
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.

4 JUNE 1985

10. Freight and Related Costs Inquiry

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

20 AUGUST 1985

19. Court Proceedings - Northern Territory Government

Mr B. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

1. Since self-government, in what proceedings has the Northern Territory government been involved before either the High Court or the Federal Court?
2. In respect of each proceedings, what was the cost to the government?

18 MARCH 1986

53. Education Programs - NTD Channel 8

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What is the cost to the Northern Territory government of the education programs shown by NTD Channel 8 in the last school semester, 1985?

61. Tourist Commission - Payroll Preparation

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRY and SMALL BUSINESS and TOURISM

1. Which company has the contract for payroll preparation and processing for the Tourist Commission?
2. What is the period of the contract?

3. Were expressions of interest or tenders called before this contract was awarded?

64. Aboriginal Community Funding

Mr EDE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What amounts were provided for Town Management Public Utilities (TMPU) funding of each Aboriginal community for 1984-85?
2. What amounts were specifically allocated for fuel costs for electricity generation on each Aboriginal community for 1984-85?
3. What amounts were provided for TMPU funding to each community for 1985-86?
4. How much have the amounts of the allocations in 3 above been reduced pursuant to the new policy of 'user pays' for essential services?

**65. Liquor - Revenue,
Rehabilitation and Preventative Programs**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for INDUSTRY and SMALL BUSINESS and TOURISM

1. What annual income does the Liquor Commission of the Northern Territory generate?
2. How much does the Northern Territory government spend on:
 - (a) rehabilitation programs for alcoholics; and
 - (b) preventative programs in relation to alcohol use?

66. Sporting Bodies - Grants

Mr EDE to MINISTER for YOUTH, SPORT, RECREATION and
ETHNIC AFFAIRS

What are the specific details of approved grants to sporting organisations and associations throughout the Northern Territory for 1984-85 and for 1985-86, with particular reference to:

- (a) the name of each organisation or association;
- (b) their base centre and the region they cover;
- (c) the amount granted; and
- (d) purpose of grant?

FROM 20 AUGUST 1985

14. Overseas Visits by Office-holders

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Since 1 January 1984, how many trips, financed by the government, have been taken outside Australia by office-holding members of the Legislative Assembly?
2. In respect of each of those trips - (a) which member was involved; (b) by whom was the member accompanied; (c) when and where did the member go; and (d) what was the total cost of the trip to the government?
3. In respect of each of the financial years 1982-83, 1983-84 and 1984-85, what amounts were paid out to each office-holding member of the Assembly for travelling allowance including full details covering total payouts and any subsequent reimbursements from members?

ANSWER

See following 5 pages.

**ANSWERS TO PARTS 1 AND 2
JANUARY 1984 TO SEPTEMBER 1985**

MEMBER	ACCOMPANIED BY	PURPOSE	DATES	DESTINATION	COSTING \$
Hon. I.L. Tuxworth	Ms Cheryl Burnett (ministerial officer)	Inspection of gas conversion	8/4/84 TO 11/4/84	Auckland, New Plymouth, New Zealand	4662
Hon. D.W. Manzie	Mrs Manzie and Ms Robyn Burns (ministerial officer)	Local Government Ministers Conference	17/4/84 TO 19/4/84	Rotorua, New Zealand	6095
Hon. I.L. Tuxworth	Mr John Tarca (ministerial officer)	Promotion of gas pipeline	16/5/84 TO 21/5/84	Singapore, Paris, Munich, Brussels	18 783
Hon. N.M. Dondas	Mr Kelvin Rae, Mr Peter Murphy (ministerial officers) Mr Steve Hatton MLA	Assess future potential development and labour relations	29/5/84 TO 2/6/84	Singapore, Brunei, Christmas Island	10 106
Hon. N.M. Dondas	Dr Fleming, Mrs Fleming and Mr Kelvin Rae (ministerial officer)	Discussions on matters relating to health and also to attend the commissioning ceremony of the HMAS Darwin	27/6/84 TO 31/7/84	Greece, Cyprus, United States, Hong Kong, Singapore	33 025
Mrs Padgham-Purich	Mr Purich (spouse)	Australian Environmental Council	2/7/84 TO 8/7/84	Wellington, Mt Cook, Christchurch	3158

**ANSWERS TO PARTS 1 AND 2
JANUARY 1984 TO SEPTEMBER 1985**

MEMBER	ACCOMPANIED BY	PURPOSE	DATES	DESTINATION	COSTING \$
Hon. I.L. Tuxworth	Mr Syd Saville, Mr Barry Coulter, Mr John Hickman, Mr Dick Slacksmith, Mr Tony Horgan, Mr Erick Morgaard, Mr Graeme Bevis, (ministerial officer)	Aquaculture industry	4/7/84 TO 10/7/84	Thailand	11 910
Hon. I.L. Tuxworth	Mr McHenry, Mr Ryan, Mr Flannery (ministerial officer)	Official ministerial business	7/1/85 TO 10/1/85	Singapore	10 012
Hon. T. Harris	Mrs Harris and daughter	Ministers Conference	19/1/85 TO 30/1/85	Christchurch, Queenstown, Auckland NZ	5148
Hon. I.L. Tuxworth	Mr Syd Saville and Mrs Saville, Mrs Tuxworth	Official ministerial business	30/1/85 TO 5/2/85	Singapore (via Perth), Kota Kinabalu	13 775
Hon. M.B. Perron	Mr N. Hawthorne (ministerial officer)	Attending the 14th Australian Minerals and Energy Council Conference	12/3/85 TO 16/3/85	Wellington, New Zealand	5435

**ANSWERS TO PARTS 1 AND 2
JANUARY 1984 TO SEPTEMBER 1985**

MEMBER	ACCOMPANIED BY	PURPOSE	DATES	DESTINATION	COSTING \$
Hon. N.M. Dondas	Mr Ian McIntosh (Press officer)	Discussions with Japanese officials on tourism	13/3/85 TO 29/3/85	Singapore, Tokyo, Hong Kong	16 667
Hon. B.F. Coulter	-	Official ministerial business	16/3/85 TO 24/3/85	Vancouver, Toronto, Seattle, Los Angeles	10 707
Hon. S.P. Hatton	Mr Brian Daly (ministerial officer)	Investigate overseas fisheries	24/4/85 TO 7/5/85	Singapore, Tokyo, Anchorage, Aalborg, London, San Francisco San Diego	27 429
Hon. I.L. Tuxworth	Hon. M. Perron, Mr M. Lauer, Mr Lex Silvester, Mr Adam Gordon and Mr John Tarca (ministerial officer)	Discussions on off-shore gas matters	8/5/85 TO 14/5/85	Korea, Japan	21 345
Hon. N.M. Dondas	Mr Ray McHenry, Mr Kelvin Rae (ministerial officer)	Investigate trade development zones	15/5/85 TO	South east Asia, UK, USA	27 508

**ANSWERS TO PARTS 1 AND 2
JANUARY 1984 TO SEPTEMBER 1985**

MEMBER	ACCOMPANIED BY	PURPOSE	DATES	DESTINATION	COSTING \$
Hon. M.B. Perron	Mr N. Hawthorne (ministerial officer)	Official ministerial business	15/9/85 TO 19/9/85	Hong Kong, Seoul	3654 (paid to date)
Mr. Bob Collins	-	Visit America to hold discussions on Free Trade Zones and inspect casinos and to Isle of Man for CPA Conference. To Denmark to attend a fishing conference.	2/9/84 TO 9/10/84	USA, London, Isle of Man, Denmark	12 236
Mr. Bob Collins	-	Official business	29/6/85 TO 6/7/95	Nandi, Suva	2115

The following qualifications to answers for parts 2(b) and 2(d) should be noted:

1. The names listed as accompanying the members are taken directly from departmental records. It may be that others have accompanied the members, however, if they are not included in our records or paid for by this department, they will not be on the attached tables.
2. The majority of travel expenditure within this department, other than air fares, is met by way of American Express corporate credit cards. Because of this system, it is not always possible or practical to allocate travel expenditure to a specific trip.

ANSWERS TO PART 3

**AMOUNTS PAID OUT TO EACH OFFICE-HOLDING MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY
FOR TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE INCLUDING FULL DETAILS COVERING TOTAL
PAYOUTS AND ANY SUBSEQUENT REIMBURSEMENTS FROM MEMBERS**

OFFICE-HOLDING MEMBER	1982-83 \$	1983-84 \$	1984-85 \$	TOTAL \$
Hon. I. Tuxworth	500	300	1110	1910
Hon. N. Dondas	2009	2000	2430	6439
Hon. M. Perron	-	-	550	550
Hon. J. Robertson	300	-	-	300
Hon. T. Harris	-	-	967	967
Hon. D. Manzie	-	300	-	300
Hon. S. Hatton	-	-	750	750
Hon. B. Coulter	-	-	1090	1090
Hon. P. Everingham	1975	-	-	1975
Hon. R. Steele	650	-	-	650
Hon. N. Padgham-Purich	-	-	242	242
Mr. B. Collins	Nil	Nil	3900	3900
TOTAL	5434	2600	11 039	19 073

The above table lists details of the amounts of overseas travelling allowances and reimbursements paid to each of the office-holding members of the Assembly for the financial years 1982-83, 1983-84 and 1984-85.

The majority of travel expenditure within this department is met by way of American Express corporate credit cards and not cash travelling allowance payments.

FROM 12 NOVEMBER 1985

28. Caravan Park Surveys

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HOUSING

1. Does the Northern Territory Housing Commission or any other Northern Territory government department or authority survey caravan parks to determine - (a) rates charged for vans and for sites; (b) whether residents are long term tenants or tourists; (c) if caravan dwellers live in them by choice or because they are unable to obtain permanent housing; and (d) the proportion of caravan park dwellers listed with the Northern Territory Housing Commission?
2. If such surveys are carried out, will the minister table - (a) the raw data; and (b) reports thereon?

ANSWER

1. (a) Yes. The NT Tourist Commission collects this information biannually.
(b) Yes. Information on caravan sites occupied by permanent residents was collected in a survey on behalf of the NT Tourist Commission conducted in 1981.
c) No.
(d) No.
2. (a) No. The raw data was for the large part collected on the basis that it would remain confidential. It would therefore be inappropriate for the material to be tabled in the Assembly.
(b) A copy of such a report has been provided to the honourable member and copies are available upon request from the Legislative Assembly Inquiries office.

31. Making of Publications

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many sets of material including, (a) the Chief Minister's budget speech, (b) statement on the establishment of a university, (c) Northern Territory submission on the review of domestic aviation, (d) statement on the Alice Springs to Darwin railway; (e) statement on government commitment to tourist development projects; and (f) statement on constitutional development, were sent out by the Chief Minister in late August and early September?

2. How much did it cost to prepare, produce and mail out this material?

ANSWER

1. 1952 sets of material, i.e. budget speech and ministerial statements, were circulated.
2. The cost of reproduction and postage of the material was \$11 191.00.

32. Peko Goldmine

Mr EDE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. At the Peko Wallsend Goldmine at Warrego during the period from October 1981 to June 1985 -
 - a. what tests for mercury levels in blood, urine or the atmosphere have been carried out by government instrumentalities on people who are, or have been, working in the Warrego gold rooms or the gold room, apart from those tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 28 August 1985;
 - b. what were the results of these tests; and
 - c. when were the results of those tests supplied to the Department of Mines and Energy and what action did the department take as a result?
2. Tests carried out by the Department of Mines and Energy on 29 October 1981 showed mercury vapour levels varying between 3 and 11 times those set by the National Health and Medical Research Centre. Were any further tests, comparable with the National Health and Medical Research Centre Threshold Limit Values carried out -
 - a. when the furnace was operating between 29 October 1981 and September 1984; and if so
 - b. what were the results of those tests?
3. Were any tests carried out by Peko Wallsend or any other non government instrumentalities between October 1981 and July 1985 -
 - a. supplied to the Department of Mines and Energy; and, if so,
 - b. when were the tests carried out; and
 - c. what were the results?

4. The District Inspector at Tennant Creek was transferred on 18 October 1981, 6 days after he had notified the Chief Government Mining Engineer of a suspected mercury poisoning case, why was he not replaced until May 1984?
5. Given that tests carried out by Department of Mines and Energy on 27 October 1984 produced results 3 to 6 times the NHRMC Threshold Limit Values -
 - a. were any further tests carried out between that date and 7 June 1985;
 - b. what were the tests;
 - c. when and what were the test results; and
 - d. if no tests were made, why?
6. Given the report by the Chief Occupational Hygienist in December 1982 stating that following a visit to Warrego, he 'rang the manager at Warrego at 1330 hours to inform him of the test results' and was informed that 'both men had been removed from the gold room', specifically, -
 - a. what tests were being referred to, when were they carried out and what were the results;
 - b. have either of the men been subsequently re-employed in the gold room and, if so, what special testing arrangements have been put in place to ensure their good health; and
 - c. what tests or inspections were carried out by the Department of Mines and Energy staff or government instrumentalities between the removal of these men from the gold room and late 1984?
7. Given that the December 1982 results led to the removal of 2 men from the gold room and that the correspondence and Mine Record Book show no specific reference to the gold room and mercury levels there from that date to July 1984, what action was taken by departmental officers in relation to mercury levels during that period?

ANSWER

1. Results of all mercury vapour in air samples collected by the Department of Mines and Energy were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 29 August, 1985. No tests were carried out by other government instrumentalities.

The Department of Mines and Energy has at no time collected biochemical samples (blood or urine) for an indication of exposure to occupational hazards. This requires specialised expertise, which the department does not possess. At any

time in the past when biochemical sampling has been indicated, the company has arranged for this to be carried out by a doctor or suitably qualified nursing sister.

2. The only samples collected by DME between 29 October 1981 and September 1984 were those the results of which were tabled on 28 August 1985. It was not recorded whether or not the furnace was operating during the periods of the tests.
3. The following tests are those carried out by Peko Wallsend between October 1981 and July 1985 on the date indicated.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>	<u>DATE NOTED</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Sampled	mg Hg/m ³	by DME (approx)	
10/7/82	air 0.002-0.03 *clothing 0.02-0.05	22/7/82	Instantaneous readings
22/7/82	air 0.03 *clothing 0.07	22/7/82	

The above results were noted in the weekly report by the mine manager in the mine record book. **

9/5/85	Below NH&MRC TLV limits	9/5/85	Mercury Sniffer Tests carried out by DME request. Witnessed by DME Officer.
24/7/85	**	20/8/85	Instantaneous readings
31/7/85	**	21/8/85	Instantaneous readings

Peko's consultants Kuttner Collins and Partners carried out a number of tests for mercury in air in late May 1985.

* This is a measure of vapour emanating from protective clothing (eg leather aprons) worn by employees during some operations.

** Copies are available upon request from the Legislative Assembly Inquiries office.

The department requested a copy of the consultants report on 30 July 1985 which was supplied on a confidential basis, hence results from this report are not supplied.

In addition, the results of Peko's routine monitoring programme for mercury in blood and mercury in urine carried out over the past 5 years were supplied to the department in August 1985 at the department's request. *Details of these results have been provided to the honourable member.

Examination of these results by DME technical staff indicates inconsistencies in both standards applied and in the units in which the results are expressed. Further work is being done in tracing these analyses back to the laboratories concerned, the results of which will not be available for some time.

It is, however, significant that a programme of testing employees for mercury in blood and mercury in urine carried out by Peko over a 4-week period in September 1985, under strictly controlled conditions showed that all employees tested were well below the recommended limits for both parameters.

* Copies are available upon request from the Legislative Assembly Inquiries office.

4. Background

The District Inspector referred to in this question was employed after an extensive recruitment campaign. This department could not find a Mining Engineer to fill the position and this person, on the basis of his practical experience, was appointed as a Senior Technical Officer, under the supervision of the Government Mining Engineer of Alice Springs.

When the District Inspector was transferred from Tennant Creek the Government Mining Engineer at Alice Springs conducted inspections in the Tennant Creek area.

From November 1981 occupational hygiene aspects of the gold room atmosphere and work place were inspected by the Chief Occupational Hygienist and his branch.

Details of action taken to replace the District Mines Inspector for Tennant Creek are as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>
18/12/81	Notification was given by the Chief Government Mining Engineer to the Director of Mines of an overseas application for a position in the department. He appeared suitable for Tennant Creek. The Director indicated an intention to advertise.
11/1/82	Request to Administration Officer from Chief Government Mining Engineer to advertise for the position of Mining Engineer 3 (Tennant Creek).

10/2/82	Position not advertised due to budget restraints.
13/3/82	Advertised throughout Australia (Weekend Australian, West Australian, Brisbane Courier Mail, Sydney Morning Herald, NT News).
26/4/82	3 applicants, all overseas, were assessed by Chief Government Mining Engineer.
15/10/82	Memo to Recruitment Officer to advertise position of Mining Engineer 3 (Tennant Creek) in weekend papers.
29-30/10/82	Position advertised.
4/11/82	Position advertised in Public Service Gazette. 10 applications were received, 3 from overseas.
22/11/82	Assessment of applicants by Chief Government Mining Engineer, 3 recommended for interview.
2/83	Interview carried out. Only suitable applicant would only accept position if in Alice Springs.
7/3/83	Offer of position, based in Alice Springs, sent to successful applicant.
8/4/83	Offer to appointment rejected by applicant.
5/8/83	File note advising position not to be advertised at this time.
4/10/83	Request to Recruitment Officer to advertise position of Mining Engineer 3 at Tennant Creek.
24/11/83	Position advertised in Public Service Gazette.
8/12/83	Request for approval to advertise vacancy in media. Justification for request read: 'Unlikely that suitably qualified applicant will be found from within the NTPS. The department has experienced extreme difficulty over the past 3 years in attracting suitably qualified experienced Mining Engineers'.
16/1/84	2 applicants interviewed for position.
19/1/84	Recommendation made.
23/1/84	Recommended applicant advised by phone that he was unavailable for position. A recommendation was made to interview another applicant.
27/1/84	Applicant interviewed and found unsuitable.
3/3/84	
28/2/84	Re-advertised in NT Public Service Gazette.
29/3/84	2 applicants were interviewed.
7/5/84	Offer of position sent to successful applicant.
28/5/84	District Mines Inspector commenced work.
12/6/84	Appointment notified in NT Public Service Gazette.

5. There is no record of the department carrying out any tests on 27 October 1984. They did however, carry out tests on 4 September 1984, from which the results were similar to those mentioned. As a result of these tests, certain

directions were given to the company regarding increased observance of personal hygiene rules, and the area inspected again on 12 October. Detailed answers are:

- (a) Yes. Further tests were carried out in May 1985 by the company at the request of the District Government Mining Engineer.
 - (b) Mercury sniffer tests.
 - (c) The tests were taken by the Peko Chief Chemist and were witnessed by the Government Mining Engineer who reported 'Readings did not exceed the NH&MRC TLV's'.
 - (d) Not applicable.
6. (a) Unfortunately owing to the typographical omission of a date from the document tabled on 28 August, 1985 in the Legislative Assembly, the above actions appeared to have taken place in December 1982. However, the paragraph as quoted above should have been headed with the date 'September 1984'. Therefore, the results of the sampling referred to were those of September 3-7, 1984 as detailed under the answer to question 2 tabled previously. A copy of the relevant page from the tabled document with the correct date has been provided to the honourable member.*
- (b) A copy of the file note referring to this occasion has also been provided.* Company reports that neither man has been re-employed in the gold room at Warrego.
 - (c) Tests were carried out as per papers tabled on 28 August 1984.

* Copies are available upon request from the Legislative Assembly Inquiries office.

7. As the visit from the Chief Occupational Hygienist took place in September 1984, (not December 1982) the question refers to the removal of 2 men from the gold room in September of that year after Department of Mines and Energy tests of the air had indicated possible exposure to elevated mercury levels. This inspection took place on 4 September, after which directives concerning improved hygiene observance were made.

The area was inspected again by District Mining Engineer on 12 October and he found 'General area appeared clean and house keeping good.'

The area was checked again by the District Mining Engineer, in company with the company's Chief Chemist, and tested on 9 May 1985. The results were below the NH&MRC TLV limits.

33. Myilly Point Housing

Mr. B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HOUSING

1. What are the policy details and arrangements for the allocation of public housing in the Myilly Point area?
2. In the Myilly Point area what are -
 - a. the number of Housing Commission houses in the area;
 - b. the names, positions and gradings of officers occupying these houses (if a constraint exists on releasing names and positions, a list of departments and gradings is requested);
 - c. the criteria for allocating these houses;
 - d. the levels of rent charged on each house; and
 - e. the changes that may have occurred in the allocation criteria since 1 January 1984?

