came here some time ago but I can only remember the name of one of them and I cannot remember the name of their corporation. Both groups are preparing feasibility studies for the consideration of the government. No doubt, in the course of the next few months - and I am not sure if it will even be before Christmas - there will be something put forward to the government jointly, I would expect, by the Department of Lands and the Northern Territory Development Corporation for us to consider.

Mr Speaker, there has been considerable public speculation in relation to the Myilly Point site and the old style houses that are still located on that site. I believe that there was quite some controversy about this matter last week. Obviously, the government has been placed in a somewhat embarrassing situation because quite a number of years ago, after negotiations with the National Trust, the government set aside Audit House on Myilly Point as an example of the style of Territory architecture in the 1920s. It was agreed

between government and the National Trust that Audit House, which is of course occupied on a caretaker basis by Mr and Mrs Harry Giese, was the best example of this style of architecture. The government spent something like \$60 000 to restore that house, which was in pretty good condition, to an excellent condition. It was dedicated and the title has been vested in the National Trust.

Approximately a year ago, government called for expressions of interest in the Myilly Point site. Of course, we are talking about the expressions of interest that have arisen earlier as a result of the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition. The government sought expressions of interest on the basis that various blocks of land would be available: the old hospital site and the sites of a number of these houses on Myilly Point. I understand there are a total of 4 houses: Audit House and another house owned by the Territory government and 2 houses owned by the Commonwealth government. It was my understanding that the houses owned by the Commonwealth government would be transferred to the Territory government. At present, action to transfer the Commonwealth houses to the Territory government has not occurred and the Territory government is somewhat embarrassed because of the controversy over the preservation of the houses and because, acting on undertakings given to it by the Commonwealth, it had indicated that these areas would be available. Obviously, the proposals from the developers might well have included retention of these buildings for whatever use the developers had in mind.

In any event, the situation now is that the Australian Heritage Commission has taken an interest in the area and the situation of the Territory government is somewhat embarrassing. Obviously, we will have to go back to the persons who have expressed an interest and inform them that it could be that the precincts at Myilly Point simply will not be available for their consideration. It is fair to say that the Northern Territory government has done a fair bit in terms of preservation of the Territory's heritage. The Territory government expended \$1m of taxpayers' money to restore the offices presently used by His Honour the Administrator which were formerly the naval offices and, before that, the historic Darwin police station and cell block. We have been mindful of preservation of the Territory's history and heritage. The oral history awards are one example of that. There is also the fact that we have taken steps to preserve an example of pre-war Territory architecture in the Audit House site. It seems to me that, as a result of public interest and the actions of the Australian Heritage Commission, the Territory government would certainly not want at this stage to take any action to alter the present status of the houses at Myilly Point. I think that we will have to tell the persons interested in the development of the Myilly Point site that they must act on the footing that these houses will not be available to them.

The Territory government will await the result of the deliberations of the Australian Heritage Commission. I hope, of course, that the Heritage Commission will take some cognisance of the views of the Territory government in its hearings which, of recent years, apparently have been conducted behind closed doors and without any direct reference or representation to parties who may be affected. I hope that we will have the opportunity to make some representations on matters of fact to the Heritage Commission. No doubt, the government will be able to formulate its future policy in relation to these houses after the Heritage Commission has made a decision. As it stands at the moment, the Territory government has no power to do anything at all in relation to 2 of the houses which are owned by the Commonwealth. Any reports that the Territory government was planning to demolish those houses are quite incorrect. We do not own them and, therefore, we can neither restore them nor demolish them. After discussions in Cabinet yesterday, I intend to inform the parties who have expressed interest in the position and will be awaiting any decision that has been taken by the

Heritage Commission.

Shareholdings for Myilly Point Development

Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

There does appear to be some division in the government. In relation to the statement just made by the honourable Chief Minister that the reports that the houses at Myilly Terrace would be demolished were incorrect, can he confirm to the Assembly that, in a press conference which he gave some 48 hours ago and which I watched on television, he did in fact state categorically that the houses would be demolished? Further to that, I imagine the Treasurer is aware that the initial development proposal submitted to the government by Henry and Walker states: 'Audit House on lot 1098 is a constraint on the orderly planning and development of the site and considerably reduces the usefulness of the site'. The developers then go on to propose that Audit House be removed and relocated. Can he advise the Assembly if he is now retracting his categorical statements of 48 hours ago that the houses would be demolished?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have any details of the submission made by Henry and Walker for the development of the old Darwin Hospital site. The matter falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Lands and Industrial Development. However, I can assure honourable members that it has never been the government's intention to do other than preserve Audit House which it has vested free of charge with the National Trust in freehold title for its preservation indefinitely. In addition, of course, the Chief Minister indicated that a very substantial sum of money was spent on the house. I have noticed that, in publicity surrounding this matter, proponents of preserving the area as an historical precinct for Darwin have always indicated that the National Trust is protecting 1 house but that 3 others are under possible threat. What the media conveniently failed to indicate every time was that the reason that Audit House was protected and is in the hands of the National Trust for preservation is because this government undertook to hand it over to the trust in an upgraded condition. However, the new-found conscience of the Leader of the Opposition on heritage matters, which has only come to light in the last few days, has led him to represent the case without all the details.

In regard to statements by myself at a press conference a couple of days ago, Mr Speaker, certainly I indicated that the intention of government at that time was that the houses would be demolished as part of the proposal to redevelop the hospital site under what, hopefully, will be one of the biggest private developments that the Territory has ever seen. Hopefully, in due course, announcements can be made. As the Chief Minister indicated at a Cabinet meeting yesterday, the matter was extensively discussed and a decision has been taken by government that, for the time being, the houses will not be moved. The Chief Minister indicated that the Heritage Commission's findings will be considered carefully and submissions will be made. Despite what I said at a press conference, the houses are not under any immediate threat. I would say that this government is not one which cannot change direction. Indeed, we have done very well by the Northern Territory over the past 5 years by considering issues on their merits and the government has changed direction many times on many issues. I think that is commendable and I hope it will reassure the Leader of the Opposition, in his new-found interest in heritage which has been exhibited only in the last few days, that the government is flexible. I hope the opposition is too.

Moneys owed on gas pipeline construction.

Mr VALE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Is he aware that certain Alice Springs companies are owed large amounts of money by the contractor who was involved in the Palm Valley to Alice Springs gas pipeline construction and, if so, can he advise what steps, if any, the government proposes to take to attempt to collect that money?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in order to answer the honourable member's question, a bit of history on the nature of the contract is necessary. The owner and operator of the pipeline at that time, under the licence, was to be TNT Bulkships. It is a very well known Australian company but clearly did not have any direct expertise in the construction of such a pipeline and it had to take on consultants and subcontractors. Its consultant and supervising organisation was Fluor Australia, a well-known international company and now an Australian company based mainly in Perth. The principle subcontractor under the contractor, TNT Bulkships, was a company called Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd which is a Queensland registered company that has left behind it a legacy of very poor performance in terms of paying bills in Alice Springs. Indeed, if these bills are not satisfied in the fairly near future, a number of long-established Alice Springs businesses will feel the pinch very badly and, in some cases, will go to the wall. A very large earthmoving company which has been operating in the Territory for many years now is owed over \$0.5m by Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd. We have a smaller engineering and construction company in Alice Springs which is owed some \$35 000. A plant hire equipment firm is owed \$28 000 and a local distributor of petroleum products will certainly go broke if he is not paid over \$100 000 owed by the company. The list goes on.

My Alice Springs office and I have been in contact with Fluor Australia. I have been in contact personally with very senior management levels of TNT to try to resolve the issue. As I have informed honourable members, there are a number of technical variations to that contract. Obviously, Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd would be going back to its principal employers, Fluor and TNT Bulkships, to have those variations examined. We have been informed that the first series of variations upon which some money would be owing to Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd numbered from 1 to 65, and also a subsequent list of variations, numbered 66 to 80, have now been filed. Hopefully, a fair percentage of that money owing will flow from those variations in due course. However, time is of the essence.

Mr Speaker, I am reliably informed that, even if each of those variations were paid - and we all know that that is never the case; all claims are never admitted - the sum total does not appear sufficient to satisfy the debts of this foreign company - it is a foreign company within the meaning of the Companies Act - which came into Alice Springs and gave all sorts of assurances of its good credit rating. It gave assurances to the Department of Mines and Energy that it had extensive asset backing. Subsequent investigations by the creditors' solicitors have found this to be nothing but a fabrication. In fact, nearly all the equipment is on lease. Indeed, one of the principal creditors in Alice Springs is the leasing company, Coates Hire Service. We may have a man of straw. I have been told by a very high level of authority in TNT that the company has an excellent reputation for its ability to get on with the job and construct but its reputation to keep a good business house is unknown, to say the least.

I am particularly concerned for Alice Springs that this has happened. I will

will not sit idly by and see Alice Springs businesses go to the wall while there is anything I can do about it as Attorney-General. Mr Speaker, honourable members would be aware that certain provisions in the Companies Act require a person who is a director of a company, when he commits that company to debt, to have regard to the ability to pay the debt. It is required by the Companies Act. This morning I referred the matter to the investigation section of the Registrar-General's Office and that investigation is currently proceeding. The reason I mention this is that I want Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd to be fully aware of my attitude and my actions and I suggest to that company that the best way it can prevent the taking of any further action which may be available to the government through the Registrar of Companies is to pay its debts forthwith.

Community Welfare and Juvenile Justice Bills

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In view of criticism by the ALP on the finalisation of the Community Welfare Bill and the Juvenile Justice Bill, does he propose to complete the debate on these 2 bills at this sittings?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in recent days, I have noted with interest the criticism by members of the opposition in relation to the Juvenile Justice Bill and the Community Welfare Bill. It seems to me that quite a curious situation has developed. I would like to reflect on the progress that has been made over recent years in developing this legislation and the attitude of members opposite during that period. Their current expressions of interest in the press are quite inconsistent with the attitude they have displayed over the past 5 years. Honourable members opposite joined with the government in 1978 in setting up a committee of inquiry of this Assembly to look into the social welfare and juvenile justice issues of the Northern Territory because the legislation operating in 1978 was some 20 years old and outmoded. Mr Speaker, the Assembly appointed the now Solicitor-General, Mr Brian Martin, as the head of the inquiry ...

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I think I have been fairly patient with the honourable minister but this is a gross misuse of question time. Standing Order 93 provides that questions cannot refer to 'debates in the current session' of this Assembly. We are discussing - and it is quite improper, Mr Speaker - a bill that is currently before the Assembly and it is completely out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr TUXWORTH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Continuing with the history of the legislation, that inquiry was set up on 15 June 1978 and proceeded for a year and 2 months. On 29 August 1979, the report was presented to this Assembly. I would just like to say that the report refers to quite a few issues that were very telling and important issues at the time. I will just name some of them: child welfare, youth, aged, migrant and ethnic groups, handicapped, family support services, juvenile aid panels, children in courts, alcoholism, drug addiction, mental health and community welfare.

Mr Speaker, in 1980, the Assembly, the minister of the day and the Department of Community Development went to a lot of trouble to hold seminars all over the

the Northern Territory to make people aware of the findings of the report and to get information that might be available to us in the compilation of the legislation. A Ms Foreman and a Mr Brewer, consultants, were engaged by the department to attend the seminars to help with the briefings to the community.

In 1980 and 1981, extensive consultations were undertaken throughout the states, with all sorts of organisations in our Northern Territory community and with the Law Reform Commission which had just published report no 18 entitled 'Child Welfare'. Further to that, a Dr Seymour, the commissioner in charge of the Australian Law Reform Commission's child welfare report, and a Dr Crawford, the commissioner in charge of the research on Aboriginal customary law, were both sought by the government to give advice on the proposed legislation. At that stage, the department ...

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, once again I must state that this is a gross misuse of the very limited time available to us in question time. Standing Order 94 says: 'An answer shall be relevant to the question'. What we are getting now is a ministerial statement. The question was very simply: 'Is the minister going to proceed with the debate in this sittings?' That requires an answer of 'yes' or 'no'. It is totally against Standing Order 94 to make ministerial statements in response to a question that can be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no'.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, during this period, the honourable member for Fannie Bay raised with the then Minister for Community Development her concern at the rate of progress in the formulation of the bills and encouraged the government to get on with the job of presenting them to the Assembly. This was raised by the honourable member for Fannie Bay in March 1982 in a matter of public importance debate and again in November in a question without notice to the minister. In January this year, draft bills were circulated throughout the departments and, in March, using the precedent that has been set by this government over the years in bringing forward innovative legislation, I tabled draft bills and announcements were made in the press encouraging people and other members of the Assembly to come forward and give their views so that the legislation could be proceeded with and disposed of this year.

I also make the point that, at the time of introducing the bills, I specifically asked if members would like to have committee sessions, as we have had in the past, relating to these bills to discuss all sorts of matters that are not of a political nature but are really related to providing welfare and community services to our constituents. No one in the Assembly asked for that sort of in-house committee meeting with me so they did not occur. The offer was made.

Mr Speaker, the draft bills were tabled in August and the preparation of the bills was completed and they are now before the Assembly. It is proposed that the bills be disposed of at this sittings. I would just like to say to all honourable members that it is a matter of great concern to the government, myself and all those people involved that members of this Assembly should be putting forward the view that this is hastily drafted and presented legislation and that it is being disposed of in an inadequate way. All I can say is that, with a history of presentation and formulation of legislation like that, and the

interest of the honourable member for Fannie Bay in having the matters settled as quickly as possible, I think it is not unreasonable that the bills come forward tomorrow and, during the rest of the sittings, honourable members can have their say. If they have valid points that they would like incorporated in the legislation, they can be taken on board. But there is no reason in my view why the legislation should be put back for another sittings.

Admiralty House

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

Mr Speaker, the loudest noise you can hear from outside is from the listeners to 8 TOP FM. Has the Northern Territory Planning Authority recommended against the rezoning of the Admiralty House site?

ANSWER

There has been some controversy generated in the media recently regarding the Admiralty House site and also in relation to the acquisition of certain land from Sir Frederick Sutton by the government. I think that this complex matter would be best dealt with if I made a short statement to the Assembly after the conclusion of question time this morning although I am happy, if the honourable Leader of the Opposition requests it, to dilate at some length on this matter during question time. I am sure that I can go at least 20 minutes on it, Mr Speaker. However, I think that a short statement would be more in order. I only finished writing this statement this morning. It was typed at about 9.45 am and I handed copies of it to your assistants as I arrived. With the leave of the Assembly, I would propose to make a short statement in relation to the Sutton acquisition, the Douglas-Daly Research Station and the Admiralty House site at the conclusion of question time.

Oolloo Pastoral Lease Valuation

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

Was an independent valuation made of Oolloo pastoral lease as well as that undertaken by the Valuer-General? What were the results of these valuations and, in round terms, what was the government's last offer to the holders of the Oolloo lease?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of the current negotiations regarding the Oolloo lease. In fact, I believe that negotiations were not continuing. I will be touching on this matter in my statement but I will be more than happy to give a short history of the Oolloo acquisition now. Mr Speaker, you would recall that you and I together had some part in attempting to establish negotiations with Mr and Mrs Rixon. At the time when the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority determined that it would require to acquire Oolloo in order to expand the project farms in the Douglas-Daly area, a number of senior government officials attempted to set up negotiations with Mr and Mrs Rixon. These were unsuccessful. Following on that, a personal visit was paid to Mr and Mrs Rixon at Oolloo by the then Minister for Primary Production, Roger Steele, and subsequent to his lack of success in getting negotiations going with Mr and Mrs Rixon, who declined to negotiate and indicated that they wanted to fight the matter all the way through the courts, you and I travelled to Oolloo, Mr Speaker. I think you will recall the event. Unfortunately, Mr and Mrs Rixon showed us the door also and indicated that they would be taking this matter to the highest



court in the land, as I recall their statement to us as we left. Off the top of my head, I think the Valuer-General's original valuation of Oolloo was \$200 000. I do not know whether an independent valuation has been obtained. I would assume that, unless Mr and Mrs Rixon have entered into some negotiations with us, they would be the parties seeking the independent valuation.

Mr Speaker, I can find out more about this. All I want to say at this stage is that I know that there have been court proceedings. I think court proceedings are still current and pending but, despite that, the government would like to try to resolve the matter with Mr and Mrs Rixon. You may recall, Mr Speaker, that we had a dispute with the owners of Douglas Station over the acquisition of the initial area to establish the ADMA farms and we settled that. I have made the same offer to Mr and Mrs Rixon and I am happy to repeat it. The offer made to the owners of Douglas Station was that, if they did not like the Valuer-General's valuation - and they did not - then we would nominate 2 private valuers - the fact that they are independent is just assumed in the case of valuers because they are sworn valuers - and the owners would nominate 2 valuers. We would select 1 of their valuers and they would select 1 of the 2 we nominated. Those 2 valuers would then carry out separate valuations and the government would pay the average of the 2 valuations by way of compensation to Mr and Mrs Rixon as was paid to the owners of Douglas Station, together with all fees and expenses. Really, I do not think that there is a fairer way to go about trying to settle compensation with anyone.

As you know, Mr Speaker, during our visit to Mr and Mrs Rixon, to try to get discussions going, I asked them to name their price and they would not even do that. We are happy to negotiate with Mr and Mrs Rixon or any person from whom the government has to acquire land at any time. If Mr and Mrs Rixon would like to discontinue their court actions, or not even discontinue them, and sit down and talk about compensation, we are happy to do so. As I understand it, their court proceedings are on the footing that they want to set the acquisition aside in its entirety. I would not want to comment on the likely decision of the court but I would not think that one would make a book on the likely result.

#### Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is the government considering changes to the Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act in view of the representations that have been made by a number of plumbers who have been affected by changes to the licensing requirements?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the government has received many representations on the implementation of the act. I note that, in recent days, the opposition has also made some remarks about the impact of the act on people who are operating as plumbers and drainers. The government has reconsidered its position in the light of these representations and, in view of the hardships being experienced, will introduce an amendment to the act at this sittings which will pay due regard to competency gained through experience.

#### Possible Government Acquisition of Pastoral Leases

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

Is it the intention of the government to acquire Humbert River Station, Bullita Station, a portion of Victoria River Downs Station, a portion of Fitzroy

Station, a portion of Delamere Station and a portion of Auvergne Station? If so, has the government undertaken a valuation of the above areas and will it move to acquire them compulsorily?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am a busy boy acquiring all those stations. For a long time, the government has been nurturing the prospect of establishing quite an extensive national park in the Victoria River district. The government would like to establish more national parks in other areas of the Northern Territory. We would like to establish a park in the Roper-McArthur area and, of course, a MacDonnell Ranges national park is an aim that we have in mind. As far as possible, we are trying to go about this without recourse to compulsory acquisition. Whilst I cannot say that the government is proposing to acquire, through purchase or compulsion, the whole or any part of those stations referred to by the honourable Leader of the Opposition, a proposal for consideration by Cabinet is being formulated to buy rather than acquire parts of various stations - certainly Humbert River is one of them. From recollection, we are looking at the purchase of Humbert River in its entirety. I know that part of Victoria River Downs is also under consideration. I think the Leader of the Opposition mentioned Delamere and I am not sure about that one. Bullita is under consideration. As far as I am aware, it is only parts of these properties that are being considered, other than Humbert River.

The submission for the purchase of these properties, which I understand has been in preparation for quite some time and has resulted from negotiations with the owners of the properties over quite a long period, should be coming before Cabinet in the near future. It is proposed that, once these properties are purchased, the major slice of them - if not their entirety - will be designated for national park purposes. However, in view of the fact that it is coming to Cabinet, and I do not know the full details yet, I cannot say that it will be accepted. But, it is a proposal that Cabinet had discussed informally on a number of occasions over the last couple of years. Certainly, it has found much sympathy and support in Cabinet and I would expect it to be a proposal that Cabinet would endorse but I cannot say that with certainty.

Firearms Licences for Private Security Guards

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the current position for registration of firearms regarding the setting of standards for the issue of C-class firearms licences, namely pistols, to private security guards?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, certain criteria have been laid down by the Commissioner of Police, who is also, by virtue of his office, Registrar of Firearms, in relation to the setting of standards for private security guards. Commencing on 2 September this year, shooter's licences or temporary permits for C-class firearms - that is, pistols - are now being issued to security personnel subject to an applicant being of good character and his producing acceptable written certification, firstly, that he has undergone firearm training in the past 12 months and is proficient in the use of the pistol required and, secondly, that he has been properly briefed by legal counsel, who is to be named in the certificate, concerning his legal responsibilities and when the use of force may be justified. Licences and permits issued are endorsed in the following manner:

*... authorised to carry on the person one only registered C-class firearm whilst physically present during the transferring of money or other valuable items in the course of duty as a security guard, whilst present for practice on a recognised range or whilst performing actual security guard duties during hours of darkness. The pistol must be carried in a holster which is secure and the firearm not exposed to public view.*

Mr Speaker, this policy seems to have been accepted and, since it has been implemented, no complaints have been received from the public nor, I understand, from security firms or guards.

Purchase of Cattle Stations

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

This follows on from the previous answer that he gave. In the light of that answer, can he confirm whether or not the government is intending to purchase, and not acquire, the whole of the following cattle stations: Nathan River, Billengarra, Bauhinia, Balbirini and Tanumbirini?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any proposal to purchase those properties. The names all ring to me of the Barkly Tablelands and MacArthur River areas from memory. Tanumbirini, Billengarra and some of those properties would probably be in the area the government would hope to establish a national park. Whether those are the properties, I am not sure. To the best of my recollection, as Minister for Lands, I have certainly not authorised any action for the purchase of those particular properties.

Funding of Sports Stadiums in Alice Springs

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for YOUTH, SPORT and RECREATION

Is it the government's intention to fund 2 sports stadiums in Alice Springs now that the YMCA and the Alice Springs Town Council cannot agree on a joint proposal? If so, has the joint viability of the 2 stadiums been considered along with the possible detrimental affects upon existing youth facilities?

ANSWER

Recently, I have had discussions in Alice Springs with both the YMCA and the Alice Springs Town Council. By way of background, in 1978-79, the Northern Territory government gave a commitment to the Alice Springs Town Council to upgrade Traeger Park. The first part of that upgrading was the baseball diamond so that it could be used for future national championships. In fact, it has been used for junior championships. In 1986, it is hoped that the Claxton Shield will be held in Alice Springs.

Part of that development was to upgrade the Centralian Football League area. That has been done. Hopefully, this financial year, it will be completed. Financial assistance has also been given to the tennis club in that area and it has upgraded its facilities for the purposes of its members. Also my colleague, the Minister for Community Development, has given the Alice Springs council an undertaking to provide financial assistance to upgrade the hockey surface in that area.

Part of the development proposal for Traeger Park was that a basketball stadium be constructed. Consequently, I have been able to advise the Alice Springs council and the basketball association that the Northern Territory government will be proceeding with construction of that facility this financial year.

Several months ago, we received a submission from the YMCA. The YMCA's proposal was to build a multi-purpose stadium within that area. In fact, the site it chose was adjacent to the swimming pool in Telegraph Terrace. At the same time, the council had wished to use that land for further expansion of the swimming pool. So there was some discussion between the Alice Springs council and the YMCA for that site. Several weeks ago, the Chief Minister and I met with the people concerned. A decision was made to allocate a portion of land in the Sadadeen area for the development of the YMCA proposal.

There are 2 different types of proposal. One is purely for basketball and associated sports and the YMCA's proposal is a multi-purpose one to provide a whole range of facilities for people in that area. The only difference of opinion between both organisations was the site. Fortunately, we were able to resolve that and arrangements are now being made to allocate a portion of land in Sadadeen for the YMCA to proceed. There is one proviso: funds will not be made available to the YMCA until the latter part of the 1983-84 financial year.

