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PART II

THE QUESTION PAPER

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

Numerical references are to Question Paper page numbers.

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

**23 February 1988**

**15. School Cleaning and Maintenance**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What were the amounts paid out during 1987 for contracts to provide:

- (a) ground maintenance; and
- (b) cleaning,

for each primary and secondary school in the Northern Territory?

**19. Northern Territory Land Management**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many grants of land have been made to the Northern Territory Land Corporation (NTLC) since its inception in 1986?
2. How was each grant valued and what was the valuation in each case?
3. For what purpose was each grant of land?
4. Which parcels of land were so granted?
5. When was each grant made?
6. Was each decision to grant land discussed at Cabinet level? If not, which grants were not discussed?
7. How many grants of land were made to its predecessors, the Northern Territory Development Land Corporation (NTDLC) and the Northern Territory Conservation Land Corporation (NTCLC)?
8. How was each grant valued and what was the valuation in each case?
9. For what purpose was each grant of land?
10. Which parcels of land were so granted?
11. When was each grant made?
12. Was each decision to grant land discussed at Cabinet level? If not, which grants were not discussed?
13. Which parcels of land have been purchased by the NTLC, the NTDLC and NTCLC?
14. What was the purchase price of each such parcel?
15. For what purpose was each such parcel purchased?

16. When was each such purchase effected?
17. Was each decision to purchase land discussed at Cabinet level? If not, which purchases were not so discussed?
18. Of which parcels of land has the NTLC, the NTDLIC or the NTCLC divested itself by way of sale, grant, gift, or any other process?
19. For what reasons were the transactions referred to in question 18 above carried out?
20. When was each transaction referred to in question 18 above carried out?
21. How was the value of each grant, sale gift or other divestment of land valued and what was the valuation in each case?
22. Was each transaction referred to in question 18 above discussed at Cabinet level? If not, which such transaction were not so discussed?

Reference: Notice of Determination in respect of Gregory National Park (Northern Territory Portion 3124) to the Northern Territory Land Corporation - Northern Territory Government Gazette No G32 of 12 August 1987, page 3.

**20. Staffing of Giles House**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. How many staff are employed at Giles House?
2. In which categories are these staff employed?
3. How many people have held the position of Superintendent at Giles House during -
  - (a) 1984;
  - (b) 1985;
  - (c) 1986; and
  - (d) 1987?
4. Of the other staff employed at Giles House, how many changes have there been in each category of staff in 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987?

**22. Macassan Prau Project**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

1. How much has the Macassan prau re-enactment cost the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences?
2. What is the estimated cost of construction of a second prau?
3. What is the anticipated cost of getting a second prau to the Yirrkala museum?

**23. Advertising - Channel Eight, Darwin**

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How much did government departments and authorities spend on advertising on Channel 8, Darwin in 1987?
2. What was the breakdown of that amount by department and authority?

**24. Helicopter Charters - Minister for Tourism**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER FOR TOURISM

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

**17 May 1988**

**27. Primary and Secondary Education**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

During the period 1980 to 1987:

1. What was the rate of teacher turnover by -
  - (a) year of service;
  - (b) gender;
  - (c) location (whether it be rural, urban, secondary, primary); and
  - (d) size of school?
2. What was the average recruitment cost per teacher?

3. What was the turnover rate of teachers in secondary schools in the following subjects -
- (a) Maths;
  - (b) Science; and
  - (c) English?

**32. Land Degradation on Cattle Stations**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Who are the CSIRO officers that claimed land degradation was 'rife' on Territory cattle stations?
2. Where are these officers based?
3. Were these same officers the ones who wrote to you (as reported in the Legislative Assembly) saying that no base data is available on which to judge degradation and sought Territory money to establish this base data?
4. Has a decision been made by government in regard to the CSIRO request for funding to establish a land data base and, if so, what was that decision and, if no, when will the decision be made?

**35. School Film Library Service**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What money does the Department of Education expect to save (going from past experience) from the decision to pass on transport costs of films to schools outside Darwin of films on loan from the Film Library Service to the schools?
2. Does the government intend to review the above decision and, if so, when?

**36. University College of the Northern Territory  
Enrolments**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many students are doing full-time courses at the University College?
2. How many students at the University College have come from interstate?
3. How many students have come because their examination scores have precluded them from entry into interstate universities?