ANSWER

1. Public housing allocations on Myilly Point are made as temporary housing on a short term caretaker tenancy basis.
2. a. There are 13 Housing Commission houses in the area. 5 of these dwellings will be purchased and removed by private contractors. 6 will be relocated to other Housing Commission properties and reused. The remaining 2 will be demolished on site. This work is scheduled for completion by the end of 1986.
- b. 5 houses are currently vacant. 8 houses are occupied by staff from the following departments:

Treasury	-	Executive E5
Community Development		Executive E4
		Executive E2
Law	-	Stipendiary Magistrate
Police	-	Police Sergeant Class 3
Health	-	Specialist (Anaesthetics)
	-	Social Worker Class 3
Chief Minister	-	Executive E6.

c. Allocations are made on the basis of short term caretaker tenancies. Prior to November 1984 public housing allocations on Myilly Point were restricted to eligible executives of E4 and above.

d. Rents vary according to the amenity of the dwelling. Fortnightly rent charged for each of the 8 occupied dwellings is as follows:

<u>Address</u>	<u>Fortnightly Rent</u>
Lot 4114 (1) Myilly Terrace	\$216
Lot 2420 (10) Myilly Terrace	\$216
Lot 4866 (13) Myilly Terrace	\$216
Lot 3843 (16) Myilly Terrace	\$195
Lot 4867 (17) Myilly Terrace	\$227
Lot 4836 (19) Myilly Terrace	\$216
Lot 4835 (21) Myilly Terrace	\$246
Lot 4834 (23) Myilly Terrace	\$246

e. In November 1984 changes in allocations criteria occurred with the dwellings to be offered to non executive staff on the basis that there were no entrenched rights for these tenants to be allocated executive housing on a permanent basis.

35. Tennant Creek/Barkly Highway Connector Road

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS and HOUSING

What are the details of the proposed Tennant Creek/Barkly Highway connector road, including -

- the length of the proposed connector road;
- the number of kilometres by which it will reduce the present Tennant Creek/Mount Isa road journey;
- whether it is proposed to seal the road now or in the future;
- when work will commence on the road; and
- will construction of the proposed connector road lead to a reduced commitment to maintain the existing Three Ways/Barkly Highway strip of road?

ANSWER

- I would like to clarify the scope of work involved in the construction of the connector road from the Barkly Highway to Tennant Creek. The budgetary allocation of \$3.9m was unfortunately an incorrect figure and related to a road of

somewhat higher standard than that proposed. This allocation has been amended to the correct figure of \$0.5m which will be used to construct a road 58 km in length.

- b. The intention underlying the project is to induce some deviation of traffic from the Barkly Highway into Tennant Creek, thus promoting tourist development in the region. At the same time the road will reduce by 9 km the present Tennant Creek/Mt Isa road journey.
- c. The amount proposed is seen as a basic requirement only, enabling assessment to be made of the derived benefits and does not include sealing the road at this time. Any further allocation of funds to improve the facility would be based upon this assessment.
- d. It is expected that actual construction works will begin late in the financial year.
- e. Maintenance of the proposed connector road will be undertaken on the local roads maintenance program in future years. The existing Barkly Highway is to remain as a National Highway and will be maintained as such.

45. Credit Cards

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

- 1. What are the criteria for determining which public servants and ministerial officers are eligible to receive credit cards for use in charging official expenses?
- 2. How many - (a) public servants; and (b) ministerial officers, currently have credit cards issued by the government?
- 3. What guidelines are given to public servants and ministerial officers on - (a) the type of expenses; and (b) the limit of expenses, that can be incurred on government supplied credit cards?
- 4. In the 1984-85 financial year, what was the total amount of money paid out to meet credit card accounts held by - (a) public servants; and (b) ministerial officers?

ANSWER

- 1. Public Servants - issued at discretion of Chief Executive Officer. Ministerial Officers - issue subject to ministerial approval.
- 2. (a) 41
(b) 13

3. (a) Official use only.

(b) No limits imposed other than -

(i)	Education	\$300.00
(ii)	Ports and Fisheries	\$300.00
(iii)	Police	\$1500.00
(iv)	Port Authority	\$300.00

4. (a) \$101 054.28

(b) \$22 429.00.

46.

Crown Land, Borroloola

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

In respect of the recent Notice of Determination under the Crown Lands Act gazetted on 16 October 1985 relating to Lots 423 and 410 and adjoining Crown Land at Borroloola - has the adjoining vacant Crown Land been valued by the Valuer-General; if so, at what figure was the land valued? Were tenders called for the acquisition/purchase of the adjoining Crown Land; if so, give details.

ANSWER

The area in question has been offered to the Borroloola Inn Pty. Ltd. to enable the company to extend its existing tourist facilities on lots 410 and 423, Borroloola.

1. The Valuer-General assessed the current market value of the vacant Crown land to be \$10 000 if consolidated with lots 410 and 423. The company was offered the land at this price, subject to the surrender of its existing titles.
2. No expressions of interest were called to develop the area, as the vacant Crown land in question is 2 separate areas to the rear and southern side of lot 423, intersected by lot 410. The most appropriate use of the land is as stated in the Gazette Notice.

47.

Mereenie and Palm Valley Gas Project

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. What is the total amount of gas contracted for by NTEC from both the Palm Valley Joint Venture and the Mereenie Joint Venture?
2. What are the currently estimated NTEC 'most probable' gas requirements on a year-by-year basis from the first contractual year to the twentieth contractual year?

3. Are any 'take or pay' obligations based on annual contractual amounts or any periods less than the total contract period?
4. What are the details of how 'take or pay' obligations relate to each period and the arrangements, if any, for contracted gas to remain in inventory?
5. If arrangements exist to hold contracted gas in inventory, what conditions apply to the cost of this gas and conditions on its subsequent uplift?
6. What are the estimated load growths for electricity generated by gas on an annual basis during the period of contracted supply from the Mereenie and Palm Valley Joint Ventures?
7. Do these estimated load growths relate directly to estimated 'most probable' gas requirements or are proposed changes to electricity generation techniques expected to change the impact on the estimated annual 'most probable' gas requirements?
8. What are the details of - (a) the proposed pricing mechanism for direct use of gas; and (b) the price of gas from the 2 joint ventures and escalation arrangements?
9. What are the precise details of price applications to take or pay obligations which are left in inventory?
10. What are the details, including letters, advertisements and seminars, of off-set procedures for the pipeline construction?
11. What are the current estimates of - (a) the effectiveness of arrangements for off-sets (including dollar estimates of contracts to local firms); and (b) expected total off-set arrangements for local firms (including dollar amounts) during the life of the pipeline constructions?

ANSWER

1. The total amount of gas contracted by NTEC from both the Palm Valley and Mereenie Joint Venturers is 266 PJ over 26 years, of which 200 PJ are contracted on a 'take-or-pay' basis.
2. At 28 June 1985 the NTEC 'most probable' gas requirement on a year-by-year basis was as detailed in Table 1 (attached). Since that date, and in view of a major revision of Darwin population statistics by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, NTEC has reviewed its electricity demand projections. This review has lead a more statistically satisfactory demand projection model and a major upward revision in Darwin electricity demand forecasts. This revision will, in the near term, be used to generate revised gas requirement projections. This review requires extremely complex plant

configuration calculations and is not available at this time, however, an examination of the forecasts detailed in Table 2 (attached) leaves no doubt that NTEC's gas requirements will be revised upwards.

3. There are 'take-or-pay' obligations based on annual contractual amounts in both the Palm Valley Joint Venture and the Mereenie Joint Venture Gas Purchase Agreements as detailed in Table 1.

4. 'Take-or-pay' obligations reflect 75% of the contract quantities. They take no account of the more recent refinement and upward revision of electricity demand projections. 'Take-or-pay' gas which is not required by NTEC will be held in inventory by the gas field operator. There are no special conditions in regard to drawdown of such inventory, other than in respect to price (see answer 5) and the fact that such drawdown can only take place after the 'take-or-pay' obligation in any year is met.

5. The costs/conditions applying to 'take-or-pay' gas held in inventory by the field operator and subsequently uplifted by NTEC are that:

'If NTEC pays for a quantity of gas not taken in a month, it may, in any subsequent month, after it has taken the 'take-or-pay' quantity (reduced in accordance with the contract) for the relevant month take, free of charge, except for payments of the difference, if any, in the contract price in the relevant month and date of accrual to inventory, a quantity of gas up to the quantity, accrued to inventory to that time provided always that such gas is taken on a first in/first out basis.'

6. The estimated load growth of electricity generated by gas in Darwin, on an annual basis during the period of the gas purchase contracts is detailed in Table 2. Review of electricity generation at Tennant Creek and Katherine is currently underway, but these quantities are relatively modest when compared with the Darwin load.

7. The converse is true, most probable gas requirement estimates are based on load growth projections. The contract gas purchase quantities were based on the load growth projections of June 1985 and the planned plant configuration at that time. The September load growth estimates (see Table 2) are conservative in that with an increasing use of gas generation technology, it is expected that the price of electricity will be kept in check. The model used to generate load growth cannot successfully cope with such long term structural change and therefore probably under estimates load growth. The September projections have not as yet been translated into gas requirement projections. Such translation is dependent on the plant configuration assumptions but this

will always be a planning variable under the control of government.

8. (a) It is not at all clear what the 'pricing mechanism for direct use of gas' relates to and clarification of this question would be helpful. If the question concerning the proposed pricing mechanism for direct use of gas relates to the pricing mechanism to be put in place for third party (non Northern Territory government) consumers, I can advise that there is no such mechanism in Gasgo Pty Ltd's Gas Purchase Agreements. If the question relates to the mechanism whereby the Northern Territory shares revenue secured from sales of gas to third party users, I can advise as follows:

(i) Darnor Pty Ltd, a company controlled by the Northern Territory government, will secure between 50-80% of the net revenue (revenue minus incremental costs) from such third party sales; and

(ii) no sale of gas can be made at a price below the NTEC price without:

- ° the same price being offered to NTEC; or
- ° NTEC's concurrence.

(b) (i) The pricing mechanism for Palm Valley gas is \$1.50/GJ in March 1985, escalating at 25% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with provision that should the CPI exceed 10% then the gas price will escalate by any CPI increase in excess of 10%. Provided also that should the cost of the fuel used for generating electricity in other states escalate by more than the CPI then a portion of such increase will be passed on to the gas producers accordingly.

(ii) The pricing mechanism for Mereenie gas is \$0.20/GJ for contract years 1-5 and \$0.35/GJ for contract years 6-21 for gas quantities up to 125% of 'take-or-pay' quantities (all in March 1985 dollars), escalating at 25% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with provision that should the CPI exceed 10% then the gas price will escalate by any CPI increase in excess of 10%. And provided further that should the cost of the fuel used for generating electricity in other states escalate by more than the CPI then a portion of such increase will be passed on to the gas producers accordingly. In the case of the MJV the pricing arrangement is more complex.

Quantities taken in excess of these quantities are priced as per the Palm Valley price in (b)(i) above.

The lower prices reflect the lower 'value' of Mereenie gas which stems from the cost of transporting it to the trunk pipeline.

9. The price applying to 'take-or-pay' quantities is exactly the same as those applying to quantities in excess of 'take-or-pay' other than as outlined above. There are no additional price or cost components in gas taken from inventory accrued as a result of shortfalls in the update of 'take-or-pay' quantities (see answer 5).
10. The arrangements to which the Northern Territory government is a party relate to the terms and conditions of the purchase and sale of gas in the gas field and Darwin. It is not a party to any of the substantive pipeline construction agreements. There are, therefore, no arrangements in the contracts to which the Northern Territory government is a party which relate to requirements to use local contents for pipeline construction. The Northern Territory government has, however, made it clear to NT Gas Pty Ltd that, as a corporate citizen in the Northern Territory, Northern Territory bids should be given preference in those instances where they are technically and commercially competitive, and has received a very positive response in this regard. By way of example, I can advise that the tender documents sent to tenderers on each of the pipeline spreads include a requirement that they define the Northern Territory labour, materials and sub-contracting content in the tender bid.
11. Attachment B is a list of Northern Territory companies which have received orders or participated in the first spread on the Amadeus Basin to Darwin gas pipeline project. An order of magnitude estimate of the dollar value of offsets to date is \$15m. The total project dollar content of the Northern Territory contract participation is impossible to estimate at this time, however, the Northern Territory government will do all that it can to ensure that this is at a maximum.

See Attachment B on following page.

ATTACHMENT B

ISSUED OCTOBER 1985

NEWHAM INTERNATIONAL - LOCAL CONTRACTORS USED IN PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION

SAND SUPPLIER: Boomerang Transport, Ken Chambers.

SAND BLASTING: Promet, Trevor Jones, supplying, manpower, equipment and special sand.

CONCRETE COATING OF PIPE: Concrete Pumpers.

PRE CAST SLABS AND SET ON WEIGHTS: Johnston Bros, pre casters.

WATER CART CONTRACTORS: Pacific Contractors and D. Hughes.

LOW LOADERS: J. Breen and Brambles (Darwin).

LOADERS: I. Hogan, K. Chambers.

COMPRESSORS: Coates

PUMPS: Coates

HAMMERS: Coates

DRILLS: Coates

HOSES: Coates

PUMPS: Wreck Air

BACK HOE: A. Mazigi

LAUNDRY CONTRACTORS: Local

ELECTRICIAN: Wolpers & Flowers, Mobile Electrics

PLUMBING: G. Grehan

LOCKSMITH: Willeme & Co

ELECTRONICS: Navcom P/L

CATERING & FOOD: All bought locally

FUEL: Flynn Petroleum

ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE: G. Caswell, Hasting Deering

ENGINEERING: NT Engineering

OFFICE SUPPLIES: Cut Price Office Supplies, Lake Office Supplies

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

BUILDING SUPPLIES: Bunnings.

SPARE PARTS: Hasting Deering, Repco, numerous others

SIGNS: Peter Crook Engineering

TRANSPORT: Comet, TNT, Len Wright, Timor Transport

WELDING EQUIPMENT: CIG

CANVAS & REPAIRS: Hampshire Canvas

HIRE CARS: Hertz, Budget

FIRST AID SUPPLIES: Industrial First Aid Medical

STEEL ROPES & CHAINS: Bullivants

EXCAVATION: Mousellis Excavation

PIPE REQUIREMENTS: Pipeline Supplies of Aust. Tubemakers

TIMBER: Territory Hardwood

HARDWARE & ENGINEERING: Tesco Pearce

AUTO ELECTRICS: Delta Electrics, Philco Electrics, Peter Brown

SAFETY: Sureguard

HYDRAULICS: Wilson Hydraulics

ACCOMMODATION: Hotel Darwin, Oasis Motel

TYRES: Darwin Tyre Service

EXPLOSIVES: Peter Crook Engineering

Relates to Newham International (subcontracts/procurement only - not exhaustive).

TABLE 1
ANNUAL NTEC GAS QUANTITIES
CONTRACT YEARS 1 TO 20

CONTRACT YEAR NO.	ANTICIPATED * FINANCIAL YEAR	TAKE OR PAY QUANTITIES			PROBABLE QUANTITIES (PJ)
		PVJV	(PJ) MJV	TOTAL	
1	1986-1987 **	2.42	0.61	3.03	3.99
2	1987-1988	4.95	1.24	6.19	7.74
3	1988-1989	4.99	1.25	6.24	7.80
4	1989-1990	5.07	1.27	6.34	7.93
5	1990-1991	5.15	1.29	6.44	8.05
6	1991-1992	5.30	1.33	6.63	8.29
7	1992-1993	5.39	1.35	6.74	8.43
8	1993-1994	5.54	1.39	6.93	8.66
9	1994-1995	5.74	1.44	7.18	8.68
10	1995-1996	5.74	1.44	7.18	8.89
11	1996-1997	5.94	1.48	7.42	9.28
12	1997-1998	6.19	1.55	7.74	9.68
13	1998-1999	6.38	1.60	7.98	9.98
14	1999-2000	6.59	1.64	8.23	10.29
15	2000-2001	6.84	1.71	8.55	10.69
16	2001-2002	7.09	1.77	8.86	11.08
17	2002-2003	7.34	1.83	9.17	11.46
18	2003-2004	7.57	1.89	9.46	11.83
19	2004-2005	7.82	1.95	9.77	12.21
20	2005-2006	8.10	2.02	10.12	12.65
		<u>119.96</u>	<u>30.00</u>	<u>149.96</u>	<u>187.45</u>

* Adjusted according to date of initial delivery

** Part year only.

TABLE 2
ENERGY SENT OUT *
CHANNEL ISLAND

YEAR ENDED		
August 1985	September 1985	June 1985
1985	522.3	513.4
1986	558.0	520.3
1987	584.1	525.4
1988	611.5	536.2
1989	639.8	548.4
1990	669.6	562.8
1991	700.5	576.9
1992	732.8	590.7
1993	766.6	605.1
1994	803.2	620.2
1995	842.2	638.4
1996	883.3	659.0
1997	926.3	680.3
1998	971.5	702.4
1999	1018.9	725.1
2000	1069.1	748.8
2001	1121.8	773.3
2002	1177.2	798.6
2003	1235.3	824.7
2004	1296.3	851.7
2005	1361.0	879.9
2006	1428.9	908.9
2007	1500.2	939.0
2008	1575.1	970.1
2009	1653.8	1002.2
2010	1736.5	1035.4
2011	1823.3	1069.7
2012	1914.5	1105.2

* Does not include power station leases.

NOTES TO TABLE 2

June 1985 Assumptions

1. Price 15% for all nominal increases mid 1985
2.16% p.a. real increases to 1992
CPI increases thereafter
2. Population 2.5% p.a. increase
3. Government expenditure
0.0% real increase - 1985-1987
3.0% real increase - 1988, decreasing annually to 1.0%
by 2001
1.0% real increase - thereafter
4. Average weekly earnings: as per W.D. Scott forecast
- September 1983
5. Housing expenditure
5.0% real increase - 1986-1988
4.0% real increase - 1989-1990
2.5% real increase - 1991-1993
2.0% real increase - 1993-1996
1.5% real increase - thereafter

September 1985 Assumptions

1. Price: as per June 1985
2. Population: as per June 1985
3. Government expenditure: not a variable in the revised model
4. Average weekly earnings: not a variable in the revised model
5. Housing expenditure: not a variable in the revised model.

48.

School Bus Fares

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What were the guidelines issued to school principals prior to the introduction of school bus fares under which principals were to determine individual cases of hardship in order to grant exemption from payment of the fares?
2. Since the introduction of the bus fare system, have these guidelines been amended; if so, what are the details?
3. What amount of money does the government estimate will be raised by the imposition of bus fares - (a) to the end of the 1985 school year; and (b) for the 1986 school year?

ANSWER

1. The wording of interim guidelines under which principals were to determine hardship was:

'Applications for free bus passes are to be assessed and approved by the school and will in most cases require proof of genuine hardship, e.g. Pension Card, Community Welfare or Social Security Card'.

The interpretations of these guidelines were discussed with principals at individual meetings. Principals were encouraged to be flexible in their interpretation during the implementation stage and were advised to contact the Assistant Director Finance and Supply for a ruling on special cases.

2. Since the beginning of 4th term, principals have been advised of further examples of hardship such as distance and size of family, and a review of the interim guidelines was commenced. The review is considering matters of hardship, disadvantage and a comparison of Northern Territory education transport services with those in other states.
3. The amount of money now estimated to be raised through fares on school transport services in 1985-86 is approximately \$200 000. This is less than \$400 000 estimated because implementation was deferred for one quarter to give schools and parents more time to adjust.

Unfortunately irresponsible political opposition encouraging parents not to comply with the scheme has made estimating difficult. Usage of buses close to schools has reduced and this may involve savings in the latter half of 1986

Although it is too early to calculate the ongoing effect, feedback to date is encouraging and indicates that there has indeed been a significant reduction in numbers travelling in

suburban areas and that the majority of those continuing to use the service are paying fares.

The intention of the scheme is not to penalise parents and students where bus travel is unavoidable, but is rather an attempt to halt the spiralling costs of the old free bus service which was being used by students living in close proximity to suburban schools.

49. Conversion of Pastoral Leases

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

1. How many applications have been made since 1 January 1983 for conversion of pastoral leases to perpetual pastoral leases?
2. What properties/leases were involved in these applications and which were successful?
3. In respect of each perpetual pastoral lease granted, what conditions/covenants are attached in respect of - (a) minimum stocking levels; (b) Maximum stocking levels; (c) clearing of land; (d) fencing; (e) measures in respect of river bank erosion; and (f) restrictions on land use?

ANSWER

1. As of 5 December 1985, 44 applications for perpetual pastoral leases had been received since 1 January 1983.
2. 30 have been considered by the NT Land Board. All have been successful. Another 6 have been heard but have yet to be determined by the Minister. A further 8 are waiting on advice from interested departments before being referred to the Land Board. The properties are:-

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Tarlton Downs, Orange Creek, Marqua, Yambah, Alexandria, East Ranken, West Ranken, Soudan, Adder Block, Lucy Creek, Ooratippra, Newcastle Waters, Powell Creek, Tandyidgee, Avon Downs, Brunette Downs, Rockhampton Downs, Austral Downs, Banka Banka, Phillip Creek, Brunchilly, Georgina Downs, Lake Nash, Atartinga, Bond Springs, Alroy Downs, Undoolya, Owen Springs, Burramurra and Dalmore Downs.

APPLICATIONS HEARD BY THE LAND BOARD BUT AS YET NOT DETERMINED BY THE MINISTER

Deep Well, Hamilton Downs, Benmara, Tanami Downs, Riveren and Jervois.

NOT YET HEARD BY THE BOARD

Robin Falls, Mount Keppler, Central Mount Wedge, Mallapunyah Springs, Rocklands, Mount Swan and Jinka (Pastoral Homestead lease no 4) and Mount Riddock.