The honourable member for Alice Springs asked whether it would be detrimental to existing organisations. I do not think it would be because the Alice Springs Youth Centre is operating quite successfully within the region and has done so over a number of years. I would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to that organisation which has provided a facility for the youth of Alice Springs. The Alice Springs population is growing and it will take some time before the YMCA facility and the basketball stadium are completed. These 2 new facilities will hopefully provide for that population growth. All members of this Assembly would remember that, in 1978, on the advent of self-government, we inherited a dearth of reasonable sporting and community facilities. This year, some \$1.3m will be made available to the Alice Springs region for facility development. An additional facility will be the construction of a velodrome to national standards. This will allow that sport to develop further.

Mr Speaker, I do not believe that the addition of these 2 new facilities will be detrimental to the operation of the existing ones. I would assure the honourable member that we do look carefully at all applications for assistance in that area. At the moment, there is a proposal by the Alice Springs Memorial Club to provide further extensions to its facilities. We are looking at that. In some respects, we are not in support of a particular proposal of the Alice Springs Memorial Club to provide additional squash facilities. Officers of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation are discussing additional proposals.

In conclusion, I advise the honourable member for Alice Springs that the Northern Territory government, through its grants-in-aid program, does provide the opportunity for organisations to obtain government assistance for the construction of youth-related facilities.

The 3-to-1 funding has been taken up only by 2 organisations in the Northern Territory so far this year: the Girl Guides and the Boy Scouts. A third will be the YMCA. I would add, Mr Speaker, that we will go beyond a level of 3 to 1 provided that the YMCA does proceed with its Sadadeen development.

Stockpiling of Sulphur

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he assure me that steps have been taken to alleviate problems being experienced as a result of sulphur being stockpiled by Ranger Uranium Mines in the Darwin rural area?

ANSWER

Ranger Uranium Mines established a sulphur stockpile in September 1980 in the region of Bees Creek. During the first years of operation, some sulphur left the site and was deposited in the bed of Bees Creek. During November 1982, during early rains, the pH level of the creek water dropped to a level of 3 and persisted until heavy rains in early March 1983. Shell grit was added in an attempt to neutralise the flow and weirs were constructed to trap sulphur before it reached the creek. As the creek dried out, monitoring revealed that salts were forming in the sediment. These salts, formed by bacterial action on the sulphur within the sediments, are highly soluble and cause a drop in the pH level when flow commences.

The Controller of Water Resources has written to Ranger expressing his concern at the pollution of Bees Creek and insisting on remedial action. Ranger was directed to supply details of its proposed action to meet specified minimum water quality in the outlet drain from the stockpile site. Ranger has undertaken, or is proposing, the following action: at the stockpile site, removal of all sulphur to the mine site; clean up of the bunded area by grading and sweeping of all surface material - this has been removed and taken to the Ranger tailings dam; further cleaning of the area will be undertaken by hosing down as necessary; a neutralising agent such as lime will be applied over the whole stockpile area; no further sulphur will be placed on site between October and April; the drainage system is being widened and weirs modified to improve settling conditions; contaminated material is being removed from the drain; an automatic instrument to monitor the pH discharged from the site has been installed; in the creek bed, the company has undertaken the removal of contaminated sediments from the area; at the same time, keeping disturbance of any vegetation to a minimum and placing earth-filled cylinders in the bed containing shell grit as a neutralising agent, Ranger has undertaken to rehabilitate the affected creek bed; consideration is being given to the method of operation and effectiveness of neutralising and removing salts already in the creek bed; and examination of the effectiveness of monitoring and reporting and the use of automatic controls for the longer term. Based on submissions already received, it is clearly the intention of Ranger, subject to the approval of the Controller of Water Resources, to carry out several measures in addition to the above. It is believed there is a serious recognition of the problem and a commitment from Ranger to rectify it.

NTDC Loan to Terri Hatcheries and Fish Farms Pty Ltd

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can the Chief Minister advise the Assembly if the company, Terri Hatcheries and Fish Farms Pty Ltd, the principals of which are Mr Rex Jettner and Mr Sam Calder, is in receipt of NTDC loans of some \$400 000? Given that this company is facing severe financial difficulties, can he advise the Assembly as to what action the government is taking to ensure that its investment is secure?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is interesting that the Leader of the Opposition should have asked this question because I understand that the NTDC will be considering this week its first annual report which will be tabled in this Assembly subsequent to the new procedures - that I outlined in a statement to the Assembly earlier this year - whereby all defaulting debtors of the NTDC will be disclosed in the corporation's annual report. A wait of a few days would have avoided the question and no doubt would have stopped the hares running. If what the Leader of the Opposition says is true - that the company is experiencing financial difficulties - he has now helped to precipitate its downfall. No doubt, this matter will gain publicity through the media and persons who are owed money by the company will panic and rush to press their claims immediately. That, of course, has brought down many a company which could have traded through its difficulties when it was at a delicate point in its financial history.

The situation is that there has been, as far as I am aware, a substantial loan for about \$300 000 to a company called Terri Hatcheries and Fish Farms Pty Ltd which has 3 principal shareholders. Two of them are Mr Rex Jettner and Mr Sam Calder. As I understand the position, that loan is secured by a mortgage over a station property - I think it is Finnis River Station. At the present time, my understanding is that the company is not in default of any arrangement that it has with the Northern Territory Development Corporation. I will undertake to check that out and report back to the Assembly as soon as possible. To the best of my knowledge, there is no default on its arrangements with the Northern Territory Development Corporation by that company.

NTDC Loan to Terri Hatcheries and Fish Farms Pty Ltd

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

I wish to ask a supplementary question of the honourable Chief Minister in the light of the answer that he just gave and his mention of a mortgage. Is the Finnis River Station in breach of its covenants? If so, what action is being taken by the government to rectify this situation? Has the Northern Territory government received proposals from Terri Hatcheries for subdivision of Finnis River Station?

ANSWER

There is a whole raft of questions there. The honourable Leader of the Opposition has asked, firstly, whether Finnis River Station is in default under its covenants, whether the government has taken action in relation to any default and whether the company has applied to the government to subdivide the station. Unfortunately, I am not aware of any of the answers to those questions. The best that I can do is seek the information. If any application to subdivide the station has been made, it certainly has not been made to me but then that would not be unusual because a lot of these things are handled directly between the lessees and the department. I will find out as soon as I reasonably can and inform the Assembly.

Chief Minister's Future Intentions

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer the Chief Minister to an article in the Woman's Day magazine of 10 October where he is quoted as saying: 'If I am re-elected next year, I won't be serving out my full term of office for, at some time during that period, I will have been the Chief Minister for 10 years. That is long enough'. This puts the Northern Territory electorate in the position of supporting an unknown leader for the Northern Territory in the event of an election of the CLP government. The Chief Minister has since categorically denied making that statement.

Is the Chief Minister aware that, on ABC Radio this morning, the editor of Woman's Day not only refuted the substance of the Chief Minister's denial but also his account of how the interview was conducted? Is the Chief Minister aware that the editor of Woman's Day has stated that not only is there a tape recording of the actual interview and statements of the Chief Minister but he personally has listened to it. In the view of these statements of the editor of Woman's Day and the serious reflection they cast on both the Chief Minister's veracity and his likely term of office, in the interests of the public of the Northern Territory, I would ask him to request the Woman's Day magazine to make that tape recording immediately available to the Northern Territory media so that it may be broadcast in the Northern Territory and the electorate of the Northern Territory can make up its own mind as to who is telling the truth.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is very pleasing and interesting to see that the Leader of the Opposition has such concern for my political future. One is gratified that the Leader of the Opposition is so keen to see the situation about my political future clarified. I have already spoken to Territory media about this matter on Monday. I have spoken to both television channels, both radio stations, to the Northern Territory News and any other print media that has cared to speak to me. As far as I am concerned, Woman's Day, if it has a tape-recording, can do what it likes with the tape-recording. As far as I am concerned, I have no property in it. I have made it quite clear that I will be standing for re-election to this Assembly in 1984. I have made it quite clear to the Northern Territory electorate, as I have all along, that, if I am re-elected to this Assembly in 1984 and subsequently re-elected by my party to the position of leader of the parliamentary CLP, and if that party has a majority in this Assembly, which I confidently expect, then I will be serving out the full term as Chief Minister of the Northern Territory. That is unless the Northern Territory moves to statehood during that time which I suppose is a possibility because it is rumoured that the federal government will talk to us about statehood before 1988.

In any event, to clear up any doubt whatsoever, I make the categorical statement that, in my view, the reporter from the Woman's Day was somewhat confused. We were talking about 10 years in politics and 10 years as Chief Minister. Frankly, I believe that the reporter became somewhat confused. Mr Speaker, I think that I have made the situation particularly clear: if re-elected to this Assembly next term and if re-elected as leader of the parliamentary CLP, I will be serving out the full term.

Tourist Vehicles

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I understand that concern has been expressed by some tour operators who have

encountered difficulties in having 4-wheel-drive vehicles registered as tourist vehicles. Can he advise what the present policy is in relation to these vehicles?

ANSWER

The requirements for 4-wheel-drive vehicles used to transport fare-paying passengers is under close review by the Department of Transport and Works in consultation with the Tourist Commission and the tourist industry. The requirements have been set out in a motor omnibus code of practice distributed to all licensed omnibus operators and to vehicle dealers in February 1982. The standards identified in that publication include those for small omnibuses as endorsed nationally by the Australian Transport Advisory Council. The standards are somewhat higher than required for similar vehicles not carrying passengers for hire and reward. This is based on the view that, where governments approved particular vehicles to operate commercially, the paying public is entitled to reasonable expectations as to safety and comfort which may be higher than for private passengers who are travelling by private arrangements.

The tightening up of standards has shown up some limitations in vehicles currently on the market. It may be that nationally-endorsed standards are too high for the type of operations that 4-wheel-drive vehicles are used for. In recognition of the absence of fully-suitable vehicles, I have endorsed some interim modifications to the standards of comfort required for new registrations to allow the industry to upgrade on the basis of what is currently available. I have asked for the Department of Transport and Works, the Tourist Commission, operators and vehicle suppliers to sit down together to consider what the desirable longer-term standards should be and over what timescale they should be introduced. There is no intention of retrospectively applying higher comfort standards to vehicles already registered although the seating number approved for some may need to be reviewed because of some safety concerns. Details will be made known to the industry on a vehicle-type basis on what the interim arrangements will be for new registrations.

#### Ayers Rock Tragedy

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

In relation to the recent disaster at Ayers Rock, will the minister confirm that it took over 2 hours from receipt of a call by St John Ambulance for an aerial medical plane to take off? Is it further correct that this delay resulted from the Department of Health being inadequately prepared for an emergency in that supplies had to be packed in the early hours of the morning before the planes could leave?

ANSWER

I am unable to give the honourable member precise details in relation to that particular question. As I understand it, the people involved with providing medical services in the region at the time of the accident did an excellent job in providing back-up facilities. The sister-in-charge reached the scene pretty quickly. However, in relation to her specific questions, I will provide information later during this sittings.



Chairmanship of Northern Land Council

Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the present situation regarding the chairmanship of the Northern Land Council?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would have thought that the position of Chairman of the Northern Land Council was of some interest in this Assembly since the Northern Land Council controls approximately 14% of the surface area of the Northern Territory. The reason why the Leader of the Opposition is not so keen to talk about who is chairman of the land council is that his colleague, Mr Clyde Holding, the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, has carried out a bloodless coup d'etat out at Berrimah at the offices of the Northern Land Council. The NLC had 53 elected members which formed an executive of 13, out of which came the chairman. The 3-year term of the council members and executive, including the chairman, would have expired on 29 August 1983 and the land council was geared up for elections on 27 September. On Friday 12 August, a meeting in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs office in Darwin was attended by the person whom, one would assume, would rightly be the chairman, Mr Gerry Blitner, and Mr Bill Gray from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and several land council members and observers. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Holding, said that he was extending the term of the council by 3 months to allow for greater representation by Aboriginal people. Observers at the meeting were given to understand by the minister that he had extended the term of the Northern Land Council members, the Executive and the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman. The 3 months' extension of term, so the minister said, was to allow for another 27 members to be elected to the NLC in the interests of greater representation. According to Minister Holding, the new council will have 80 members. Of course, we are criticised in this Assembly if we increase the representation of the whole Northern Territory from 19 members to 25 but the NLC's representation has been increased from 57 or so to 80.

The land council meeting is scheduled for Thursday 13 October. On Monday 10 October, Mr Blitner was informed that he was no longer the chairman as the minister had no power to extend his term, although he apparently has power under the act to extend the terms of members. Aboriginal communities have been nominating members for the council over the past month and, apparently, Mr Silas Malarangura has taken over as interim chairman until the election on Thursday. In the meantime, Mr Blitner, I am told, has been denied access to NLC facilities, including telex machines. Mr Holding, as all honourable members know, is an anti-uranium activist and has clashed verbally and in the press with Mr Blitner, both as minister and whilst Mr Holding was an opposition back-bencher. Mr Holding's law firm represented the Alderson family in its last ditch attempt to block the Koongarra mining agreement. Mr Holding was vocal at the Lake Bennett meeting where the National Aboriginal Conference also had much say and attempts were made for an inquiry into the operations of the Northern Land Council. Earlier this year, the Northern Land Council's media organ 'Land Rights News' carried a story from Gerry Blitner hitting back at southern critics, including Mr Holding, of the Koongarra agreement and saying that the NLC was pro-uranium but it was pro-Aboriginal and the traditional owners wanted uranium mining. At the Aboriginal Affairs Ministers Conference in Melbourne, Mr Holding openly advocated the National Aboriginal Conference as the supreme Aboriginal body in Australia. He did the same at the Lake Bennett meeting. His expansion of the NLC numbers, coupled with the extension of existing members' terms and the sacking

of the chairman, shows the federal minister is taking an unhealthy interest in the internal affairs of the NLC, particularly at its election time.

Mr Speaker, now that Mr Wesley Lanhupuy has been endorsed by the Australian Labor Party federal executive as its candidate for Arnhem, a possible deal is that Mr Wesley Lanhupuy goes to the Assembly and Gerry Blitner goes on the scrap heap. So much for self-determination when an Aboriginal gets in the way of personal views and policies of the federal Labor Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. If there is a disgrace, it is a disgrace on the part of Mr Holding for interfering in this election in this blatant way.

Chairmanship of Northern Land Council

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I will give the Chief Minister an opportunity to carry on with this nonsense. Is he aware that the decision to appoint an interim chairman for the Northern Land Council was in fact taken on legal advice sought by the legal department of the bureau of the Northern Land Council? Is he aware that the decision to appoint Mr Silas Malarangura as interim chairman until the elections - which will be held tomorrow - was taken on receipt of legal advice that the federal minister only had the power to extend the terms of members and not of the chairman and that that decision was taken by the fully Aboriginal executive of the Northern Land Council itself and not by the minister?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would certainly be pleased to respond to that. I am informed that Mr Gerry Blitner has legal advice to the contrary. Obviously, there are 2 disputing legal views. All I can say is that the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has set up Mr Gerry Blitner nicely. The only way that Mr Blitner can hold his position as Chairman of the Northern Land Council, which he is legally entitled to hold until the election, is by taking legal action. He has no funds and he has no resources to do so. That is the position. This deposition of Mr Blitner should never have occurred and would not have occurred without the interference of Mr Holding extending the time of the election.

Ministerial Officer in Katherine

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he presently considering the establishment of a ministerial officer in Katherine and, if so, on what terms as this would appear to be somewhat unique in the annals of Northern Territory Cabinet history?

ANSWER

I have no information for the honourable member.

Pine Creek Water Supply

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise what steps are being taken to alleviate problems with the supply of water to Pine Creek?

ANSWER

The supply of water to Pine Creek has been a problem for some time. New bores have been drilled but there have been some delays in equipping of the bores and the construction of the rising mains. The problem has been exacerbated by the discovery of unacceptable levels of arsenic in one of the bores causing it to be withdrawn from service. At present, all bores pump directly into the reticulation as it is not possible to pump directly to storage tanks. In addition, all the bores are in danger of forking and, where possible, production rates have been reduced to avoid this.

It is expected that 3 of the 4 new bores will be equipped by the end of November and, with the construction of a rising main, the first bore should be on line by the beginning of December. The other 2 bores will come on line in January. A public meeting was held in Pine Creek on Tuesday 4 October with the Katherine Area Manager and a public works engineer present. Some 22 people attended the meeting. The department's representative explained the position, the consumption patterns required and the consequences of ignoring restrictions. Various leaks, including 4 leaking fire hydrants, were brought to the attention of the department and maintenance crews have been dispatched to rectify the situation. A departmental representative has gone to Pine Creek to call upon larger consumers individually in an attempt to obtain their cooperation. The situation will be monitored daily and the department hopes that action now being taken will be successful in alleviating the situation.

Ministerial Officer in Katherine

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has he appointed a ministerial officer and staff to Katherine and does he have an office in which to locate this officer in Katherine?

ANSWER

The complement of my personal staff is presently down by one. My proposal to fill that position is to appoint a research officer based in Darwin.

Teacher Positions in NT

Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

There has been public comment recently about anticipated teacher shortages for next year. Can he advise the Assembly whether applications for teacher positions in the Northern Territory are down on previous years and whether there is a demonstrable lack of interest in teacher positions in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

There has indeed been some public comment and concern expressed about the teacher situation in the Northern Territory. There has been an expectation that supply and demand of teachers in Australia may put us in the position of finding it particularly difficult to recruit teachers to the Territory in future years. I am pleased to advise that, on the advice of the Northern Territory Teaching Service Commissioner, applications now being received are reaching an all time high. This was at a time when it could have been expected that they would reach an all time low. The latest figures indicate that 687 applications have been received from interstate and applications are continuing to come in to the Teaching Service Commissioner's office at a rate of approximately 50 per day.

We believe the reason for the influx of applications is that, approximately 4 to 6 weeks ago, an intensive advertising campaign was mounted in southern states. It included advertising in national and state newspapers and teachers' union publications. In addition, a poster and publicity campaign was conducted in all colleges of advanced education. These efforts now seem to be bearing fruit. Teaching and life generally in the Territory is beginning to have more appeal to residents of southern states. The Territory is seen by Australians generally as a progressive place to be in. It appears that promotional opportunities are declining in some southern states and, generally, that there is a lack of opportunity and challenge. In some states, particularly South Australia, there is still an excess of graduates over teaching vacancies. Interestingly though, other states which do not have that problem have generated many applications; for example, we have received some 90 applications from Western Australia. It is also interesting and very encouraging to note that a considerably-increased proportion of applications are from mature teachers of several years experience. Honourable members will be aware that one of the difficulties faced in the past in the Territory was that many teacher recruits were straight out of teachers college.

Interview rounds will commence towards the end of this month. In view of the number of applicants, they may have to continue right to January. Selection will be rigorous to ensure that we obtain the most suitable teachers in terms of qualifications and experience for the Territory. We are hopeful of obtaining many more mature and experienced teachers for the Teaching Service. In common with the rest of Australia, we envisage there may still be difficulties in recruiting suitable teachers in the science and technical studies areas, as there is a national shortage. However, the picture is very encouraging over all. I understand that teacher retention rates in the Northern Territory are also improving. Together with nearly 700 applications we have received for teaching positions in the Northern Territory, it certainly places us in a very encouraging position as far as the future is concerned.

Ayers Rock Tragedy

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he confirm that a request was made to Ansett Airlines in Alice Springs to provide an F28 aircraft to evacuate victims of the accident at Ayers Rock? Is it a fact that the aircraft could have evacuated all the victims to Alice Springs within 1½ hours? Was the request originally agreed to and, if so, why was it subsequently withdrawn?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide the honourable member with information now. However, I will provide an answer to her.

Subsidies for Freightng Liquor to NT

Mr HARRIS to TREASURER

The Darwin Hotel manager has recently suggested to the freight inquiry that there is a scheme afoot in the Northern Territory whereby liquor wholesalers can obtain a subsidy for the cost of freightng liquor into the Northern Territory. Is such a scheme operating in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

There is no specific subsidy available for freighting liquor into the Territory. It is understood that the person who made the submission to the Northern Territory inquiry was referring to the scheme whereby the Northern Territory government refunds sales tax paid on freight for many items brought to the Territory by wholesalers. If I recall correctly, during the last election campaign, the federal ALP undertook to abolish sales tax on freight. Perhaps we could inquire whether that is another item in the long list of broken promises.

The Territory government scheme was introduced in 1980 to assist Territory-based wholesalers who were disadvantaged in relation to wholesalers in the states. The purpose was to enable Northern Territory wholesalers to keep a greater range of stocks for sale. It was cheaper for people to buy goods from southern ports, pay the sales tax there and freight the goods to a Northern Territory retailer rather than deal through a local wholesaler.

The scheme has been working successfully and Territory residents have benefited through a slackening of expected price increases. It has now attracted interest from some 46 companies in the Territory. At present, \$250 000 has been allocated in the Territory budget to cover subsidies. A relatively simple administrative system enables claims to be processed quickly once the percentage of sales tax attributed to freight and handling charges is calculated on the particular goods. That percentage is then applied to the actual amount of sales tax paid and forms the basis of the wholesalers' subsidies. From time to time, I receive information from Treasury seeking approval for payments to wholesalers under this particular scheme.

The Northern Territory government introduced the scheme to try to counter some of the costs of living in the Northern Territory, in this case a cost which results from an inequity whereby Territory people and other people in remote areas of Australia have to pay sales tax on the freight component of goods. This is an anomaly in the Australian taxation system that we have brought to the attention of successive federal governments for many years without a great deal of success. It appears that the latest federal government has added it to its list of broken promises.

Public Holiday for Australia II's Victory

Ms LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

I understand that South Australia had a public holiday on Monday to celebrate Australia II's victory in the America's Cup. Is it the intention to declare a public holiday for the Northern Territory and, if so, has he considered 1 November which is Melbourne Cup Day?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I said that the Northern Territory would monitor the situation in the other states. In fact, I did ask my department to do this and, to date, no advice has been received that any other state is planning a public holiday to commemorate the victory of Australia II in the America's Cup. I will again inquire of my department as to the plans for public holidays elsewhere but, to the best of my knowledge, even Western Australia, which one would imagine would have the greatest amount to crow about, has not yet planned to have a public holiday to celebrate the arrival home of the crew of Australia II.

One other matter of interest which has been taken up by the Northern Territory Tourist Commission is the spin-off benefit to Australian tourism which will hopefully occur as a result of the yacht races that will have to be held if there are challenges to the Royal Perth Yacht Club for the custody of the America's Cup. I know the Western Australians hope that it will result in a very great influx of visitors and money to Western Australia. The Territory Tourist Commission is making plans to attempt to ensure that as many of those people as possible will be attracted to the Northern Territory during their stay in Australia and that as many as possible will be brought into Australia through the Northern Territory. This latter prospect is limited because of the lack of direct flights from our national airline, Qantas. Mr Speaker, I believe that the Tourist Commission is showing great foresight in doing this. We have an office established in Perth, but I am sure that the America's Cup will prove an extremely valuable tourist asset to the state of Western Australia.

As to the matter of the public holiday, the government certainly does not want to be a dog in the manger about this. We propose to follow the lead of other states and we have been waiting to hear what they propose to do.

Ayers Rock Tragedy

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

In the light of genuine and serious concern that is being expressed in Alice Springs about the evacuation of patients from the Ayers Rock disaster, will he establish an inquiry into the management of the disaster to ensure that delays do not occur during any future emergency in central Australia?

ANSWER

I will not give an assurance that I will hold an inquiry. The honourable member opposite asked me previously if I was aware that it took 2 hours for an aerial medical aircraft to get off the ground. I am not quite sure that that information is correct. I did not give the honourable member a precise answer because I wanted to check my facts first. I offered to provide that information at a later hour. My understanding is that the accident happened at about 1 o'clock in the morning and the people involved were treated very quickly. St John Ambulance people and professional staff in that region were on the scene very quickly. In fact, I received a minute from the Secretary of the Department of Health advising me that, as far as he was aware, the particular situation had been handled with the utmost efficiency. Accidents like this can happen anywhere in the Northern Territory and the Department of Health is able to provide the necessary equipment and personnel as soon as it receives the information. Yesterday, in the budget speech, it was mentioned that St John Ambulance would receive a grant of over \$2m from the Northern Territory government to provide these services not only in the main centres of Darwin but also in some of the other areas.