4. What advantage does the Territory government expect from paying the education costs of interstate students with Territory taxpayers' money?
5. What is the annual cost to the Territory taxpayer of the 'connection' between the University College and the University of Queensland?
6. What services are provided by the University of Queensland for the money provided by the Territory?

**38. 'Towards the 90s'**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Is the Education Advisory Council considering a revised edition of the 'Towards the 90s' paper?
2. If so, when will -
  - (a) their Report be available;
  - (b) opportunities be made available for public response to the revised paper; and
  - (c) the Minister undertake to allow a debate in the public arena and in Parliament before a decision on implementation is taken?

**39. School Council Regulations**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many full-page advertisements were placed in Territory newspapers recently, to explain the government's position on newly-introduced School Council Regulations?
2. Which newspapers were used?
3. What was the total cost of all such advertising?
4. What is the expected saving of passing the cost of freighting audio-visual material ex-Darwin?

**40. Truancy Officers**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Does the government intend to reinstate Truancy Officers with the Department of Education in 1988?

**41. Preschool Vacancies in Alice Springs**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many 4-year-old children, or children about to turn 4 in Alice Springs are not able to attend preschool on turning 4 because of staff or facility shortages?
2. What is the approximate waiting time for children over the age of 4 years to gain preschool entrance?

**42. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**43. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to TREASURER

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**44. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**45. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**46. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**47. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

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

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**48. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**49. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**51. Northern Territory Land Corporation  
Receipts**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS AND HOUSING

With reference to page 9 of the Northern Territory Gazette No. S56 of 7 August 1987 upon which appear receipts and expenditure of the Northern Territory Land Corporation:

- (i) from which source or sources did the Northern Territory Land Corporation receive \$385 961 as indicated; and
- (ii) on which item or items was \$96 624 expended?



**52. Child Welfare - Custody**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. Currently how many children in the Northern Territory are living away from their natural parent/s as a result of actions taken by Community Welfare and Northern Territory courts?
2. How many of these children came from the northern region of the Territory?
3. How many of these children came from the southern region of the Territory?
4. How many of these children live in -
  - (a) foster homes (private families);
  - (b) government-run homes or institutions;
  - (c) private institutions; and
  - (d) other types of accommodation?
5. How many children were taken away from their parent/s on the grounds of -
  - (a) neglect;
  - (b) physical abuse;
  - (c) sexual abuse;
  - (d) parents incapable of looking after their children due to -
    - (i) alcoholism;
    - (ii) drug abuse;
    - (iii) mental state; and
    - (iv) immaturity;
  - (e) poverty; and
  - (f) other?
6. What is the average cost to the taxpayer for the weekly keep of children housed as under question 4?
7. How many hours of court time were taken up by these cases in 1987 in the Territory whether the children were taken away from their parent/s or not?

8. How many of the children currently taken away from their parent/s were interviewed by the Magistrate -
  - (a) alone;
  - (b) with the parent/s in attendance and Community Welfare Officers absent;
  - (c) with Community Welfare Officers and parent/s present; and
  - (d) with Community Welfare Officers present but parent/s absent?
9. How many children have attempted to return to their natural parent/s in 1987?

**53. Kormilda College - Expenditure**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What Territory government money has been spent at Kormilda College on -
  - (a) teacher housing;
  - (b) boarder accommodation;
  - (c) classrooms;
  - (d) landscaping; and
  - (e) other areas in Kormilda,since the take-over by the new Board of Management?
2. Are there any arrangements to recoup this money?
3. What ongoing commitment does the Northern Territory government have to provide money for Kormilda College?
4. What fee structures are proposed for Kormilda College students?
5. What arrangements have been made over the title of land at Kormilda College with the new Board of Management?

**54. School Councils Regulations  
Advertising**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What was the total cost of advertising -

- (a) explaining the changes to Schools Councils Regulations; and

(b) encouraging parents to be involved in School Councils, from February 1988 to the present time?

**55. Territory Super Plastics**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

1. Has the Trade Development Zone taken away the licence to operate of Territory Super Plastics?
2. What was the nature of and cost of the incentive offered to Territory Super Plastics by the Trade Development Zone?
3. What action is the Trade Development Zone taking to recoup the money it put into Territory Super Plastics?

**56. Applications Under Freedom of Information Act**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TOURISM

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible?
2. For what purpose was each request made?