3. Each perpetual pastoral lease issued, contains covenants for minimum stocking levels and the erection and or maintenance of internal and boundary fencing.

Some leases in the northern region may also include covenants relating to the clearing of land for improved pasture. Except for the clearing of timber for fence posts to be used on the property, all leases contain a clause restricting the clearing of land for the sale of timber, timber trees and all trees producing resin, or valuable substances. A conservation clause addresses the problem of accelerated soil erosion, occurring as a result of stocking, clearing and the construction of fixed improvements including dams, roads and firebreaks.

Pastoral leases are issued only for pastoral purposes. However alternative uses may be permitted under sections 40A and 40B of the Crown Lands Act.

FROM 18 MARCH 1986

50.

Academic Resignations

1. How many resignations of academic staff employed at the Darwin Institute of Technology occurred during the 1985 academic year?
2. What reasons were given for each particular resignation?

ANSWER

1. There were 21 resignations of academic staff employed at the Darwin Institute of Technology during the 1985 academic year.
2. The reasons given for each resignation are outlined in the following table.

LIST OF ACADEMICS RESIGNING IN 1985

ADVANCED EDUCATION

<u>Date</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Jan 85	Lecturer Gr 1	Travelling overseas.
Feb 85	Lecturer Gr 1	To further career.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

	Lecturer Gr 1	Returned to UK to care for elderly parents.
	Lecturer Gr 1	Marriage break-up; returned to Perth.
May 85	Lecturer Gr 1	Take up appointment at Duntroon (applied for in 1984).
	Lecturer Gr 1	Moved interstate with husband.
July 85	Senior Lecturer Gr 1	Unhappy about appointment of Mr K W Davis as Director. Accepted appointment of position as Principal Lecturer at Canberra College of Advanced Education.
Dec 85	Lecturer Gr 1	Due to educational problems with family at Batchelor.
	Lecturer Gr 1	Uncertainty regarding future and position due to announcement of NT University College.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (TAFE)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Jan 85	Lecturer Gr 3	Family unhappy in Darwin.
Feb 85	Lecturer Gr 2	Accepted permanent appointment interstate due to no long term prospects of permanent appointment at Institute.
May 85	Lecturer Gr 3	Moved interstate with husband.
June 85	Lecturer Gr 2	Moved interstate - did not like tropical climate.
	Lecturer Gr 3	Reason unknown.
July 85	Senior Lecturer Gr 2	Returned to private enterprise.
	Lecturer Gr 2	Moved interstate. Unhappy with running of his department.
Sept 85	Lecturer Gr 2	Left as no prospect of permanent appointment at Institute.

	Senior Lecturer Gr 3	Moved interstate - family unhappy in Darwin.
Nov 85	Lecturer Gr 3	Family problems - returning interstate.
Dec 85	Lecturer Gr 2	Obtained position elsewhere. Unhappy with service provided by Computing Services.

51. Gardens Hill Development

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS and HOUSING

1. How much will the Housing Commission pay for the pensioner units that will be constructed in Stage 1 of the Gardens Hill development?
2. When will the Housing Commission be taking over those units?
3. Who called for the tenders for the development?
4. What is the component of land cost in the total cost of \$1.985m quoted by the minister in his speech of 29 August 1984?

ANSWER

1. The Housing Commission has paid \$1 914 528.54 for the 28 pensioner units constructed in Stage 1 of the Gardens Hill Development.
2. The Housing Commission took over all the units on 17 July 1985.
3. Gardens Hill Development called tenders for all the units.
4. The component of land cost is \$187 235.42 in the total cost of \$1 914 528.54.

52. Auditor-General's Report

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Does the Report of the Auditor-General for 1985 indicate that a sum of \$118 409 was written off due to loss in the 1984-85 financial year? If so, what items were lost and in what circumstances?

ANSWER

The amount of \$118 409 mentioned in the Report of the Auditor-General represents losses disclosed at stocktake and comprises items of furniture and equipment in schools and departmental offices throughout the Territory. Such losses result from disposal of items without proper documentation. Such items would have been dumped or 'cannibalised' for spare parts, for use in manual training classes, etc.

The Department of Education currently holds stocks in the form of accountable assets valued at \$20 446 000. The figure written off represents 0.06% of the total value, and is within the tolerance loss levels for stocks of this nature.

54. Tourist Commission - Films

1. What was the value of the tender awarded to Capricornia Productions for the production of a series of films for the Tourist Commission?
2. Did this tender include travel, accommodation and general living expenses? If not, what was the cost of these expenses?
3. Was an outside consultant engaged to oversee the Capricornia project? If so, what fee was paid to this consultant?
4. When was the tender awarded to Capricornia Productions?
5. Did the tender specify any date or series of dates by which the films should be completed? If so, were these dates met? If not, why not and did the failure to meet the specified dates increase costs?

ANSWER

1. \$861 679.00 (subject to variation as agreed by the respective parties).
2. (a) Yes.
(b) Not applicable.
3. (a) Yes.
(b) \$60 000.00.
4. The tender was discussed at the meeting of the NTTC on 15 November 1983 and the contract was awarded in 1984.
5. (a) Yes (31 December 1985).

(c) Delays, occasioned by:

- ° management restructuring as a result of a change in company principals;
- ° unfavourable top end weather conditions during filming, ie late beginning of wet season necessitating film crew and equipment to return for additional filming sessions which in turn resulted in a subsequent extension of the final technical production processes.

(d) Yes.

55.

Auditor-General's Report

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS

1. Does the Report of the Auditor-General for 1985 indicate that a sum of \$278 000 was reimbursed to a company by means of an ex-gratia payment of a deposit paid on the purchase of land? If so, under what circumstances did this reimbursement take place?
2. Does the Report of the Auditor-General for 1985 indicate that a sum of \$180 000 was given as compensation to a company for increased development standards of a subdivision? If so, which subdivision was involved?
3. Why was it necessary to upgrade the original development standards?
4. How was the figure of \$180 000 compensation determined?

ANSWER

1. Yes, in 1982, a Crown Lease (Term) was sold to a developer for \$280 000. In 1984 the developer sought a reduction in the covenants over the lease. The proposal was not acceptable to the Northern Territory government and a refund of the purchase price was made in exchange for the surrender of the lease. The refund was calculated on the basis of original purchase price (\$280 000) less administrative costs (\$14 000) plus cost of development work completed on the lease (\$12 000).
2. Yes. Katherine East Residential Development Stage 2.

This matter has been canvassed at some length in the past. I refer the honourable member to my statement during the adjournment debate on 27 August 1985 (Hansard pp 1328-1332) for the answers to questions 3 and 4.

56.

Auditor-General's Report

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for HEALTH

Does the Report of the Auditor-General indicate that a sum of \$140 995 was written off due to loss in the 1984-85 financial year? If so, what items were lost and in which circumstances?

ANSWER

The amount of \$140 995 was written off due to loss during the 1984-85 financial year. The loss represents items not found during stocktakes conducted on Department of Health establishments.

Stocktakes were finalised for 68 establishments during 1984-85.

None of the missing items was valued at more than \$2000, the items being in the categories of minor and general purpose equipment, ward furniture and equipment, and office and domestic equipment.

The apparent deficiencies are due to a failure to follow Basic Stores Accounting Procedures where items have been disposed of through the Government Auction Process or by being obsolete, unserviceable or being beyond economical repair.

57.

Public Service - Selection Procedures

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Are recommendations from selection panels to fill E4 positions in the Northern Territory Public Service forwarded to Cabinet for approval?

ANSWER

In accordance with the Public Service Act, the filling of senior executive positions are approved by the Chief Executive Officers of the departments or authorities in which the vacancies exist.

A proposed appointment to a senior executive position may be notified to Cabinet if the duties are of a sensitive nature.

The appointments of Chief Executive Officers are approved by Cabinet.

58.

Domestic Travel Office-holders

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the total amount of travelling allowance paid to each office-holding member of the Legislative Assembly for domestic travel both within the Northern Territory and interstate in respect of each of the financial years 1982-83, 1983-84 and 1984-85, including any reimbursements of allowances paid to members?

ANSWER

The attached 2 tables present figures for 1983-84 and 1984-85. However, details of expenditure for 1982-83 have not been provided. I am advised that retrieval from archives and examination of the actual source documents for the additional year would involve considerable time and expense without throwing any more light on expenditures than is already indicated by the figures provided for the 2-year period.

I would be happy to provide specific information for 1982-83 that may be required, if the details of expenditure for the full 1982-83 period were necessary.

See Tables 1 and 2 on following pages.

RE: The total amount of Travelling Allowances payable for each office-holding member of the Legislative Assembly for travel within Australia.

TABLE 1

OFFICE HOLDER	PERIOD 1983-84	TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE \$
Hon P. Everingham, Chief Minister	full year	14 767
Hon M.B. Perron, Minister	full year	4233
* Hon J.M. Robertson, Minister	full year	13 314
Hon R.M. Steele, Minister	July 83 to 13/12/83	5752
Hon I.L. Tuxworth, Minister	full year	22 315
Hon N.M. Dondas, Minister	full year	8521
Hon T. Harris, Minister	13/12/83 to June 84	2122
Hon C.N. Padgham-Purich, Minister	13/12/83 to June 84	1937
Hon D.W. Manzie, Minister	13/12/83 to June 84	2956
Mr B.W. Collins, Leader of the Opposition	full year	3795
Mrs P. O'Neil, Deputy Leader of the Opposition	1/7/83 to 9/12/83	495
Mr T.E. Smith, Deputy Leader of the Opposition	9/12/83 to 30/6/84	940
Hon L. MacFarlane, Speaker	July 83 to Feb 84	1725
Hon R.M. Steele, Speaker	Feb 84 to June 84	3865

* The Minister resides in Alice Springs and was required to travel to Darwin for ministerial business on a regular basis.

TABLE 2

OFFICE HOLDER	PERIOD 1984-85	TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE \$
Hon P. Everingham, Chief Minister	July 84 to 17/10/84	7780
Hon I.L. Tuxworth		
1. Minister	July 84 to 17/10/84	
2. Chief Minister	17/10/84 to June 85	17 761
Hon N.M. Dondas, Minister	full year	10 342
Hon M.B. Perron, Minister	full year	5135
* Hon J.M. Robertson, Minister	full year	16 625
Hon T. Harris, Minister	full year	3006
Hon D.W. Manzie, Minister	full year	4600
Hon S.P. Hatton, Minister	21/12/84 to June 85	2834
Hon B.F. Coulter, Minister	21/12/84 to June 85	3610
Hon C.N. Padgham-Purich, Minister	July 84 to 21/12/84	1246
* Mr R.A. Hanrahan, Leader of the House	21/12/84 to June 85	9070
Mr B.W. Collins, Leader of the Opposition	full year	3295
Mr T.E. Smith, Deputy Leader of the Opposition	full year	1655
Hon R.M. Steele, Speaker	full year	11 930

* The Hon J. Robertson and Hon R.A. Hanrahan (as Leader of the House) reside in Alice Springs and were required to travel to Darwin for ministerial business on a regular basis.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The foregoing 2 tables provide details of the costs of travelling allowance payable for each office holding member of the Assembly for travel within Australia during the 1983-84 and 1984-85 financial years.
2. The totals shown consist of payments made directly to each member and also payments made on behalf of each member for accommodation.
3. The expenditure shown for the Speaker and Deputy Leader of the Opposition has been provided by the Legislative Assembly.

59. Distribution of Government Publications

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

What criteria are used to determine who receives sets of government information documents sent out by the Chief Minister?

(See question no 31).

ANSWER

Government information documents distributed by the Chief Minister are made available to a wide cross section of the community throughout the Northern Territory. The criteria to receive them is simply by request. Presently distribution includes various professional groups, trading organisations, pastoralists, child carers, minister fraternal, mining interests, Aboriginal groups, construction industry and various youth groups, etc.

60. AMDEL Guarantee

In the agreement to hand over to the firm AMDEL a number of government laboratories, was any guarantee given to AMDEL on the value of government work that would be given to AMDEL; if so, what was the value for each of the first 5 years of operation?

ANSWER

Both the Heads of Agreement and the Management Agreement make reference to the level of government work guaranteed to AMDEL (Australian Minerals Development Laboratory).

Clause 5.2 of the Heads of Agreement executed between AMDEL and the Northern Territory government states that:

'The Department of Mines and Energy shall, for the first year only, utilise services from the Project Laboratories to a value of not less than \$420 000.'

Clause 3.7 of the Management Agreement between AMDEL and the NT government states that:

'The Territory will, for a period of not less than five (5) years from the commencement of this Agreement, unless the Agreement is terminated, direct to AMDEL - NT all metallurgical and chemical analysis and mechanical and material testing currently being undertaken internally by the Department of Mines and Energy and which is within the competence of AMDEL - NT. In the first year of operation this activity will have a monetary value of not less than \$420 000.'

62. Performing Arts - Management Committee

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for YOUTH, SPORT, RECREATION and
ETHNIC AFFAIRS

Did the Department of Youth, Sport, Recreation and Ethnic Affairs, in August 1985, issue a pamphlet purporting to set out the government's arts policy, stating, under the heading 'Performing Arts', that a committee of the managers of the Darwin and Alice Springs Theatres and the Arts Council had been established to examine proposals by professional companies wishing to visit the Territory; if so, can the minister confirm that no such committee has been established?

ANSWER

The Department of Youth, Sport, Recreation and Ethnic Affairs issued a pamphlet entitled Arts Policy and Programmes of Assistance in August 1985.

The committee referred to in the section on Performing Arts is a departmental one. Its function is to provide a mechanism for co-ordinating visits to the Territory by interstate performing groups and to ensure that opportunity is provided to allow companies contracted by the theatre managements to visit smaller places in the Territory.

The committee met in Darwin on 25 November 1985. Subsequently 3 applications for financial help were made by 1 of the organisations present at the meeting with the support of others represented.

63. Warrawulla Association - Lump Sum Payment

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Was a lump sum payment made to a retiring employee of the Warrawulla Association, Borroloola, in December 1985 or January 1986 from the association's Community Employment Programme (CEP) account?
2. Was the payment authorised by an officer of the Department of Community Development; if so, was the Minister for Community Development aware of the authorisation?
3. To whom was the payment made and how was the lump sum calculated?
4. What steps have been taken to reimburse the association's CEP fund the amount that was paid out?
5. Should a payment of this nature have been made from a CEP account?

ANSWER

1. Yes.
2. No - the transaction was an internal office matter for the Warrawulla Association. No Department of Community Development officer's authorisation was required. When this matter was first raised with me on 5 February at Borrooloola, I immediately requested auditors to respond to the association's request for assistance and advice. The audit has been completed and a report made to the association.
3. The termination payments were made to a number of employees, including Mr N. Brown and Mrs P. Brown. The payment calculations have been examined by the auditors. They did not make any comment thereon. However, the auditors did comment on an associated payment for repatriation airfares. The amount paid to the 2 employees totalled \$5200.00. This was intended to cover return airfares and also included 1 child at an adult airfare rate. The entitlement recalculated by the auditors amounted to \$2354.70. The apparent overpayment totals \$2845.30. The association is aware of this and has been advised to seek reimbursement from the ex-employees concerned.
4. The association drew the termination payments from CEP funds held by the association, due to a temporary liquidity problem in its current account. The matter was rectified, the funds reimbursed and the Department of Community Development has already approved an adjustment to the association's budget and grants for the current year to allow for this.
5. No, given the association's practice of holding its funds in separate bank accounts. Had the various funds been held in 1 current account, at the same time being readily identifiable through a more sophisticated accounting system, the the liquidity problem would not have arisen.

Reappointment of Administrator

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Has he had any advice from the federal government concerning the continued appointment of His Honour the Administrator, Commodore Johnston? Can he advise what role Senator Ted Robertson played in this reappointment?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would like to advise the Assembly that I have received a communication from the Prime Minister asking whether the Northern Territory government agrees to the reappointment of His Honour the Administrator, Commodore Johnston. I am happy to advise that I will be confirming with the Prime Minister that it is the wish of the Northern Territory government to see His Honour reappointed in his position as Administrator.

I have been advised that the arrangements for the reappointment of His Honour were set in motion 6 days ago but it was only this morning that I received the communication from the Prime Minister. I think all Territorians would join with me in saying that it is really good news for the people of the Northern Territory because the way in which the proposal to remove His Honour the Administrator from office emerged was one of the most dastardly things that we have ever had to witness in the Territory. I lay the blame for that clearly at the feet of the honourable Senator Ted Robertson who played a very devious role, dating back to some 12 months ago, in trying to set in place the machinery to ensure that the Administrator was removed from office in the Northern Territory. He did that because of his own personal likes and dislikes.

I would like to say also that, while the Leader of the Opposition had some moments of reluctance at the beginning of the year, in the final analysis, he gave strong support for the reappointment of His Honour the Administrator and went to Canberra to lobby amongst his own people to ensure that that happened. I am sure that all Territorians are grateful for that contribution.

However, the devious role that Ted Robertson played in all of this is a blight on the Territory and on the Labor Party. It is absolutely disgusting. Senator Ted Robertson started a move as far back as April last year to try to get into place the procedures to remove the Administrator from office. I found out 2 months ago that people were being asked in May and June last year whether they would like to be the Administrator. They were asked by people from Canberra and by others who felt it was their duty to establish whether there were any other candidates in the offing. I learnt that as many as 3 judges had been asked whether they would like to be the Administrator. There had been no discussion with the people of the Northern Territory nor the Northern Territory government about whether the Administrator's term should terminate. One man went off on his own. He decided that he had had enough of the Administrator of the Northern Territory. He set up his own style of recruitment to see who the successor would be and he put the wheels in motion to see that the Administrator was removed from office.

Apart from that role, which can only be regarded as one of the most devious we have ever seen, he then began a process of lies and duplicity in the community that would make people believe that he had nothing to do with it - it was all a big sham, a mistake and a misunderstanding.

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The standing orders are quite clear in relation to personal references such as 'lies' and 'duplicity' in respect of members in another place.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable Chief Minister, I draw your attention to standing order 62 which relates to offensive or unbecoming words against a member of a parliament in another place. I ask the honourable Chief Minister to make his remarks less inflammatory.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, I will withdraw the word 'lies' and replace it with 'untruths' if that meets with the approval of the Chair.

Whilst it may seem to be inflammatory to talk about duplicity, it is true that Senator Robertson's role in this affair was one which deceived the people of the Northern Territory. He was saying one thing and doing another.

Mr Speaker, I repeat that this is a victory for the people of the Northern Territory. It is not a victory for me or my government or for the Leader of the Opposition; it is a win for us all. I would like to thank those people throughout the Northern Territory who have made their feelings known by way of signing petitions, sending letters or ringing people to urge them to do something. The grassroots movement of the people of the Northern Territory played a very important role in having the original decision overturned. I am delighted to be able to say that the government will be confirming to the Prime Minister that it is our wish that His Honour the Administrator remain in office until June 1988.

Batchelor Police Station Upgrading

Mr McCARTHY to CHIEF MINISTER

In light of the rapid growth in the area and the size of the area to be patrolled, are any steps being taken to upgrade the Batchelor Police Station to 2-man status?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the pressure on the government to increase the size and indeed the number of police stations is never ending. We are very keen to see that the Northern Territory is protected and served by the police force in the best possible way, but there will always be financial constraints. I am sure the member for Victoria River understands that. On a per capita basis, we have more policemen in the Northern Territory than any other part of Australia. We have small communities in the Northern Territory that have as many as 3 policemen. Communities of an equivalent size in other parts of Australia would not have a policeman within 500 km. They do not receive the service from the police force that we have in the Northern Territory.

The provision of policemen, whether at Batchelor or Bathurst Island, is a problem that is continually with us. We will try to provide sufficient police resources to ensure that the community is protected and serviced but I cannot give an undertaking that, every time a community wants additional policemen, we will be able to provide them. The body is willing but the purse often cannot stand the pressure.

Minister for Education's Trip to New Zealand

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he confirm that he approved a trip to New Zealand by the Minister for Education and his immediate family at taxpayers' expense in January 1985 knowing that part of this trip was to be used for the purposes of a family holiday? If so, did that remove the obligation on the Minister for Education to reimburse all or any of the expenses incurred on the trip and is the Chief Minister aware that the minister stated in a radio interview on 12 February this year that the travel had been approved and that there was no requirement on his part to pay any money back to the government?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is correct that I approved the travel for the Minister for Education to attend an education ministers' conference in New Zealand, a conference which generally takes between 3 and 6 days. It is interesting to note that education ministers do not have a one-day conference; they spread it out over quite a number of days, probably because of the pressure of work.

I would also like to say that, in my view, it is perfectly reasonable for ministers to be able to take their wives on interstate or overseas trips if that is necessary or desirable. It has been the practice in the past, and I believe it is a reasonable one, that these trips be approved by me and paid for by the government. When the Minister for Education went to New Zealand for the conference, I was happy to approve the cost of the travel for his wife. Where I approve travel for the husband or wife of any Assembly member or government officer, I am also happy to approve travel for any young children who cannot travel by themselves or be left behind. That process has been in place now for 7 years. I think it is perfectly reasonable. I do not think it is unreasonable that the Minister for Education, who spends considerable time away from his home and his family, is able to take his wife with him on a trip to New Zealand while he is working. If the Minister for Education took some time off to be with his family while he was there, I would understand that totally. I just wish I could do it myself from time to time.