My understanding of the situation is that the people involved in the unfortunate accident at Ayers Rock were evacuated as quickly as possible not only to the Alice Springs Hospital but also to a hospital in Adelaide. The victims received the most efficient service possible considering the circumstances. I will obtain the information that the honourable member asked for in relation to the F28 being on the ground and why it was not used. There may have been a mechanical problem. There are several reasons why it may not have been brought into service. As I said earlier, I will provide the honourable member opposite with the information she requires at a later date.

Security in Territory Prisons

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In view of the recent prison officers' strike and the resultant publicity focussing on the question of security in Territory prisons, can he inform the Assembly what action has been taken?

ANSWER

The matter to which the honourable member refers was dealt with during my absence by the Chief Minister. It really relates to the industrial relations portfolio. I would ask the honourable member to redirect the question to the honourable Chief Minister because he would have everything at his fingertips as he was involved in the discussions at the time.

Security in Territory Prisons

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the recent prison officers' strike and the resultant publicity focussing on the question of security in Territory prisons, can he inform the Assembly what action has been taken?

ANSWER

It is true that, at the time of the dispute, the honourable Minister for Community Development was in Tennant Creek. As minister responsible for industrial relations, I became involved in the matter. I was approached by the Secretary of the Department of Community Development, the Director of Correctional Services and the Public Service Commissioner. The dispute centred over the feeling that the prison officers had that they would be made scapegoats for the escape of these prisoners being conveyed from Gunn Point Prison Farm to Darwin Prison.

As a result of discussions with representatives of the Prison Officers Association and the Miscellaneous Workers Union, it was decided to have an inquiry into the escape. I will read into the record the terms of reference, which also relate to security at the prison. The inquiry is to be carried out by the Police Commissioner, the former Director of Correctional Services, Mr Terry Fegan and Mr Hunter Harrison of the Prison Officers Association. Their terms of reference are as follows:

*Firstly, to consider representations made by the Prison Officers Association and the Senior Prison Officers Association on matters relating to the security of the prisoners at Darwin Prison, Alice Springs Gaol and Gunn Point Prison Farm, including the escape of 4 prisoners from custody on 18 September 1983, and rosters and manning.*

*Secondly, to seek advice as necessary from the Director of Correctional Services and the Secretary of the Department of Community Development on these matters.*

*Thirdly, to submit conclusions and recommendations to the Chief Minister and to the Minister for Community Development on the understanding that they will be discussed with management and representatives of the Senior Prison Officers Association and the Prison Officers Association before submission to the ministers.*

It was also agreed between the parties that immediate steps would be taken, beginning on Monday 26 September 1983, to check the security of all vehicles used for the transport of prisoners and to remedy defects. As I understand it, the various vehicles were in fact being progressively fitted with the necessary security equipment. B block will be closed earlier each day to release 3 officers plus one miscellaneous duty officer for enhancing the manning of G, K, H and L blocks. This arrangement will be for a trial period of 1 month from Monday 26 September 1983 subject to review by the end of that time by management. If, after that month, the committee of inquiry has not reached a conclusion on manning levels, management can extend the arrangement for a period necessary to enable the committee to reach a conclusion or it can end the arrangement. It was agreed, however, that the committee of inquiry would make the manning levels and rosters for G, K, H and L blocks its first consideration and provide an interim report on this matter if necessary.

The roster arrangements for Gunn Point Prison Farm will be looked at urgently, beginning on Monday 26 September 1983, by representatives of the Department of Community Development, Public Service Commissioner's Office and the Prison Officers Association to settle the matter in which the problem of single officer manning at night could be solved. As an interim arrangement, the officer on night shift would be redeployed to the afternoon shift leaving no cover on the night shift and officers would commence at 6 am for the day shift.

Mr Speaker, I asked for the inquiry to commence as quickly as possible. I understand it is doing so. Naturally, the unions are agreeable to it all and have stated so publicly. I hope to have a report fairly soon. As a result of that, I hope that these problems can be resolved.

Ngaringman Aboriginal Lease Application

Mr DOOLAN to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the government's intention to purchase Humbert River Station in its entirety, as mentioned by the Chief Minister during question time yesterday, will consideration be given to the Ngaringman Aboriginal application for a lease at Lingarra, which is located on this property, and where they have been living for a number of years, in order for the government to demonstrate its firm interest in establishing a settled community there and obtaining a lease over an appropriate area of land for the community needs? I would add that Lingarra is not a proposed community; it is an established community and they have been living on site for some years.

ANSWER

I have not followed this matter up since yesterday. I indicated in my answer yesterday that I was not precisely sure of what stations or parts of stations the government was proposing to purchase. I do believe that Humbert River is included. I will certainly inquire into the situation as stated by the honourable member for Victoria River. At this stage, I could not give any such undertaking.

Replacement of Asbestos Insulation in NT Powerhouses

Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he advise that a program is continuing to replace asbestos insulation in the Territory's powerhouses and, if so, is that program being carried out within the guidelines of established worker, job and safety codes?



ANSWER

The short answer to both of those questions is yes. The arrangements as far as industrial safety goes are being coordinated by the Department of Mines and Energy Industrial Safety Division in conjunction with advice that came from the Department of Health and the concerned unions. I share the unions' concern. There is no question that asbestos, particularly blue asbestos, is an extremely dangerous substance. In fact, it is one of the most dangerous of all of the insulating materials available. Having regard to those concerns of the unions and government, that material is being removed from the Stokes Hill power-station in particular, and, I would hope, anywhere else where the public has access. It is a material which is no longer required. It was installed in power-stations for the purposes of very effective insulation at a time when its hazard to health was unknown.

The process of removal will continue, and with a great deal of care and consideration to workers in close proximity to this dangerous material while it is being removed. I would expect it would take some time to complete this project due to the very difficult nature of the removal of the substance itself. Blue asbestos, of course, becomes more dangerous with time. It disintegrates; it becomes powdered. When you attempt to remove it after a period of time, particularly if it has been used as a boiler wrap or a hot-water or steam-pipe wrap, it becomes even more unstable. It is the inhalation of blue asbestos, or any asbestos, which is highly undesirable. Blue asbestos, being the more dangerous of the 2, is the one that the department and the Northern Territory Electricity Commission will be most concerned to remove very carefully indeed.

Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What investigations were undertaken by the Department of Mines and Energy to check the bona fides of Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd when it was selected as a subcontractor on the Mereenie oil field pipeline?

ANSWER

Let me make it very clear at the outset that this company was not selected at all by the Northern Territory. Indeed, as honourable members ought to be aware, the pipeline is not owned by the Northern Territory. It is owned by private enterprise. The role of the Northern Territory government is to ensure the engineering standards of that pipeline are within the meaning and terms of the Pipeline Licensing Act. That is the sole role of the Northern Territory government in this matter.

I can understand the way people in Alice Springs are feeling in that many of them think that the government ought to have had a role in it. But that would mean that, every time a private enterprise company employs a subcontracting private enterprise company, the government ought to investigate its bona fides. Nonetheless, I think it is fair to say that, during the process of the pipeline application to the Department of Mines and Energy, and particularly myself, the minister responsible for the issuing of the pipeline licence, Interstate gave information to TNT which subsequently proved to be less than truthful. I understand from the information that I have been given that it listed assets such as earthmoving equipment, wrapping equipment and the like. It subsequently turned out that all of that was either encumbered such as to make it unavailable to creditors or, worse still, just on lease.

Yesterday, I mentioned that one of the major creditors is a small business in Alice Springs which is itself an equipment hire company. Without naming the actual company, it works through Coates Hire. Quite clearly, if one looks down the list of creditors, such as the major earthmoving components of the debts, it is apparent that Interstate, rather than being an actual operator of equipment, in fact sub-subcontracted most of the contract to other people. It is its lack of payment to those local construction companies and hiring firms which is causing me a great deal of personal concern. My interest in this, apart from my obvious role to see that the correct things were done within the meaning, terms and spirit of the Companies Act, is more as a local member coming from Alice Springs. People in my constituency, and in those of the honourable member for Alice Springs and Stuart of course, have been badly hurt and are facing potential ruin as a result, in some cases anyway, of the activities of this company and its apparent inability to pay its debts.

I can only repeat what I said yesterday. I urge that company to pay its debts forthwith or I will continue with my examination of whatever mechanisms may or may not be available under the Northern Territory Companies Act.

Government Policy on High-rise Building in Alice Springs

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the controversy in Alice Springs concerning the proposed high-rise building, can he advise what is the government's policy in this respect?

ANSWER

I presume that the honourable member for Stuart has raised this matter because of the recent controversy in Alice Springs over a town planning decision to reject a building proposal by the Aboriginal Development Commission for a 6 or 7-storey building on land between Hartley and Bath Streets. It is amazing how different points of view seem to arise in different circumstances. I think it could be properly said that, in respect of buildings that could interrupt the view anywhere between Anzac Hill and Heavitree Gap, it has been a long-established policy that there should be buildings of not more than 3 storeys. Unfortunately, the Aboriginal Development Commission apparently wants to maximise the use of the particular land which, I understand, it has purchased from the Uniting Church. It has a number of historic buildings on it that were erected back in the 1920s and 1930s when the Presbyterian Church first established its mission in central Australia.

In any event, I discussed the policy after the Town Planning Appeal Board's decision which rejected the application for review by the Aboriginal Development Commission. I discussed the policy with the Alice Springs Town Council because I believe that, as Minister for Lands, I should take the views of the council into consideration. As far as I could judge from my discussions with the council, it seems that it wants the existing policy of low rise in that area to continue. The council had no objection to an area being set aside for high rise or multi-storey development in Alice Springs. Its view and my view was that this area would probably need to be in one of the side valleys where it would not interfere with the amenity of the aspect which is the hallmark of Alice Springs on which its international reputation is built.

The Alice Springs town plan, Mr Speaker, restricts the erection or use of a building which contains more than 2 storeys except with the consent of the Northern Territory Planning Authority. The authority's policy is to restrict

building height in the central business district of Alice Springs to 3 storeys. The authority has now exhibited for public comment an amendment to the town plan to incorporate the 3-storey limit into the town plan and I will receive a report from the authority when it has considered submissions.

That is the position. I understand the Aboriginal Development Commission has taken its appeal to the Supreme Court, apparently by way of prerogative writ claiming some breach of natural justice, one assumes. I discussed the matter with its architects after the decision when they requested to see me. I suggested that the quickest solution would be to redesign the building to spread it over more of the land. The government's policy is that there should not be any buildings in that area above 3 storeys.

Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Yesterday, he stated that Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd had given assurances to the Department of Mines and Energy that it did have extensive asset backing. Why didn't the department check this information? Secondly, why wasn't the department aware until after it had been pointed out by creditors of the company that the machinery was actually on lease and not owned by the company?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, for the life of me, I cannot remember having said any such thing. I do not have Hansard in front of me to check it. If I said such a thing, then it was not my intention. As I indicated this morning, the sole role of the Department of Mines and Energy was to ensure the technical standards involved in the construction of the pipeline and, of course, to ensure its successful completion. In both regards, the government's assessment of all of the companies involved in that has been completely justified and accurate. The relationship between the owner of the pipeline, TNT Bulkships, and any subcontractor that that company wished to employ was a matter of normal commercial practice and not a matter for government. The government's function was to ensure technical standards and to ensure its completion. There is a separate contract between NTEC and the Palm Valley joint venturers for the purchase of gas at the wellhead. Given that, we must have contractual assurances to ensure the maintenance of the pipeline so that the gas ultimately arrives at the power-station. However, the government has not had, and nor should it have had, any role in the vetting of the financial worth or otherwise of private companies which are not contracted to the Northern Territory government.

Ammaroo School

Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he advise when it is proposed to open a new school at Ammaroo in central Australia?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am advised by the department that a school is planned to be opened in January 1984 although completion will be effected later this year. A janitor will be on site as soon as the school is completed this year. The complex consists of 2 classrooms, 2 residences, 2 toilet ablution blocks, shade

areas, an electrical-generating plant and an upgraded water supply.

Housing Commission Interest Rates on Loans

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER FOR HOUSING

In view of recent falls in interest rates since the latest Commonwealth bond tender, is there any intention to reduce the maximum interest rate currently applicable on housing loans offered by the Housing Commission to the general public?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Housing Commission interest rates are still well below the Australian average. For the time being, there is no intention by the government to reduce interest rates.

Timber Creek School

Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he advise when it is proposed to open the new school at Timber Creek?

ANSWER

Honourable members will appreciate that we have many schools in the Northern Territory. I think there are 150 of them. A question about any one of them could come at any time. I am advised that the proposed Timber Creek school will open early in 1984. It will be a mobile complex comprising a classroom, a residence and a toilet ablution block. A 0.8 ha site on police land close to the existing community services is currently being negotiated for with the Northern Territory Police Force. Problems have been encountered in finding an adequate water supply for the school. Currently, the Department of Transport and Works is investigating a possible means to achieve this water supply.

Fish River Pastoral Lease Acquisition

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Yesterday, he failed to address let alone answer a number of significant questions in respect of the Fish River pastoral lease acquisition and Sir Fred Sutton. Will interest be payable to the former leasholder in respect of compensation paid for the acquisition of the Oolloo pastoral lease and, if so, from when will the government be liable to make such interest payments?

ANSWER

I am sorry that I did not give sufficient attention to the Oolloo acquisition when making my statement about the Fish River acquisition. Next time I am making a statement about something else, I will remember to include everything in my portfolio in the statement.

Mr B. Collins: It is not related to it at all.

Mr EVERINGHAM: Well, now we are told that it is not related. I wonder what sort of question I am being asked, Mr Speaker. I have already given considerable information in relation to the Oolloo acquisition but I will read a short briefing that I have now received from the Department of Lands regarding

the Oolloo pastoral lease determination of compensation.

Pastoral Lease 748 was compulsorily acquired from Mr Robert Rixon on 24 March 1982. An offer of \$200 000, which was the Valuer-General's assessed market value at that time, was forwarded to the solicitors representing Mr Rixon on 28 April 1982. A notice of dispute rejecting this offer was received. You will recall that attempts at negotiations had been made by the ministers prior to the time of acquisition. Mr Rixon had told us that he intended to fight the matter through the court. Nonetheless, the offer of \$200 000, the Valuer-General's assessment, was conveyed to Mr Rixon. It was rejected and a notice of dispute was received by the government.

In an effort to settle the matter quickly though, a second offer at an amount of \$350 000 was forwarded on 2 July 1982. This offer, which included interest, was subject to acceptance within 28 days. The offer was not accepted nor rejected. I heard as an aside the word 'fascinating'. Mr Speaker, the government receives the Valuer-General's valuation and one normally expects that the government should as far as possible adhere to the Valuer-General's valuation. As I said yesterday, valuation is not an exact science. It is rendered extremely difficult in these circumstances, where the only yardstick for valuation purposes at all for pastoral land that is intended to be used as agricultural land is another acquisition, namely, the Douglas acquisition. There are no sales of comparable agricultural land to which the valuers can refer. However, the Valuer-General does his best. We indicated to everyone whose property is being acquired in that part of the world that, if they want to nominate 2 valuers, we will nominate 2 valuers. They can then pick 1 of the 2 we nominate, and we will pick 1 of the 2 they nominate and we will average what the valuers come up with and pay them that as compensation. That offer has been made to everyone because of the difficulty in establishing what could be called a scientific valuation because of the lack of the sort of data that valuers need to work on.

The offer of \$350 000 was forwarded on 2 July 1982. It included interest and was subject to acceptance within 28 days. It was not accepted nor rejected. In accordance with the Lands Acquisition Act, a 90% part payment has been made based on the original offer of \$200 000. Mr Rixon received \$78 138 after the payment had been made to mortgagees who had the first prior right. On 5 May 1983, the then Chairman of the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority, Mr Baden Cameron, requested that action be commenced to have compensation determined by the Lands Acquisition Tribunal. The minister approved this course of action and a preliminary hearing of the Lands Acquisition Tribunal before the Chairman, Mr P.D. James, was scheduled for 10.30 am on 15 September this year. That was last month. The purpose of the preliminary hearing was to coordinate a later hearing by the tribunal to determine the level of compensation payable to the former owners. The solicitors representing Mr Rixon failed to appear as the solicitor concerned was unexpectedly delayed by a matter in the courts. The preliminary hearing as a result did not proceed. The solicitor later met with the Chairman of the Lands Acquisition Tribunal and tentative arrangements for a hearing in mid-November have been set. The Registrar of the Lands Acquisition Tribunal is waiting for advice from solicitors for Mr Rixon as to the availability of their valuer and whether the valuation will be completed by mid-November. Their valuer is Mr J.R. Wake from Townsville who completed one of the 2 valuations used in determining compensation for the area required for ADMA from Douglas Station. Both parties have agreed that the tribunal will consist of the chairman, Mr P.D. James, and valuers Messrs John Patterson and G.C. Fenwick. The matter is obviously progressing.

Investments in Trustee Executor and Agency Company

Mr D.W. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

In light of the uncertainty suffered by Territorians who have invested in the Trustee Executor and Agency Company, which failed this year, can he indicate what moves the Territory government is taking to protect the investors' interests?

ANSWER

Honourable members would be aware that the government immediately acted upon the collapse of that company in May this year to protect the interests of many charitable organisations and community-based groups by ensuring that grant funds that they had invested in that organisation would be made available prior to the commencement of this financial year. So the government has already acted to protect Territorians against this unfortunate company's collapse. The actual position in relation to the company is that, as a trustee, it holds some 160 Northern Territory wills - and controls the administration thereof - and in the order of \$3.5m in deposits. In addition to that, it has some \$2m worth of short-term property loans within the Northern Territory. Territorians obviously were affected considerably by the collapse of the company. What has now happened is that, in order to protect unsecured creditors - that is, people who are without security in terms of mortgage and so on - of that company, the receiver offered that side of the trustee company's business for sale nationally. The upshot was that that very sound and well-known Australian banking group, the ANZ group, has offered \$6m for the trustee side of the company's operations.

What is now necessary is complementary legislation to be enacted by the Australian states, the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory to facilitate the smooth transfer of the operations of the Trustee Executor and Agency Company to a new company to be called ANZ Executors and Trustee Company.

I propose during the course of this sittings, hopefully tomorrow, to announce the Northern Territory government's intention to introduce complementary legislation. It has already been before the Victorian parliament. I would assume it is going to be done around Australia. That will be by way of an amendment to the Companies Trustees and Personal Representatives Act. I would hope to be in a position to give notice tomorrow and hopefully introduce that bill next Tuesday.

Fish River Pastoral Lease Acquisition

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

My question follows on my previous question about Oolloo. Will interest be payable in respect to the compensation paid for the acquisition of the Fish River pastoral lease? If so, what rate of interest and from what date will the government be liable to make such interest payments?

ANSWER

Quite frankly, I am not aware of whether the amount of interest is included in the proposed settlement figure. I can certainly find that out and then inform the Assembly.

Rolls for New Electorates

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Could he advise the Assembly when the new rolls will be printed and available showing the new 25 electorates?

ANSWER

I will have to take that question on notice and advise the honourable member at a later time.

NTEC Funds

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Why were funds which were raised by Treasury through the semi-government borrowing program for use by the Northern Territory Electricity Commission not drawn on by NTEC during the financial year 1982-83?

ANSWER

I too have noticed the comments of the Auditor-General in this regard. There is a briefing available from Treasury which I have not yet seen. I am certainly happy to make the information available to honourable members. Indeed, as that report is before the Assembly, I will make a point of that coming on for debate and will address the question at that time. I believe there is information coming from Treasury at this stage.

Assistance to Small Businesses

Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

What steps are being taken to increase the level of assistance given to small businesses since the announcement of increased funding in the budget speech?

ANSWER

The Small Business Advisory Service has done considerable work in identifying as it sees it the best use for the additional \$1m. I understand that its proposal will have to be approved by the board of the Northern Territory Development Corporation. I expect to receive firm recommendations from the NTDC in the very near future, although I understand that the Small Business Advisory Service is looking to expand its operations in a number of ways. It is proposing to expand its advisory and information services, and its educational services in conjunction with the community college and other educational institutions. It proposes to provide on-the-job consultancy services. It proposes to assist in the promotion and development of markets and also to provide for special loans in certain circumstances.

As was said in this Assembly yesterday afternoon, one of the major causes of failure by small business around Australia has been the lack of training of people in small business in management techniques. I certainly believe that it is in that area that the Small Business Advisory Service could very usefully expend a considerable portion of the additional \$1m of funding made available to it by the Territory government in this year's budget. Artificial supports for

any small business which is not viable or not being managed properly will only draw out its existence rather than make it flourish. The best way that the government can assist small businesses is by ensuring that the Northern Territory economy is flourishing as best it possibly can. To that end, the budget this year has expended significantly greater amounts of funds in the capital works areas. That has spin-offs for the service industries and to small business generally.

I am sure that, when the Small Business Advisory Service announces in detail its plans as to how it intends to use those funds, they will be to maximise the benefits to small businesses in the Territory generally.

Teaching Positions in NT Schools

Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer him to his previous answer in relation to applications for teaching positions in the Territory for 1984. Does he have at hand specific information about how many applications there are for positions in general primary schools, Aboriginal schools and secondary schools? Particularly in relation to secondary schools, does he have information available about applications for teachers of foreign languages?

ANSWER

I do not have that specific breakdown. Whilst I think that the applications could be broken down into primary and secondary teaching, I am not sure that they could be broken down any further until such time as a complete assessment of the applications has been made. He may be asking for information a little in advance of our capacity to provide it. However, I will seek the information that he asks and, if it is available, provide it during the course of this sittings.

Darwin Port Authority Bill

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it his intention to proceed with the Darwin Port Authority Bill (Serial 328) at this sittings and would he undertake to circulate as soon as possible any proposed amendments to save unnecessary duplication.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is the government's wish to proceed with the legislation at this sittings. Recently, quite a bit of consultation has taken place with various interested parties and amendments are being prepared at present. I will undertake to circulate the amendments prior to the second-reading debate.

Terri Hatcheries and Fish Farms Pty Ltd

ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister) (by leave): I would like to provide additional information in response to a question asked yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to funds provided by the NTDC to a company known as Terri Hatcheries and Fish Farms Pty Ltd. An amount of \$350 000 was approved on 1 October 1981. Terri Hatcheries is in business apparently as a fish farm.



\$290 000 has been drawn down. The account is not in arrears or default. The security is a second mortgage over pastoral lease 689, Finniss River Station, and personal guarantees from the directors. The corporation understands that the company is looking at the prospects of subdivision of Finniss River Station.

I have a report on Finniss River Station because I was asked the status of the pastoral lease there. On 13 September 1983, an inspection of the Finniss River pastoral lease was carried out for the purposes of determining compliance with the lease covenants and reappraisal of lease rental. The lease was found to be in breach of lease conditions requiring 81 ha of improved or artificial pasture and in breach of the condition requiring maintenance of all improvements. Whilst the pasture breach is considered to be minor, the maintenance of improvements is poor. A notice under section 24A of the Crown Lands Act is to be issued for non-compliance with lease conditions. An application to subdivide the lease for agricultural purposes was received by the department on 3 October 1983. Further information is to be sought from the lessees concerning use of the residential area.

Myilly Point Development

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has any agreement been reached between the Territory government and Henry and Walker with respect to the Myilly Point development or the actual site on which the development is to take place? Have any contracts been signed between the government and that company?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, at this stage, no contracts have been signed with anyone, let alone Henry and Walker, in relation to the Myilly Point site. As I advised the Assembly on Tuesday, there are negotiations going on with 2 parties. At this stage, as I understand it, both parties are furthering their feasibility studies of the proposals that they have for the particular site.