**57. Advertising Campaign  
'We're Building a Secure Future'**

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What is the total cost of the current Northern Territory government advertising campaign on the theme 'We're Building a Secure Future'?
2. How much money is being spent on -
  - (i) television;
  - (ii) radio; and
  - (iii) newspaper advertising,for this campaign?
3. Of the money spent on television advertising, how much is being spent on Imparja?
4. How much money is being spent advertising in each of the newspapers in the Northern Territory?

**58. Illegal Grape Varieties Grown in the Territory**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

1. Is the Minister aware of recent discoveries in the Mildura and Medindie areas of illegal grape varieties that are claimed to endanger the Export Table Grape Market (currently worth some \$90m to Australia), which could have introduced new diseases into this country to the detriment of the Table Grape Industry?
2. Are any such illegal varieties being grown in the Territory?
3. Is the variety claimed by Territory Grape Farms to be Perlette, indeed that variety: in light of the fact that Territory Grape Farms Perlette comes in after its Flame Seedless, whereas Perlette from other Territory growers comes in ahead of Flame Seedless?

**59. Open Space Development Strategy**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Will the Northern Territory government carry out the development objectives outlined in the Open Space Development Strategy prepared by Land Systems Pty Limited, dated September 1986?

**24 May 1988**

**60. Freeholding of Special Purpose Leases**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many Special Purpose Leases were there in the vicinity of -
  - (a) Darwin;
  - (b) Katherine;
  - (c) Tennant Creek;
  - (d) Alice Springs; and
  - (e) elsewhere in the Northern Territory as at 1 July 1978?
2. For what purposes had these been granted?
3. How many of these Special Purpose Leases had been granted at 1 July 1978 on -
  - (a) a rental basis;
  - (b) payment of current market value; or
  - (c) some other basis?

4. If they were granted on some other basis [3(c)], what was that basis?
5. How many holders of Special Purpose Leases, as of 1 July 1978 were offered freehold title to lots over which the Special Purpose Leases were held for each of the following periods -
  - (a) the financial year 1978-79;
  - (b) the financial year 1979-80;
  - (c) the financial year 1980-81;
  - (d) the financial year 1981-82;
  - (e) the financial year 1982-83;
  - (f) the financial year 1983-84;
  - (g) the financial year 1984-85;
  - (h) the financial year 1985-86;
  - (j) the financial year 1986-87; and
  - (k) the financial year 1987-88?
6. On what terms were these Special Purpose Leases offered for the above financial years [5(a) to (k)]?
7. How many of these offers were accepted?
8. How many Special Purpose Leases were granted in each of the following periods -
  - (a) the financial year 1978-79;
  - (b) the financial year 1979-80;
  - (c) the financial year 1980-81;
  - (d) the financial year 1981-82;
  - (e) the financial year 1982-83;
  - (f) the financial year 1983-84;
  - (g) the financial year 1984-85;
  - (h) the financial year 1985-86;
  - (j) the financial year 1986-87; and
  - (k) the financial year 1987-88?
9. For what purposes were these Special Purpose Leases granted for the above financial years [8(a) to (k)]?

10. How many of these Special Purpose Leases had been granted in each of the financial years [8(a) to (k)] on -
  - (a) a rental basis;
  - (b) the payment of current market value; or
  - (c) some other basis?
11. If they were granted on some other basis [10(c)], what is that basis?
12. How many of the holders of Special Purpose Leases referred to in Question 8 were offered freehold title to the lots over which the Special Purpose Leases were held for each of the following periods -
  - (a) the financial year 1978-79;
  - (b) the financial year 1979-80;
  - (c) the financial year 1980-81;
  - (d) the financial year 1981-82;
  - (e) the financial year 1982-83;
  - (f) the financial year 1983-84;
  - (g) the financial year 1984-85;
  - (h) the financial year 1985-86;
  - (j) the financial year 1986-87; and
  - (k) the financial year 1987-88?
13. On what terms were these Special Purpose Leases offered for the above financial years [12(a) to (k)]?
14. How many of these Special Purpose Lease offers were accepted for the above financial years [12(a) to (k)]?