Minister for Education's Trip to New Zealand

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Could the honourable minister explain to the Assembly why he decided to reimburse \$1867 to the government for his New Zealand trip in January 1985, a year after making the trip - and, I might add, 4 days after the Acting Chief Minister said it had been done - when he believed that he was under no obligation to pay any money back to the government?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am also a little perplexed at this whole issue because, as I stated on that particular radio program, I was under no obligation to pay anything in relation to that air fare because the Chief Minister had approved travel. I must say that the AEC meetings are held overseas only once every so often and, in those cases, ministers often take members of their staff and families. In this particular instance, I made it very clear to my staff that it was my intention to spend some time over there with my wife and daughter, and I would be paying for that part of the trip. It was my request that that

direction be carried out. I left it at that because there are entitlements. As you know, Sir, such entitlements accrue and, quite often, one does not hear anything more. It was my belief that my wishes had been met. Unbeknownst to me at that time, the Chief Minister had approved that travel and officers of the department did not take any money out of my entitlement because the travel had been approved. That is what needs to be made very clear. I paid that money back as a matter of conscience. I had requested initially that the money be reimbursed from my entitlement. When I discovered that the amount had not been repaid, I took steps to see that it was repaid. I accept that the reason why it had not been taken out of my entitlement was that the Chief Minister had approved that travel.

Child-care Services

Mr DALE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In view of the \$20m cut by the Commonwealth in funding for child-care services throughout Australia, has he been able to reach satisfactory agreement with the Commonwealth for continued funding of child-care services in remote areas?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I advise honourable members that a triennial funding program has been reached with the federal government, in particular with Senator Grimes, to provide funding for the Northern Territory for 152 centre-based, day-care places, for \$360 000 of Commonwealth funds towards the construction of centres to provide the above places and also for 51 family day-care places.

On 12 December 1985, I asked Senator Grimes to look at the funding for the Northern Territory because I believed that our funding had been arrived at by using a data base which was not relevant to the Northern Territory. They were using 1981 census figures which were not accurate enough to reflect the true situation in the Northern Territory.

As a result of that representation, Senator Grimes looked at formula funding for places in the Northern Territory. I am happy to announce that, as a result, the special categories program, which funds such things as after-school care for disabled children and children in isolation, will be increased by possibly 100% in the Northern Territory to about \$780 000. This was part of the good news that I was able to relate to the Child-Care Conference held in the Northern Territory last weekend. People from interstate who attended that conference were pleased with the initiatives that had been taken by the Northern Territory government, including the continuation of the 20% subsidy to ensure that child-care in the Northern Territory maintains the high priority which this government has given it. Although the federal government has cut funding, including the \$36m in the mini-budget in May last year, it looks as if the Northern Territory will be funded on a basis that truly reflects its population growth, particularly in the 0 to 4 years of age bracket, and that special funding allocations for children in isolated and remote areas will continue. I know the Leader of the Opposition will be pleased to hear that because one of our programs relates to Gunbalanya. We are also involved with a child-care facility at Maningrida. Right across the Northern Territory, from the most populous areas such as Darwin to some of the more remote areas of the Northern Territory, this government will be able to provide funding for child-care facilities with the assistance of the federal government.

Remote Television Licence Application

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the present Northern Territory government position on the current Australian Broadcasting Tribunal hearings in Alice Springs on the remote commercial television licence application?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, honourable members will be aware from the reports in the media that the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal is reconvening in the Northern Territory to determine the provision of a commercial television licence on the central zone footprint. Honourable members would also recall that the government indicated in the last sittings that it is happy to support whoever is granted the licence because we have a vested interest in using the television signal off the satellite to provide education services to remote areas. It would be quite a plus for the Territory if we can get the signal. If the tribunal refuses to grant a licence to either party for any reason, we would not have any communication at all and that would be quite a pity.

IMPARJ and the Channel 8 organisation in Darwin are both applicants before the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal. To date, there has been no success in getting these 2 organisations together. That has been compounded by the fact that, in its report handed down early in the new year, the tribunal said that it believed that both organisations had serious shortcomings and, in their existing state, would fail to meet the tribunal's requirements to justify the granting of a licence. I must say that I have become very concerned. There has been a bit of work going on behind the scenes to try to bring them together.

Obviously, CAAMA believes that it can remain quite independent of the rest of the community and seek funding from the federal government to the tune of about \$8m a year to be able to sustain its operation of a licence, while Channel 8 needs to beef up its resources to be able to provide a level of programs, particularly of an Aboriginal nature, to be eligible for a licence. The situation has now been compounded in that, as a result of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal's decision, we have withdrawn the offer of \$2m per annum support for CAAMA and IMPARJ on the basis that they do not have the expertise and the managerial skill to operate a station and it is unlikely that they will be able to develop it in the time necessary to make themselves proficient and make a dollar out of the operation.

That is regrettable but a further complication developed on the weekend that really is very unfortunate. Members would have heard reports that accusations were made on the radio CAAMA signal that Mr Peter Severin of Curtin Springs has been selling poisoned meat to Aborigines in central Australia. While those reports were regarded as scuttlebutt in the first instance, I have now received a written submission and signed and witnessed interviews. I believe it is my duty to send those reports to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal so that it can ascertain their veracity. I believe that, if there is any substance in the accusation...

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr BELL: My recollection is that the question put by the member for Ludmilla related to applications before the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal for commercial licences. I believe that the Chief Minister is giving information that is entirely irrelevant to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr TUXORTH: Mr Speaker, I will be brief for the benefit of the honourable member. I believe that, having received these documents, I have a duty to forward them to the tribunal so that they can be checked. If there are people in the Northern Territory transmitting, by any form of public medium, accusations that people in the Territory are poisoning people or whatever, they ought to be investigated. Such people would not be fit and proper to operate a licence of any sort.

Undergrounding of Electricity Supply

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In view of the continuing problem of trees on private property interfering with powerlines, can consideration be given to undergrounding the electricity supply in Darwin?

ANSWER

The notion of undergrounding the electricity supply in Darwin's older suburbs is raised almost annually. I am happy to provide an information update for the member because I appreciate that it is of some considerable concern to his electorate, which is very green - in a leafy sense.

It is technically possible to underground electricity in Darwin's older suburbs but it would be very expensive and disruptive to the community generally. Presently, about 12 000 domestic and 2300 industrial and commercial consumers in the Darwin urban area are still serviced by overhead reticulation. The cost of converting overhead reticulation to underground reticulation is estimated at about \$45m - in other words, about \$3000 per consumer. In addition, there would be substantial social disruption, as established suburbs would be subject to considerable earthworks and construction works. Disruption of road use and other services would incur additional costs which would have to be met from some source.

The existing overhead reticulation system has been designed to withstand cyclonic conditions. The member for Jingili referred recently to damage sustained during Cyclone Gretel. He is quite right in saying that nearly all the damage was caused by falling tree limbs. Despite the extensive damage, 99% of power was restored within 40 hours due to the efforts of NTEC crews. In fact, 80% of the system was back in operation within 20 hours. The bill to NTEC in terms of damage and cleanup was approximately \$100 000, a fraction of the \$45m that would be required to underground existing overhead reticulation.

As honourable members are aware, NTEC is building a new systems control centre at Hudson Creek as part of the Channel Island Power-station project. Computerised systems to be installed at Hudson Creek will further improve the efficiency in fault finding, maintenance prioritising and supply restoration. Hopefully, with future supply disruptions, the problems can be overcome even more expeditiously.

Turning now to the matter of trees interfering with powerlines, particularly trees on private property, I would point out to honourable members that it is the responsibility of householders to ensure that the trees on their property do not create an unsafe condition in regard to electricity. It is certainly not NTEC's intention to penalise residents' attempts to landscape and beautify their properties. But landscaping needs to take into account NTEC's requirements that the service line on their property is not rendered unsafe by tree growth. Consumers should weigh up NTEC's requirements against their landscaping requirements and decide if they wish to prune trees or whether they would prefer to locate the service line to their property underground. If they wish to relocate their service line underground, they can obtain the services of a licensed electrician to do so at their own expense, although NTEC will cooperate by relocating the necessary street connections at no cost to consumers. Consumers should remember that they then become responsible for maintenance of underground service lines on their property. During Cyclone Gretel, a significant number of outages resulted from damage to service lines on consumers' properties, as distinct of course from being on the street. In relation to trees growing on footpaths, NTEC and the Darwin City Council will continue to conduct regular footpath tree trimming programs. Given NTEC's current financial situation, the reliability of the existing overhead reticulation and further improvements which will result when the Hudson Creek system control centre is completed, I cannot see the justification for spending \$45m to convert existing overhead reticulation to underground and the impact this expense would have on the cost of electricity to the Territory consumer.

Travel by Senior Government Member

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he confirm that he has approved, or indeed has received, an application from a senior member of his government to travel to Berlin in the near future at public expense?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will answer that question for the Leader of the Opposition in the morning. Offhand, I do not recall such an application but it may be on my desk.

Rural Strategy Plan

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS

What is the current situation in relation to the rural strategy plan which is of great importance to my constituents?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as I announced last year, the Department of Lands is engaged in a review of the development of the Darwin Rural Area Strategy Plan. This was accelerated as a result of a number of disputes and concerns in the Darwin rural area in relation to applications for the subdivision of some land into 1-acre lots. As members would be aware, I have placed a moratorium on any subdivisions in the Darwin rural area to that size until this strategy plan has been completed.

The main issues being addressed in the strategy plan are the projected service requirements, the future land use requirements for the region, retention of land for agricultural purposes and the provision of lots for 1 ha areas. At the moment, a draft of the rural strategy plan is currently being finalised for presentation to the joint planning group as a working paper. When a draft document has been prepared by that working group, it will be widely advertised throughout the Darwin rural area. We will arrange for display of the proposals in the rural area and provide plenty of time for the local residents to comment. I look forward to the assistance of the local member in disseminating information about that so that we can obtain the considered views of the Darwin rural community before we finalise our structure plans for that area.

Government Support for Yulara and Sheraton Hotels

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

In his statement in support of tourism infrastructure in 1985, he indicated that, in 1985-86 and in 1986-87, the total level of support for Yulara, the Alice Springs Sheraton and the Darwin Sheraton would be in the order of \$49m. Can he confirm to this Assembly that this estimate remains the same or have those estimates changed dramatically one way or the other?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can advise the honourable member that I will be making a comprehensive statement on contingent liabilities during the course of these sittings. I will try to do it on Thursday for the benefit of the member but I cannot guarantee that. The statement will be an updating of our exact position, given the benefit of trading activity in the last 3 to 4 months.

Uluru Board of Management

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

When will he appoint a member to the Uluru Board of Management?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will be making a statement on the possible appointment of somebody to the Uluru Board of Management as soon as discussions with the federal ministers are completed.

Land Titles Office in Alice Springs

Mr D.W. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Is it the intention of government to open a facility in Alice Springs for accepting land title transfer documents?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there has been some agitation in Alice Springs for quite a long time now about improving the services to persons dealing in land titles. In December last year, it was decided that a lands titles lodgment facility would be established in Alice Springs. The need was seen because of the growing number of land dealings coming from that centre which has grown very

significantly. They now constitute 20% of all dealings lodged at the Land Titles Office.

With the Land Information System and Land Titles Office computer system that has been developed recently, documents, if correct, could be accepted over the counter for lodgment, fees paid and particulars entered into the Land Information System. Their priority of registration would date from their time of lodgment at Alice Springs. Although the Land Titles Office endeavours to give priority to Alice Springs documents and overlooks or corrects minor errors on the spot, if the documents are considerably deficient, they must be sent back to Alice Springs for correction. This holds up final registration even though a settlement may have taken place and moneys paid. If a document is lodged in Darwin while documents are being sent from Alice Springs for lodgment following a settlement, the document lodged in Darwin would have priority on registration.

The system that is now proposed will prevent that technicality from occurring. With the opening of the Alice Springs office, practitioners or members of the public will be able to settle a matter at the Alice Springs office then proceed to the counter for the payment of fees, checking of documents and on-the-spot registration. If necessary, the documents could be corrected the same day or at the counter and relodged. Priority will extend from that time, though final entry of details on the original and duplicate certificates of title will take place in Darwin where the central registry is located. The clerk at the office will also be able to answer queries, check documents for practitioners and others and supply photocopies of searches from the Land Information System. He will also be able to receive grants from the Department of Lands for checking for prompt dispatch to the drafting section in Darwin and bills of sale. If the complexity of a document makes the clerk unsure of how to handle it, he can send a facsimile to Darwin so that it can be studied by senior staff.

It is proposed that the office be in the Greatorrex Building. All necessary equipment, including visual display units, have been ordered and will be available when the office is opened. There will be overnight courier services to and from Darwin. The only hold-up is likely to be in the appointment of the staff member. The position was advertised in local papers and the Gazette. The closing date is 11 March. Interviews will occur in Alice Springs during the course of this week and, hopefully, one of several local candidates with a knowledge of the Alice Springs scene will be successful.

It is anticipated that the office will open as a functional unit at the end of April 1986. It should be noted that the Land Titles Office processes documents more quickly than other Australian titles offices. Locating a lodgment facility in Alice Springs is not an acknowledgement that the system of registering land titles in the Territory is slow. In comparison to all states, we are way in front. However, we recognised that we could improve the system in so far as Alice Springs is concerned with some cooperation between the Department of Lands and the Department of Law. I am very pleased to say that those departments, together with computerisation, have made it possible for the government to take this initiative.

Refinancing of the Alice Springs Sheraton

Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

Why was a total of \$37m raised as part of the refinancing of the Alice Springs Sheraton when, at September last year, the initial purchase price was \$35m? Does this additional \$2m reflect the capitalising of interest charges in the first 6 months of the hotel's operation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, full marks! The answer is yes.

Orthodontic Services for Children in Alice Springs

Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is he aware that problems are being experienced by Alice Springs' parents concerning the department's inability to obtain the services of an orthodontist and that schoolchildren are being advised that the department is unable to take any new cases even though the children may be in need of urgent treatment?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am certainly very aware of the concern expressed by parents of young children in need of orthodontic facilities in Alice Springs. At the last sittings, I advised of similar problems in the Nhulunbuy district. We have experienced great difficulty in attracting specialist medical personnel to the Territory. Unfortunately, we have been unable to attract an orthodontist to Alice Springs. The department has approached a private practitioner in South Australia who has advised that he is prepared to establish a private practice in May next year. I remind the member for Braintree and the people of Alice Springs that the negotiations with the private practitioner are preliminary at this stage. Although he has indicated a willingness to come, negotiations have not been finalised. For the benefit of the people in Alice Springs who need the service, I hope he takes up our offer and commences services early in May 1987.

Review of Fish and Fisheries Act

Mr LEO to MINISTER for PORTS and FISHERIES

I refer the minister to a statement that he made on Tuesday 19 November 1985 when he indicated that he was conducting a review of the Fish and Fisheries Act. When will submissions to this review be closed, and when will the minister be introducing legislative changes arising from the review?

ANSWER

Analysis of the current legislation has been completed. It has been a very complex exercise. We have gone to great pains in this process to work very closely with the industry and not in isolation from it. I am certainly not being critical of the industry when I say that this has delayed the process to some extent. Fishermen, given the nature of their industry, are not always readily able to meet to assess proposals. On a number of occasions, they have asked us to hold off while they have a chance to revise proposals.

The process we have adopted is to analyse current state, Commonwealth and overseas legislation. We want to ensure the most appropriate approaches are incorporated in the new legislation. We have the brief on the revised act which should be ready for submission to the legislative draftsman shortly. A Cabinet submission seeking agreement for priority listing on the legislative program is being prepared. The fishing industry will continue to be consulted about the revised act. However, as I mentioned, the fishermen are seeking time. Because of that, I did not introduce the bill in the November sittings. I advise honourable members that we are approaching the time when the bill will be finalised for presentation in the Assembly.

Trade Development Zone

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for INDUSTRY AND SMALL BUSINESS

Can he advise when construction will start on the Trade Development Zone and when local businesses will reap the benefits of this government initiative?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, a contract in excess of \$3m has been let to Sitzler Bros to provide the infrastructure necessary for the zone to operate. Other contracts have been awarded since the appointment of project managers, Henry and Walker. Contracts have been awarded to RUV Excavations Pty Ltd, Tubemakers of Australia and Steelmaker Pty Ltd for the supply of valves. James Hardie Ltd and Hardie Iplex Plastics have been awarded contracts for the upgrading of the water supply. Tenders have been called for the administration building, the trunk water main, the arterial road, the provision of geotechnical services, and the provision of the survey service. Packages are under design at the moment for sewerage works and a rising-main pump station. Eventually, we will tender for landscaping.

Since the legislation to set up the Trade Development Zone was passed last year, many things have occurred. Members would be aware that the Trade Development Zone Authority is now operating at a site in the old quarters that were used by the nuns at the leprosarium. In 1986, the focus will be in 2 areas. We have had many inquiries from the Asian region and many missions from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia to investigate the possibility of setting up in the zone. I have made announcements from time to time that we are signing people up for the zone. To date, 5 organisations have signed up for the zone. A sixth organisation will be the company that is installing our generators at Channel Island Power-station. I understand that officers will be signing up a seventh organisation today in Taiwan.

As we provide infrastructure in the zone, it will be much easier for us to attract organisations. In fact, next month we are expecting a delegation of 15 to 20 people. We are not concentrating on the South-east Asian area alone. From May this year, we will begin holding seminars in the Australian capital cities. Many of the southern-based companies are involved in joint ventures with companies from the United States, Asia and Europe. It is important that we should canvass our own backdoor to ensure that they know what is happening and the benefits of setting up in a trade zone.

The political future of Hong Kong in 1997 is certainly foremost in the minds of investors in the Asian region. They see us in Darwin as being part of a very stable political climate and being able to provide exports from

Australia to the United States and to Europe where no quotas exist. That is a very important component of our marketing proposal to the people in that region.

Mr Speaker, I could go on forever on this subject. If members have further questions on this, I would be happy to have the department provide a briefing for them. We are on track. Hopefully, the first businesses will be established in the zone later this year. By that time, we hope that more businesses will have indicated their desire to operate in the zone. We are encouraging people from South-east Asia who do not want to establish in the zone to take up space in other parts of Darwin. One particular gentleman at the moment is seeking to rent some 5000 m² of space for a particular type of manufacture. An announcement will be made about this later.

Refinancing of Alice Springs Sheraton

Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

I hope he will be as forthcoming with his answer to this question as he was to the last one. In announcing the refinancing of the Alice Springs Sheraton, the Treasurer indicated the State Bank of South Australia will provide \$28m over 5 years and that CIBC Australia will provide temporary finance of \$9m. Does the level of involvement by the State Bank of South Australia reflect the bank's valuation of the market value of this hotel and therefore does the \$9m borrowing reflect the potential level of loss on the purchase price?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer to both questions is no.

Review of Administrative Arrangements Relating to Liquor Act

Mr EDE to MINISTER for INDUSTRY and SMALL BUSINESS

I remind him of remarks he made in the debate last year on legislation I introduced regarding the forfeiture of vehicles under the Liquor Act. The Deputy Chief Minister stated that he was about to institute a review of the administrative arrangements relating to restricted areas. I ask him again whether that review has commenced and, if so, when does he intend to advise the people affected so that they may have some input into the deliberations?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, last time he asked the question, I told him that this review would cost about \$40 000 and I would request additional funding from my ministerial colleagues. I am happy to report that Cabinet endorsed the provision of an additional \$40 000 to the Northern Territory Liquor Commission's budget to enable that review to be carried out.

One problem has been determining the terms of reference for the review but that has now been resolved. A second problem was in trying to find the right person to undertake the review. I am happy to report that Mr d'Abbs will be seconded from the Department of Community Development to conduct the review in May or June. The review will be carried out during the height of the dry season because you must be able to move around the restricted areas. I had

hoped that we may have been able to start earlier but Mr d'Abbs was unavailable. Once that review is completed, I will provide the report to the honourable member.

Introduction to Year 11 Course

Mr DALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Apparently, one high school last year ran an introduction to Year 11 course for Year 10 students. Some people have complained that children who did not have the opportunity to do this course have been disadvantaged in relation to those who undertook the course. Is he aware of that situation and can he advise whether all high schools will be running an introduction to Year 11 course for all Year 10 students this coming year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware that there has been some concern from a number of constituents in relation to this matter. I think that the holding of such a course is a good idea. The problem is that some people feel that their children have been disadvantaged through not having had access to such a course. I have asked the Secretary of the Department of Education to investigate this matter. I feel that all feeder schools should run induction courses for students who will be going to Darwin High School and to Casuarina High School which will become a secondary college in 1988. We are aware of the problem. I cannot say that there will be an introduction to Year 11 course run in all high schools, although I hope that will be the case.

Refinancing of Alice Springs Sheraton

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he inform the Assembly exactly what form of security the State Bank of South Australia has sought in support of its loan of \$28m? Is that security a mortgage document and does that document value the hotel at \$28m?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will obtain the details for the honourable member.