NT Government Lottery

Mr VALE to TREASURER

Following the success and popularity of the first Northern Territory government sponsored lottery in July, can the Treasurer advise what plans the government has for future lotteries?

ANSWER

There has been indeed a great deal of interest in the Northern Territory government lottery following the very substantial success of the first one for which virtually all sales were completed within the first 3 or 4 weeks of the program. We had expected to sell them over 3 months. As a result, Cabinet has decided that a second lottery will be launched shortly and will be drawn just before Christmas. One of the advantages of this is that the tickets will remain at the very large A4 size - the largest lottery tickets in the world. The tickets' very high standard will be maintained. The tickets in future will include an aspect of the Northern Territory scenery. They have been expertly prepared and will make excellent gifts as well as being very attractive to tourists.

First prize will still be \$100 000. There will be some adjustments to the minor prizes compared to the first government lottery. The next government lottery should go on sale about 3 November. Indications are that it will be as successful as the first lottery because of the interest that has been expressed and the continuous inquiries to the Racing and Gaming Commission about advance orders. I am pleased to announce that the government will be allocating the proceeds of this lottery - in the vicinity of \$50 000 - to charities in the Northern Territory. Advertisements will appear shortly asking for charities in the Northern Territory to apply for some of those funds.

Electricity Charges

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

If the Northern Territory is successful in getting a remission of the additional excise on fuel oil, how will that affect our electricity prices given that we are tied to north Queensland which may not get the same attention?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in recent times, the direct tie to north Queensland rates have been removed. There is no such fixed arrangement any longer. One would assume that, if we were to try to maintain a reasonable balance of electricity charges, we would certainly have regard to north Queensland rates. In so far as the excise imposed by the Commonwealth in its last budget is concerned, quite clearly that is outside of any consideration which would be relevant to north Queensland. It uses coal and we use imported oil. It would not be the intention of this government to increase electricity charges of the order which has been advised as being necessary - that is, 6.3% - as a result of the Commonwealth's impost on the Northern Territory. If that impost were removed, that 6.3% would not apply. It is not the government's intention at the moment to increase electricity charges in any event other than would otherwise be caused by this impost. Whether or not there is an increase in electricity charges in the 12-month span is totally dependent on the attitude of the Commonwealth and not on anything under the control of the Northern Territory.

Community Employment Program

Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

In May this year, the federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations set in train machinery to establish a community employment program. Is he able to indicate to the Assembly what stage that program has reached in the Northern Territory? In particular, have any guidelines been set for the program?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as the member for Port Darwin said in his preamble, on 19 May this year, the federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations introduced into the House of Representatives a bill to appropriate \$300m for a community employment program over a period of 3 years. The intention of the legislation is to implement a major job-creation program throughout Australia to create jobs for the unemployed through the funding of projects to provide worthwhile community facilities and services, principally at the local level. States and Territories were invited to join with the Commonwealth in the community employment program scheme and the Northern Territory government has accepted the opportunity to participate in the program.

Funding allocations to states and territories was determined on a population basis, with the Northern Territory unfortunately receiving a total allocation of only \$2.822m of the \$300m. Within this allocation, specific money has been identified as follows: funds for local roads - \$1.306m; funds for water supply projects - \$169 000; and funds for Northern Territory government or local government and community organisations projects - \$1.347m. In addition to this amount, successful project sponsors should wherever possible contribute 30% of total project costs, thus further increasing employment-generating opportunities. Agreed guidelines for the program have been finalised and particular emphasis will be placed on providing jobs for longer-term unemployed people and those disadvantaged in the labour market.

The guidelines propose that a joint Commonwealth-Northern Territory secretariat be formed to encourage submissions from a wide cross-section of the community. I understand that already a number of submissions have been lodged. The secretariat will also serve as a consultative committee which will consider project applications and will make recommendations to the Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments jointly for approval.

The joint secretariat has been formed and commenced operations at suite G7, first floor, Centrepont Building, Smith Street, the Mall, Darwin. Nominations for the consultative committee have been determined and these names have been sent to the federal minister for acceptance. At this time, a total of 267 expressions of interest have been recorded by the secretariat and a total of 15 sponsor applications have been processed for consultative committee consideration. It is expected that the first approvals will be considered before the end of this month.

Asbestos for Sanderson High School Pipes

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In view of the known hazards to health presented by asbestos, which have been acknowledged in this Assembly earlier by the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy, why do the specifications for Sanderson High School construction projects specify the use of asbestos pipes for the school's water reticulation system?

ANSWER

The government has undertaken to seek further information on the question of asbestos in water pipes. The health hazard associated with asbestos is the inhalation of minute fibres which have been found to cause cancer. Asbestos is not now used as a fibre product in the building industry and has not been for several years. However, it was previously commonly used for thermal lagging and is therefore most likely to be found in powerhouses.

The product is still used extensively in the form of asbestos cement which is commonly used in buildings and pipes. This product contains approximately 15% asbestos and the fibres are locked in by the cement with which it is combined. The fibres can only be released by cutting the material and in this event there is far more cement dust produced than asbestos dust. Asbestos cement is an extremely long-lasting material and ideal for use in water pipes where the water provides a continuous curing process for the cement content, thus extending its already long life. There have been extensive scientific tests carried out on this type of pipework. A team of environmental consultants in the UK tested water samples from asbestos cement water pipes in use throughout the world. In no instance was the concentration of asbestos in the sample more than one-tenth of the limit prescribed by the world health organisation. It has been suggested that pipework could break down or disintegrate over the years, thus polluting the water. The test previously referred to, it should be noted, was carried out on pipes in use and which had been in use for varying lengths of time and had never indicated any such deterioration. There are more asbestos fibres released from brake-linings in everyday driving than are produced by the construction industry.

Accommodation at Berrimah Police Complex

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he provide brief details of accommodation being planned at the new police headquarters at Berrimah for police and fire brigade personnel and what use will be made of present accommodation in the various places in Darwin?

ANSWER

The Berrimah police complex, currently under construction, is due for completion about mid-1984, although it is presently running ahead of schedule. I do not have any precise timing. It will house all police operational units and the Fire Services headquarters component. Police offices will be retained in the Darwin city area, at Casuarina, Palmerston and Fred's Pass. The existing traffic complex on Coonawarra Road, Winnellie, known as the Traffic Centre, will be retained to house the police supply and stores section, the police air wing and the combined police fire and emergency services' garage and workshop. The existing police headquarters in the Darwin Police Station has been declared surplus to the needs of the Police department and is intended for occupation by another government department. When the new police complex at Berrimah is occupied, leases on the Vogliotti Building, Mitchell Chambers and Roussos Building will be relinquished.

Cane Toads

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

In view of the serious threat that the cane toad would impose on the environment if it did reach the wetlands in the Top End, has consideration been given to setting up an inspection point on the Barkly Highway to inspect vehicles coming from Queensland to make sure that those vehicles are not carrying unwelcome passengers in the form of cane toads?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, despite the few jokes we are able to raise about the issue from time to time, the possibility of the cane toad coming into the Territory is indeed a very serious matter and one that will require the surveillance of the whole community. I recently circulated to all members a briefing paper on the cane toad. That information suggested that the cane toad is moving west out of Queensland at the rate of about 30 km per year. While there have not been any sightings in the Northern Territory at this stage, there is no reason to believe that they are not here or that they will not come. In fact, the challenge to the Conservation Commission and other people involved in the eradication of this pest is to educate the community to the problems that the cane toad will represent for us and to have the community on guard constantly looking for the arrival of this species and for ways of making sure that its movement west is as slow as possible.

Added to this is the risk confronting the Northern Territory with importing products from Queensland. I refer particularly to the possibility of cane toads being brought into the Northern Territory by the farmers who are importing 60 000 or 70 000 trees over the border to plant a mango plantation at Katherine on the Bernard farm. The possibility of cane toads coming in in a shipment of trees of this nature is not to be discounted at all. The Conservation Commission is working with the Bernard principals in this matter to ensure that every precaution is taken.

The member for Port Darwin raises the suggestion about the suitability of putting a road block on the Barkly Highway. While that is something we may treat with some mirth in the first instance, the issue of quarantine between ourselves and Queensland is one that we can no longer regard in a jocular fashion. It is something that we will have to be very mindful of as our agricultural and horticultural industry increases in size and as the traffic in primary produce between the 2 areas increases. Honourable members would be

aware that there is a horticultural inspector at most airports to ensure that people are not unwittingly carting unwanted bugs and pests into particular states. We may have to look at some method of protecting the Northern Territory from some of the bugs that haunt the agriculturalists of this country. I will endeavour to report back to the Assembly in the November sittings on the progress that is being made and the measures which the Conservation Commission and the Department of Primary Industry believe are necessary to ensure that unwanted bugs do not threaten our agricultural, horticultural and primary industry potential.

#### Disabled Persons

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the Chief Minister given an undertaking to groups representing disabled people that he will introduce an equal opportunity bill into the Assembly to ensure equality of opportunity to disabled persons in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot recall giving any such undertaking. If the member for MacDonnell could be more specific about what group he is referring to and when, I would be happy to search my files to see if that is the case. I do not recall giving any such undertaking recently. It may have been some other minister.

#### School Buildings

Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Why is Tennant Creek, which has a student population of some 704 students, to get priority for a third school while Nhulunbuy, which has a student population of 1114, will only receive some upgraded demountables and possible extensions to the high school?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have all the details before me even though I have of late taken considerable interest in the education system at Nhulunbuy as far as school facilities are concerned. I think it is wrong for school communities in the Northern Territory to make judgments based on a town 900 km away, and say that, because it has x number of schools for a similar population, it should have the same. The situation is quite different in the 2 areas. Without going into much detail, I can say that both towns started off with area schools. Honourable members will be aware what an area school is. The Tennant Creek area school was on quite a small block of land. As the population there grew, it was necessary for additional educational facilities to be built on another site. The area school simply could not be expanded. In Nhulunbuy, the situation was quite different. Also in Tennant Creek, there was serviced land available for these additional facilities. In Nhulunbuy, the situation for potential population growth must be assessed from time to time because the town has the solitary purpose of mining. It is unique in Australia in not having road access. Its future can be determined more accurately than a place like Tennant Creek which has a number of industries.

In Nhulunbuy, the area school is situated on a very large area of land. That large area of land was even larger in a real sense because it was adjacent to a couple of hectares of public open space as well. There was considerable room in Nhulunbuy for expansion on the present site. At that time, there were

no additional sites available. Today there are no additional sites available should the government decide that it should build another primary school in Nhulunbuy, which some people in Nhulunbuy would like to see because it has a very large primary school. That is some explanation as to why there is a difference in the educational layout of facilities between Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy. Whilst I am happy to address and provide information and experts from the Department of Education to school communities to discuss their situation, where we should go in the future and so on, I think it is wrong to make comparisons between distant towns which have so many differences. In that situation, student numbers, town populations and the number of schools are really quite irrelevant.

Seminar on the Criminal Code

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Has the ABC agreed to televise the seminar on the Criminal Code on Saturday?

ANSWER

I understand that the Chief Minister received a letter from the ABC this morning indicating that it felt that it was unable to televise either in whole or in part the seminar which the government has set up for the purposes of explaining the legal realities of the Criminal Code rather than its philosophy. I would have thought that the ABC, having telecast so many other matters of significant public interest around Australia, would have seen fit to have devoted at least some time apart from normal news service to this particular very important matter. The short answer is no. Because of financial and equipment reasons, the ABC has been unable to see its way clear to do so. We are somewhat disappointed.

Collection of Payroll Tax

Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

The government currently is undertaking a campaign to ensure that every cent of payroll tax that is due and payable is collected. When did the campaign commence and does the Treasurer expect that the campaign will significantly alter the government's estimated increase in payroll tax revenue given in this year's revenue statement?

ANSWER

The government has tax inspectors whose role it is to make routine checks on all areas of company activities which impinge upon the lawful payment of taxes to the Northern Territory government. I am sure that the whole community would agree that everyone should meet his responsibility as a taxpayer. There was not so much a campaign commenced to inspect books and have tax inspectors travel from place to place. We have been doing that all along. The number of tax inspectors was increased some time ago. In fact, this has been an activity of the taxation office ever since the office was established. The improvement has been in the provision of resources for field trips, checking returns and so on.

As far as the second part of the honourable member's question about the impact on revenue estimates is concerned, obviously, the Treasury and the taxation office have made the best estimate that they can for the 1983-84 financial year. I would expect that the activities of the tax inspectors should not make a great deal of difference unless they come upon unexpected examples of

tax evasion or tax avoidance which can result in additional funds flowing to the government.

Control of Mosquito-borne Diseases

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

Has the government accepted the offer of \$30 000 on a dollar-for-dollar basis from the federal government under a national program for the control of mosquito-borne diseases such as encephalitis and dengue fever.

ANSWER

The short answer is yes.

Casuarina Development Site

Mr VALE to MINISTER for LANDS

What is the current situation concerning the Casuarina development site which is bound by Trower Road and Bradshaw Terrace.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, applications to purchase and develop this site were advertised both locally and nationally and 3 development proposals were received. A local group, Casuarina City Centre Development Pty Ltd, provided the best combinations of price and development proposals. This group is headed by Mr Dominic Scaturchio and was given a 120-day option to finalise details both in terms of end-users and the financial aspects. This has largely been done and I am pleased to advise the Assembly that an offer of tenure for the land has been made to this local group. Development covenants on the land include provision for a \$35m complex and the development includes a hotel, motel, restaurants, service stations, cinema, indoor recreation and retail and discount outlets. It is pleasing to see local businessmen combining to take this opportunity for investment and development in the Territory and I certainly wish them well in their venture.

Electricity Charges

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

This follows on an answer he gave a short time ago about electricity charges or lack of them. There was a note in the explanatory notes to the budget on NTEC, which I thought was very intriguing, that there had been little or no maintenance work carried out in the 1982-83 financial year due to 'lack of resources' and also an indication that there would be a rapidly expanded maintenance program this financial year to make up for that. Can he explain what caused the lack of resources so that the maintenance was not carried out and whether this rapidly expanded maintenance program this year will result in an increase in electricity charges?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that is rather a complex question. I think the best way to go about it is to answer the last part of the question first. Under no circumstances will electricity tariffs be used for the purpose of providing accelerated maintenance programs. Electricity tariffs are based on the operational function



of NTEC and not on its capital side. If any government in the Northern Territory were to attempt to amortise in any way the asset value and the improvement to asset value, we would be paying \$10 per unit. It is quite impossible to do it that way.

Mr Speaker, as to the question relating to maintenance, I would need to seek further information on that. As a minister, one must take a very close interest in the activities of one's departments because one is directly accountable in here for every decision taken by those departments, whether or not one knew about them at the time. NTEC is, nonetheless, quite a different identity. Its whole charter is set up as business; it runs as a business enterprise. It is answerable to government and therefore answerable to the people through this Assembly for its activities. No doubt, there would be very good business reasons why it chose to expend funds on capital matters during the last financial year and not on maintenance matters. It may be now varying those priorities after having achieved whatever capital initiatives it wanted.

I must say that the wording is odd. No member of the commission ever brought, to my attention at least, any suggestion of 'lack of resources' in that area. I think that the most accurate answer would be that it has channelled its resources in a manner in which it has seen fit as an operational business enterprise and it is clearly now adjusting its priorities. Nonetheless, I do not think that answer I have given will be satisfactory to honourable members. I will certainly seek further information and make it available.

Humpty Doo High School

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he tell me when stage 2 of the construction of the Humpty Doo High School will be completed and when will the proposed school farm be developed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have the information for the honourable member before me. I have lots of other information about schools which I guess she would not find interesting. I will certainly seek the information for the honourable member and provide a detailed explanation during these sittings.

Subdivisions in Alice Springs

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

Will he undertake to ensure that backyards in future subdivisions in Alice Springs will not face onto roadways as is the case with blocks in Sadadeen stage 1 and Araluen?

ANSWER

There appears to be a divergence of views from Alice Springs on this matter. While I can assure the honourable member that there will be no blocks in the new Mt John subdivision backing onto the main road, I cannot give him the total assurance that he has asked for. From planning and road safety viewpoints, it is not desirable to provide direct access to urban residential blocks from major roads. It is therefore inevitable that, in providing access from minor roads, some blocks in future subdivisions will back onto major roads. Nevertheless, I can assure the honourable member that every effort is made in designing these subdivisions to minimise the number of blocks adjoining major roads.

While I am on my feet, I will just refer to the residential land situation in Alice Springs generally. I seem to recall it being raised in question time earlier in the week. The development of Sadadeen stages 2 and 3 subdivisions is proceeding rapidly and it is expected to transfer 70 lots to the Housing Commission later this month with 34 lots on the private market by the end of November. The balance of the development, 125 allotments, should be on the market by March 1984. Larapinta Estates currently has applications before the Planning Authority to subdivide 18 lots which could be available in March 1984 and to rezone another area which has the potential to yield 60 lots in October 1985. The timetable cannot be guaranteed at this stage as this is private land but there are no headworks constraints and development will be directed by demand. While land in Larapinta and Desert Springs is up market, people moving in to those subdivisions release housing in other areas onto the market. A rezoning proposal for 0.4 ha lots in the farm area is currently on exhibition and, if accepted, will provide a new choice in residential lifestyle not previously available in Alice Springs. The Emily Hills estate has the potential to yield up to 250 lots of this type. Again, movement to rural subdivisions makes housing available in other areas.

Funding for headworks to the Mt John residential subdivision has been advanced to 1983-84. This will enable stage one of around 230 lots to be completed by the end of 1984. This area has the potential to yield an additional 700 allotments. The provision of headworks and drainage to the valley are major obstacles and expensive to overcome. Limited clearance on the aspect of Aboriginal sacred sites has only just become available. The Department of Lands is investigating the potential of various pockets of land for in-fill development. One area is the Dixon Valley road. Depending on the removal of rockfill dumped there several years ago, 70 to 100 allotments can be produced. It is planned to release this land to a developer in December 1983 and turn off could occur by June 1985.

Land is not unlimited in Alice Springs. Future expansion will require acquisition from surrounding pastoral properties. Some areas have significant constraints imposed by the existence of sacred sites. Current planned development should be capable of catering for a population in the town of 26 000 people.

Passenger Service on Townsville Trader

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has the Northern Territory government undertaken any studies or encouraged ANL to undertake studies on what demand there would be for a passenger service on the Townsville Trader?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware that we have encouraged ANL or carried out independent studies ourselves as to the suitability of or requirements for passengers on ANL routes. I understand that all matters of ANL activity are currently under very close scrutiny. I was proposing to make a full statement about ANL and the east coast shipping service next week.

Criminal Code Seminar

Mr B. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Again, this follows on a statement made earlier this morning about the failure of the ABC to cover the Criminal Code seminar. Was the Attorney-General

invited to debate the Criminal Code on ABC television? Did he decline this invitation and, if so, why? If it was because of the person offered to debate against him, I would be quite happy to make myself available for such a debate on ABC television should the Attorney-General decide to reconsider his decision.

ANSWER

I could not care less who is offered to debate with me on this issue. I will take on any comer on the thing. It is not that at all. A program like Territory Tracks and the time available to do justice without distortion to a matter as complex and as involved as the Northern Territory Criminal Code would cause nothing more than confusion in the public mind. That is not only my view but it is the view contained in every piece of advice I have received. The Leader of the Opposition is perfectly correct. I have declined to accept the ABC's offer because I believe it would be harmful. If anyone around here, particularly the Leader of the Opposition, thinks it is because I am afraid to debate the issue, then I would simply point out that I am setting aside 2 whole days to do just that, both in Darwin and Alice Springs. I will debate the matter with anyone. But I will not have it distorted by journalists or a certain journalist who has clearly demonstrated a certain view. More importantly, the time available for that sort of debate would be totally counterproductive and would confuse the public more than it is confused already.

Criminal Code Seminar

Mr B. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I have more faith in the public, Mr Speaker.

Mr Robertson: Because you want to confuse people; you don't want honesty to come out. That's the reason.

Mr B. COLLINS: It would be a great debate.

My question again is, if the ABC is prepared to allow extended time for such a debate, since according to the answer just given time is the problem, would the Attorney-General be prepared to reconsider his decision to debate with me on television on the Criminal Code? The Chief Minister debated with me on the railway with some alacrity.

ANSWER

The honourable gentleman mentions the railway. All there was involved in the railway was a broken solemn promise by the present Labor government that it would build it. Now that is not complicated, is it?

Mr B. Collins: Answer the question.

Mr ROBERTSON: You raised it my friend. It was a straight, broken promise. That is all there was to debate and the Chief Minister, naturally, because it was so simple, won it hands down. Now, as to the other part of the question, what a nonsensical proposition for the Leader of the Opposition to put to us. On the one hand, the ABC says it cannot spare the time to film for the public benefit ...

Mr B. Collins: All day!

Mr ROBERTSON: I said: 'in whole or in part'. He cannot listen either.

Mr B. Collins: Which part?

Mr ROBERTSON: It spent a whole week on the summit yet it could not devote half a day, which is about all that would be required, for the purposes of the Criminal Code. What a nonsensical proposition. We already have a letter from the ABC saying it cannot spare the time to film a factual presentation, not by a politician but by a lawyer...

Mr B. Collins interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr ROBERTSON: He asks a question and then babbles and prevents me from answering, Mr Speaker.

Mr B. Collins: How much time do you want?

Mr SPEAKER: Order, order! The honourable Attorney-General will be heard in silence.

Mr ROBERTSON: He cannot remain silent, Mr Speaker.

Mr B. Collins: Hardly.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Attorney-General will be heard in silence.

Mr ROBERTSON: Mr Speaker, the plain fact is that the ABC has indicated that it is not prepared to devote the time necessary to properly get across the meaning and realities of the Criminal Code. What a nonsensical proposition it is for the Leader of the Opposition to now propose that that period of time would be set aside for the purposes of his sounding off. It is a preposterous proposition.

Howard Springs Reserve

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Is he aware of concern being expressed by some people about certain service works being carried out at the Howard Springs Reserve?

ANSWER

I am aware of recent press reports suggesting that the work being done at Howard Springs is damaging the flora on the reserve. I have sought an explanation from the Conservation Commission and I would like to read it to honourable members.

The particular project involved at Howard Springs involves the upgrading of sewerage facilities at the park in order to overcome problems caused by increased visitor usage of the area. The problem was that effluent from facilities on the western side of the park had to be pumped to the treatment ponds on the eastern side. Four alternatives were put to the consultants and the Conservation Commission decided to adopt the route through the rain forest as this provides the least threat to park values. Everybody is probably aware, Mr Speaker - and it is still evident - that Cyclone Tracy seriously damaged the canopy of the rain forest. With this in mind, it was considered reasonable to sacrifice part of the degraded forest least likely to be of concern to visitors

because the alternatives, although less damaging in toto, passed across the areas of highest public use. The opportunity could be taken also to build walkways through the clearing and then rehabilitate the forest so that, eventually, there will still be an area of undamaged new forest accessible by use of the walkways. The Conservation Commission admits that its officers agonised over this problem. They acknowledged and understand the concern that has been expressed in the community. The solution is unsightly at the moment but they believe that positive change should be seen shortly after the wet.

Lyons Cottage Tenants

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

For the benefit of the ABC, I think the answer to my previous question was no. Has the minister officially advised the tenants of Lyons Cottage that, according to the Chief Minister's statements made in here on Tuesday, they are to be removed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have sent a copy of my statement to the Secretary of the Department of Lands. In passing, Mr Speaker, since the Leader of the Opposition has advised the ABC that the answer is no, it seems to me from everything that the Leader of the Opposition has said this morning that the ABC is taking its directions from him. Apparently, he can give undertakings that the ABC will make extra time available for debates between himself and the Attorney-General. The federal Labor government can demand a week of ABC television time.