20 October 1987

3. **Aboriginal Employment**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for LABOUR and ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

In view of the Northern Territory Government's stated commitment to improving Aboriginal employment and in the light of recent reports indicating a decline in Aboriginal employment levels, what are the numbers of unfilled positions in each of the following categories:

- (a) Police aides;
- (b) Trackers;
- (c) Health workers;
- (d) Assistant teachers in Aboriginal schools on Aboriginal communities; and
- (e) Teacher aides in Aboriginal schools on Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

As at 8 February 1988 the number of vacancies in the above categories were as follows:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| (a) Police Aides                                | 1   |
| (b) Trackers                                    | 7   |
| (c) Health Workers                              | 19  |
| (d) Assistant Teacher                           | Nil |
| (e) Teacher Aides - not a separate designation. |     |

5. **Skywest - Aero-medical Services**

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

What are the details of the cost to the Northern Territory government of the financial, legal and other arrangements made with the Skywest Company to finalise negotiations allowing Skywest to begin the aero-medical services in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The identifiable costs to the Northern Territory government of the financial, legal and other arrangements made with the Skywest Company to finalise negotiations allowing Skywest to begin aero-medical services in the Northern Territory amount to \$229 354.53. This amount is broken down as follows -

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Settlement arising out of legal action<br>(damages and costs)  | \$226 426.27 |
| Cost of visit by Secretary, Department<br>of Health and Community Services and<br>the Secretary, Department of Law to<br>Perth to negotiate with Skywest<br>(airfares, accommodation, meals) | \$ 2 928.26  |
| TOTAL  | \$229 354.53 |

The new contract arrangements have resulted in significant savings over the previous arrangements. The extent of the saving on a monthly basis is in the order of \$70 000.

### 23 February 1988

#### 21. Parks and Reserves - Tourists

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TOURISM

What was the number of visitors to each of the following parks, reserves or lands managed by the Conservation Commission in 1985, 1986 and 1987:

Alice Springs Telegraph Station Historical Reserve;  
Arltunga Historical Reserve;  
Finke Gorge National Park;  
Glen Helen Gorge Nature Park;

Berry Springs Nature Park;  
Butterfly Gorge Nature Park;  
Daly River Nature Park;  
Douglas Hot Springs Nature Park;  
Holmes Jungle Nature Park;  
Howard Springs Nature Park;  
Imbrawarra Gorge Nature Park;

Cutta Cutta Caves Nature Park;  
Katherine Gorge National Park;  
Keep River National Park; and  
Mataranka Pool Nature Park?

#### ANSWER

This question should have been directed to my colleague, the Minister for Conservation. However, I have requested the information from the Minister for Conservation and his reply follows.

The Conservation Commission has taken positive steps in recent years to improve visitor monitoring in its parks and reserves.



Visitor use information is of crucial importance if the Commission is to satisfy the demands of what is, as you will note from the figures below, a rapidly increasing visitor load while at the same time protecting the amenity and other values of the areas that these people come to enjoy.

The estimated total number of visitors to each of the areas identified, region by region, for the years 1985, 1986 and 1987 is set out in the following tables.

ALICE SPRINGS REGION

| AREA   | VISITOR NUMBERS  |                     |                     |
|--|--|---------------------|---------------------|
|  | 1985   | 1986                | 1987                |
| Alice Springs<br>Telegraph Station<br>Historical Reserve | 180 000 m  | 196 000 *<br>(8.9%) | 224 700<br>(14.6%)  |
| Arltunga Historical<br>Reserve                           | 6 000 m  | 11 400 m<br>(90.0%) | 12 700<br>(11.4%)   |
| Finke Gorge<br>National Park                             | 40 500 h   | 54 700 h<br>(35.1%) | 56 700<br>(3.7%)    |
| Glen Helen Gorge<br>Nature Park                          | No Specific Data Available<br>(see Ormiston Gorge data below **) |                     |                     |
| Ormiston Gorge and<br>Pound National Park **             | 59 000 m   | 70 000 m<br>(18.2%) | 98 000 m<br>(39.4%) |

Key: h - high reliability data  
m - moderate reliability data  
l - low reliability data  
(%) - percentage increase in visitor numbers from  
the previous year

\* - Visitor numbers for the Alice Springs Telegraph Station Historical Reserve for 1986 and 1987 are projections based on 1985 data using estimated annual increases in tourist numbers and resident populations, they are necessarily of low reliability.