Minister for Education's Trip to New Zealand

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In his capacity as acting Chief Minister, the minister issued a public statement in respect of overseas travel by the Minister for Education in which he stated that the Minister for Education had reimbursed the government \$1867 for that travel. We now know that, at the time that statement was issued, it was false. Could he explain why neither he nor the Minister for Education made public the fact that the cheque had not been written until 4 days after that statement had been made and why no attempt was made, after misleading the public, to correct the public record?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I certainly could not answer questions on behalf of the Minister for Education, which the Leader of the Opposition has just asked me to do. He also mentioned that I made a statement on the radio quoting a figure of some \$1800. If he refers to the transcripts, he will see that I mentioned no figure at the time. Thus, to some degree, as is not unusual, he has misrepresented me. It is true that I was answering questions from the media in early February on the subject of questions on notice from the opposition in relation to overseas travel by ministers and their families.

I had contacted the Minister for Education in regard to a trip that he and some members of his family had undertaken to New Zealand and sought clarification on whether he had reimbursed a portion of that travel cost. He advised me that he believed that he had and that, if there was any misunderstanding on the subject, he would certainly have it clarified immediately. At the time, I might point out that he was on leave although, fortunately, he was still in Darwin. I contacted him while he was out of Darwin enjoying himself on a farm. However, I went on the radio and advised that the honourable member had told me that he believed that he had reimbursed the funds concerned. That was the extent of my comment on the matter. As the honourable member well knows, the rest of the story has been explained adequately by the Minister for Education.

DRCS to Remote Areas

Mr McCARTHY to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, in view of the importance of improved communications to the more isolated areas of the Northern Territory, can he inform the Assembly about the unreasonable delays brought about in the installation of the digital radio concentrator telephone services to Port Keats, Peppimenarti and Palumpa by the intransigence of the Northern Land Council.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the fight for improved communications in the Northern Territory is one that all members of this Assembly become involved in from time to time. The people of the Territory suffer communication problems, particularly as a result of the sparseness of the Territory. The member for Victoria River has an electorate like my own, and I can assure him that the problem that he is talking about is one that I have been conversant with for 10 or 12 years.

The reality is that there is no need for there to be a problem in the honourable member's electorate in relation to providing telephone services to Port Keats and Daly River with the DRCS. It is a very simple operation. Telecom has a program to do it and it has made the funds available to do it. It has the equipment on the ground and it is ready to start work. However, it cannot reach an agreement with the Northern Land Council on the placement of 3 transmission towers to allow the telegraphic signal to go from Darwin or any part of Australia to Port Keats and Daly River.

If ever there was an example of how the Aboriginal Land Rights Act fails to serve the people of the Northern Territory, not just Aboriginals but the people of the Northern Territory, this has to be a glaring example. The Northern Land Council is sitting on its digs, making demands for payments from Telecom to gain access to the sites and, if Telecom does not come up with the dough, there will be no telephones - end of message. My information from the honourable member for Victoria River and from other people I have spoken to is that the people in those communities are begging for a telephone service at a time when all that needs to be done is to install the equipment on the ground and send the money. Telecom tells us that it plans to have the job finished by November 1986. If it cannot get on the site shortly, it will be November 1987 and that would be an absolute disgrace. The Northern Land Council stands indicted for obstructing people from having normal services.

Mr Speaker, I feel for the honourable member for Victoria River who has an area the size of Victoria to look after. He has to service most of it in a motor car because the Northern Land Council will not let him communicate with some people in his electorate in the normal way. I can assure you that I will be taking this matter up again with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs because it is an absolute disgrace. It is another glaring example of why the Aboriginal Land Rights Act has to be amended so that all the people in the Territory receive a fair shake.

Territory Economic Scene

Mr D.W. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Territorians are well aware of the gloomy economic picture painted by Senator Ted Robertson in recent days. Would the Chief Minister care to give the good news to cheer our despondent senator?

Mr SPEAKER: The question is out of order.

Minister for Education's Trip to New Zealand

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

The minister informed this Assembly a few moments ago that he made a public statement categorically stating that an amount of almost \$2000 had been reimbursed on the basis of advice given to him by his minister. He was Acting Chief Minister at the time. When the minister subsequently wrote out a cheque 4 days after that statement had been made, did he advise his Acting Chief Minister that he had misled him and therefore had caused the Acting Chief Minister to mislead the public? I am absolutely serious.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question obviously is more complicated than that. As the Leader of the Opposition knows - I think he referred to the matter yesterday in this Assembly - reimbursement had already been made by the Minister for Education. As the Minister for Education has said, that had already been approved by the Chief Minister, and rightly so. That amount did not have to be reimbursed by the minister at all. However, the minister provided a cheque on the day of the announcement to cover any amount which inadvertently may not have been deducted by the Department of the Chief Minister. It did not make the deductions because the Chief Minister had authorised travel for the honourable member's family members. I think the honourable Leader of the Opposition probably knows the story. He is trying to twist it as best he can to make an issue out of it. The fact is that the minister did not have to reimburse any of those funds at all yet he sought to do so as a matter of personal principle, and I think he should be admired for that.

Industrial Land at Coconut Grove

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for LANDS

Would he advise what action is being taken to develop the currently vacant light industrial land at Coconut Grove in my electorate?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this matter has been near and dear to the heart of the honourable member for Ludmilla. The land he is referring to is in the vicinity of Totem Road and Bagot Road near a Mobil service station. There has been some pressure from small businesses in the area to try to have that vacant land developed for light industrial purposes. The honourable member has raised that matter with us on a number of occasions.

Mr Speaker, we did not have funds in the capital works programs to enable the development and subdivision of that industrial land. Rather, we sought to encourage the development of that land through a straight private development of the facility without the injection of government funds. It was a fairly complicated procedure because there was a requirement under the traffic planning arrangements for a service road to be constructed to avoid traffic entering and exiting Bagot Road, and thus reducing the traffic flows on that road. There were complications because of other landholders in the area.

Nonetheless, I am pleased to say that we have been able to find a developer who has now received a Crown lease term for the private development of that land. The only costs that will be incurred by the government - and I would not like to be quoted because I am not sure of the exact figure - are in the order of \$40 000 for providing services to one block at the far end which does not belong to the developer. It will enable us to open up other industrial land at the far extremity of that site and it should ensure that that area can now be developed in the appropriate manner.

Bankruptcies in the NT

Mr FINCH to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer to comments made recently by Senator Ted Robertson regarding bankruptcy within the Northern Territory. Does the Chief Minister have any

more realistic economic indicators that might illustrate what the true picture is in the Northern Territory?

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The member is asking the Chief Minister for a matter of opinion. It is a simple matter to draft the question seeking specific information, and he has been in the Assembly long enough to know how to do that. It is not hard.

Alcohol-related Accidents in Central Australia

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware of widespread concern in central Australia concerning the apparent dramatic increase in alcohol-related accidents and, if so, what steps has the government taken concerning these accidents?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the issue of road accidents and fatalities in the central Australian area has reached serious proportions in the last 3 months. Members on both sides of the Assembly share the government's concern and CLP members from Alice Springs have raised it constantly. I know the Minister for Transport and Works and the Road Safety Council have been doing their best to address the issues and stem the damage to the community. The Commissioner of Police has advised me that his department has become involved in an effort to bring people back to their senses and reduce the carnage. It is important for Territorians to know about the results of the police campaign in the Alice Springs area.

From 1 January this year, police have been involved in a campaign to try to reduce the death and accident rate in the Alice Springs area. During the course of this campaign, 1079 traffic infringement notices have been issued and 144 notices have been issued in respect of defective vehicles. You would think that was hardly possible in this day and age. 237 drivers have been subjected to breath analysis and, of those, 197 have been prosecuted for driving with a blood-alcohol level over 0.08. The average breath analysis reading of drivers prosecuted was 0.155.

The message that I have for the community, and particularly the people of Alice Springs, is that there is certainly a level of irresponsibility in the community concerning people's responsibilities to others. Somebody must make a concerted effort to have people acquit their responsibilities in relation to their fellow motorists and pedestrians. I will ask the Commissioner of Police to continue the campaign to get defective vehicles off the road and to ensure that as many people as possible are absolutely sober when they drive. I think it is fair for every citizen in the community to expect that the bloke coming the other way is stone cold sober; it is not an unreasonable expectation because we all want to live. It is time that some members of the community addressed the issue and supported the police, the Road Safety Council and the members of this Assembly who are concerned about the problem. It cannot be allowed to continue.

Minister for Education's Trip to New Zealand

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

On 3 January this year - and I have a note of the statement in front of me now - the Acting Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, in response to a public statement I made, said that the Minister for Education had fully reimbursed the government for the cost of his wife's and daughter's travel. No amount of money was specified but he said quite clearly that my statement had been incorrect and that the minister had fully reimbursed the government for the cost of his wife's and daughter's travel. A letter I received from the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, not the Acting Chief Minister, on the same issue, states very clearly that the reimbursement was not made until 7 January. Could the honourable minister please advise the Assembly who is telling the truth? Was the Acting Chief Minister telling the truth when he said that the amount had been reimbursed on 3 January or did the honourable Minister for Education not reimburse the government until 7 January which is the advice I received in writing from the Chief Minister?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this really is a nonsense. I do not know if the Leader of the Opposition is trying to inflate his ego.

Mr B. Collins: Just answer the question. What is the date on the cheque?

Mr HARRIS: The Leader of the Opposition is just trying to inflate his ego.

Before I answer the question, I want to make it quite clear that there was no need to reimburse this money at all. The travel had been approved by the Chief Minister and I did not have to pay anything.

To answer the question specifically, 3 January was a Friday. That is when the Acting Chief Minister contacted me about this matter. He knew how I felt in relation to travel. I have very strong principles about it and I argue with my own colleagues about it. At the time, I made it quite clear to the Acting Chief Minister that I was certain that I had paid because I had requested that the amount be taken out of my entitlement when I took the overseas trip in January 1985. It was not taken out because the Chief Minister had approved the travel. You cannot blame officers for not following my wish that travel costs be taken out of my entitlement because travel had been approved by the Chief Minister. The Acting Chief Minister contacted me late on Friday 3 January. He was concerned because he was about to attend a press conference. I said: 'Marshall, I cannot absolutely guarantee that I have paid. I am fairly certain and I will check it out on Monday. However, so that you can make a statement to the people, I will make out a cheque right here and now for the amount. If it has not been paid, that cheque will cover it. If it is not required to be paid, then do not worry about it'.

On Monday, we checked out the whole story. It was confirmed that the Chief Minister had approved travel and it was not necessary for me to pay anything to the government. However, I said to the Acting Chief Minister, because he had publicly stated that I had made out a cheque, that the cheque was to be banked. That was on the Tuesday. Really, this is a nonsense. The Leader of the Opposition has an inflated ego. He thinks anything that happens, such as the reappointment of the Administrator, is the result of his being...

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Bonaparte Gulf Gas Project

Mr DALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

I understand that the Northern Territory is currently hosting a visit by a Korean VIP. Does this indicate that we are close to finalising a deal with South Korea with respect to the much-publicised Bonaparte Gulf gas project?

ANSWER

The member's question touches on a matter of considerable importance to the Territory and the development of its resources. I will inform the Assembly of the current situation. The honourable member referred to press reports that a particular gentleman from Korea is in town at present. I think the report gave the impression that we are closer to signing a deal than in fact we are. Exploration over a number of years by a consortium led by Gulf Aquitaine Australian Petroleum Limited has outlined potentially commercial reserves of gas. These reserves lie in 2 structures, the largest one being Petrel which stretches - unfortunately, because it complicates the matter administratively - across Northern Territory Western Australian offshore waters. The other smaller deposit is in Western Australian administered waters.

The joint venturers are very keen to develop this resource but, as in all commercial ventures, first they must establish a market and tie up long-term contracts as a basis for the enormous developmental costs involved. The total cost of the field, if it is to be developed, would be in the order of \$US3000m. To raise funds of that order, you must have contracts for the sale of the product. In the world-wide natural gas market, the roles of governments and companies are very closely interwoven. All governments of importing and exporting countries take a very close interest in the activities of companies which are developing resources. The Territory government, with the agreement and support of the Commonwealth and the Western Australian governments, is supporting the joint venturers in this project in establishing markets in the Asian region for the gas. Following a visit to Japan and Korea by the Chief Minister in May last year and further visits by myself and departmental officers to Korea and Japan, we managed to develop some good relationships with persons in important positions there.

General Kim, the gentleman who is in town at present and whom I am pleased to welcome to the Northern Territory, is President of the Korea Mining Promotion Corporation which forms part of the Ministry of Resources and Energy in the Korean government. This group provides technical and resource assessment of projects both within Korea and overseas. The group is also responsible for advice to government in regard to public sector investment in resource development outside Korea. General Kim Bok-dong has just visited the coal mine in central Queensland where a Korean equity investment has been made in conjunction with a sales agreement for selling coal to Korea.

With regard to the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf project, we are still a long way from signing contracts and actually commencing development. Projects of this size take many years of planning. Permit NTP28 has been renewed recently after the joint venturers made commitments to the drilling of an important well, Petrel No 4 in the Petrel structure, to define the deliverability parameters of that deposit. Further testing may be required after Petrel No 4

is drilled. The total cost of that well and testing is estimated to be between \$20m and \$30m. Hopefully, that will be done this year.

Contracts are unlikely before late next year at the very earliest and visits by representatives of General Kim's stature from possible market countries hopefully will continue. The obtaining of firsthand information on the potential of the project and support for development within the Northern Territory can only help us when it comes to decisions on where an importing country will buy its gas from next. The development of resources such as those in the Bonaparte Gulf are essential to the long-term economic viability of the Territory. It would have enormous economic spin-offs for the Northern Territory even though it is a deposit owned by the Commonwealth because it is offshore from the Northern Territory and Western Australia. The government will do all it can to promote this development, including hosting General Kim's visit to the Northern Territory which I hope he finds enjoyable and informative.

Westpac Loan to Mudginberri

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

In August last year, did he personally approach the Westpac Bank and ask that bank to provide a loan of \$2m to Mudginberri Pty Ltd? Did he personally approach the Westpac Bank and ask it to advance that loan in order to immediately repay almost \$1m that had been advanced secretly by ADMA - almost three-quarters of its entire budget - specifically because he was concerned about the political embarrassment that would be caused by that matter being discovered in this Assembly?

ANSWER

No.

Water Pressure in Alice Springs

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware that, during the particularly hot summer months, residents of both industrial and residential lots and Aboriginal camps on the northern edge of Alice Springs experience a severe reduction in water pressure and, if so, can he advise what steps could be undertaken by his department to boost that pressure and when such work could be completed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer to the first part of the honourable member's question is yes. I advise the member that there is an item on the current 1985-86 capital works program which provides for augmentation of water supply to the northern zone of Alice Springs. That work includes the installation of a booster pumping station on the Stuart Highway opposite Mount Nancy, together with a header tank. Obviously, it is designed to boost pressure in the northern zone of Alice Springs, including the Dixon Road subdivision. It is expected that that work will start in May and be completed by September.

Study in Communications in NT

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he confirm that his government commissioned a Mr Vanderstar to carry out a study into communications in the Northern Territory, including the feasibility of setting up a Northern Territory government satellite-based telephone system that would service Territory government departments but not private citizens in the rural areas of the Territory? When will this report be tabled in this Assembly and, in the meantime, will he quantify the extent of the damage that he has already done to rural residents by signalling to Telecom that a large part of the expected customer base for the DRCS may in fact not eventuate? Further, has he received information that the 1988 completion date for DRCS is in danger of blowing out to whenever because of his actions?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I welcome the question from the honourable member. He has picked on something that is dear to my heart so I will settle in for a good reply. In case it has escaped his attention, I would like to put on record the fact that I have been at war with Telecom for 10 years for its failure and incapacity to provide people outside the major centres with a reasonable communications system. The situation is just about the same today as it was when I was elected to this Assembly. Telecom has a lot to answer for. What really gives me the stirks with this organisation is that it thinks that it is doing us a favour. We are not Australians who are entitled to something that everyone else has; we are mugs who live in the bush and, if we want to live here, we put up with what we get. I do not accept that.

Mr Ede: Answer the question.

Mr TUXWORTH: The honourable member for Stuart might accept it but I do not. I believe that the development of the Territory is dependent...

Mr Ede: You have put it back 10 years.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, if he would just be quiet for a moment. He took 40 seconds to ask the question. I will spend a few minutes replying to it for him.

This country will develop when we can all communicate. That is essential. Only then will we be getting somewhere. We have to get the Commonwealth and Telecom into the starting stalls for that. Let me go back a bit further for the benefit of the member because he is a new boy at this. When people like myself and the member for Victoria River started pressing Telecom for remote area services, it said: 'We will take you off the radio telephone and put you on the microwave system. If you live within 59 km of the microwave system and you pay us \$35 000, we will give you a telephone'. Many people in my electorate said: 'Great, we will do that. Give us the system'. Do you know what happened, Mr Speaker? It bought 7 sets a year. Even now not everybody who is entitled to be on the system is on it. That is the first point.

Telecom then said: 'You do not have to worry about the microwave system. We have a fantastic new system called the Digital Radio Concentrator System and we will bring services to everybody in the outback'. I said: 'Great, tell me how it works'. Telecom said: 'We will run a system like a microwave system

through the Northern Territory. You will be able to have voice and radio signal, but not high speed transmission of data nor many other things'.

Mr Ede: You can!

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, at the time, you could not. If it can do it today, it has come a long way, but it still has a long way to go.

In 1980, I asked Telecom to run the DRCS through the Barkly Tablelands. It told me that, because it was a prototype, the Barkly was the wrong place to put it. It could not do it in the Northern Territory but it could do it in Queensland. Then it decided that it would run the prototype system from Darwin to the Daly River. What do we have? We have nothing. It still has not performed. The excuses do not count; people are entitled to be able to communicate. That is all they are asking for. Many of them are not even arguing about the cost of it; they simply want the service.

While all this was happening, AUSSAT came on the scene. You do not have to be terribly smart to realise that the satellite will put microwaves, DRCS and the radio telephone system out of business. It will provide a service to people anywhere. It also has 2 television channels, 3 radio channels and voice high speed data transmission.

Mr Speaker, the fight with Telecom dates back at least 3 years. It started with the big convention in Alice Springs which was attended by rural people from all over Australia. They told Mr Duffy that he would not get away with scrapping the satellite because too many of them wanted it. At that time, the Canadians had 4 satellites, the Indonesians 2, and India one. We were still thinking about whether we ought to have one. Good God, what sort of flat earth mentality do these people have? Eventually, we persuaded the Commonwealth to agree to provide the satellite. Thus, at least we can have radio and television in remote areas. We are still fighting about whether we will have a commercial signal in the central Australian zone, but at least we receive the ABC, and that is working well.

Next, the Commonwealth informed us that we can have a telephone system off the satellite only if Telecom operates it, and Telecom does not want to operate it because it will interfere with its terrestrial system. Thus, it does not want anybody to have it. We told Telecom and the Commonwealth that, if they do not want to install a Telecom system using the satellite, that is all right. They are yesterday's people and we understand that. We are building for tomorrow, and what we want is a system whereby the government in the Northern Territory can use the satellite for its internal communications. Perhaps that is not ideal, but it is better than not being able to communicate at all.

Mr Ede: Always look after yourself.

Mr TUXWORTH: That is what I am doing. They have a system which ensures that the rest of the community cannot communicate! We are trying to break through that bottleneck by forcing the issue. If the Commonwealth government and Telecom are determined that the rest of this community will not be able to communicate, we cannot stop them, but we are telling them that we want the government people in the community to be able to communicate, whether they be nurses at Docker River or stock inspectors at Argadargada. Our staff needs to communicate with government.

Let us now look at the cost to the Northern Territory government of current communication systems. These include the RFDS system, the School of the Air, the Health Department communication system, the Transport and Works system and the Primary Production system. We have at least 6 systems providing communications to everybody in the Northern Territory because Telecom will not use the satellite. We are doing the best we can, but what limits us is that we have yesterday's equipment and we cannot make it serve today's community.

I am very interested in the proposition of the member opposite that the Northern Territory government should sit on its hands and let Telecom tie us to a tree and beat us to death because it does not want us interfering with its golden way of doing things. Here is a new signal for him: we will not rest until this matter is settled! Territorians are entitled to communicate - whoever they are and wherever they are. It is not for Telecom or the federal government to tell us to hop it because it does not suit it.

Release of Vanderstar Report

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

When will the government release the Vanderstar Report so that everyone can have an intelligent look at the propositions that the government is putting to us?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I regret that I omitted this from the answer. I will not start from the beginning again. The Vanderstar Report is before Cabinet. As soon as Cabinet has approved its release, it will be released. It is a very comprehensive and far-reaching document. It has tremendous beneficial implications for the people of the Territory. You will not be disappointed with it, although you might not like the way they want to do it if you stick to the Telecom doctrine.