Ms D'ROZARIO: A point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Ms D'ROZARIO: Mr Speaker, Standing Orders clearly state that the answer to a question shall be relevant to the question. The matter of the ABC's transmission has nothing to do with the tenants of Lyons Cottage.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr EVERINGHAM: Mr Speaker, I would not have raised the topic had there not been a deliberately provocative remark by the Leader of the Opposition in his preamble about the Attorney-General and the ABC. The situation is - and I think that we ought to be placing it on the record - that the ABC seems to be able to do anything for the federal government. It can provide a week of television time to film the entire proceedings of the National Economic Summit yet, for a community such as the Northern Territory, considering a most important piece of legislation which has had a very strong media attack on it, the ABC cannot suspend its normal programs for one Saturday of the year and find the necessary resources.

Ms D'ROZARIO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Chief Minister is making an adjournment speech. He can bring this up later in the afternoon if he wishes to pursue it.

Mr SPEAKER: Will the honourable Chief Minister answer the question please.

Mr EVERINGHAM: Mr Speaker, the situation in relation to Lyons Cottage ...

Opposition members: Hurray!

Mr SPEAKER: Will honourable members allow the Chief Minister to answer the question.

Mr EVERINGHAM: Mr Speaker, it would be nice too if the honourable member for MacDonnell would keep his laughing for when he goes home to his looney bin.

The story with Lyons Cottage is that I have discussed this matter with a working party which I set up a couple of weeks ago to consider the future use of Admiralty House and Lyons Cottage. As a consequence of making the statement to the Assembly on Monday - which I note was not noted or debated - I have sent a copy of the statement to the Secretary of the Department of Lands and asked him to initiate the necessary action. I indicated in the statement that the tenants would have a few months, at the very least, to relocate to satisfactory premises. I must say, Mr Speaker, that it has always been a criterion of mine that, if we are to save buildings which are regarded as being historic or having some significance to the public, as far as possible, they should be open to and accessible to the public. Certainly, I intervened in the case of Audit House to ensure that there would be public access to Audit House on a certain specified number of occasions each and every year. Had I my time over again, although I was not involved in the decision at the time, private organisations would not have been given tenancies of Lyons Cottage. In my view it should always have been in its pre-eminent use because, of its very nature, it would have been a small museum in relation to the history of the British Australian Telegraph Company and the Overland Telegraph Line. I do not want to cause these organisations any inconvenience; we will give them whatever time is reasonably needed to relocate. Their requirements are pretty small anyway, because Lyons Cottage is not that big. Action has certainly not been instituted to kick them out. Negotiations will be civilised and they will have at least a few months.

#### Door-to-Door Salesman

Mr VALE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware of the activities of a door-to-door salesman, travelling from town to town, offering to take family portraits and the finished product is often far from that which was originally promised and far from satisfactory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware that there is a firm of portrait photographers who are selling door-to-door in Tennant Creek and Darwin. Their activities have been such that many complaints have been received by the consumer affairs people. I do not think it is unreasonable that this be highlighted in the Assembly and that the people of Darwin and Tennant Creek become aware of the activities. The firm's name is New Image Photographics and Art. It operates door-to-door and undertakes to have photographic portraits delivered at a specific time after the payment of a deposit. It turns out that considerable delays are being experienced in delivery and, in some cases, the product is unsatisfactory and difficulties arise in the cost of returning the portraits to Queensland for satisfaction. In some instances, consumers have found, to their dismay, that they are being expected to pay the COD cost on top of the original agreement to purchase the portrait. I bring this to the attention of the Assembly because there are many people in the Northern Territory who do business with door-to-door salesmen and do it on very satisfactory terms. Every now and then, there is a group that comes into the Territory that does not exhibit a high level of business ethics and Territorians are taken for a ride. Rather than portray everybody in the door-to-door sales business as a villain, it is important that we highlight the less satisfactory ones on occasion so that people can be made aware. If honourable

members are aware of any of their constituents suffering some disadvantage by the activities of door-to-door salesmen, whether they are Territory-based or interstate-based, I would be grateful if they would bring it to the attention of myself, my office or the Consumer Affairs Council.

Rum Jungle Rehabilitation

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

How much funding was allocated for the upgrading of accommodation being used for the workforce engaged in the Rum Jungle restoration scheme? How much was spent and is it a fact that these buildings are to be demolished on completion of the 2-year contract with James Hardy?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have a figure for accommodation in this vital project. This year, some \$53m has been allocated by the Commonwealth through the Northern Territory for the rehabilitation program. I will seek further information and pass it on to the honourable member this week.

Electoral Rolls

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise if and when the new electoral rolls showing the names and addresses of all people, including the new Territorians, in the 25 new electorates will be printed and available?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this question was asked yesterday but I was unable to answer it. In the meantime, I have obtained the necessary information. Had the member for Stuart not asked the question, I would have provided the information towards the end of question time. Administrative arrangements for the printing of the new rolls are in hand. It is expected that they will be available to the public, through the Northern Territory Electoral Office, by the end of this week or early next week. Maps showing the new electoral divisions will also be available through the Electoral Office. The Electoral Office has also notified each elector by post as to the division in which he or she is now enrolled as a result of the redistribution. Quite a number of us would have already received those fawn-coloured slips. I hardly need to ask the media to highlight the fact that an election in the Northern Territory must take place before August next year. The point it could highlight is that people who are not enrolled should be enrolling. That would be a considerable assistance to the Electoral Office and would fulfil a real public duty.

Sale of Food from Vehicles

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is he aware that a number of food vendors are operating out of ordinary motor vehicles in the Winnellie area and, if so, can he advise what action is being taken to ensure that they comply with the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act?

ANSWER

Two other ministers are also involved in this: the Chief Minister and the Minister for Community Development. The only advice that I can give is that Department of Health surveyors have been keeping an eye on the take-away food vendors to ensure health standards are met. There are some problems because I received complaints from some of the local food store operators who were paying rent. They were a bit concerned that they were employing staff, paying payroll tax, rent and insurance and had several other overheads and some of these operators are able to take some trade away from them. I understand that, after consultation between the 3 ministers involved, the matter will be resolved in the near future.

Statement by Senior Public Servant

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware that a senior public servant stated to the National Trust that, if it continued its opposition to the removal of Admiralty House, it would not receive Northern Territory government funding and was that statement made with his authority?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have no knowledge of any such statement. It certainly was not made with my authority.

Timorese People

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has the government been able to extend help to Timorese people in the Northern Territory having regard to their place in the wider community?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the activities of the Timorese society in the Northern Territory community are really very extensive. I had the opportunity the other day to receive a delegation from the Timorese community to explain their activities and seek government support. For the benefit of members, I would like to say that the Timorese community is establishing its own cultural centre, for want of a better term, in the northern suburbs and it has been assisted by the government by the provision of demountable buildings that will enable the community to get off to a good start. The activities of the community vary from child care to teaching traditional dance and music. The community, I understand, has a very strong soccer contingent in local soccer competitions. At this stage, it is organising to send a delegation of Darwin Timorese back to Timor in the next year or 2 to establish stronger links between the Darwin and the Timorese communities.

The amount of money that has been made available by the government is not extensive, but the provision of the buildings that the government no longer had a use for will provide a very useful centre for the community. I would just like to commend the community for the work that it is doing to help itself in such a worthwhile way and I assure the Timorese community in the Northern Territory that it has the full support not just of the government but, I believe, of all politicians in the Northern Territory.



User-pays Principle for Aboriginal Associations

Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I refer him to his determination to introduce the user-pays principle for the use of electricity and water on special purpose leases held by Aboriginal associations in the Alice Springs area. Is the Northern Territory government in receipt of Commonwealth funds for this purpose?

ANSWER

The Commonwealth government handed to the Northern Territory some short time ago the responsibility of administering remote area communities and outstations and some town camp areas that had previously been looked after by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. One of the criteria under which the transfers were made to the Northern Territory was that the Northern Territory government would, over a period of time, introduce a system of user-pays for facilities that are provided. There was never any intention that the scale of charges that are made in the major towns in the Territory were to be extended immediately to all communities in the Northern Territory. The transition was to be a gradual one that would enable people to adjust and to cope with the concept of paying for community services that they use.

Mr Speaker, in some parts of the Territory, that was a matter of administrative arrangement. The honourable member and I have had discussions and correspondence on the issue of charging for town camps in Alice Springs. That is an administrative arrangement for the government. In some other areas in the Territory, the application of the user-pays system is not possible because of impediments caused by the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act. That is more of a legal matter than one of philosophy. The government is making a submission now to Mr Justice Toohey who is looking at the impact that the act has on the Northern Territory because we believe it is an issue that needs to be defined.

On top of this is the problem of what constitutes a community in the Northern Territory. We have a system whereby the Commonwealth government holds unto itself the ability to create outstations with a small amount of money - for instance, \$100 000 or \$200 000 - and the Northern Territory government picks up the continuing operational costs of those outstations. I am of the view, and I think most people share it, that the outstation movement, as we understand it, is probably a very good one. It is timely. We need to have some rationalisation in the way that outstation development occurs because it is not a reasonable proposition for the Commonwealth to say to a group, 'Yes, you can be an outstation; here is \$100 000 or \$200 000 to kick off', and then to have the operational funding for that met by the Territory government. In one circumstance in central Australia, a very large community has developed that places upon the government the responsibility for schools, airstrips, water, power supply, roads, health facilities, community development representation and a wide range of government services that are well and truly outside the concept of an outstation settlement. I do not think the problem is insoluble at all. It is just a matter of coming to some common ground with the Commonwealth on how we do it.

I would not discourage the outstation concept at all because I think in some communities it is most beneficial. I would cite Papunya. The honourable member knows more about Papunya than I ever will but I would cite that as a community that I believe would benefit from the outstation movement because it will reduce some of the tension from within the Papunya community. That is good in the social sense. But in moving say 100 or 200 people from Papunya to Kintore,

which you can do with an outstation grant, that will cause the Northern Territory government an incredible expenditure in the years to come without reducing any expenditure at all at Papunya to compensate for it. Again, it is not an insurmountable problem. It is just one that needs working through so that, whatever we do in the way of funding communities, developing outstations, and providing services and community facilities to people in remote areas, is done rationally.

I would cite another circumstance where an outstation was set up. At the time, it was set up quite logically and with everybody's agreement. It was found later that the nearest good water supply was some 70 km away. That caused an enormous cost. Maybe we should have sat down with the Commonwealth, the community and whoever else was involved and said to the Aboriginals: 'Is there a difficulty with moving closer to what we believe is an available, potable, long-term water supply because, if you are not prepared to do that, then these are the ramifications?'. Again, I do not see that the problems are that difficult that we cannot solve them. I do think that we need a fair amount of consultation and goodwill between the parties to understand each other's difficulties. I think that the Commonwealth too has an important role in giving some ground on this issue because the present situation is not reasonable and fair, given the system of funding that we have for remote areas.

Land Acquisitions in Relation to National Parks

ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I was asked questions by the honourable Leader of the Opposition regarding possible land acquisition proposals in relation to national parks. I have been provided with information from the Conservation Commission, which is why I did not know a great deal about all this. The Conservation Commission is actually handling the matter.

In the Humbert River area, a proposal is being formulated to purchase both Humbert River and Bullita Stations to form the core of a major national park. The proposal is pending resolution of potential conflicts with mining and pastoral interests. The proposal at the present time requires the following matters to be resolved: the alienation of a small piece of vacant Crown land adjacent to Humbert River; funding for the development of what is apparently proposed to be called the Gregory National Park; approval to negotiate with the Yarralin Aboriginal people to provide them with suitable land for their living requirements from within the areas acquired; rationalisation of boundaries with adjoining pastoral properties to be investigated and negotiated to take account of the proposed subdivision of VRD Station; maximising the benefits to adjoining pastoral properties by exchanging land of good production potential within the acquired core area with added scenic recreation potential; and approval to negotiate with the Department of Primary Production over the future of the Victoria River Research Station at Kidman Springs. The matter should be presented to Cabinet for consideration shortly. To date there has been no suggestion of compulsory acquisition and it is expected that, should this proposal proceed, the realistic market price as negotiated will be paid.

The commission is also investigating the possibility of forming a major national park in the gulf district. The stations initially considered to form the basis of such a park - and I would not think by any means all of these stations would be under a consideration for purchase, probably 2 or 3 of them - include Broadmere, Bauhinia, Nathan River, Tanumbirini, St Vidgeon, which the government already owns, and possibly Billengarrah and Lorella. It is certainly true that the government is looking to provide recreational and other facilities

at St Vidgeon. It was for that reason that we purchased it. It is also thought apparently to have some agricultural or horticultural potential. Various Aboriginal groups have expressed interest in getting bits of it.

Beyond alerting Conservation Commission staff to the need to gather resource data and prepare a report on the proposal, little further action has occurred in the investigation at this stage. It is planned that the minister, in the company of the Director of Conservation, and Mr Harry Butler, a member of the Conservation Commission, will go over the area in November to gain a first-hand appreciation of its value.

Department of Mines and Energy Staff and Litchfield Corporation Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

I refer to the minister's statement on 2 June in this Assembly that he would ask the Public Service Commissioner to investigate the relationship between certain employees of the Department of Mines and Energy and a company called Litchfield Corporation Ltd. Did the Public Service Commissioner instruct employees of the Department of Mines and Energy, who are Directors of Litchfield Corporation Ltd, to dispose of their shareholdings and directorships in that company and, if so, has he satisfied himself that the officers concerned have complied with the instruction of the Public Service Commissioner?

ANSWER

This question ought really to go to the Chief Minister who is responsible for the public service. I referred the matter, as minister in the first instance, to the Public Service Commissioner. It then became a matter for the Chief Minister. My understanding of the matter is that the Public Service Commissioner never so much instructed those officers that they were to surrender their interests in the Litchfield company but rather advised them that, in all of the circumstances, that would be the wisest and most sensible thing to do. I understand that all of those officers accepted that advice of the Public Service Commissioner and have proceeded from that time to shed their interests in that company. To the best of my knowledge, it was not mandatory but, in wisdom and in hindsight, it was seen by all parties to be highly desirable that they do so because of the possibility of conflict which may arise in the future. My understanding was that there was no direct conflict at that time nor, to my knowledge, to this stage. But, to guard against possible future conflict, those officers, for whom I have the highest regard, mutually decided to shed their interest in the company. Remember that their wives also had money involved. Thus, as far as it can conceivably be done, those shares are being shed or already have been shed. As to the actual status of that exercise, I am quite happy to inform the honourable member privately.

Federal Funds for Aborigines

Mr VALE to TREASURER

The federal member for the Northern Territory recently claimed that the Territory government was not spending funds provided by the federal government for Aborigines on Aborigines. Does the Treasurer acknowledge this to be correct?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, certainly, I do not accept allegations that the federal member for the Northern Territory is reported to have made to the federal parliament. The member is reported to have said that the Northern Territory government has not been spending on Aborigines specific purpose funds which were received from federal government. In addition, he made other comments. He claimed that the accounting system in the Northern Territory was inefficient and impossible to decipher and that the Grants Commission had reported that the Territory provided below-standard services to some Aboriginal communities within the Territory.

On the face of press reports of what the federal member was alleged to have said, it would seem that things were grim in the Territory. The facts are that he was wrong on the 2 counts of the Territory government not spending specific purpose funds for the reasons for which they were provided and he certainly

misinterpreted the Grants Commission's wording on the allegation that the Territory government is deliberately providing below-standard services to some Aboriginal communities. Federal specific purpose payments provided for Aboriginal services in the Territory are used entirely and solely for that purpose. Not only has the Territory used the Commonwealth's specific purpose payments for the purposes for which they were provided, the Territory has added its own funds to augment the total level of funding for Aborigines. In the 1983-84 Territory budget, no less than \$20m has been provided for community government, town management and public utilities in Aboriginal communities, in addition to other expenditure in areas under the budget specifically directed to Aborigines. An additional \$6.7m has been programmed for new capital works in Aboriginal communities. All of this will be provided by the Territory government.

As for the federal member's comments about the Territory government's accounting system, clearly he is ignorant of the facts. The present accounting system, which is based on a system designed by and currently operating in the Commonwealth Department of Finance, is effective in controlling public moneys and keeping track on levels of expenditure under particular cost headings. It is far ahead of the accounting systems operating in some of the states. To say that it makes it impossible to find out how Commonwealth moneys are spent is the height of ignorance. The Territory must know and does know exactly how these moneys are spent and, under arrangements with the Commonwealth, must comply with stringent reporting requirements. If the federal member knew what he was talking about, he would realise that his comments were an implied criticism of the Commonwealth government for allowing Commonwealth money to be spent, as he believes, without adequate controls. One would expect that the Commonwealth Auditor-General would also take an interest in the matter if that were the case.

As to the comments by the Grants Commission in its recent report on special assistance for the Territory, the references to below-standard services were not to the Territory government doing too little for Aboriginal communities but to the fact that the Territory government needed extra funding for this particular purpose. In these and other areas, the commission in fact concluded that the Territory needed a special grant of \$16.9m and it recommended accordingly.

The federal member, whom we must forgive to some extent because he is fairly new in his job, quite clearly does not comprehend the role of the Grants Commission in making assessments in the Northern Territory. We have argued to the Grants Commission that the Territory is in many areas providing a level of governmental services below that provided in the states. Indeed, that is the very basis for submissions to the Grants Commission. For him to turn the question around and say that the Territory government is providing below-standard services demonstrates that he has missed the very principle on which we go to the Grants Commission. The fact that the Grants Commission has chosen to give us additional funds demonstrates that it has accepted our argument that many of these services have to be upgraded further. It cannot be done in a single financial year. Below-standard services in many areas of government activity require persistent input year after year before they are brought up to a satisfactory level. I would have thought that Territorians could have expected a much better performance from the only member that we have in the House of Representatives.

Department of Mines and Energy Staff and Litchfield Corporation Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

I refer the minister to an answer that he gave me a few minutes ago. Is he aware that the records of the Companies Office indicate that, as of 17 October

1983, the following persons are listed as being directors of the company called Litchfield Corporation Ltd: Joseph Maxwell Smith, Christopher Hall Smith, Brian Ross Farrow, William Lewis Thompson and Ian Edward Lewis? Would he also confirm that all of these people named are also currently employees of the Department of Mines and Energy?

ANSWER

They certainly were and I know a number of them still are. As I said, they are officers in whom I have every confidence. They are officers of complete integrity. I very much value their advice and their dedication to their duty to the Northern Territory public. My answer need not be altered in any way from what I gave previously. It is obvious that the honourable member has had someone check with the Companies Office and that is perfectly legitimate and reasonable. It is then clear from what she said that these men are still directors and shareholders. It follows from that they have been unable to shed the shares. Personally, I would not ask them to completely abandon them though I must say I would have hoped to have seen some progress in the matter since then.

Mr Speaker, there is a considerable amount of money involved. I think that the officers went into the company with the most honourable intentions, not realising the potential consequences. I would not expect them to lose considerable savings while there is no conflict in existence, which is the case at the moment.

Mr Speaker, through the Chief Minister, I will be happy - if that is what the honourable member is implying I should do - to take the matter up again with the Public Service Commissioner in order that a review be carried out of the progress being made by these members of the public service to shed their shares in this public company. It is common knowledge that it is not just an ordinary company. It is in fact a merchant banking company and therein lies the potential conflict as the Public Service Commissioner sees it, as I certainly saw it from the first day and, indeed, as the officers have been persuaded. I will once again have the matter reviewed. It is not my practice, once an agreement has been reached, to pursue things in the manner of a witch-hunt. An amicable agreement was reached between the Public Service Commissioner and highly-respected and valued officers of my department. I would expect that, in due course, those gentlemen will carry out the undertakings they have given. Clearly, it has proven more difficult than they and even perhaps the Public Service Commissioner envisaged at that time. Nonetheless, I will once again examine the matter.

#### Crop Contract Scheme

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Will the government be continuing the crop contract scheme for the 1983-84 growing season and is the scheme proving successful?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am happy to confirm that the crop contract scheme will operate in 1983-84 through the NTDC and the Department of Primary Production who are presently calling for applications under the scheme. The scheme has helped 8 private farmers in 1981-82 and 6 private farmers in 1982-83 to grow grain crops. This scheme provides support for farmers to enter crop growing and provides a basis of financial and technical backing for these farmers to become commercially viable producers. The scheme resulted in the production of 1448 t of grain in

1981-82 and a further 1715 t of grain in 1982-83. Honourable members would have to concede that that sort of production and the assistance that is made available are very beneficial to the Northern Territory.

Cost of Verification of Electricity Meters

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is it a fact that, as reported in last night's NT News, to have an electricity meter verified costs \$33 in the Northern Territory compared to \$2 in Queensland for the same service and, if so, can he explain how this difference in charges occurs?

ANSWER

Needless to say, it is very costly to carry out this exercise. These charges are designed basically to recover for the public purse the money that the public pays out to have such examinations carried out on behalf of individual people. All of the community should know that, where the meter is found to be subsequently at fault in favour of the person who has made the application, then the charge should not apply because the meter is in error. As for the actual figures that the honourable member for Victoria River gave, I am unaware of the precise relativity in charges between the Northern Territory and Queensland. Indeed, because of the huge range of charges which are levied by government agencies, including NTEC, for various services, I am not able to recall the precise amount which relates to the inspection of the meter. I remember 14 years ago that the charge was \$4. If one was to index inflation and rising costs, it would be a considerable amount of money now.

Nonetheless, I would have to check the accuracy of the honourable member's assertions. If it is found accurate, then I will certainly look into why such a disparity exists. The methods of charging for government services are quite distinct from methods of charging for the delivery of electricity. That is the case right across all government agencies throughout this country. Basically it is designed to recover the cost and the cost only to the public of providing the service.

Upper Daly River Land Claim

Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise the current position in relation to the Upper Daly River Land Claim and whether the Northern Territory government has attempted to negotiate a settlement of that claim bearing in mind the potential of the area for long-term agricultural development.

ANSWER

The honourable member for Port Darwin has asked a question which may be of interest to some honourable members and is undoubtedly of interest to a number of people in the community. If I may, I will read extracts from a memorandum from the Secretary of the Department of Primary Production to myself, dated 6 October:

*Following your approval to enter into discussions with representatives of the Northern Land Council relating to the Upper Daly River Land Claim, I advise that Mr A.D.L. Hooper and myself met with Mr R.W. Blowes senior legal adviser, and Mr R. Ledger of the NLC on 30 September 1983.*

*This was an informal meeting not involving representatives of the Department of Law. Prior to the meeting, I took advice from the Aboriginal Liaison Unit of the Chief Ministers' Department as to the strategy I should adopt. From the report of the meeting, you will note that the following proposal was put on behalf of the Northern Territory government. The Department of Primary Production proposed that, if the claimants would withdraw their claim on those areas of land identified as being suitable for agricultural development, then the western half of Fish River pastoral lease would be offered as compensation. The area of land offered is greater in area than that sought from the claimants. Mr Blowes, on behalf of the Northern Land Council, advised that he would raise the matter with claimants but, as the area of land on the Fish River pastoral lease was covered by a linguistic group separate from that covering the land identified as suitable for agricultural development, it was unlikely that an exchange of lands could be achieved.*

There, Mr Speaker, the matter rests.

Teacher-Pupil Ratios in Schools

Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is class size related to the number of pupils in each class or simply the number of teachers and staff divided into the student enrolment?

ANSWER

I did have some forewarning of this question and it caused a little confusion in interpretation. The term 'class size' usually relates to the number of students in a particular classroom. The term 'pupil-teacher ratio' is used when talking about the numbers of teachers that a school may be entitled to have in regard to the population of the school itself. As honourable members know, from 1984 onwards, the Territory government will be working on the basis of the school population divided by 21 to give the actual numbers of teaching staff which will be provided to any school. To use the words 'class size' is a little inappropriate if one is talking about the numbers of teachers that a school is entitled to because schools, under the new formula system, will be given a great deal of flexibility in structuring teaching. Indeed, there may be certain subject areas where quite large numbers of children are gathered together for particular instruction. It could be up to 40 or even more in some areas. This of course would allow teachers to take classes with quite small numbers of children, be it 10, 15 or whatever. That would depend entirely on how the principal and the school administration seeks to operate their particular school within the resources that are provided under the 1:21 ratio. I have a table with me which indicates the numbers of band 1, band 2, band 3 and band 4 teachers who could be allocated under the system in 1984 under the various headings of school population - up to 800. If honourable members want to know the numbers of teachers under the new formula for any particular school in their electorates, I would be happy to provide that information to them.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Censure of Minister for Mines and Energy

Ms D'ROZARIO (Sanderson): Mr Speaker, I seek leave of the Assembly to give notice of a motion relating to the censure of the Minister for Mines and Energy for his failure to prevent senior officers of the department from using their position in the Department of Mines and Energy for private gain to the detriment



of the mining industry and the people of the Territory.

Leave denied.

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**  
Censure of Minister for Mines and Energy

Mr B. COLLINS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I move that so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the honourable member for Sanderson from giving her notice of motion.

Mr Speaker, the evidence that we have to lay before the Assembly in regard to the matter of the Litchfield banking corporation and the Department of Mines and Energy is serious indeed.

I might add that this motion is entirely predicated on the answers that were given this morning to questions in this Assembly to the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy. If he wants to involve the Chief Minister in this, he can do so. Clearly, he has not been as assiduous in the pursuit of this matter as is required by the evidence that is available.

The directors of the Litchfield bank were 5 current employees of the Department of Mines and Energy plus Dr Nicholas Blake. Dr Blake said that any investigation into the affairs of the bank was 'hysterical nonsense'. Of course, that was shortly before Dr Blake took off at high speed for regions unknown in the south. Dr Blake was as much a doctor as I am. Indeed, the remaining directors of the Litchfield Bank are now entirely comprised of senior employees in a policy area of the Department of Mines and Energy. Of course, you do not have to be too smart to work out that one of the most lucrative areas for a Territory merchant bank to be operating in is investment in the mining industry.

There is another thing that we view with considerable misgivings. At the last sittings, the Minister for Mines and Energy himself was clearly embarrassed and disturbed by this incident. He said that one of these directors had resigned from the Department of Mines and Energy. Indeed, that person did resign but what the honourable minister has not advised us is that he has since taken up his employment again with the Department of Mines and Energy. The minister says by way of interjection that he does not know. We are suggesting that this is a serious and continual conflict of interest for senior employees of the Department of Mines and Energy. I point out to the honourable minister, and I am sure he is well aware of it, that administrative instruction 833 of the Northern Territory Public Service says quite clearly that employees of the public service must 'regulate their private financial interests so they do not conflict or appear to conflict with their public duty'. Mr Speaker, if there is ever a clear conflict of interest ...

Mr ROBERTSON (Mines and Energy): Mr Speaker, I would like to seek your direction. It is quite apparent that the sole purpose of the opposition in bringing this on at the moment is because they know that 8 Top FM is broadcasting.

Mr B. Collins: Oh, rubbish!

Mr ROBERTSON: Mr Speaker, I merely seek your direction as to when question time will cease for the purposes of a motion like this. Obviously, the Leader of the Opposition intends to canvass each and every issue involved in this as part of his motion for the suspension of Standing Orders. He will then continue later with the actual debate on the motion which, incidentally, I have no intention whatsoever of denying.

Mr SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ROBERTSON: Mr Speaker, I ask that any further questions be placed on notice.

Reconstruction of Stuart Highway in Alice Springs

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

This question follows a question I asked during the last sittings. Can he advise when MacMahon Constructions, which has a contract for reconstruction of Stuart Highway through the township of Alice Springs, will actually start work on that highway?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand that MacMahon Constructions has started work. Surveys are under way and the installation of box culverts on the Bloomfield connector road has started. Telecom relocations have started and relocation of electricity lines is scheduled to begin in a week's time. With the exception of minor clean-up operations, the demolition contract is complete. I understand there is a dispute with the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen about the alternative accommodation during the realignment and negotiations are still being processed.

Department of Mines and Energy Staff and Litchfield Corporation Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the advice given by the Public Service Commissioner to the Chief Minister, who relayed it to the Assembly yesterday, that Litchfield Corporation Ltd is expected to be wound-up this week, and in view further of the fact that searches of the Supreme Court revealed that no such petition for the winding-up of this company has been lodged there, will he confirm the correctness of the advice given to him by the Public Service Commissioner on this matter? If the advice of the Public Service Commissioner is thought to be correct, can the Chief Minister inform me of the date when the petition for the winding-up of Litchfield Corporation Ltd was lodged?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, certainly, I confirm the advice that the Public Service Commissioner gave me yesterday morning, namely, that Litchfield Corporation Ltd would be wound-up during the course of this week. I do not know whether a petition for its winding-up has been lodged or not. I assume that the documentation will go to the Supreme Court. However, I understand that Litchfield Corporation itself issued a statement yesterday which indicated that the delay in this whole procedure has been one which reflects some credit on it in an otherwise sordid affair. The Leader of the Opposition made much play of this yesterday so perhaps he would like to pin his ears back for once and stop his mouth from flapping.

The Leader of the Opposition complained at considerable length yesterday about the sordid way that Aboriginal communities are treated by their white employees. Whilst I would admit that, in my experience of the Northern Territory, there are quite a number of white employees of Aboriginal communities whose service to those communities has done them less than credit, nonetheless, it was a very broad-brush approach adopted by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. In fact, there are innumerable people who have done great service for the Aboriginal people working, at most times, in less than congenial conditions. It appears that the people who are concerned with the Litchfield Corporation are attempting at least to rectify the situation with regard to the Kunwinjku Association because it seems that the delay in winding-up the affairs of the

Litchfield Corporation has been due to the desire of the officers of that corporation to purchase from the association its shares in the corporation before winding-up the affairs of the corporation. I saw the statement after I had made my contribution to the debate otherwise I would have incorporated it in my statement. According to the statement, negotiations with the Kunwinjku Association for purchase of the shares are expected to be completed shortly and the corporation will then go into liquidation. It could be that the Public Service Commissioner, in his advice to me, passed on something that he had been told and it may be that formal steps have not yet been commenced but there is every evidence that the corporation will be wound-up in the very near future. As I said yesterday, I invite the Leader of the Opposition, and any other member of the opposition, to place all material which they have in their possession in relation to this matter in the hands of the Public Service Commissioner so that appropriate action can be taken in all the circumstances.

Public Service Commissioner

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it true that the Public Service Commissioner is in fact about to terminate his employment in the Northern Territory? Is it further true that his position is to be taken by Dr Keith Fleming? Is it further true that Dr Fleming's position as Secretary to the Department of Health is to be taken over by Dr Ella Stack?

ANSWER

The rumour mills are really operating 24 hours a day at the moment. These are the sorts of things about which the honourable Leader of the Opposition - if he is really concerned with the governance of the Northern Territory and the provision of a sound administration with morale at a high level - would pick up his office telephone, ring me and say, 'Look, Paul, I am concerned that you are going to undermine the morale of the public service by getting rid of the Public Service Commissioner and putting Keith Fleming in there'. I am just saying hypothetically what the Leader of the Opposition might well do if he had the good administration or the good morale of the Northern Territory Public Service in mind. Instead, we have a question in this Assembly which is sure only to prompt a great deal of speculation. I do not know if the Public Service Commissioner is leaving because he has not told me and I have not asked him to. I do not know if Dr Fleming is shifting because he has not told me and I have not asked him to. Certainly, I have not spoken to Dr Ella Stack about any shift in her position. I would suggest that the honourable Leader of the Opposition might do the public service, in at least 2 of its connotations, a great deal of service himself if he perhaps went straight to the horse's mouth privately on topics such as this first. He can always ask the question later in the Assembly if he wants to.

Gravel for Mainoru Road

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise whether or not it is a fact that his Department of Transport and Works is having difficulty in obtaining gravel in the Katherine region for the Mainoru road?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Department of Transport and Works first applied to the

Northern Land Council for approval to extract gravel from the Beswick lease in March of this year. I understand there have been some communication difficulties and those negotiations are still under way. I called into Beswick on about 26 September and discussed these various problems with Sam Ashley, the President of the Beswick Council. I assured him that we would do our best to expedite a solution to this difficulty.

Admiralty House and Lyons Cottage

Ms LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

The reason that I have not rung him up and asked him is that it is extraordinarily difficult to get through to him at times. This concerns a statement that he made earlier in this sittings that the government proposes to offer Admiralty House and Lyons Cottage, jointly or separately, for expressions of interest. Which department will assess the replies to the expressions of interest and forward a submission to Cabinet?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, to spar back a little, the honourable member for Nightcliff has only tried to phone me twice in the last 4 years so, obviously, I do not hold out any great attraction to her as a subject of telephonic conversations. Mr Speaker, I recall the 2 occasions that the honourable member for Nightcliff has phoned me, because they are like oases in the desert, they are so far apart. They are like green palms and cool waters amidst sear sand.

Mr SPEAKER: Will the honourable Chief Minister answer the question?

Mr EVERINGHAM: Mr Speaker, some weeks ago, when it came to my notice that the Planning Authority had said that it thought the zoning of this particular land at Admiralty House should remain unchanged, I convened a working party consisting of the Acting Deputy Director-General of the Chief Minister's Department, a representative of the Department of Community Development - I think it was Bill Coburn - the Director of Museums and Art Galleries, Colin Jack-Hinton, and a representative of the Department of Lands. That working party is charged with the implementation of the proposals that the government has in relation to the future of Admiralty House and Lyons Cottage. The Department of Lands is the executive department in that it will post the advertisements etc but the assessments, I imagine, will be carried out by the working party.

Department of Mines and Energy Staff and Litchfield Corporation Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Did the directors of Litchfield Corporation Ltd, who are also employees of the Department of Mines and Energy, lodge with the secretary of that department statements of their pecuniary interests as required by section 4 of the public service General Orders? Did the secretary subsequently declare this information to the minister as is also required by that general order? If so, what were the approximate dates upon which these declarations were made and, if not, has the minister any explanation as to why the requirements of this general order were not complied with?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, quite clearly, it cannot be expected that such details would be

readily available to me. I will certainly attempt to find the information so that I can give a complete and accurate answer to the honourable member. I do not have information that includes dates. Certainly, I do recall that it was because of the requirements of the Public Service Act that the matter first came to my attention. It was because of that that I took the immediate action which I took at that time. As to whether it was filed under that provision of the Public Service Act, I have no direct knowledge. But it was certainly through the disclosure of information to the department, and subsequently to the Public Service Commissioner - which was consistent with the spirit of the quite proper provisions of the Public Service Act and its general orders and regulations - that this matter first came to my notice. Immediate action was taken by me as a result of that information.

Qualified Teachers for the Blind

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Some concern has been expressed recently over the lack of qualified teachers for the blind and visually impaired. Can the minister advise what efforts are being made to overcome this problem?

ANSWER

Certainly, I am aware of the concern in the community. I have had meetings with people on the subject of specialists in the area of teaching the visually impaired. It is one of those areas for which the Territory has had difficulty in recruiting sufficient experts. However, there has been some progress. I am pleased to report that the situation has recently improved in that 2 teachers with appropriate specialist qualifications have been recruited. One teacher has been deployed at Dripstone High School and the other commenced last week at Ludmilla Special Unit. The Ludmilla teacher will be transferred to the Tiwi unit for the 1984 school year. Efforts will be continued to recruit a further teacher for the visually impaired to bring the complement in the Territory up to 3 positions. In addition, an existing teacher, who is not qualified in teaching the blind, will be undertaking a course of full-time study for teachers of the visually impaired next year and will receive a scholarship from the Northern Territory Teaching Service for this purpose. Members will appreciate that there is an Australia-wide shortage of specialist teachers for the disabled and the handicapped. However, we have been making special efforts through a recent very successful recruitment drive to seek people with special qualifications. Also, we will continue to look at people within the Northern Territory Teaching Service who wish to upgrade their qualifications whilst they are in our employ. That way, we will have staff to teach all manner of disabled persons in the Northern Territory.

Funding for NT Schools

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

In the Programs North Newsletter, Volume 5, No 12 which went out to schools this week, it is stated that funding available under the \$1-for-\$1 scheme has been 'modified'. For example, one school which normally receives a maximum of \$5000 has now been told it will receive only \$3000. Can he please explain this reduction in funding? The same newsletter goes on to increase and expand those areas of funding that are exempted or are removed from the \$1-for-\$1 scheme, including such things as donations by parents or other people to the school. Can he also explain this because it is causing considerable confusion with a number of school councils as to how they will budget for this coming year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I received some additional last minute briefings on this subject this morning. Unfortunately, I have not had time to peruse the material. I would prefer to do that and give a detailed answer tomorrow morning or in the adjournment debate. As I explained yesterday in this Assembly, if I recall rightly, last financial year, the \$1-for-\$1 funds were in the vicinity of \$500 000. They have been topped up to the tune of something like \$57 000 and, at the same time, the system has been extended to include \$1-for-\$1 grants and \$2-for-\$1 grants. That should answer the honourable member's question. More money is available to the Northern Territory school system under the new schemes, not less money. Guidelines will be drawn up and I will report to the Assembly on exactly what schools will be asked for by way of bids in a first round to determine which schools wish to take up the full portion of a standard allocation across the Territory. Following that, we will be able to see whether there are outstanding funds available for those schools which seek to obtain a greater portion of government funds under the \$1-for-\$1 and \$2-for-\$1 schemes than can be offered in the first round. As honourable members will appreciate, it is not possible to ask every school in the Territory to state just how much it wants and that the government will match it. As honourable members will appreciate, the schemes are very popular throughout the Northern Territory and that includes what I would normally consider to be disadvantaged schools. Some honourable members have criticised this scheme on the grounds that some schools feel that it is a terrible scheme because they miss out. It has been a very popular scheme even amongst schools normally considered to be disadvantaged. They take every opportunity to benefit from it. I will obtain a prepared statement which answers the honourable member's questions and give it to him during the course of this sittings.

Housing Commission Flats

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HOUSING

Some time ago, a number of Housing Commission flats were set aside for strata titling. What response has there been to this Northern Territory government initiative and are further Housing Commission flats being set aside for strata titling in the future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, so far some 71 of the 127 units offered by the Housing Commission have been sold. At the moment, I understand that another 49 units are in the progress of being sold. Members would remember that the Housing Commission issued a directive to offer for sale 50% of their stock of flats. It is the policy of the government to encourage those people who are living in small accommodation units to purchase them. In some instances, some flat units that were constructed several years ago are not suitable for strata titling and they cannot be included in the particular scheme. However, the Housing Commission is taking strata titling into consideration in its future designs. Consequently, any new construction that takes place in the following years would be able to be used for strata titling. The important thing is that the scheme is working. A total of some 71 flats have been sold and 49 are going through the stages of sale.

Horticulture in Central Australia

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Will he outline the plan the department has for horticultural development in

central Australia, particularly in the Deep Well, Woodgreen and Ti Tree areas?

ANSWER

The results of the last few years with horticultural production in central Australia have been extremely encouraging. Honourable members would be aware that the grape production at Ti Tree, which comes onto the market earlier than any other grapes in Australia, gives the producers in the Ti Tree area an advantage over their southern competitors. In fact, it enables the people of Ti Tree to do very well with their initial production of grapes. In the Alice Springs area, it is well known to members that farms have done quite well over the years. It is very interesting to note that the production of flowers in the Alice Springs area has turned out to be quite a success in recent days. There is no doubt that there is a horticultural opportunity for us in central Australia. The thing to determine is what particular products we are likely to do well in and why. I think the great strength that the Northern Territory has with its horticultural production is not particularly that we can do things better than anybody else but that we can turn produce off at times when other markets in Australia cannot. Therein is our strength.

Mr Speaker, with this in the back of our minds, the Department of Primary Production, in consultation with the Conservation Commission Water Resources Division, has been looking at those areas in the Ti Tree-Woodgreen area that might be suitable for horticultural production in the future. The initial surveys involve the assessment of soils, the availability of water and the quality of the water. I make the point that the quality is absolutely important because difficulties have been encountered at the Ti Tree farms because of the high level of salt in the water there. These assessments will continue for some time. While they are continuing, I have asked the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority to have a look at market prospects that may be available to us for the products that we are likely to do well in. I think we must be realistic and not embark on a program of enormous production only to find that, for some reason or other, the markets have evaporated before our eyes.

I can assure the honourable member that there is a great amount of work being done behind the scenes by officers in the various departments involved. The situation is very encouraging indeed. As information becomes available, I will be only too happy to make it available to the honourable member or anybody else who has an interest in this particular area of Northern Territory production.

Department of Mines and Energy Staff and Litchfield Corporation Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

As he was Minister for Mines and Energy in June last year and the Litchfield Corporation Ltd was incorporated on 4 June last year, I ask him if the Secretary of the Department of Mines and Energy declared to him any information relating to the pecuniary interests of 3 of the directors of Litchfield Corporation Ltd who were then also employees of the Department of Mines and Energy, as is required by public service General Order section 4, and, if so, what action, if any, did the minister take as a result of that information?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can say with all honesty that I had no knowledge of departmental involvement in the Litchfield Corporation until the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy raised it in this Assembly. Any activity that went on within the department in that regard during the period of



my ministry occurred without any knowledge on my part.

Water Supply Agreements with Rural Residents

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Have agreements concerning supply of water in the Darwin rural area been sent to all rural landholders or has this exercise been confined to residents of the Bees Creek area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I took note of the honourable member's remarks in the adjournment debate last night in respect of this matter. I have no information for him today, but I propose to have the matter considered and will advise him of the situation.

Rural Adjustment Scheme

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Will the recent announcement that additional funding for the Rural Adjustment Scheme is to be provided in 1983-84 be of any benefit to primary producers in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Territory's rural producers will share in the increased funding being made available. The Territory's approval level will increase from \$0.7m in 1982-83 to \$1.2m in this financial year. Unfortunately, the scheme is still very small in relation to Territory rural producers' total financial needs but the increase will enable assistance to be extended to more producers. For the benefit of honourable members who may be interested, the Northern Territory Development Corporation, which administers the scheme, will be writing to all Territory rural producers providing details of the scheme and seeking interest from producers who might require assistance under it.

Electricity Tariffs for Nhulunbuy

Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he advise whether, as a result of additional excise charges levied on diesel fuel by the federal government, additional electricity tariffs will apply in Nhulunbuy and at what level?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, whilst I have received no direct communication on this matter, I understand that, as a result of the federal government's excise levy on the fuel on which that town relies, the Nabalco Corporation will increase electricity charges across the board by 10%. I understand that was to take effect from 1 October. Of course, that date has already passed. That increase will only compensate the corporation at the expense of the people so that the federal government can pick up this additional levy. That only goes to the question of domestic electricity; it does not go to the broader question of the production costs of the mine and the impact on jobs. As a result of this excise brought down by the benevolent Hawke government, this impost placed upon people of the Northern Territory, shortly there will be fewer consumers to pay for electricity in Nhulunbuy.

Darwin Performing Arts Centre

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he confirm that the construction of the Darwin centre has been delayed for up to 6 months? Is it further true that a dispute as to the responsibility for this delay exists between the builder and the developer, Burgundy Royale? Is the Northern Territory government represented at these negotiations to ensure that the interests of the Northern Territory taxpayers are protected?

ANSWER

I understand that that contract is behind considerably but not by 6 months. I think it is closer to 60 days. I would have to check on that in the interests of providing a detailed response. I will be happy to do that. But I prefer not to bandy around figures that are not correct. The government has made representations to Jennings over the delays on several of its contracts in the Darwin area. I understand that the management has not been up to the standard that we would expect of that company. As I indicated, we have made representations to that company.

I have not been advised, at this stage, of any dispute between Burgundy Royale and the Jennings company in respect of the Darwin performing arts centre. As far as I am aware, we are represented at all times on all discussions on the joint site.

Rigging and Scaffolding Safety Procedures at Nabalco

Mr LEO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he tell me if those provisions of the Construction and Safety Act which relate to the safety procedures for rigging and scaffolding yet apply to the Nabalco production site?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, no. I do note the honourable member's concern in this matter. There must be very good reasons in his mind why he genuinely believes that the Construction Safety Act ought to apply to those sorts of operations in Nhulunbuy. I do wish that, instead of asking questions like this, he would take the opportunity to discuss it with either myself or officers as to what those reasons would be. I am quite sure that they are well-founded and it is worth talking to the honourable member about them. I take it that his question probably arises from the very unfortunate accident recently in which a contractor's employee was rather badly injured in a most unfortunate accident at Nhulunbuy. That was an accident involving a crane, from memory. There were 3 people operating the crane, the usual 2 doing the actual job on the scaffolding and a dogman giving directions. The driver of that crane, from recollection, held an unrestricted certificate and licence in the state of New South Wales but I do believe that he did not hold a licence in the Northern Territory. He held an unrestricted licence for all types of cranes in the state of New South Wales. We know the scope of crane operations in NSW - they go up some 50 and 60 floors. One must assume that he was qualified to do the work that he was doing. As I understand it, due to circumstances unknown to me at this stage - there is an investigation still continuing which will consider also any possibilities as to breaches of the law - the crane was put into free-fall. I understand that the injury was caused when the crane mechanism, while in free-fall, struck a rail. Some extensive spinal injuries were received by the worker.

Mr Speaker, the relevant provisions in relation to crane operators in Nhulunbuy are covered by the Inspection of Machinery Act. The relevant provision in the Inspection of Machinery Act is identical to the provisions in the Construction Safety Act. In fact, Northern Territory regulations were in place at the time of the accident. So the matter is covered. There is no question about that. Nonetheless, the honourable member keeps raising in the Assembly his apparent concern that the Construction Safety Act should apply as well. If he can provide further argument as to that, it will be looked at. But while there is one piece of legislation successfully covering an area of endeavour, there seems to be little reason to substitute it for another which does exactly the same thing.

Federal Member's Assertions as to Overfunding in NT

Mr D.W. COLLINS to TREASURER

Is he aware of very damaging reports that our federal representative, John Reeves, has suggested quite strongly in the federal parliament that the Northern Territory is being overfunded?

ANSWER

I am certainly aware of the damage being done by the federal member for the Northern Territory by his persistent references to the Territory being overfunded. I was disappointed to read an extract from federal Hansard yesterday which caused me some concern. Unfortunately, the Northern Territory has only one member in the Federal House of Representatives and so no balance of view can be put on behalf of Territorians. After reading this particular section of Hansard, one would really wonder for whom this particular person was working. The condemnation of the Territory governmental system was very damaging to the Northern Territory. I really wonder whether this person will do more harm to the Northern Territory in his term of office than benefit.

It certainly is not in the interest of Northern Territorians that he carries on the way he does at the present time. He is giving the view to southern politicians that the Northern Territory is run in a most appalling fashion by a bunch of country hicks and that all federal funds to the NT are being misdirected, misappropriated and not properly accounted for. I think that it was a sad day when this man went to Canberra to represent the Northern Territory because he is doing a disgraceful job.

Nursing Sisters for High Schools

Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Following his statement in the budget that nursing sisters would be stationed at high schools during 1984, can he advise which high schools will get these nursing sisters during that year?