Workshop Accident at Darwin High School

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is he aware of a recent workshop accident at Darwin High School resulting in serious injury to a student? What action is the Department of Education taking in relation to industrial safety in high schools and senior colleges?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware of the incident to which the honourable member refers. It is a matter of concern to the government, particularly in view of the fact that the secondary colleges will have more sophisticated machinery. There are definite guidelines that need to be followed.

One of the problems in some of the Aboriginal communities has been raised with me by the member for Victoria River on a number of occasions. Asking students to wear shoes when they normally do not wear shoes can create a dangerous situation. Such issues are being examined by the government. We hope to send instructions out to schools very soon.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr B. COLLINS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, under standing order 83, I wish to bring a matter of privilege to the attention of the Assembly. I believe that the honourable Minister for Primary Production has misled this Assembly categorically and specifically. I asked the honourable Minister for Primary Production a very straightforward question:

'Has he personally contacted the Westpac Bank in order to assist in the securing of a loan of \$2m for Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd so that part of that \$2m loan could be used to repay to ADMA a sum of almost \$1m that had been advanced by ADMA to Mudginberri Pty Ltd'.

The answer that the honourable minister gave could not have been clearer. The honourable minister said, 'No', and sat down.

Mr Speaker, a prima facie case certainly exists, until it is investigated further, that the minister has committed the most serious breach of privilege a minister can engage in. Mr Speaker, I have an official document, dated 16 August 1985, from the Westpac Bank. All I can say in respect of this matter of privilege is that either the senior officer referred to in this Westpac memo is lying or the Minister for Primary Production is lying. It has to be one or the other.

Mr Speaker, let me make it clear that I intend to make this the subject of a more substantive debate in this Assembly at a later stage during these sittings. I am not prepared to make this documented evidence available at this stage because I do not expect you to reach a decision on this now. It will be made available in due course.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Leader of the Opposition is aware of standing order 87 to which he may care to refer.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, could you refresh my memory on standing order 87?

Mr SPEAKER: Standing order 87 reads: 'Any member complaining to the Assembly of a statement in a newspaper, book or other publication as a breach of privilege shall lay on the table a copy of the newspaper, book or other publication containing the statement in question and shall be prepared to give the name of the printer or publisher'. I suggest that would pertain to the document to which you are referring.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I am certainly prepared to do that. I will quote from the document. The memo is dated 16 August 1985. The subject of the memo is Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd and the matter relates to the Jabiru branch of the Westpac Bank which handles the account for Mudginberri Station. The document is signed by A.D. Moore, Regional Manager of the bank. Among other things, it says:

'Mudginberri Station. Subject - overdraft facility \$2m. On Friday 23rd last, Group Account Executive, Bruce Cowan, telephoned me to say that Northern Territory Primary Production Minister, Steve Hatton, had telephoned him to inquire whether the bank would be prepared to assist Mudginberri Station with an advance of \$2m against a government guarantee. Mudginberri is embroiled in a longstanding and bitter clash with the Meatworkers Union in respect of pay and

working conditions. Although contracts for substantial amounts are held with Taiwanese and West German interests, the company has been unable to export any meat due to federal meat inspectors refusing to cross union picket lines. Accordingly, the company has been denied cash flow and its operation has been propped up by a number of interests with the National Farmers' Federation at the forefront.

Latterly, the NT government, through the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority, ADMA, has lent support by advancing moneys against meat stocks as beasts are slaughtered. Stocks are held in various cold stores in Darwin awaiting inspection by federal meat inspectors to enable export to proceed. To this point, ADMA has advanced approximately \$1m but the Legislative Assembly is now in session and the government is anxious to have advances refinanced to avoid any embarrassment at question time.

Following discussions yesterday and today with ADMA and Primary Production officials, we are asked to provide an overdraft limit of \$2m against a Northern Territory government guarantee. Short form of guarantee, but preserves the usual safeguards; for example, on demand and includes an interest payment for 12 months. Term 12 months. Interest rate: ILR plus 0.25%. Establishment fee: \$5000.

Our current exposure is in thousands: overdraft limit \$370 000; leasing \$64 000; personal loan directors J. and J. Pendarvis \$91 000; assessed exposure \$525 000'.

It then goes on to list a number of the personal holdings of the Pendarvis' which I will not read into the Hansard.

'Relevant act, under which guarantee is given, provides for government to take effective and adequate security. While they will hold the cold store warrants, the legal view is that title could be challenged and, accordingly, the government would prefer to take a floating charge ahead of our own over the company's assets. I have indicated that this would be acceptable on the clear understanding that the government acknowledges the on demand nature of the guarantees to be executed. The side agreement between ADMA and the company provides for proceeds of export meat sales to be applied, firstly, in reduction of the bank debt and accrued interest fees. In its own right, given resolution of the union problems, the company's operations are extremely viable with buffalo meat being keenly sought by overseas buyers. Trading results for 1983-84 show that 1984 results were again affected by union problems with the product being severely interrupted in the early part of the season'.

It then goes on to list further financial matters which, because of their reference to the Pendarvis family personally, I will not read into the Hansard.

'The connection with Mudginberri is long standing and valued, providing good free credit funds at 1983. Best figures for September-December inclusive were in excess of \$400m'.

I want to say that I had no intention of releasing this information now. I intended to release it in a major debate at a later date during these sittings, but I was completely taken aback by the minister's answer. I will finish reading the memo:

'While we are mindful of the inherent political overtones in this proposal, nonetheless we are well secured, and we are assisting an established customer at the behest of the Northern Territory government whose business we are actively pursuing. Group Account Executive, Bruce Cowan, has indicated verbally that credit risk of Northern Territory government guarantee has been accepted for this proposal. In confirmation of our earlier telephone conversation, the NT government would like this facility drawn down today if possible. Could you please indicate by FAX whether the proposal is acceptable. I understand that the Group Account Executive has informed General Manager Corporate Banking of the proposed borrowing in view of the political nature of the request. Group Account Executive, Mr Cowan, in confirmation of our telephone conversation.

Signed: A.D. Moore, Regional Manager of the Westpac Bank'.

Mr Speaker, the reason I have taken some trouble to read out most of that memo is that honourable members will appreciate that the Regional Manager of the Westpac Bank, certainly on a prima facie basis, could be considered to be telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in this document which is to his own branch in Darwin. One would hardly consider that he would do otherwise.

The thrust of this document is specific and very clear: an urgent personal request was made to the bank by the Minister for Primary Production; the loan was for \$2m; and the draw down was required that day for the urgent purpose of defraying a \$1m advance to ADMA. I think I am pretty right in saying that that constitutes about 0.75% of the entire budget for that organisation. Further documents show quite clearly that, immediately that draw down was completed, almost \$1m of that \$2m loan was given to ADMA to extinguish the advances that it had made.

Mr Speaker, I do not think that there is any need to table at this time, in support of my allegation of a breach of privilege, any of the other documents that I have here. I might as well give the minister and the Chief Minister fair warning now - although I think they may already have the message - that the information that I have will be the subject of a very substantive motion at a later stage in these sittings.

Mr Speaker, it is clear - and I do not think that anyone would be foolish enough to deny the authenticity of this document once he sees it - that this Westpac document contains, in very detailed and clear terms, a complete rebuttal of the answer the minister gave in response to my question this morning in the Assembly. As I said, either the regional manager of the Westpac Bank is not telling the truth in his document to his own bank or the Minister for Primary Production has grossly misled this Assembly this morning.

Mr Speaker, in respect of a personal responsibility, and let us not talk about public servants in this case because that does not apply, if it is demonstrated that these documents are accurate and that the minister's statement to this Assembly was false, the minister knows full well that he has no option but to resign. Mr Speaker, I refer this matter to you for your consideration. Obviously, I do not expect you to report on it immediately.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have listened to the Leader of the Opposition. I will give the matter my consideration and I will report back to the Assembly, pursuant to standing order 84, on my intentions in respect of this matter.

Bridge on Todd River

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When is construction of the bridge across the Todd River south of Alice Springs likely to commence and could he further advise the estimated time for this construction?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, work is expected to commence on the Ross Highway bridge in April. It is due for completion in March 1987. Roadworks will also be undertaken in that area at the same time. For the benefit of honourable members, the value of the bridge works is \$1.7m.

Draft Alice Springs Structure Plan

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

A draft Alice Springs structure plan was made available for public comment in June 1985. This plan contained details of options for the future development of Alice Springs. Would he advise why a final decision on that future direction for Alice Springs development has not yet been announced?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member is correct that there was a draft structure plan produced in June of 1985. That draft plan was referred to a joint planning group in Alice Springs. The group comprises a number of service organisations such as the Department of Transport and Works, NTEC, Telecom and others involved in the provision of services. It is typical of joint planning groups in other towns in the Northern Territory. The group prepared recommendations to me. If my memory is correct, in September last year it recommended the Undoolya option. This was 1 of 3 options considered by the group.

The Undoolya option is the development which extends through Undoolya Station to the east of Alice Springs. In that area, there is what is known as a seismic array. I do not know the fine details, but I believe it measures earthquakes and earth tremors, and there are rumours that it also measures nuclear blasts. It is obviously a matter of significant importance to the federal government and, I understand, the United States government. Any development in that direction could not be completed unless the seismic array was moved. Whilst the planning group's recommendations indicated that there probably would be no problems in moving it, I did not feel I had enough facts before me to put a recommendation to Cabinet. I have asked the Department of Lands to engage urgently in negotiations with the federal government to ascertain whether it is possible to move the seismic array and, if so, within what time frame. In making recommendations to Cabinet, I want to be assured that the seismic array is capable of being moved so that any recommendations to accept the Undoolya option can be implemented.

The matter has particular importance because, if the Undoolya option is chosen, money for design and capital works will need to be committed within the next 12 months to enable headworks to be provided prior to release of subdivisions. That would necessitate that the seismic array be moved early. We are negotiating currently with the federal government, and I hope to obtain

suitable responses following the verbal indications we have received. When that happens, I will be in a position to refer the matter to Cabinet for final decision. We have time to carry out those negotiations, given the very advanced state of development and planning for subdivisional release in Alice Springs. This has enabled us to solve substantially the problems relating to availability of housing and residential land in Alice Springs.

Allegations Concerning Matter of Privilege

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

Are the allegations made by the Leader of the Opposition in referring to a matter of privilege correct?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Lands is entitled to make a personal explanation after question time.

Travel by Ministers

Mr B. COLLINS to TREASURER

On 16 June last year, the Treasurer announced that the Northern Territory government was severely curtailing ministerial travel overseas as a cost saving measure. As a result of that public statement, I put a series of questions on notice to the Treasurer regarding overseas travel and have received replies. As a result of the questions I raised, the Treasurer wrote to me on 3 February 1986 and said that, in the light of my interest in greater details on these matters, he had instructed staff from his department to investigate the practicability of amending the accounting system to record in greater detail individual travel costs incurred in the future.

Mr Speaker, I sought information on the total cost of those overseas trips, including accommodation which had been paid for by using American Express cards, and was advised that that information was simply not available as the accounting procedures did not provide for it. Could he advise the Assembly if accounting procedures have been put into place that will enable the actual cost to the taxpayers of overseas travel by ministers and public servants of the Northern Territory government to be determined?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, last year, the Leader of the Opposition raised a very valid point: that some detail on trips was difficult to pinpoint even though there was absolutely no doubt that the travel was undertaken by officers or ministers on behalf of the government on bona fide business. As a result of his representation and interest in the matter, I have asked the Secretary of the Department of the Chief Minister, Mr Morris, to put in place procedures that will enable us to identify to the last detail who travelled, where they travelled, what money was spent on fares and accommodation and other expenses so that questions of this nature can be answered.

Rice Receival Depot

Mr MCCARTHY to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

During last year, the minister stated to a meeting of rice growers at Tortilla Flats that a rice receival depot would be built for their use. Has action been taken on this matter and, if so, when will the rice receival depot be provided?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member is quite correct in recalling that there was considerable discussion at a meeting of rice growers at Tortilla Flats about the practicability and future direction of rice research and the future potential of the industry generally. It is pleasing to note that, after many years of frustration in the Northern Territory, including failures which are almost folklore, the current practice of developing the rice industry with small, owner-operator farmers is now proceeding well. Figures show that the Northern Territory is growing rice, particularly for consumption in pelletised form as stockfeed. There is a considerable demand for rice for stockfeed. Presently, demand is considerably in excess of production. Consequently, we are interested in encouraging the expansion of stockfeed rice production. With that as a base, we can then proceed to consider growing rice for human consumption. That, however, is some way down the road.

To assist that industry, as with other grain production in the Northern Territory, the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority is looking at ways in which we can provide storage handling and marketing facilities for grain growers. As the member pointed out, ADMA undertook to construct grain handling facilities, specifically for rice, in the Tortilla Flats area.

Subsequently, one of the farmers, a Mrs J. Whatley, wrote on 18 November last year suggesting that a suitable site for the facility might be at the 60-mile farm on the Stuart Highway. I had suggested previously that we would construct the facility at Tortilla Flats Research Farm. Since then, ADMA and DPP officers have conducted an investigation into present and projected future needs of the industry with the object of enabling the board of ADMA to make recommendations on the scale, funding and siting of the facilities. The principal issue is to determine the most practical location and, following that, the size and type of facilities that should be installed.

A report by officers was considered by the ADMA board at its meeting on 25 February this year. The board decided that more information was needed before it would be prepared to make recommendations to the government involving the establishment of a permanent facility with attendant capital expenditure. Accordingly, officers have been asked to consider and report to the board on a number of alternatives for the permanent installation. In the meantime, I can advise that the board has directed the General Manager of ADMA to make arrangements for short-term measures to provide receipt and storage facilities for the 1986 crop. I understand that a report is currently being prepared detailing the proposed arrangements for this year. I understand that the honourable member for Victoria River will be attending a field day this Saturday at Tortilla Flats. I undertake to obtain more specific details for the member so that he will be in a position to advise his constituents in the Tortilla Flats area about progress on the matter.

Chief Minister's Method of Paying for Accommodation

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

All office holders of this Assembly are provided with corporate American Express cards, including myself. I am well aware that the Chief Minister will be able to answer this question. In respect of the Chief Minister's own travel - and I ask this in a general sense and do not expect a detailed answer - is it his practice when on overseas and interstate trips to pay for his accommodation with his American Express corporate card or does he seek reimbursement by way of travelling allowance?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I try to book any expenses that I incur in conducting government business on the American Express card. I do that as a matter of practice because it is convenient. There are some problems with that because, believe it or not, some places do not take American Express cards. I find myself using my personal Diners Card or borrowing money from somebody to pay the bill. Generally, I put all my expenses on Amex. I must say that, from time to time, in certain circumstances, members of the staff put on their Amex cards all the costs of the group that may be travelling. That comes back to the point that the member raised earlier. Quite often somebody will pay for the accommodation for 3 people in a hotel. When you break that down, it is not a fair record of individual expenses incurred because it was all due to be paid by the government. There was no funny business about it. The answer is yes.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I thank the Chief Minister for his advice that, in general, he uses his American Express card for accommodation. In response to the questions that I asked about travelling allowance for office holders, information has been provided to me which shows the following. In respect of the financial year 1982-83, no information was provided. It is a matter I will be taking up at a later stage. In the financial year 1983-84, the information provided to me - and it has taken me 9 months to get it - is that, in respect of travelling allowance paid to office holders, including myself, the average for most ministers was around \$3300. My own travelling allowance for that year was \$3395. In respect of the Special Minister for Constitutional Development, the amount received in that year in tax free travelling allowance was \$13 314. A clear explanation for that was provided in the answer. The reason is that 'the minister resides in Alice Springs and was required to travel to Darwin on ministerial business on a general basis'. I accept that as perfectly reasonable.

Mr Speaker, in respect of the Chief Minister and Treasurer, in that same year, as the then Minister for Mines and Energy, he received the sum of \$22 315 in tax free travelling allowances for which no explanation has been provided in the answer given to me. Can the Chief Minister advise this Assembly if the major portion of the sum I have specified for travelling allowance in that year - and I have received additional information in respect of his overseas travel that year; this is a separate amount...

Mr Tuxworth: This is 1982-83?

Mr B. COLLINS: It is 1983-84.

In respect of the amount of \$22 315 received that year, and for which no explanation has been provided, could the Chief Minister advise the Assembly if the major portion of the travelling allowance received in that year, which involved at the mean rate payment for 280 days of travel, was to cover the cost of accommodation in Darwin or if any of that amount was in respect of payments for accommodation for nights spent in Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I must confess that my memory does not go back to 1983-84. I do not have it on the top of my head but I am more than happy to provide the honourable member with details of the information that he wants.

Mr B. COLLINS: I wish to ask a supplementary question, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Wanguri.

Aboriginal Legal Aid Clients

Mr DALE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Late last year, I asked the Attorney-General to write to his federal counterpart seeking information on the means testing of clients by Aboriginal Legal Aid. What is the nature of any reply received? I think it has cost the taxpayer a bit more money than that referred to in the previous question.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as a result of representations from the honourable member, I wrote to 2 federal ministers, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, on the subject of means testing Aboriginal Legal Aid clients. I received a reply from the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on 17 February. I would like to read 3 paragraphs which will explain the federal government's attitude:

'The matter of means testing Aboriginal Legal Aid was addressed by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs in its 1980 report on Aboriginal Legal Aid and, more recently, by a Mr Harkins whom I engaged in 1983 to conduct an inquiry into Aboriginal Legal Aid. While the majority of the standing committee supported a means test, a dissenting view was that this is best left to individual legal services.

Mr Harkins concluded that the imposition of fees, or a means test generally, would hinder accessibility and be uneconomic to administer but he proposed that consideration should be given to a means test with the provision of contributions in substantial or costly matters. The income of most Aboriginals would fall below all but the most stringent means test and it is probable that the fees collected from the few who are able to pay would not cover the cost of administering a means test. Aboriginal legal services are prohibited by law from charging fees for legal services although they could charge a referral fee, or the solicitors they employ or refer to could impose such a charge.

The imposition of a means test in respect of Aboriginal legal aid is kept under review but, until the circumstances of Aboriginals improve to the point where sufficient numbers are able to pay or contribute towards the cost of advice and representation, the introduction of a general means test would not be justified. In the meantime, Mr Harkin's proposal for means testing substantial and expensive matters appears to have some merit'.

Mr Speaker, it appears from that letter that the federal government certainly is not of a mind at present to means test anyone for Aboriginal legal aid.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Would honourable members resume their seats.

Honourable members, I have been considering the matter of questions being delivered to ministers and this morning's actions lead me to make a brief explanation as to my position as far as question time is concerned.

Briefly, I try to allow all members to have a question during question time and, in particular, I allow the opposition special ability to group their questions through the Leader of the Opposition. Why I am raising this is that we do not very often get supplementary questions requested but, in this particular instance, the Leader of the Opposition is asking for supplementary questions which is provided for in the standing orders. Obviously, there is an arrangement with the Leader of the Opposition and members of his party that questions are grouped through him. I still hold the view that questions

should be allowed to all members who wish to ask questions. If members think there is any bias at all, I can quite properly explain the matter to them at a later time.

Television Licence Application

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

In respect of the remote commercial television licence application before the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal hearing in Alice Springs, has he any knowledge of an agreement being entered into by an Aboriginal organisation and Television Capricornia, NTD8, with respect to their applications?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the issue of the IMPARJ-NTD8 application before the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal is a very important one for us all because, if it fails, we are unlikely to have a commercial television signal in the Northern Territory, and that would be most regrettable. There is presently a fair amount of infighting between respective groups as to who should get the licence and for what reason. The member for Ludmilla has raised again the importance to the Northern Territory of finding a solution to the impasse.

At the moment, we have a very serious situation. The tribunal is holding its hearings into the granting of a licence to all the areas of the Northern Territory, not just central Australia. Some very interesting facts have now come before the hearings. The first is the new structure of voting rights that relate to IMPARJ. At the hearings last August, IMPARJ made much of its democratic record. It said then that CAAMA held 1 of the 9 seats on the board and the other members represented the Aboriginal communities. Yesterday in the hearings, it was revealed that IMPARJ has been totally restructured. Instead of having 1 out of 9 votes, CAAMA has emerged with 12 out of 21 - an absolute majority. IMPARJ has moved from being a democratic organisation to an autocratic one. Initially, there was some value in this submission and members will recall that, at the hearing last August, the Territory government did not take sides. We treated everybody evenhandedly. What we have now, however, is another burgeoning Aboriginal bureaucracy, one of the main purposes of which seems to be to keep white advisers in jobs and other white advisers in healthy consultancies.

That brings me to the matter that was raised on the radio this morning, which is implicit in the the member's question. It concerns the \$2m that has been offered by the Bicentennial Authority to IMPARJ. I find it strange that CAAMA is depending on this money when prominent Aboriginal leaders such as the Chairman of the Northern Land Council, Gallarrwuy Yunupingu, have said that 1988 will be a year of confrontation, not celebration. Mr Yunupingu's statement was made because the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs was not prepared to introduce a national land rights bill. We now have a very serious situation developing. I believe it is important that the tribunal comes to grips with it as soon as possible.