ANSWER

There are 10 high schools in the Northern Territory which will receive full-time sisters as from 1984, provided of course that suitable people can be recruited. I would hope that that would be the case. The schools are: Darwin High, Casuarina High, Nightcliff High, Dripstone High, Taminmin High, Katherine High, Alice Springs High, Sadadeen High and Nhulunbuy High. At Tennant Creek, I understand a sister will be made available when the new high school is completed. It is about the only centre in the Territory at the present

time that does not have a separate high school where we can place a sister. I am sure that we can negotiate in this complex situation to find a suitable arrangement whereby a sister can be available to students in that area. As I mentioned in the budget speech, we felt that the trial program of having nursing sisters in 2 high schools in the Northern Territory - I think they were Nightcliff High and Sadadeen or Alice Springs High - under a schools commission program was so successful that the Territory government felt it should be extended to all high schools in the Northern Territory. That will be done as from the beginning of school year 1984 in those schools that I have just mentioned.

Transfer of ADMA Stocks of Maize

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

If he has any problems handling the question, he should just imagine that I am ringing him up.

Mr SPEAKER: Will the honourable member ask the question?

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, can he confirm that ADMA stocks of maize were recently moved from Katherine to the Douglas-Daly storage depot and are now about to be moved from the Douglas-Daly storage depot back to Katherine? If this is the case, can he give an explanation as to why this has happened and who will meet the associated costs?

ANSWER

I will pretend that I received a phone call and advise the honourable member that I will ring him back.

Consultative Committee on Children's Services

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Northern Territory child-care conference held in mid-April, about 6 months ago, requested of the Northern Territory government to establish a consultative committee on children's services. Does the government intend to establish such a committee and, if so, when?

ANSWER

I have to say honestly to the honourable member that the creation of a consultative committee on children's services is one that I have not had a briefing on for this sittings. I will endeavour to get the information for her and make it available. Could I say that I do not have any difficulty with the proposition that was put forward by the conference. It seemed perfectly reasonable. If it is possible to effect it without a great deal of expense - we need to cover the whole of the Northern Territory with the establishment of such a committee - then we will do it. However, I will provide the honourable member with a definite answer later today or tomorrow.

Darwin Bus Service

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it a fact that the written report on the Darwin Bus Service states that contract services might reasonably be expected to cost more than in-house

operations and, if so, does the government intend to replace contract services?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of the report the honourable member referred to. I have indicated before that the cost of providing bus services is of considerable concern to the government and reviews are ongoing in respect of that service. In respect of the Palmerston bus service, I have no knowledge of what management proposals are being submitted for consideration.

Local Government for Jabiru

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise what steps are being taken by the government to encourage the development of local government at Jabiru?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the government has been supporting and encouraging the development of local government at Jabiru for some time now. In the same way, some years ago we offered local government to the people of Nhulunbuy. Unfortunately, the people of Nhulunbuy seem to have spurned that offer. There has been no visible movement or agitation towards local government there that I have been able to discern in 3 years. At the opening of the high school in Nhulunbuy some years ago, I deliberately offered, in a formal political sense, the concept of local government to the people of Nhulunbuy and there has been absolutely no move to take up that offer. Local government in Nhulunbuy would be a most complex arrangement because people there do not own their houses.

Of course, the same complex arrangements will have to be developed for Jabiru because, at this stage, people cannot own their homes either due to the nature of the tenure. The underlying title at Jabiru is Aboriginal freehold and a lease, for a term of years, has been granted by the Aboriginal Land Trust to the Director of the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. In turn, he has granted an underlease to the Jabiru Town Development Authority. Any form of title for a house in Jabiru would be in the nature of some sort of assignment of the underlease held by the Jabiru Town Development Authority and banks would not rush to pick that up as security.

In any event, the government has been supporting the movement towards local government at Jabiru. Honourable members will recall that, in June 1982, we amended the Jabiru Town Development Act to provide for the establishment of the Jabiru Town Advisory Council which consists of 8 members of whom 5 are elected by the local community and 3 are appointed. The council's main function is to advise the Jabiru Town Development Authority on matters within the competence of a municipal council in the Territory. The council is an advisory body only and serves a useful purpose in training elected members for greater responsibilities in local government in future and in providing valuable feedback to the Jabiru Town Development Authority and the government on community wishes.

The government has also provided financial support to the Jabiru Town Advisory Council. In 1983-84, the government will be providing a grant of \$31 000 to the council through the Department of Community Development to meet its administrative expenses. The Jabiru Town Development Authority and the Advisory Council met recently to discuss the introduction of local government at Jabiru. I am pleased to advise the Assembly that the government proposes to

introduce legislation amending the Jabiru Town Development Act to enable the authority to delegate its municipal powers and functions, except the power to set the general municipal rate, and to determine the terms and conditions of employment of municipal staff to the Jabiru Town Advisory Council. The council's name is to be changed to the Jabiru Town Council to reflect its enlarged responsibility. The term of office of the present elected members of the advisory council terminates in May 1984.

Mr Speaker, it is proposed to introduce a bill to amend the act along the lines that I have just outlined at the next sittings of the Assembly and the timing of the transfer of powers will be referred to a joint working party of the JTDA and the council. Mr Speaker, the extent to which, and the way in which, municipal functions can be devolved to the Jabiru Town Council are influenced by the rather complex legal situation with regard to the town of Jabiru. Bearing in mind Jabiru's particular legal situation and that ERA's interest must be protected, it will be necessary for the Jabiru Town Development Authority to continue to remain in existence and to hold the lease over the town from the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service.

I believe that these initiatives represent an important step forward in the development of local government at Jabiru. They will provide scope for general community involvement and participation in local affairs whilst recognising the peculiar legal and other constraints, especially financial, in the Jabiru situation. They will operate as a yardstick whereby local government at Nhulunbuy could work if the people and the company could agree on the concept of local government with the Northern Territory government, with the traditional owners of Nhulunbuy and, presumably, with the federal government under whose act, the Nabalco Agreement Act, the town of Nhulunbuy exists. I think we are pushing forward in Jabiru. If there is any genuine agitation in Nhulunbuy for local government, then I would suggest that it would need to go somewhat the same way.

Erosion Hazard Area South of Heavitree Gap

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS

Has the minister received any recommendations from the Soil Conservation Authority in relation to the erosion hazard area declared south of Heavitree Gap in Alice Springs? If so, what action will flow from them?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have not received any such recommendations. Perhaps they would go to the Minister for Conservation because soil conservation is in his area of responsibility.

Erosion Hazard Area South of Heavitree Gap

Mr BELL to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Mr Speaker, I redirect the question.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have not received a report but, if there is one, then I will obtain it. If there are any actions to flow from the recommendations, I would be happy to make that information available to the honourable member.

Traffic Flow in Inner-city Area

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I understand that consideration has been given to restructuring the traffic flow in the inner city area. Is he able to inform me if his department has put forward any proposals to alter the existing traffic flows in the inner city area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand the department, in concert with the city council, has looked at various alternatives from time to time. I think they have arrived at a position where they do not believe there is urgency, over and above initial planning, to determine a track, particularly out of the city. I understand they will be aiming to enter the city through Bennett Street and, through a U-turn, depart via Knuckey Street. However, I believe they are looking at other options. They want to take into account the opening of the performing arts centre and traffic resulting from that. I believe there may be a need in the future for consideration to be given to an outlet through the McMinn Street/Daly Street bridge area. I believe it is still very much in the early planning stages.

Accommodation Funding for Students from Isolated Areas

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Given that the Education Advisory Council has recommended that a hostel be built in Darwin to accommodate students from isolated areas attending government schools and given that the latest Schools Commission report urges that adequate accommodation be provided for isolated children attending both government and non-government schools, will he assure the Assembly that hostels catering to government school students will receive at least equal funding to that currently provided by the Northern Territory in relation to students at non-government schools which have been given in excess of \$300 000? No allocation at all has been made in relation to government schools.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would expect that no allocation has been made for government schools because there is no government school hostel. It would seem a very odd thing for the Leader of the Opposition to imply the government was somehow derelict in its funding. At present, the government is examining its options and proposals in this particular area and an announcement should be made at an appropriate time.

Land-backed Wharf

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer to an article in the NT News of 17 October in which it was claimed that public authorities were using road transport in preference to subsidised sea transport, which could result in the possible ceasing of the service supplied by the Townsville Trader in January of 1984. Does he now believe that the enormous cost of the land-backed wharf and its associated container installation is warranted?

ANSWER

The situation is that the program development at the port must proceed even

though the various downturns have to be considered. I would not be prepared to make a recommendation, other than that, at this point in time.

Darwin Port Authority Bill

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has he circulated copies of his proposed amendments to the Port Authority Act to users of the port as was done with the principal bill?

ANSWER

I do not recall circulating the amendments. I am pretty sure that we sent a copy down to the waterside workers. Certainly, the amendments were circulated to the Assembly last week and I guess those amendments have been made available to them.

Giles House

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware of the concept put forward by Giles House in Alice Springs for a self-development training farm in the area?

ANSWER

It has been brought to my attention that, within the Department of Community Development, a proposal is being worked up to extend the influence of the Giles House correctional service unit to provide for that unit a rural environment where children who are responding well to programs can be given an extension into a more rural setting. I think the proposal involves the acquisition of an area in the Alice Springs farm area and the establishment on that land of rural pursuits such as running chickens and goats and having stables and horses. The present arrangement is that all juveniles held in a correctional environment in Alice Springs do have a very restricted area. I think that everybody who has been to Giles House would agree that it is probably one of the most well-run juvenile detention units in our country. It is really a credit to the people who work there.

I can appreciate that the campus at Giles House does have limitations. I can appreciate that the rural environment that is being suggested would have a lot of benefits, advantages and new opportunities for the children who are involved.

Mr Bell: A prison farm.

Mr TUXWORTH: I heard the interjection by the honourable member for MacDonnell about the prison farm and would just say to the honourable member that the concept of putting young people below the age of 17 in a prison farm with adult prisoners is not one that my heart warms to at all. My heart does warm to the possibility of extending the Giles House environment to a rural setting so that other pursuits are available for the children involved. I am happy to say to the honourable member that, if he, members of the Alice Springs community and the department would like to sit around a table and work up a proposal with me that I can present to the Chief Minister - it involves the acquisition of land - I would be only too pleased to make myself available for that because I think the whole program has a lot of merit. It is one that we as a government should be supporting because the success of Giles House is one that we should be



trying to improve upon to the benefit of everybody in the Northern Territory.

Chlorination of Sewage

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Some time ago, the NT News reported that the department was trialing a process of chlorinating sewage at sewerage stations to eliminate odours. Can he provide any information on how successful that trial has been?

ANSWER

I will get the information for the honourable member.

NT Teachers Federation Strike Call

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is he aware of reports that teachers at least at one Darwin high school unanimously rejected a call by the NT Teachers Federation leadership to go on strike over the Sanderson High School issue?

ANSWER

The matter of Sanderson High School and threatened industrial action by the Teachers Federation last week has been in the press of late. I am very pleased to advise the Assembly that I understand that the Teachers Federation, which proposed industrial action by their members at 2 high schools in Darwin to enforce its demands, had its recommendations rejected unanimously by both high schools.

I am further concerned by a circular put out on 13 October by the Teachers Federation to all its branches on this very subject. It states that it has had considerable success as a result of its threats. I will quote a couple of paragraphs from the circular because it is certainly of relevance to the whole question of the attitude of the Teachers Federation towards the Sanderson High School and towards the government's attitude.

The first paragraph of the circular says: 'Since the failure of the Minister for Education to reply to the federation's demands concerning Sanderson High School by 7 October 1983, the subsequent threat of industrial action by members has resulted in some changes to the Sanderson High School plans and industrial action at this stage has been postponed'. Mr Speaker, I submit that it was postponed because it could not get its members - and I give credit to its members for being sensible in this issue - to institute industrial action. In fact, there have been no changes to the plans whatsoever as a result of the Teachers Federation's threats to me that it would stop construction on the Sanderson High School forthwith unless the plans were changed.

What we did learn from the press was that the Teachers Federation found out that it was indeed looking at the wrong set of plans when it was making up its mind to have the construction stopped. This is referred to in this memo to Teachers Federation branches:

*A lengthy meeting between the general secretary and 2 senior officers of the Sanderson High School Interim Steering Committee took place on Tuesday 11 October 1983 and a meeting between the Director of Education Facilities and federation officers took place on Wednesday 12 October*

1983. In relation to each of the federation's concerns over the Sanderson High School, the following assurances have been given. Such assurances are to be provided in writing to the federation by 17 October 1983.

I will indicate those assurances. Honourable members would be aware that they were in fact already part of the changes to plans since mark 1 of the plans which the Teachers Federation was incorrectly working from. All it has done really is to have itself updated on events in relation to Sanderson High School. As a result of the community consultative process we have been going through, it has finally caught up.

One of the issues, which it raised quite recently, is the provision of laboratories: 'The Sanderson High School Interim Steering Committee has been given an undertaking by the minister that, should additional laboratory space be necessary, such space will be provided in stage 2'. Mr Speaker, I gave that undertaking weeks and weeks ago. The Teachers Federation is only just catching up. 'Classrooms will satisfactorily accommodate 30 students and are designed in order to use the allocated space effectively. Senior offices/interview rooms: the general interview room is provided in the administration block but no other separate facilities are planned. If senior offices/interview rooms were incorporated now they would infringe upon space planned for other areas'.

Another concern of the Teachers Federation was a lack of faculty areas: 'The one general area set down to house humanities, English, maths and language teachers has been allocated funds so that internal dividing walls can be provided should this prove necessary'. That is another one of several things that the government agreed to alter in the plans as a result of the community process which took place weeks ago. 'Teachers preparation areas: teacher preparation areas now provide 6.2 m<sup>2</sup> per staff based on 48 staff. This area is slightly above the Schools Commission guidelines. The amended design for teacher furniture will adequately meet teacher needs'. That is the Teachers Federation reporting to its members how satisfactory its major concerns have been accommodated in the plans to which the Sanderson High School is being constructed. The disappointing part of the whole affair, Mr Speaker, is the fact that the Teachers Federation has taken so long to catch up with events. In the meantime, it recommended industrial action to stop facilities being provided for students to go to school at the beginning of school year 1985 so that it could demand certain changes to plans most of which had already been accommodated. That is the absurdity of it all.

Since this matter is of considerable public interest, I would like to outline some of the features of the Sanderson High School because it is certainly an interesting school. The Sanderson High School will provide the most advanced facilities of any high school in the Northern Territory. Starting with the sports facilities, there will be a full-size football oval and athletics ground, combined soccer and hockey field, 9 tennis and netball courts, 2 basketball courts and an undercover, synthetic surface, multi-purpose sports venue. Compare the studies area: 2 classroom areas, staff preparation area and a secure central area for the main computer and storage of other sensitive and expensive equipment. Up to 30 micro-computers can be located in each classroom. The drama and dance teaching area will have a wooden floor, higher-than-normal ceiling, special lighting systems, stereo sound system, stores and dressing rooms, a lighting control room which can be used to teach students, technical lighting and air-conditioning. The drama-dance area is combined with the stage area of the multi-purpose building. Operable walls will permit the entire drama-dance area to be used as a stage with audience seating in the open area of the multi-purpose building or an intimate theatre environment to be created with audience

and cast all located inside the drama-dance area or 2 separate teaching areas to be provided on the stage; for example, one for drama and one for dance.

The multi-purpose building will have a synthetic floor surface. This will be the first time that this new floor surface has been provided in a Territory school. The area can be used for basketball, volleyball, badminton, gymnastics and formal functions, with stage and audience areas used. The multi-purpose area will accommodate up to 1000 students and will be suitable for out-of-school activities and functions.

The Sanderson High School will have the first purpose-built music teaching facility in a Territory high school which will comprise 2 classrooms, a group practice room, 2 individual practice rooms, 2 storage areas and some areas designed for live performance. One area is designed to allow for sound recording. A 2-bedroom caretaker's flat has been included in the school design to assist with security of the school after hours.

The following teacher preparation areas are included: science staff room, computer study staff room, general studies staff room, library staff room, home economics staff room, general classroom area staff room, arts staff room, music staff room, technical studies staff room and physical education staff room. Some of the areas of these staff rooms have been increased to accommodate requests from the Northern Territory Teachers Federation, Mr Speaker. Those requests were made to us by the federation weeks ago when we first started the consultative process. These teacher preparation areas give 6.5 m<sup>2</sup> of working space for each teacher. As a comparison, Dripstone High School has 6.07 m<sup>2</sup> South Australia has 3.5 m<sup>2</sup> and Western Australia 3.5 to 4 m<sup>2</sup>. In addition to those teacher preparation areas, there will be a general staff room, a visiting staff room, a principal's office and 3 assistant principal's offices.

Mr Speaker, I think that will give honourable members an idea that the Sanderson High School will be the most advanced in design and most generously endowed high school in the Northern Territory. That is understandable. It is the latest high school to be designed and built in the Northern Territory. We learn as we go with design and consultation. What has been annoying in the whole affair is the performance of the Teachers Federation which last week came up with a demand that the minister stop construction of the school forthwith whilst it discusses some of its concerns. As I have clearly highlighted here, by and large, its concerns were more than accommodated weeks and weeks ago. I pay credit to the staff of the 2 high schools in Darwin who were asked to go on strike by the Teachers Federation over this issue and flatly rejected the proposition.

#### Examination of Tenancy Act

Mr BELL to TREASURER

I refer the minister to his letter to me of 10 August in which he advised that the Commissioner of Tenancies was currently looking at some areas of the Tenancy Act which require clarification and possible amendment. Has the commissioner completed his deliberations and will any action flow from such a report?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Commissioner of Tenancies has been given approval for a total and thorough review of the provisions of the act under which he works. He is conducting that review at present.

Groote Eylandt Lock-up

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Although it was a long time ago, I am sure that the Chief Minister would recall correspondence from myself on the complete unsuitability of the Groote Eylandt lock-up to be used for the detention of prisoners. Is it true that 18 Aboriginal prisoners were detained recently by police at Groote Eylandt over a number of days in 2 cells, one of which did not even possess mattresses? Can he confirm that there have been consistent requests, including requests from the Police Force itself, for an upgrading of detention facilities at Groote Eylandt? What steps are being taken to effect this necessary upgrading?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can certainly remember the Leader of the Opposition raising this matter previously. It is unfortunate that, in a relatively small community such as Groote Eylandt, a lock-up which would normally be deemed of sufficient capacity for a population of that size proves to be insufficient from time to time. I took this matter up with the Commissioner of Police and I understood that other arrangements had been made. I cannot say specifically whether funds have been allocated for the upgrading or construction of an alternative lock-up at Groote Eylandt but, to my recollection, the Commissioner of Police indicated that alternative arrangements would be made. Since the matter has only just been brought to my attention again, all I can do is to look into the matter and see what steps are being taken by the police. It is not really a matter of their bringing it to my attention. I have brought it to their attention for action. I would assume that, if another lock-up is seen by them to be necessary, then provision will be made for it in a capital works program.

Power Failures in Alice Springs

Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

My question follows on from a letter I wrote to the minister earlier this month concerning constant power failures in Alice Springs. Can he advise the reason behind these power failures?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, with respect for the honourable member for Stuart, there have not been constant power failures. There have been a number of minor power failures emanating from the Alice Springs power-station. At the outset I would like to put the minds of the community at rest and put a certain employee in a better light than he has been painted at the Alice Springs power-station. The rumour that was going around Alice Springs was that the power failures were caused by NTEC's employment of an inexperienced shift supervisor. These stories were quite damaging to that person because it is not difficult to work out which shifts coincided with the power failures. This became such widespread rumour in Alice Springs that I personally had the matter looked into. The truth of the matter is that the difficulty has involved the conversion of the first power plant, plant number 5, to the new dual fuel firing of gas and diesel.

For the benefit of honourable members, I might describe very briefly how the equipment works. It is not pure gas being injected into the cylinders because it is compressed gas. It simply cools down to such a stage that it liquifies. In other words, it has the opposite effect to the compression of gas. Clearly, it requires a detonating mechanism. From memory, about 10% dieseline is injected

into the power plant and the remainder is gas. The diesel line then detonates as a normal diesel engine does. It ignites the gas and there is power. This is the first plant of this type attempted in Australia. One must reasonably expect that there will be some teething problems. It is those teething problems which caused the automatic shut down of plant number 5. When that plant shuts down, it automatically triggers a power-shedding arrangement.

NTEC was faced with the problem that, as each unit was commissioned, there was a risk of teething problems occurring in each of the 8 units. That was unacceptable to the general public. NTEC has now arranged for a constant spinning reserve to be provided during the 100-hour test period. It takes about 100 hours to settle the plant down, I am told. During each of those 100-hour test period times, while the tested plant is on grid or on load, it will have a spinning reserve operating.

I think that it is fair to point out that this is not a cheap way to go about it. That sort of spinning reserve costs quite a lot of money. Over that 100-hour period, it costs several thousand dollars. We believe that, in order to guarantee the continuity of supply in Alice Springs, this spinning reserve will be maintained. With any sort of luck, during the commissioning process for the major use of natural gas in central Australia, a spinning reserve will be maintained. I am not guaranteeing it but, with luck, there ought to be a minimum of disruption from now on.

Power Charges in Nhulunbuy

Mr LEO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is Nabalco Mining Company the licensee for the Northern Territory Electricity Commission and, if so, is it the responsibility of the minister to fix and vary the charges?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Electricity Commission has no direct role in that, although negotiations have been going on to clarify the relationship of NTEC with such undertakings as Nabalco. The same would apply to the uranium province and undertakings of that type where the public are recipients of electricity and are charged for the electricity consumed.

I am not certain as to the exact relationship at this time between the electricity commission and Nabalco. I would have to check that out. But I am certain that, whatever relationship that is, it certainly does not include the power to override commercial decisions of a commercial undertaking such as the company mentioned by the honourable member.

Power Charges in Nhulunbuy

Mr LEO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Given that answer, I would ask him if he can confirm a statement made by the Chief Minister in this Assembly in February 1981 that power charges in Nhulunbuy had been increased by 17% to comply with the requirements of the Electricity Commission Act which specified that there had to be a standard charge for power throughout the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I would have no recollection of what was said in 1981. Clearly, the question is asked to cast a complete red herring on the real issue of the reported 10% increase in electricity charges in Nhulunbuy. It is widely known, and he wants to bury it with red herrings, that it was the federal government's oil levy which caused this increase. If he has concerns about the increase in electricity charges in Nhulunbuy, I would suggest that he does not ask this side of the Assembly, which is not responsible for the necessary increases, but refer the matter to the Labor government in Canberra which is the direct and total cause of this increase. Let him not stand there and try to disguise the real issue. I will bet the honourable member for Nhulunbuy has done absolutely nothing about making representations to the Australian Labor government which is the true cause of this impost on Northern Territorians.

Power Charges in Nhulunbuy

Mr LEO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In an attempt to extract an answer from the minister, I will repeat my question. Can he confirm a statement made by the Chief Minister in this Assembly in February 1981 that power charges in Nhulunbuy had been increased by 17% to comply with the requirements of the Electricity Commission Act which specified that there be a standard charge for power throughout the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The answer to the question is, as I have already indicated, that I cannot. The fact remains, Mr Speaker, that, even if that was the case, there is nothing the Northern Territory Electricity Commission can do to prevent the 10% increase in Nhulunbuy imposed as a result of the Australian Labor Party government in Canberra. While I am on my feet, I point out that that is clearly demonstrated by the absolute compulsion placed on the Northern Territory Electricity Commission to increase its charges by at least 6.2% from 1 January this year for the very same reason.

Doctor for Jabiru

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

Has the position of a permanent doctor for Jabiru yet been filled?

ANSWER

Realising that the honourable member would ask me a question regarding the doctor for Jabiru, I asked the department to prepare a brief. I advise the honourable member that the Department of Health has placed advertisements in various newspapers and journals: the Weekend Australian, the Medical Journal of Australia, Lancet, the British Medical Journal, the New Zealand Medical Journal and the Hong Kong Medical Journal. The advertisement called for expressions of interest from doctors interested in establishing a private practice in Jabiru. It offered a package of assistance with the establishment and the initial operation of service. I understand, at the moment, that there has been no response to those advertisements but a doctor has been appointed temporarily to work in Jabiru until a decision is taken to appoint a permanent person to that position once the expressions of interest are received.