As a result of yesterday's discussions, a new body has emerged. It involves United Australia Television which was set up recently. It has the leaders of a number of Aboriginal communities on its board and it seems to have real support from the Aboriginal members of the community. They appear to have the majority say in this company's affairs. It is my understanding that this company and the Channel 8 organisation have had discussions about

providing Aboriginal services over the whole of the Territory if Capricornia Television wins the licence for its commercial service. I think it is important to remember that this application is for a commercial television licence. It will not need to be funded at the taxpayers' expense. Obviously, IMPARJ is relying totally on taxpayers' funds for its continued involvement. I believe that the combining of Channel 8's organisation with the new Aboriginal company called United Australia Television will produce a group of people who could perhaps be successful in obtaining a licence from the tribunal.

As I have said before, the government is more than happy to support the successful applicants before the tribunal, provided that they have the expertise and the common support of Territorians for what they are doing. Obviously, the IMPARJ organisation is not representative of Territory Aboriginals and is not representative of Territorians and it does not have the financial capacity to carry out the work that would be expected of it. I am encouraged by the prospect of Channel 8 and United Australian Television getting together to form a group that will be successful in front of the tribunal. When that happens, the government will be happy to talk with it about how we can become involved in using the satellite, particularly for educational purposes.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

This is a repetition of the previous question I put to him. However, in respect of the financial year concerned, it may be a little more fresh in his memory. Information has been provided to me for the financial year 1984-85. I draw members' attention to the Chief Minister's previous answer that it is his practice to use American Express cards for the majority of his accommodation costs. In the financial year 1984-85, the average for most ministers was again around \$4000. My own travelling allowance for that year was \$3295. Two other ministers, Mr Robertson and Mr Hanrahan, had a slightly higher travelling allowance for which an explanation has been provided which I accept: they are ministers residing in Alice Springs needing to travel to Darwin. In the same year, at the top of the poll again in respect of receipt of tax free travelling allowances, the Chief Minister received \$17 761. Could the Chief Minister advise the Assembly if the majority of that sum of money was in respect of accommodation costs in Darwin or if any part of that \$17 761 was in respect of accommodation costs in Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as I said to the Leader of the Opposition a moment ago, I do not have the chits in my pocket. I am more than happy to provide him with the information that he wants. He is asking questions on detail. I will obtain the details and give them to him.

Bankruptcies in the NT

Mr FINCH to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, my question relates to recent claims by one of the Northern Territory's federal representatives, Senator Ted Robertson. He claimed the rate of bankruptcies within the Northern Territory was abnormally high as a result of Northern Territory government policies. Does the Chief Minister

have any specific evidence by way of economic indicators to substantiate such claims?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that is a very important question for 2 reasons. From his public announcements, the senator would seem to live in a different place to the rest of us. Later this morning, the opposition will proceed to discuss a matter of public importance: the problems that are being faced by the Northern Territory due to the federal government's failure to achieve and maintain a rational and ongoing economic development policy. Thus, the opposition is also appreciative of the problems that are being forced on the Territory by the federal government.

The other day, Senator Robertson outlined how serious things were because of a number of bankruptcies that he identified. He forgot to say that most of them were personal bankruptcies that were caused by people who misused credit cards. He did not say that in the press release because it would have destroyed a good story. But there are many other good indicators that would show that the Territory is in pretty good health.

Between June 1984 and June 1985, the Territory's population increased by 5000, an annual increase of 3.6%. The labour force from February 1985 to February 1986 rose from 59 700 to 68 500, an increase of 14.8%. Average weekly earnings in the Territory, from September 1984 to September 1985, rose from \$334 to \$347, a 4% increase.

Prices in Darwin were very encouraging. While the national average rose by 8.2% for the year, the Northern Territory increased by 8.1%. The total value of work done in the building industry in 12 months to the September quarter of 1985 was \$82m, an increase of 35.7% on the previous year. At the same time, commencements on new dwellings increased by 6.9% to 660 dwellings. Completions of new dwellings increased by 21.3% to 670 dwellings.

A broad indicator on how a community is going is the use of concrete in the community. In the 12 months to November 1985, the production of concrete in the Northern Territory increased by 25.6% to 259 000 m³. The national increase was 10%. During 1985, 7808 new vehicles were registered in the Territory and this was a 14.9% increase on the 6779 purchased in 1984. In Australia, for the same period, new registrations increased by only 8%.

A broad indicator that is used by people in establishing how a community is going is telephone connections. Telephone connections in the Territory increased to a total of 70 931 in February this year, an increase of 14.9% on the same period last year. Mineral production in the Northern Territory for 1984-85 was \$872m, an increase of 21.9% on the previous year. Private mineral exploration rose from \$24m in 1984-85 to \$28m.

The cattle exports in the Northern Territory increased from 310 000 head in 1984 to 336 000 head in 1985, an increase of 8.5%. Fishing was fascinating. The government has put a lot of effort into the fishing industry and it is interesting to note that fin fish landings in the Territory have increased from 1782 t in 1984 to 2120 t in 1985, an 18.9% increase. Prawn landings rose by 50% for that year.

On the agricultural front, which is a very important one for the Northern Territory because we are moving towards trying to feed ourselves and not be

dependent on other people, the planting in the last year was 21.9% above the 1983-84 level. The production on that planting rose by 21.6%, and the value of the production increased by 27%.

On the horticultural side, we had a 116% increase in the value of exports of horticultural product out of the Northern Territory between 1984 and 1985. It rose from \$1.5m to \$3.372m. Not only that, nursery production has increased by 42.7% in exports out of the Northern Territory.

On the tourist front, an interesting figure indicates how the Territory fared. The total room occupancy rate in the NT for the September quarter 1985 was 73.7%. That is not bad compared with 69% in the corresponding quarter in 1984. Takings rose to \$10.2m from \$8.1m in the previous period, an increase of 25%.

Mr Speaker, there are a range of other figures that I could provide for honourable members but I will just say to the Assembly that there is a tremendous opportunity being developed in the Northern Territory. The Ted Robertsons of the world and the doomsdayers of the world will not set the Northern Territory back with their continual forecasts of how bad things will be.

Rural Electricity Schemes

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Are there any plans to review the \$5000 NTEC program in the rural area in view of certain anomalies that have arisen in this scheme?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware that the rural electrification scheme is certainly of very great interest to the honourable members' constituents. She is aware that there are 2 schemes in operation at present. The first one is called the rural distribution funding scheme which was introduced on 31 July 1984. This policy relates specifically to unserviced allotments in the Darwin rural area which had been approved prior to the Planning Act of 1979. This scheme was introduced to rectify anomalies in the previous rural electrification scheme and provides for NTEC to electrify progressively all the pre-1979 allotments over a 3-year period. Consumers are required to pay a \$5000 contribution and various repayment options are available - namely, a 5% discount for cash payment, a 2-year interest-free payment period or repayments over a longer period with such payments attracting interest. There are no plans to review the rural distribution funding scheme which will continue until all allotments are serviced and this is expected to be by the end of 1986. That scheme applied to a specific number of blocks in the rural area at the time.

The second scheme, which relates to extensions of supply throughout the Northern Territory, is called the Distribution System Policy which was introduced in January 1985. This scheme involves the basic contribution of \$5000 depending on the consumer's load. Due to the complexities of supply arrangements, some teething problems have been experienced with the scheme, particularly where they relate to excessive headwork costs associated with expansion of existing loads in the system. I point out that the basic \$5000 contribution is to remain. We do not propose to increase that amount by the inflation figure which was the original intention. We will leave it at \$5000.

I have asked NTEC to undertake the review, particularly to address some anomalies which have come to light. It may be that aspects of the system will need to be contracted a little for it to be feasible in that, when people pay the \$5000, they get electricity connected without fail in a reasonable period. I will take the review of the scheme back to my Cabinet colleagues and I will inform the member when the review has been completed and what decisions have been made.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

At any time since the beginning of 1982, has he reimbursed to the Northern Territory sums of money in respect of travelling allowance received by him in the financial years that I have mentioned this morning in question time involving some thousands of dollars? If so - and I do not expect a detailed answer - can he provide the Legislative Assembly with the figure to the nearest \$1000 and can he advise the Assembly as to when that was done?

ANSWER

The answer to the member's question is yes. I do not remember the exact year but it would be some 4 or 5 years ago. The amount of money was in the order of \$7000 to \$9000. I will get the details for the member so that there can be no suggestion of any scurrilous activity.

I would just like to make it plain that I am quite happy to table all the facts in relation to this matter. The facts are simple. At that time, my place of residence was designated as Tennant Creek and I was entitled to claim, and claimed, for travel for all the time I was out of Tennant Creek. I changed that designation to Darwin. I now collect time and travel for when I am out of Darwin. According to my listing with you, Mr Speaker, Darwin is my place of residence for the purpose of travel entitlements. But I will get the details of that for the honourable member and make them available to him.

Sign at Casuarina High School

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has a decision been made regarding the erection of a new sign at the entrance of what was the Casuarina High School and, if so, what is its wording?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not usually become involved with the actual naming of schools. I understand that the Casuarina High School Council has in fact been discussing the name that the school will take when it becomes a secondary college. As far as the government is concerned, we would encourage councils to be involved actively in this type of exercise. All that we would require is that, when a school is named, account is taken of government policies generally. In this particular instance, there will not be a secondary college in Darwin until 1988. It is in a transition phase. At present, I would expect the name of the Casuarina school to relate to the fact that it is still a high school that will become a secondary college in 1988. I have not received any indication from the council in relation to that. I do not want to become involved in that sort of aspect. My only comment is that we will

have high schools and secondary colleges. That is how the split is to be titled. At this stage, there will not be a secondary college in Darwin until 1988. Bearing those facts in mind, all I can say is that I will wait until I have some indication from the council as to what it would prefer to have as its school's name.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

It appears that my memory is much better than his. I would refer all members to the answers that have been received this morning because all members, and particularly ministers, utilise travelling allowance as part of their duties. They should realise how absurd these answers have been. I would point out to the Chief Minister that it was not 4 years ago; it was in fact from the beginning of 1982. I would also suggest to the Chief Minister that the amount involved could well have been closer to \$15 000 or \$16 000 rather than the \$9000 or \$10 000 he has just suggested.

I realise I have had confirmation of this in the last answer but I want to place it on the record: since the beginning of 1982, has the Chief Minister at any time been paid travelling allowance in respect of which he later had to reimburse the Northern Territory government? Has he, in fact, listed an incorrect real place of living in respect of that travelling allowance and was the repayment of that travelling allowance a result of an instruction he received from the former Chief Minister of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I forget the order of the questions but I will try to pick them all up. Yes, I repaid money for travelling allowance. It was at the direction of the Chief Minister. That came about because of the point I made a moment ago: Tennant Creek was my home base and not Darwin. His view was that Darwin should be listed as my home base and, accordingly, I should repay that amount of money from the period that my family moved to Darwin. I forget when that was.

Mr B. Collins: The amount of money?

Mr TUXWORTH: I thought it was \$7000 to \$9000. I said to the member a moment ago that I am quite happy to obtain for him all the details.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, pursuant to standing order 83, I raise with you a matter of privilege. After I have concluded, Sir, I request that you refer the matter of privilege to the Privileges Committee pursuant to standing order 84.

Mr Speaker, yesterday the Leader of the Opposition tabled in the Legislative Assembly what he claimed to be one document that was in fact two. Those documents were dated 16 August and 22 August 1985. The reason I was absent from the Chamber during the first part of question time was that I was making certain inquiries in Sydney. I raise this matter of privilege pursuant to standing order 83 because of the information which I was given just 5 minutes ago. It would seem prima facie, to use the words of the Leader of the Opposition, that the documents tabled yesterday by the Leader of the

opposition were subpoenaed from the Westpac Banking Corporation by the Federal Court of Australia. It is my understanding that those documents are the property of the Federal Court or, alternatively, a judge of the Federal Court, and were made available....

Mr B. Collins: Even if they were, it is not a breach of privilege.

Mr ROBERTSON: That is a matter for the Privileges Committee via the Speaker.

Those documents were made available to counsel of the parties to assist them in the preparation of their case and not otherwise. Mr Speaker, I request you to examine whether or not the Leader of the Opposition, exercising the privileges which attach to being a member of this place, acted properly in the manner in which he disclosed documents which are the property of the Federal Court.

Mr Speaker, I request that the Privileges Committee investigate and determine: (1) whether or not the documents tabled yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition in question time were the property of the Federal Court of Australia or a judge thereof; (2) if so, did those documents have attached to them confidentiality in the right of the Federal Court of Australia or a judge thereof, or confidentiality in the right of other parties as a result of their being the property of the Federal Court of Australia or a judge thereof; and (3) if the answer to either point in (2) is yes, did the public disclosure of the contents of those documents by the Leader of the Opposition in question time yesterday constitute a breach of privilege of the Legislative Assembly by the Leader of the Opposition?

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr B. COLLINS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I seek the leave of the Assembly to move a motion without notice relating to the censure of the Chief Minister. I wish to move that this Assembly censure the Chief Minister and Treasurer because: (1) the Chief Minister did knowingly receive amounts of public money by way of tax-free travelling allowances to which he was not entitled; and (2) that the Chief Minister's action in so doing was tantamount to fraudulent behaviour, and would have resulted in dismissal and the institution of criminal proceedings had he been a public servant of the Northern Territory, and that this Assembly calls upon the Chief Minister to resign forthwith.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. In respect of the matter raised by the Special Minister for Constitutional Development, I will consider it pursuant to standing order 84 and advise the Assembly within the next sitting day.

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on notice.

Government Support for Mudginberri

Mr McCARTHY to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

What are the extent of and reasons for the Northern Territory government's support for Mudginberri?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is nice that somebody has asked me to explain the position of the Northern Territory government regarding the assistance granted to Mudginberri in the industrial dispute which occurred last year and which is currently before the Federal Court of Australia. We have been hearing statements for the last 5 weeks by the Leader of the Opposition about secret deals which the government supposedly entered into. He has been promising us for weeks that he will make some revelations.

I have nothing to hide concerning the arrangements that the Northern Territory government entered into in the Mudginberri matter. I am quite prepared to defend what we did. I deny that we have done anything secretive or have been frightened to have this matter raised in the Assembly. During the November 1985 sittings of this Assembly, the Chief Minister readily answered questions concerning financial assistance to Mudginberri. This seems to have escaped the attention of the Leader of the Opposition, judging by his statements in February and March this year.

I have been asked specifically to outline the assistance that has been granted and the circumstances under which that assistance was given. I can deal specifically with the financial assistance that has been provided to Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd during 1985 and 1986. On 2 July 1985, the Northern Territory government directed that the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority would assist Mr and Mrs Pendarvis of Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd with the operational costs of their abattoir whilst it was being picketed by members of the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union. Using funds borrowed from the Treasury, ADMA made advances to Mr and Mrs Pendarvis, as required, at the rate of \$2.30 per kilo for meat processed at their abattoir. The \$2.30 per kilo represented a production cost of the meat and was paid to ensure that the Pendarvis' were able to continue operating whilst the picket excluded export inspectors from inspecting their product and passing it for the premium export market.

Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is throwing asides as he usually does in this Assembly about loans versus purchases. I specifically used the word 'advances'. I used that word and I refer the Leader of the Opposition to the evidence given by the General Manager of ADMA and the Chairman of ADMA, the Secretary of the Department of Primary Production, in the Federal Court actions where they answered specific questions under cross-examination and specifically made the point that they were advances. The Leader of the Opposition is referring to statements made by Mr Pendarvis during that case and, whilst I do not have the specific quote in front of me, I am aware that, during the hearing, the judge made the point that Mr Pendarvis was quite unclear in his answer as to whether it was a genuine purchase. Mr Pendarvis used the term 'purchase', at the same time saying that there was a buy-back but recognising that he had paid for the cold storage of goods and that he was responsible for any sale or marketing of that product. The judge specifically made the point that it would be a matter of legal interpretation by the court as to whether it was a purchase or an advance. However, I note the evidence

provided by the Chairman and the General Manager of ADMA on that matter. They were quite specific in their evidence. If the Leader of the Opposition wishes to raise it further, I am quite happy to go through the details of their evidence right now.

Mr B. Collins: You give me no choice.

Mr HATTON: We honestly thought that it would be a short-term arrangement. I will explain shortly the circumstances involved which led to the belief that the arrangement would not last for any length of time. Given that the courts had issued an injunction on the trade unions to prevent them from taking any further action, there was every reason to assume that the matter would be resolved shortly and that the abattoir would resume normal operations.

Unfortunately, that was not the case. The AMIEU continued its criminal contempt of the Federal Court of Australia, and was found guilty of that in September last year. During August, we found it necessary to reconsider the arrangements, given the extreme actions that were being taken by the union. On or about 23 August last year, more ongoing arrangements needed to be made so far as Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd was concerned. At the time, I said it was becoming apparent that the authority was exhausting the funds available to make these advances. If my memory serves me correctly, the figure had reached \$992 000 by way of advances to Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd. That was a great deal of money. In fact, it represented almost two-thirds of the trust account of ADMA in so far as advances for agricultural purposes were concerned. We were faced with the choice either of continuing that arrangement and seeking additional funds from Treasury or coming to some alternative arrangement.

The government then moved to assist in the arrangement of loan facilities to be made available to Mudginberri Station by the Westpac Banking Corporation. The advances made by the authority, plus interest on those loans, were repaid by Mudginberri from this facility. That involved \$2m credit from the Westpac Banking Corporation under a guarantee from the NT government. That guarantee was provided under section 16 of the Agricultural Development and Marketing Act. The guarantee was supported by an agreement between the company and ADMA whereby the company agreed that the meat producers' product prior to 30 November 1985, and since held in cold storage, would represent security in respect of the guarantee.

As it turned out, that guarantee applied only to meat killed during the course of the picket; the facility was provided for that purpose. When the picket line was lifted in September 1985, the extent of that facility, and the guarantees provided under it, had a line drawn across them, except in respect of an agreement that, given that Mudginberri Station had been driven to the edge of bankruptcy by the actions of the trade union and had no working capital, it requested the use of that fund for a short period as working capital to get back into the export industry. It used that fund, and I can advise that all of that money was repaid, I believe, by 25 November. I refer there to the money specifically in respect of export-killed meat after the lifting of the pickets. For the meat killed as a domestic abattoir operation prior to the lifting of the pickets, the facility is being repaid through the sale on the domestic market of meat produced in that period.

Mr Speaker, sales of that meat are proceeding but, unfortunately, because of a number of actions, including the refusal to allow the meat to be reinspected to be made available for export ...

Mr B. Collins: Shame. Did you have a legal agreement that forced him to buy it back?

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, on the prices being received, it is anticipated currently that there may be a loss of some \$490 000 with respect to the sale of that meat.

Mr B. Collins: Oh, a mere bagatelle - only public money.

Mr Dale: Shame on the unions!

Mr B. Collins: What about the Katherine meatworks?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, that loss is recognised as a loss by Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd, and is the subject of damages claims before the Federal Court. Under the agreement signed with Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd, the Northern Territory government has first call on any damages awarded in that case.

Mr B. Collins: That is right. You have a pecuniary interest in the court case.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, it is all very well for the Leader of the Opposition to throw in these snide remarks. His role in this whole affair has been somewhat dishonourable, supporting a trade union ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will confine himself to the question.

Mr HATTON: Yes, Mr Speaker. In the circumstances surrounding this action, I do not regret the actions that have been taken nor the recommendations I have made. I believe they were quite proper for the Northern Territory government to make. It was within the powers of the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority and the government to take those actions, and they were taken in circumstances whereby an employer was trying to abide by the law and his employees were trying to work under an award and abide by the law. They were being driven out of business by the illegal actions of a trade union. The honourable members of the opposition giggle about this, Mr Speaker. That is the level of the contempt which they show for the legal processes of this country.

Mr Speaker, to understand those circumstances, I refer to some of the background that led up to the unusual circumstances that existed in June last year. It is a matter of public record that, on 2 May last year, an award known as the Northern Territory Meat Industry Award was established. That award provided a wide range of conditions of employment which are common to employees generally in the Northern Territory and in the meat industry in Australia. I am advised that all clauses, with 1 particular exception, were introduced into that award by agreement between the employer and the trade union. Clause 33 was the only clause not introduced by agreement. That clause refers to provisions whereby the employer and the majority of employees, or their representative, may enter into an agreement for payment by results, provided that the employees working under that arrangement must

receive at least the weekly wage provisions of the award plus 20%. There is also a provision whereby, in the event of there being no work provided specifically for the kill - for example, if there were no animals available - the employees would still be entitled to revert back to the weekly wage for those periods.

Those conditions arose from a decision on 5 September 1984, arbitrated by the full bench ...

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I refer you to standing order 112. The minister has been on his feet for 20 minutes in respect of this question. This is the first time that this Assembly has sat in 4 months and we are now on the second last day of the sittings. The government has the numbers in this Assembly. As the honourable minister knows full well, it can bring on ministerial statements whenever it chooses. This is a gross and improper use of our very limited question time in this Assembly.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I refer honourable members to standing order 112(3)(b) which refers to announcing new government policy and the provision of an explanation regarding that policy and its application. I believe that the minister has now probably gone as far as he is able to in answering that particular question. However, it is up to the Assembly itself to determine the length of responses, not the Speaker.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I was simply trying to outline the circumstances surrounding the award because I think they are critical to understanding the reasons why the government made the decision it did. The critical element in this dispute was in relation to clause 33 which subsequently became the source of a dispute between the AMIEU and employers employing people under the Northern Territory Meat Industry Award. I will deal with the facts that led to that.

From 2 May 1985, meatworkers at Mudginberri were employees, not subcontractors, employed under the terms and conditions of an award of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The only arbitrated part of that award was in respect of the issue of the former payment by results. A full bench of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, headed by the commission's president, Sir John Moore, specifically refused to insert a tally system into the award, but did agree to support the introduction of a piecework system for actual work done with reversion to weekly wage rates for other times. In early August 1984, before arbitration, the employers and unions entered into an agreement which inter alia provided that the employers would discontinue actions under the Trade Practices Act and that there would be no further industrial action.

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I refer you to standing order 112(2)(b). The honourable minister is arguing the case that is currently before the Federal Court but standing orders preclude such debate in answer to questions without notice.

Mr SPEAKER: I believe the honourable minister at this point is offering information concerning the award for meatworkers. I do not believe that particular matter is sub judice.

Mr B. COLLINS: The Chief Minister will be happy. No more questions about travelling allowance this morning.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HATTON: The agreement entered into between the union and the employer was that there would be no further industrial action in respect of the award and that the parties would accept the award that came down from the commission. In addition, there was an agreement that there would be no discrimination against any employee by any of the parties to the dispute.

The ink was hardly dry on that award when picket lines came into being at a number of abattoirs in the Northern Territory. We are referring specifically to Mudginberri at the moment. The abattoir opened on 9 May 1985 and a picket line was in place on 10 May 1985. I was overseas at that time and, if my memory serves me correctly, when I returned, I sought to meet with union picketers and the employers to see if there could be some arrangement whereby they could get together to resolve the problem. That discussion occurred at Victoria Valley.

Mr Speaker, I sought to bring them together to see whether the unions would be prepared to lift the picket lines so the matter could be brought before the Australian Conciliation Arbitration Commission by way of a conference to try to resolve the differences before that commission. After that Saturday afternoon discussion, the union representative, Mr Rowan, and the employer proceeded to make contact with the Meat and Allied Trades Union in order to have a conference. That conference occurred on 3 June before Mr Deputy President Keogh of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. At that conference, the union refused to lift the picket lines so that the matter could be heard before the commission, a normal practice of the commission.

On 12 June, Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd obtained an interlocutory injunction against the union's maintaining its ban. That was heard before Mr Justice Beaumont of the Federal Court. The union, however, decided to ignore that interlocutory injunction. On 21 June, Chief Justice Bowen heard an application for contempt of court with respect to the union's refusal to abide by the interlocutory injunction. On 21 June, he fined the union for contempt. The union then refused to pay the fine. This forced Mr Justice Morling to issue a final injunction on 12 July.

The employers had demonstrated in the courts that they were prepared to work in accordance with the award and that they were working in accordance with the award. The unions were acting illegally in maintaining a picket line. There had been an injunction and there had been a fine imposed on the union. This had never happened before in the history of actions under the Trade Practices Act. In the midst of these events, on 27 June, we received a telex from Jay and Joy Pendarvis saying that they could not continue the fight because they had run out of money. We felt that it was important that this matter be resolved through the proper processes of the law so that there would be no victory for illegal action, driving a company into bankruptcy and resulting in a victory of industrial muscle over right.

These were the circumstances that led us to support Mudginberri Station Pty Ltd to enable it to exercise its rights before the court without being driven into financial ruin by the illegal actions of the unions, as has occurred in other cases in the past. I believe our actions have been vindicated by subsequent decisions of the court, particularly in September when all of those actions were upheld and the union was found guilty of criminal contempt of court. It was severely fined by the court and its funds were sequestered as a penalty.

Home Purchase Assistance Scheme

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware that there is some concern within the community that the Northern Territory Home Purchase Assistance Scheme will be discontinued in the near future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware of this concern. I have received representation from the Real Estate Institute of the Northern Territory in relation to it. The Northern Territory Home Purchase Assistance Scheme commenced on 1 September 1984, replacing the Northern Territory Government Home Loans Scheme. The provisions of the scheme relate to the requirements of the Commonwealth States Housing Agreement, and they encourage the major private lending institutions to increase significantly their lending for housing. In fact, bank participation rose from 17% of all funding in 1983-84 to approximately 60% in 1985-86. The amount of the loan available under the Northern Territory Home Purchase Assistance Scheme is geared to the gross income of the main breadwinner, and the borrower must first obtain a prescribed minimum loan from a private lending institution. Monthly repayments under the scheme are calculated so that, where borrowers receive a minimum loan from private sources, total repayments on both loans do not exceed 20% of the family income. Obviously, this gives people on lower incomes the chance to purchase a home, which they might not otherwise be able to do. It is therefore conducive to social stability and economic growth.

I can assure members that home ownership for Territorians will continue to be a government priority. The scheme is monitored continually to ensure that its provisions meet the needs of potential home buyers, while ensuring that there is private sector involvement in housing finance. There is certainly no plan to discontinue the scheme. The present circumstances in which all Australians find themselves, as a result of the federal Labor government's financial mismanagement, should certainly be deplored. We have a situation where home building is dropping dramatically. A number of Australians are unable even to contemplate purchasing a home to provide a roof for themselves and their families. This government certainly has by far the best scheme in Australia. It is working but, until the federal government changes some of its policies and the banking industry has the confidence to provide funding for home building, the housing industry in this country will be in dire straits.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, during debate on the question of travelling allowance last week, the member for Fannie Bay said that, in order to be an effective minister of the government, one has to spend 60% of one's time in Darwin. I agree with that assessment.

Last week, I put a question to the Chief Minister concerning the \$22 000-plus in travelling allowance he collected in the financial year 1983-84. He responded by saying he could not remember. I refer again to this matter, in which the Chief Minister collected approximately 5 times the travelling allowance paid to any other minister. Could he provide me with an

answer now as to whether any part of that amount was for accommodation costs in Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I advised the Assembly last week that I would provide additional information. My research shows that, as far back as 3 months ago, I provided the Leader of the Opposition with reams of answers to questions which he has asked.

Mr B. Collins: Most of which were inaccurate.

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, they were not inaccurate to my knowledge and ...

Mr B. Collins: Your letter says they are. Do you want me to produce the letter?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr TUXWORTH: Mr Speaker, if I can just finish the answers, the Leader of the Opposition can have a say later if he likes.

The information I have provided to the Leader of the Opposition states quite clearly the travelling payments that were made to all members of this Assembly for the respective financial years. I want to make it clear to him that the \$22 000 paid to me was the total amount paid for the period, either for accommodation or for travelling allowance.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I will provide him with a third opportunity to answer this question. Is any part of the \$22 000 which the Chief Minister received in tax-free travelling allowances in the year 1983-84 for claims made in respect of accommodating himself in Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I said in the Assembly the other day that my home base from the point of view of the Remuneration Tribunal is Darwin and has been Darwin since, I think, February 1982. Accordingly, all claims for travel have been based on Darwin as my home base with travelling allowances being related to travel to other places.

Proposed Recreation Lake in Alice Springs

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise the Assembly on the current status of the proposed recreation lake for Alice Springs?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will not be longwinded about this and I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will be pleased about that. I would hate him to think that we were bogging down question time.

The desire of the Territory government to build a recreation lake for Alice Springs people has not waned one bit since it was first mooted 5 years ago. In fact, one of the deep regrets of this government is that we did not move at the time to start construction of the dam, despite all the furore, because there is no doubt that the people of Alice Springs want it and we believe that they are entitled to have it. I have gone to a lot of trouble to have discussions with Aboriginal traditional owners of the area. The information that they gave me is that they are not concerned about the construction of the dam as long as their sacred sites can be accommodated in that construction. We believe that is possible. However, there are forces of darkness at work which will ensure that the dam is never built. They will use whatever opportunities they have under the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act and the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act to ensure that the dam is not built.

The studies that we have carried out on alternative dam sites for Alice Springs have shown that one alternative site is possible, but it is so remote from Alice Springs that it may not be a prudent expenditure of money. I can say to the member for Braintree that the government is committed to building a dam. We would dearly like to. We appeal to the Aboriginal people of Alice Springs to work with us on this because it is a facility that will help the whole community and not just the people of Alice Springs. We believe we ought to start as soon as possible.

Rates Levied on Darwin Sporting Clubs

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In view of the recent controversy regarding the rating of sporting clubs within the Marrara complex by the Darwin City Council, and a motion passed by a public meeting calling on the clubs to refuse to pay the rates and calling on government to legislate in their favour, does the minister intend to amend the Local Government Act to comply with the clubs' request?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member has been involved in this issue over a period of time, as have many other members of the Legislative Assembly who have been approached by their constituents on this particular issue. I am pleased to inform the Assembly that I met with the Acting Lord Mayor in my office yesterday. I outlined to him some of the schemes which are operating in other municipalities throughout the Northern Territory. In particular, I had discussions with the Mayor of Katherine on this particular issue of rating sporting bodies. She advised me that they have a honeymoon period for fledgling sporting bodies similar to those who use the Marrara facility. The paying of rates is phased in over a period of 5 years. Likewise, I had talks with Alf Chittock, the Mayor of Tennant Creek. A rental system operates there whereby sporting bodies pay a token contribution towards municipal-type services. I understand that Alice Springs also has a flexible scheme whereby sporting bodies are given consideration.

The Acting Lord Mayor pointed out to me that there were provisions within the act whereby sporting bodies could approach the council to have the rates reduced. I believe that that opportunity is available to sporting bodies in the Marrara area. I believe that the Acting Lord Mayor would be most amenable to an approach from the sporting bodies either to have that particular rating system waived until they have established themselves or to facilitate some other means of reducing the rate burden.

I found the whole issue most embarrassing because I am the member for that particular area and also the minister responsible. The Acting Lord Mayor has given an undertaking that we address the main issues of contention between the government and the Darwin City Council. I am hopeful that the outcome of those meetings will put me in the position to advise members that there will be some rate relief for those particular sporting bodies in that area. It is interesting to note that we are talking about a very small amount: less than \$27 000. However, that represents a lot of chook raffles or guesses at the number of beans in a bottle. I feel for those sporting bodies which have to raise that money. I am hopeful that the discussions which I have now entered into with the Acting Lord Mayor will lead to a satisfactory arrangement.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

In the Assembly last week, the Chief Minister stated that, in respect of his overseas and interstate travel, it was his practice - and I know this to be true - to defray accommodation costs by using his American Express Card. Therefore, by necessary implication, all or the majority of the \$22 300 collected by the Chief Minister in respect of his travel for 1983-84 must have been paid for travel inside the Northern Territory. In respect of applying the travel costs that were provided in 1983-84, this means that the Chief Minister in 1983-84 spent almost 300 days travelling away from Darwin inside the Northern Territory. In respect of the fact that this can be proven to be false, could the Chief Minister provide this Assembly with an explanation as to how he was able to claim \$22 000 in respect of intra-Territory travel in 1983-84.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable Leader of the Opposition is on a fishing expedition and there are no fish to be caught. I have provided him with reams of information. He is able to read that information just like anybody else. I have outlined that, for the period he is talking...

Mr B. Collins: He is not going to answer the question.

Mr TUXWORTH: If he is patient and listens, and stops making up his own answers to suit his own ends, we might get somewhere.

For the period that he is referring to, my total expenditure for travel out of Darwin was \$22 000 and that was paid either in cash or by American Express. That was the total amount. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to ask me any more questions on detail, I would be happy to take them on notice or in writing.

Chief Minister's Travelling Allowance

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

I have a supplementary question. The Chief Minister gave this Assembly a commitment in question time last week - which he is obviously not prepared to honour - that, before the end of these sittings, he would make available to this Assembly all of the detailed information that we sought. Is he prepared to honour that undertaking today? In respect of the fact that the detailed

paperwork is available - because it had to be gathered together to answer my question - is the Chief Minister prepared before the luncheon adjournment of this Assembly to provide this Assembly with that detailed paperwork, including the individual travelling allowance claims lodged for the financial year 1983-84? I can assure him that they are available.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have just said to the Leader of the Opposition that I have given him reams of information and, if he wants more, I am happy for him to put the questions on notice and obtain the information. But to expect me to give a commitment within the next hour and 7 minutes is unreasonable because I do not have the information here and I would have to obtain it.

Labor Party Strategy on Uranium

Mr DALE to MEMBER for STUART

As he is the sponsor of the Mine Workers Health Protection Bill (Serial 149) on the notice paper, together with a notice of motion that he moved this morning relating to the referral of a matter to the Sessional Committee on the Environment on health, safety and welfare of workers employed within the uranium industry in the East Alligator River region of the Northern Territory, are the introduction of this bill and the notice of motion part of the Australian Labor Party's strategy to cause disruption to the uranium industry as illustrated by its support for the unions ...

Mr B. Collins: This question is absurd. Apart from anything else, it seeks an opinion from the honourable member.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! In asking his question, would the honourable member for Wanguri refrain from asking the member for Stuart for an opinion.

Mr DALE: Is it a fact that the introduction of the bill and the notice of motion given this morning are an indication of the Australian Labor Party's strategy to cause disruption to the uranium industry as illustrated by its support for the unionists who recently prevented the shipment of yellowcake conservatively estimated to be worth \$40m, together with support for current industrial disruption at the Ranger Mine?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer to the honourable member's question is no.

Land Rights Amendment

Mr D.W. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I understand that he has just met with the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs over proposed land rights amendments. Would he outline the points of agreement reached at this stage?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not sure that I can advise of many points of agreement. There is no doubt that there will be amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act that will improve the present situation in relation to the administration

of Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory, particularly in respect of access to land from the point of view of both the European and Aboriginal communities. Until the fine details of the legislation are available to us, it is pretty hard to say whether the commitments given by the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs will be fulfilled.

You would recall, Mr Speaker, that some 6 to 9 months ago the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Prime Minister both stated that the veto on mining on Aboriginal land was to go. We have found that this is not the case. Instead, it is to be watered down. It is pretty hard to be sure exactly what changes will benefit the Northern Territory community as a whole. I had a strong disagreement with the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on the likely implications of the new veto arrangements. I accept that some of the proposed arrangements may help the administration of the Land Rights Act and mining on Aboriginal land, but I have a great deal of difficulty with the proposition that Aboriginals should have the right to veto exploration on land for a period of 5 years. That is really to the detriment of the Northern Territory. We all own land in different ways; we all have a responsibility to the community to see land developed to the benefit of the community where that is possible. In the case of mining, none of us should have the opportunity to say that there will be no exploration and there will be no mining, because the fruits of mining generally benefit the whole community. I think it will be tragic for the Territory if we are to have a situation where traditional owners, even for their own good reasons, can say that there will be no exploration over large tracts of land and lock that land away for 5 years at a time by so doing. I think that would be to the total disadvantage of the Northern Territory mining industry, the Northern Territory community and, ultimately, to Aboriginals themselves.

Senior Secondary Marking System

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What changes are proposed to the marking system for senior secondary students within the Northern Territory and what impact will those changes have on tertiary education and the employment prospects of Territory students?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am pleased that the honourable member has raised this question because I know that it has caused some concern in the community. Naturally, any changes that are to be made in relation to examination systems are of major concern and need to be looked at in detail. I can assure the students of the Northern Territory that they will not be disadvantaged as a result of this change. As far as the Territory is concerned, we must ensure that we are locked into the interstate system so that there can be no doubt about the credibility of the examinations that we have in the Territory and the results of those examinations cannot be queried in relation to employment opportunities in the states or the entry into tertiary institutions elsewhere in Australia.

I will read the changes that are to be implemented at this stage so that people can check back on them at a future date. First, the achievements in both publicly-examined and school-assessed subjects will be reported on the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia's certificate as a numerical score out of 20, with a corresponding letter grading A to E, and a brief description of the quality of the achievement. The scale to be used is

as follows: 20 - outstanding achievement in all syllabus objectives; 17 to 19 - very high achievement in subject objectives, which would also have a letter grading of A; 14 to 16 - high achievement in subject objectives with a grading of B; 11 to 13 - competent achievement in subject objectives with a grading of C; 8 to 10 - marginal achievement in subject objectives with a grading of D; and 0 to 7 - low achievement in subject objectives with a grading of E. Secondly, scores shown on the certificates will not be subject to cross-subject scaling, which is the process which attempts to even out differences in the level of difficulty between, for example, modern world history and physics. Thirdly, because each subject will have a score out of 20, the aggregate score will now be out of 100 rather than 500. Tertiary entrance data will be reported on a detachable part of the certificate document rather than on the certificate itself. It will show scores which have been processed through cross-subject scaling.

As I stated in my opening remarks, there is indeed a great deal of concern in relation to the changes that are being implemented from the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia. Their rationale needs to be mentioned here. Three main reasons have been put forward for the change. The first is that the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia considers that the use of a 100-point scale for each subject is statistically unsound, and that a 20-point scale is more valid. The second point is that, whilst it is convenient to use a 100-point scale with a derived aggregate out of 500 as a basis for tertiary selection, it is unfair to students because there are substantial inbuilt errors of measurement. The Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia has calculated that the standard error of measurement in each subject score out of 100 is at least 5 points, and that the error of the 500-point aggregate scale in the range used for tertiary entrants is at least 15 points. It is thus quite unfair to determine a cut-off point using the 500-point scale. There is no statistically valid basis for saying, for example, that a score of 350 is better than a score of 349 or 345 or 340. The new 100-point scale will eventually result in tertiary selection being made not solely on aggregate score as large numbers of applicants will be grouped on the same score out of 100. However, in 1986 and 1987, the tertiary institution will still receive aggregates effectively scaled out of 500. The third reason is that the board wishes to move towards eliminating the difference between publicly-examined and school-assessed subjects. Hence the common reporting scale. The Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia has also increased the weight being given to school assessments in the publicly-examined subjects from 25% to 50%.

It is of concern to us that these changes are occurring, but I again indicate to members that we must presently remain locked in with one of the states so that our credibility remains high in relation to examinations, access to tertiary institutions and job opportunities for our young people in other states. However, we have our concerns. I reiterate that students will not be disadvantaged at this time. I will be taking the issue up further with the ministers from the other state education systems.

Joondana Investments

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

Can he confirm that the Joondana Investments has been selected to build community facilities, including a swimming pool at Palmerston for which land is now being allocated. Can he confirm that, between 1976 and 1978, Joondana Investments lent \$142 056 to the company who had as its director a person who

subsequently held a senior position with the Palmerston Development Authority and a senior position within the Department of Lands and who is currently involved in the setting of conditions for land allocations to Joondana Investments?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can confirm the first part of that question. I am unaware of the details of the second part of the question and, therefore, I am unable to confirm or deny it. If the honourable member would like to give me the details, I can have the matter investigated.

Plans for Combined Tourist Developments

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TOURISM

Can he advise whether the Tourist Commission has plans for the combined tourist development of Litchfield Park on Stapleton Station, Berry Springs Zoo and historical sites on Channel Island.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the short answer is no. Most of us would be aware that developments on Stapleton Station, now known as Litchfield Park, will occur hopefully in the very near future. The Northern Territory Tourist Commission will include such places of interest in its promotional brochures as it does for other areas of importance in the Northern Territory.

Attorney-General's Private Charter Trip

Mr B. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Can he confirm that, since we met last week, he used a private charter to return to the Northern Territory from interstate at an estimated cost of \$12 000.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I certainly did engage a charter on Saturday afternoon after being stranded in Adelaide. I attended a meeting of ministers responsible for the National Companies and Securities Scheme on Friday. Unfortunately, on Saturday, the refuelling unions in Melbourne decided to pull some antics and the flight that I was scheduled to travel on was cancelled. The advice that the flight was cancelled was received from TAA by passengers at about 10 minutes before noon. The Ansett flight to Darwin had left some 2 or 3 hours earlier. In fact, that flight was full because, earlier that morning, we had attempted to book on the Ansett flight. I was advised that there were no seats available for Darwin. The reason I wanted to change planes was simply to get home that couple of hours earlier. TAA advised me that there was no indication when flights to Darwin would resume and that, when flights did resume, passengers booked on the flights would have priority over passengers left stranded by cancelled flights.

We had 5 Northern Territory government officers seeking to return to Darwin at that time: myself and a ministerial officer, an officer from the Department of Law who was my adviser during the meeting, the Chairman of the TAB who had arrived in Adelaide that morning or the previous night and was

booked on the same flight and the Crown Solicitor who was returning to Darwin from a conference in Hobart. In addition, another 4 persons were placed on board the plane. They were employees of TAA whom we took as far as Alice Springs. We had a full plane of 9 passengers to Alice Springs and the remaining 5 continued on to Darwin. I have not found out as yet whether there were any passengers for the flight from Darwin back to Adelaide for which we had to pay to obtain that charter. I left word prior to leaving Adelaide with Air North in Darwin and indeed with the office of the company concerned in Darwin that the plane would be available out of Darwin for any passengers going south and that we would seek from them some contribution towards the cost of the flight.

The reason why I chartered the plane - reluctantly because no one would spend 7 hours on an aeroplane if he did not have to - was because there was no guarantee of getting out of there on Sunday or, indeed, Monday. Balancing all the costs involved in that, I decided it was the most prudent course of action.

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