Dr Thorn is still providing a normal medical officer service at Jabiru and

his term is due to expire in February 1984. Consequently, yesterday, I was discussing this particular problem with a resident of Jabiru who informs me that another doctor is in the area and has been working quite well. I am concerned that the Department of Health, at this stage, has not made any permanent arrangement to provide the service after January 1984. I intend taking that up with the Secretary of the Department of Health to discuss the problem that he may be having in appointing somebody after January 1984. In the next couple of weeks, it is my intention to visit the Jabiru area and talk to the people concerned.

Marina for Frances Bay or Doctor's Gully

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for LANDS

Is he aware of any firm proposal, including sketch plans, for the establishment of a marina in either the Frances Bay or Doctor's Gully area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of any proposal whatsoever for Doctor's Gully other than fish feeding. As for Frances Bay, the honourable Minister for Transport and Works could better answer this question, but I have taken a bit of interest in it. The Northern Territory government is proposing to establish fore and aft moorings at Frances Bay. It will not quite be a marina in terms of what you would expect in Sydney. It will not be like some of those marinas on the north shore in Sydney, but at least there will be access for people wanting to get to the boats. Provision is being made for the reclamation of some land, an access way and some sort of little wharf. Piles will be put in. At least, I think that this is the case. There was some ingenious device shown to us some time ago. It was a series of chains that held the boats in place. It looked pretty complicated. I think they have gone back to piles. I hope that these piles will be put in place in the near future, within the next 6 months or so. I believe it will increase substantially the availability of Frances Bay for yacht mooring. It should enable a considerably greater number of yachts to moor there.

Further up in Frances Bay, there is a proposal for Sadgroves Creek. On a technicality, I really need not have mentioned it because I was asked about Doctor's Gully and Frances Bay. For Sadgroves Creek, there is a feasibility study being conducted by a firm of civil engineers as to whether there could be a marina combined with some sort of residential land subdivision. That has a long way to go yet. I would not want to excite anyone about it because I would rate its chances of getting off the ground at this stage as maybe 1 in 4. So many of these things come forward. People accost you on planes with sketches of proposed marinas and subdivisions for Darwin, and in airport waiting rooms. When you are walking down the street to Charlie's, they sidle up to you with a set of plans and so on. Only 1 in 20 of these things ever gets off the ground. Maybe the honourable Minister for Transport and Works might like to give us a better run down in the adjournment debate this afternoon of the provision of piles. We are going to insert piles, rather than operate for their removal, in Frances Bay.

Garbage Collection

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has the government been approached by the Darwin City Council with a request to amend the Local Government Act to enable more than one garbage collector to collect garbage within the municipal boundaries?

ANSWER

If there has been an approach by the Darwin City Council, it has not come to my notice. It may have been made at officer level through the Local Government Division of the Department of Community Development. I am happy to get that information for the honourable member. If there is any advice on such a proposal, I will let him know the details of it.

Golden Perch at Koolpinyah Station

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Some time ago, Mr Lawrence Ah Toy imported a considerable quantity of fish, commonly known as yellowbelly, into the Territory. They were to be kept in ponds for commercial purposes. At that time, he had a fish expert, Mr Chan Lee, working for him. He is no longer in his employ. As the yellowbelly are a voracious fish, known to eradicate indigenous fish if released in a waterhole, is it a fact that these fish have been released in creeks and waterholes in the vicinity of Koolpinyah Station?

ANSWER

I can only promise the honourable member that the matter he raises is one of concern to me. I will get him the information he is seeking later in the day. I would be extremely concerned to hear that a species such as the yellowbelly now has access to the Northern Territory's waterways. In fact, I will be surprised if it has. I will be very concerned if it has. Something will have to be done about it.

Mt Wells Battery

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

When the Mt Wells Battery was sold, the tender price was \$300 000. Can he confirm whether the successful purchaser, Jingellic Minerals (NT), has yet paid the full tender price?

ANSWER

The answer is no. It is a particularly disappointing and miserable performance on behalf of Jingellic as a company. One can only note with disappointment that a company such as Jingellic can enter into a contract like that with the Northern Territory government, pay a 10% deposit and then fail in the remainder of its obligations to government. When you look at Jingellic's annual report, Mr Speaker, you will note a multi-million sum - I do not recall the exact amount - for which it purchased a share in a gold mine. It seems that it can expand its commercial activities in Western Australia but not honour its contracts with the Northern Territory in relation to the battery. I can assure honourable members and Jingellic that I would have cancelled the contract forthwith or alternatively taken action to ensure specific performance of that contract long ago had there been any prospect at that time of anyone else being able to buy and operate the battery, including the government itself. The position is the result of the world tin market. The quota system which has been applied upon indigenous tin mining in Australia has made it impossible for the battery to operate as a tin battery. Currently, we are negotiating with another party, who is well known in mining circles in the Northern Territory, to take over the operation of the battery. That person is negotiating with Jingellic in the hope that the matter can be resolved. Mr Speaker, the answer to the question



is no. To say that I am disappointed and annoyed would be understating the position.

Female Prisoners

Ms LAWRIE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The honourable minister will be aware that alternative arrangements are made for long-term, male prisoners classified as a low security risk. Normally, this involves transfer to the Gunn Point Prison Farm. When will alternative arrangements be made similarly for low-risk, long-term female prisoners who at the moment have no option?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member's concern is noted. I regret that I have not responded to her on this matter earlier. There was a proposition put forward some time ago about the possibility of using Gunn Point Prison Farm. It did not receive a great deal of favour at the time for various reasons but I would undertake to take the matter up again with the prison authorities and see what arrangements they are making. I do accept that the premise that long-term women prisoners who are not a security risk ought to have an alternative environment during their period of rehabilitation.

Mt Wells Battery

ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr ROBERTSON (Mines and Energy)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I would like to add to my answer in relation to Mt Wells Battery purchase. I recall now that the figure was not in the millions but was about \$800 000, if I recall correctly. The exact amount paid by Jingellic to date is \$28 500 of an amount of \$363 750.

Seminars on Criminal Code for Aboriginal Communities

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Will the government provide information seminars on the Criminal Code in Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that matter was canvassed at the seminar held in Darwin last Saturday. It is amazing that the government basically has to do the job that the Aboriginal Legal Aid Service is paid for. It staggers me that representatives of the Aboriginal Legal Aid Service could stand up in a forum like that, purporting to represent the interest of Aboriginal people and the law - that is what their sole function is and it is of course one of the functions of the Northern Territory government - and say that the Aboriginal communities have never in any way been consulted about the Criminal Code. I believe it is a dereliction of duty of those legal officers.

The Aboriginal Legal Aid Service continues to be completely negligent in its duty. By the very nature of the request from the Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, it has indicated that it will continue to be negligent in its duty because it really indicated that it was not going to take the information to Aboriginal communities which it regularly visits and represents. Seeing that it did not intend to do it, then it was left to the government to do it. So the answer to

the question is yes. Where and when reasonably required, this will be done. It will be done now at double the taxpayers' expense because it should have been done by that service ages ago.

Use of Manton Dam for Recreational Purposes

Mr LEO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Have there been recent studies into the possible use of Manton Dam for recreational purposes? If so, has the government considered these studies and is it looking at changing its present policy on such use?

ANSWER

Ongoing studies have been undertaken into the use of Manton Dam for a number of years. Recreational activity has been prevented at the dam by virtue of public health requirements in respect of the water. At this stage, I would need to research the matter to see where we are at present. I will do that and report to the honourable member.

Bindi Centre

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

What action is proposed regarding the night-time care of young people with psychiatric problems who fit in with the Bindi Centre day program but who are considered to be a danger to control at night in the Bindi Centre?

ANSWER

There is no easy answer to this particular question. The Bindi Centre staff and the Department of Health are aware of this problem. They have discussed it on a number of occasions. I am hopeful a proposal will be put to me for consideration in the very near future. The young people accommodated at Bindi Centre are retarded. The psychiatric problems result from their mental and physical condition. The 3 young children in particular have caused problems. They have seen the Department of Health psychiatrists. There is really very little they can do. Ward 1 of the Alice Springs Hospital at this particular time is not an appropriate place for them because their problems are not amenable to psychiatric treatment. As I said, it is not an easy one. Hopefully, after the recent discussions between the Health Department and Bindi Centre people, the problem may be solved.

Aboriginal Legal Aid Service

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Could he advise whether it is the policy of his government, as I am sure it is, that a reasonable obligation does exist on the government to provide public information on the government's own legislation? Could he confirm that he knows, as the honourable Attorney-General would know, that both Aboriginal Legal Aid Services have been close to the point of bankruptcy and are simply conducting their major work, which is defending their clients in court? On at least 2 occasions in the last 12 months, they have needed additional funding to do that work alone. Could he explain how the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services were supposed to do this ages ago when the act was only assented to a fortnight ago?

ANSWER

It is a bit disappointing this morning that the standard of questions is perhaps not as high as it might be. I hark back to the exercise where this Assembly passed the liquor legislation. At that time, the cooperation of the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services in disseminating information about the draft liquor legislation was virtually taken for granted by the government. The Aboriginal Legal Aid Services did, at that time, perform a very useful task in explaining the proposed legislation and participating in meetings in many communities as to the effect of the legislation on the people in those communities. Whilst I might concede that the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services say that they need more funds, there has been dispute about why they need the funds. For instance, the local Northern Territory bar has said that, if the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services - definitely the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, because I am not quite certain in relation to the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service - used local barristers instead of always bringing up southern counsel, then considerable savings would be made. So it could be that some of their financial problems are of their own making.

But I concede, as did the honourable Attorney-General, that the government has a role in information promulgation. We do not shrink from undertaking that task. I am just as surprised as he was to find that, in the period that the code has been under discussion, at no time when lawyers from the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services have visited communities have they taken the opportunity to discuss aspects that they say concern them. After all, they say these aspects concern them. But they have not concerned them enough to discuss it once with the people whom they are supposed to represent. Their charter is not simply that of a solicitor to take a client into the court and defend him. They have a much wider charter than that. I do not think that they have carried out the terms of their charter. I fully support my colleague in what he said. The Aboriginal Legal Aid Services should have been consulting with their potential clients because, whilst they certainly have a wide brief in terms of acting as it were without instructions, who are they representing?

It has become very clear from what has been said this morning that the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services have been representing the views of no one but some of the lawyers. I know they do not represent all the views of all the lawyers in their employ. A handful of lawyers in the employ of the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services have very strong views about different aspects of the code, views that, in most cases, are legally incorrect. In one or two cases only, these are views of difference in philosophy. It is quite obvious that this small coterie of lawyers in the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services have embarked on an ego trip quite at their own discretion and without any reference to the people whom they are supposed to be acting for. If they have the time to go around giving plenty of interviews to journalists and to rush down to consult with Victorian barristers, I wonder why they do not have money. I know that they have been doing that because it has been in the papers.

A gentleman who is in the employ of the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service was said to be closeted with some Victorian barrister. Not only that, he was closeted for the weekend with the Australian Attorney-General. It was reported in one of the newspapers, either here or nationally that this gentleman, whose name I just cannot remember - although he has been shouting a fair bit lately - was spending the weekend with Senator Evans. Unfortunately, Senator Evans cannot find the time, despite my invitations, to see Mr Des Sturgess, who formulated in great part the Criminal Code, but had to send a representative to talk to him. It is a great shame that the Australian Attorney-General does not want to speak to the 'horse's mouth' but is quite

prepared to talk to these people who, it has now been proven, have gravely misconceived ideas about the Criminal Code.

We will be taking affirmative and positive action to ensure that not only Aboriginal people but the wider public of the Northern Territory are properly informed in relation to the Criminal Code, as best one can deal with such a massive subject. Honourable members can look forward to the commencement of a widespread publicity campaign, reaching into all corners of the community, in the very near future.

#### Consumer Affairs Reports

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Consumer Affairs Act requires the Commissioner of Consumer Affairs to present an annual report to the Assembly. Why has the report not been presented for 1981 and when will the reports for the years 1981-82 and 1982-83 be presented to the Assembly?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to talk about 1980-81 and 1981-82. I can say that the report to come before the Assembly for this year is on my desk and will be presented to Cabinet before it is presented to the Assembly in the next sittings. On the advice of the honourable member, I will endeavour to table the earlier 2 reports at the same time.

#### Family Law Court

Ms LAWRIE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

He will recall that, on Thursday 24 March, I drew his attention to the shortcomings and lack of privacy presently faced by people attending the Family Law Court in Darwin. In his considered reply, he acknowledged that there were deficiencies and stated that he would seek advice from court staff and the appropriate officials. Could he now advise the results of those consultations and any action which is likely to ensue?

ANSWER

I can only express to the honourable member my heartfelt penitence at my omission. I have not followed the matter up. I do know that there was a call for information from the various sections of the Department of Law involved in this. I apologise to the honourable member. I will make sure the information is obtained and provided to her without further delay.

#### ALP Submission to Freight Inquiry

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is the minister aware of the content of the Labor Party submission to the recent freight inquiry and, if so, is he able to inform this Assembly if that submission has thrown any light on the freight problems being experienced by Territorians?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the level of questioning has just improved. I read with interest

some weeks ago the submission put forward to the freight inquiry committee by the member for Millner on behalf of the Labor Party. It was one of those documents that would have been very easy to put down at any moment because it had very little in it. I did not do anything or say anything about it because of the nature and the weakness of the document. However, last night, the honourable member took up the time of the Assembly to tell us what a jolly good job he had done in preparing the report to the freight inquiry and how his report would assist the consumers of the Northern Territory.

Ms D'ROZARIO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! This Assembly has constituted an inquiry to examine the matter and the minister is reflecting upon the contents of a submission made to it. It is properly the privilege or right of the inquiry to perform that task.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, the question was phrased: 'Can the minister shed any light on whether the Labor Party's submission assists in the freight problems of the Northern Territory'. Mr Speaker, that is clearly a question seeking an opinion of the minister - a political opinion on a political document. It is completely out of order. Questions must seek information.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, the document is a public document and I am about to provide information if honourable members can restrain themselves for half a moment while I do it. I can understand the situation whereby the honourable members opposite do not want the document spoken about any further.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, I would not have raised the matter of the document myself but, in view of the fact that the member for Millner went to great lengths last night to tell us what a fantastic document it was, I thought I should explode the myth about the great things that the honourable member is doing on our behalf before the freight inquiry. I would like to read about 5 paragraphs from this document. If honourable members will listen to the words carefully, they will understand my concern about how the situation is being represented by the honourable member.

On page 5: 'It is recommended that this inquiry investigate the channels of distribution through which these items are forwarded to the end user in order that any deficiencies present might be exposed, overcome or minimised'. A little further on, it says: 'Any inquiry into freight costs is faced with the task of both segmenting the overall cost structure of goods sold in the marketplace and quantifying these costs on a unit basis'. There are 30 pages of these miscellaneous quotes from high school primers on economics. On another page, we read: 'However, in the absence of any economies of scale and at normal profit levels, a firm reducing its freight rates may increase its volume of trade but would not reduce its per unit cost hence reducing profitability'. It goes on to say: 'There has also been a trend within the transport industry to increase profit performance by differentiating services and then increasing freight rate scales, the argument being that the consumer is prepared to pay a premium for higher-priced services'.

When one starts to analyse all that and read it carefully ...

Ms D'ROZARIO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! This inquiry has not been set up by the minister but by this Assembly. It is not the function of the minister to comment on the evidence that is placed before this inquiry. If he wished to be a member of the inquiry, he should have appointed himself to it. The minister is not just giving information from the submission. He is giving

opinions on the submission as well.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, I can understand why the honourable member would not want a word of this spoken about in the community because, if the average Darwin citizen read that, he would not believe it because no one would understand it anyway.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr TUXWORTH: I understand the honourable member's frustration and I will try to be brief for her benefit.

Mr B. Collins: It will be the first time in history.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, as the honourable member says, there is a first time in history and I am happy to accommodate him on this occasion.

Mr Speaker, this submission is not about freight in the Northern Territory; it is a collection of paragraphs taken out of high school textbooks. The honourable member for Milner is entitled to his opinion that this is a great submission. I am about to point out that it is not a submission but a series of instructions to the inquiry. It does not outline any facts or problems, present any options or discuss any of the realities of the Northern Territory freight system in any way at all. Nowhere in this submission is anything mentioned but roads. There is no mention of shipping. Given the honourable member's connection with the waterfront ...

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! This performance is turning the Assembly's freight inquiry into a total fiasco. Apart from that, the minister himself has indicated by his statement that it is not a submission, but a collection of this, that and the other. He is offering political opinions on the document. That is clearly in contravention of the Standing Order 93 which says that answers shall be relevant and opinions cannot be sought. Mr Speaker, the question is completely out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, there is no point of order. My adviser has pointed out that, while opinions may not be sought, that does not prevent the honourable minister giving an opinion.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I have no argument with that proposition. The point of order is not against the answer but against the original question. I suggest that the wording, which will be reported in Hansard tomorrow, clearly sought an opinion from the minister. I am not objecting to the answer but to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I wish to move a dissent from your ruling on this matter.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, I must say that ...

Ms D'ROZARIO: A point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Ms D'ROZARIO: Mr Speaker, there is a motion of dissent before you.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, perhaps we could seek a Hansard proof of the actual question.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, the sittings will be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

Sittings suspended.

Mr Speaker MacFarlane resumed the Chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have checked with the extremely efficient Hansard we have here. The question was: 'Is the minister aware of the content of the Labor Party submission to the recent freight inquiry and, if so, is he able to inform this Assembly if that submission has thrown any light on the freight problems being experienced by Territorians?'

I stick by my ruling. In view of the question asked and the verification of that by Hansard, I request the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw his dissent motion.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, in view of the discussion that was held outside the Chamber and the agreement that was reached and on the understanding that the honourable the minister will withdraw, I will withdraw. If he is satisfied that his statement has been sufficient, I am quite happy to withdraw, and I will withdraw, my motion of dissent.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I am not happy with that. The question is allowable.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, the statement I made was unconditional. I said, in closing: 'I will withdraw my motion of dissent' - unequivocally, I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, I have completed my answer to the question.

Mr ROBERTSON: Mr Speaker, could I seek leave of the Assembly to make a gratuitous comment on how I see procedure in this matter?

Members: No!

Mr ROBERTSON: All right.

#### Poisons and Dangerous Drugs Act

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is he aware of concern from the medical profession about practical problems relating to the Poisons and Dangerous Drugs Act, particularly the need for written permission before administering one-dose schedule-A drugs in maternity cases and also relating to repeat prescriptions? If so, will he undertake to investigate these claims and seek to remedy them if possible?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are problems relating to the Poisons and Dangerous Drugs Act. In fact, I have received a submission from the Pharmaceutical Association of the hospital and I will undertake to investigate the matter.



Aboriginal -  
    associations, user-pays principle 346  
    communities, employment studies 295  
    Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 287  
    Legal Aid Service 379  
Aborigines, federal funds 349  
Accommodation funding for students from isolated areas 368  
ADMA, transfer of stocks of maize 365  
Admiralty House 305, 345, 358  
Alice Springs -  
    high-rise building 323  
    power failures 373  
    reconstruction of Stuart Highway 356  
    sports stadiums, funding 308  
    subdivisions 338  
Ammaroo School 324  
Apprentices 287  
Asbestos -  
    for Sanderson High School pipes 333  
    insulation replacement in NT powerhouses 321  
Ayers Rock tragedy 313, 317, 319  
Berrimah police complex 333  
Bindi Centre 379  
Blind and visually-impaired people, qualified teachers for 359  
Cane toads 334  
Casuarina development site 337  
Central Australia, horticultural development 360  
Chief Minister's future intentions 312  
Chlorination of sewage 370  
Community employment program 332  
Community Welfare and Juvenile Justice Bills 303  
Consultative committee on children's services 365  
Consumer Affairs reports 381  
Corkwood Bore abattoir 295  
Criminal Code, seminar 336, 339, 340  
Crop contract scheme 351  
Darwin -  
    Bus Service 366  
    performing arts centre 363  
    Port Authority Bill 329, 369  
Department of Mines and Energy staff, Litchfield Corporation Ltd 349, 350, 356, 358, 361  
Disabled -  
    employees, government departments \*284, \*285, \*286  
    persons 335  
Door-to-door salesman 343  
Drinking law, 2 km 288  
Electoral rolls 344  
Electricity -  
    charges 337  
    meters, cost of verification 352  
    outback communities \*283  
    subsidy \*283  
Family Law Court 381  
Federal member's assertions on NT funding 364  
Female prisoners 378  
Firearms licences for private security guards 307  
Fish River Station, acquisition \*284, 325, 327

INDEX TO QUESTIONS  
11 October - 20 October 1983

---

Freight inquiry, ALP submission 381  
Garbage collection, Darwin 376  
Gas pipeline construction, moneys owed 302, 322, 324  
Giles House 369  
Golden perch at Koolpinyah Station 377  
Grants-in-aid 289  
Groote Eylandt lock-up 373  
Heavitree Gap area, erosion hazard 367  
Horse slaughtering \*284  
Housing Commission -  
    dwellings with electric hot water systems 297  
    flats 360  
    interest rates on loans 325  
Howard Springs Reserve 341  
Humpty Doo High School 338  
Interstate Constructions Pty Ltd 302, 322, 324  
Jabiru -  
    doctor 375  
    local government 366  
Kargaru bush camp, lease 287  
Katherine, gravel for Mainoru Road 357  
Land-backed wharf 368  
Lyons Cottage 342, 358  
Manton Dam, use for recreational purposes 379  
Marina for Frances Bay or Doctor's Gulley 376  
Meat processing, hygiene regulations \*284  
Minister for Transport and Works, ministerial officer in Katherine 315, 316  
Moudal Consultants, NTDC loan 296  
Mosquito-borne diseases, control 337  
Mt Wells battery \*283, 377, 378  
Myilly Point, development 299, 301, 331  
Nabalco, rigging and scaffolding safety procedures 363  
National Companies and Securities Scheme \*283  
Ngarinman Aboriginal lease application 321  
Nhulunbuy -  
    electricity tariffs 362, 374, 375  
    school buildings 335  
Northern Land Council -  
    chairmanship 314, 315  
    legal advisers 288  
NTEC, funds 328  
Nursing sisters for high schools 364  
Oolloo pastoral lease valuation 305  
Pastoral leases, possible government acquisition for national parks 306, 308, 347  
Payroll tax, collection 336  
Perpetual pastoral leases 297  
Pine Creek water supply 314  
Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act 306  
Point Stuart estate, NTDC loan 296  
Poisons and Dangerous Drugs Act 384  
Power-station, Darwin \*283  
Public holiday for Australia II's victory 318  
Public Service Commissioner 357  
Railway electrification \*283  
Rolls for new electorates 328  
Rum Jungle rehabilitation 344  
Rural Adjustment Scheme 362  
Sale of food from vehicles 344

INDEX TO QUESTIONS  
11 October - 20 October 1983

---

Schools, funding 359  
Security in NT prisons 320  
Small businesses, government assistance 328  
Souery, Edward, NTDC loan 296  
Subsidies for freighting liquor to NT 317  
Sulphur, stockpiling in rural area 310  
Suspension of Standing Orders, censure of minister 354  
Teacher -  
    positions in NT 316, 329  
    ratio to pupils in schools 353  
Teachers Federation strike call 370  
Tenancy Act 372  
Tennant Creek meatworks 297  
Terri Hatcheries and Fish Farms Pty Ltd, NTDC loan 310, 311, 329  
Territory lottery 331  
Timber Creek -  
    land claim 288  
    school 325  
Timorese people 345  
Tourist vehicles 313  
Townsville Trader, passenger service 339  
Traffic flow in inner-city area 368  
Trustee Executor and Agency Company 327  
Upper Daly River Land Claim 352  
Vocational Training Commission, staffing review 295  
Water supply agreements with rural residents 362