\*\* - Data for Ormiston Gorge, 10 km east of Glen Helen Gorge along Larapinta Drive, is considered indicative of visitor numbers in the West MacDonnells District generally.

DARWIN REGION

| AREA                               | VISITOR NUMBERS |                   |                    |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
|                                    | 1985            | 1986 *            | 1987 *             |
| Berry Springs<br>Nature Park       | 141 500 h       | 150 700<br>(6.5%) | 165 800<br>(10.0%) |
| Butterfly Gorge<br>Nature Park     | 9 000 m         | 9 900<br>(10.0%)  | 11 700<br>(18.2%)  |
| Daly River<br>Nature Park          | 20 000 l        | 21 300<br>(6.5%)  | 23 400<br>(9.9%)   |
| Douglas Hot Springs<br>Nature Park | 23 300 m        | 25 600<br>(9.9%)  | 29 300<br>(14.5%)  |
| Holmes Jungle<br>Nature Park       | 15 000 l        | 15 500<br>(3.3%)  | 16 000<br>(3.2%)   |
| Howard Springs<br>Nature Park      | 150 000 h       | 158 100<br>(5.4%) | 170 400<br>(7.8%)  |
| Umbrawarra Gorge<br>Nature Park    | 8 500 m         | 9 400<br>(10.6%)  | 11 000<br>(17.0%)  |

Key: h - high reliability data  
m - moderate reliability data  
l - low reliability data  
(%) - percentage increase in visitor numbers from  
the previous year

\* - Visitor numbers for 1986 and 1987 are projections based on 1985 data using estimated annual increases in tourist numbers and resident populations, they are necessarily of low reliability.

KATHERINE REGION

| AREA                             | VISITOR NUMBERS |                      |                      |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                                  | 1985            | 1986                 | 1987                 |
| Cutta Cutta Caves<br>Nature Park | 12 800 h        | 13 400 h<br>(4.7%)   | 13 400 h<br>(-0.1%)  |
| Katherine Gorge<br>National Park | 138 000 m       | 164 000 l<br>(18.8%) | 202 000 m<br>(23.2%) |
| Keep River<br>National Park      | 2 000 m         | 3 200 l<br>(60.0%)   | 6 700 m<br>(109.4%)  |
| Mataranka Pool<br>Nature Park    | 50 000 m        | 90 000 l<br>(80.0%)  | 130 000 l<br>(44.4%) |

Key: h - high reliability data  
 m - moderate reliability data  
 l - low reliability data  
 (%) - percentage increase in visitor numbers from  
 the previous year

17 May 1988

25. **Commissioner of Taxes**  
**Unpaid Tax**

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

I refer to the table on page 17 of the Northern Territory Treasury Annual Report:

1. Why was the number of inspections only 128 in 1986-87 compared to 195 in the previous year?
2. How many average staff years were deployed to inspection work within the Inspection and Enforcement Unit during each of the financial years ended 30 June 1982 to 30 June 1987?
3. What has been the coverage ration (total inspections divided by total registered taxpayers) for those same years?

ANSWER

1. The decline in the number of inspections between 1986-87 and the previous year can largely be attributed to staff shortages.

This problem has since been overcome by:

- (i) the upgrading of existing positions (thereby attracting qualified accounting staff); and
- (ii) the recruitment of 2 additional investigation officers.

The Investigation and Enforcement Unit is currently at full strength.

2. Average staff years deployed to inspections:

|         |       |
|---------|-------|
| 1981-82 | 1.02* |
| 1982-83 | 1.58* |
| 1983-84 | 3.18  |
| 1984-85 | 2.90  |
| 1985-86 | 2.88  |
| 1986-87 | 1.97  |

\* Unit staff by 2 inspectors only.

3. Total inspections as a ratio of total registered taxpayers:

|         |      |
|---------|------|
| 1981-82 | 0.14 |
| 1982-83 | 0.13 |
| 1983-84 | 0.17 |
| 1984-85 | 0.13 |
| 1985-86 | 0.14 |
| 1986-87 | 0.09 |

**26. Arrears Administration Fee**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. What was the total amount of arrears administration fee imposed on Housing Commission loans during 1987?
2. Upon how many loans was the fee imposed?

ANSWER

An Arrears Administration Fee (AAF) is imposed monthly on each Northern Territory Home Purchase Assistance Scheme (NTHPAS) loan which is \$50 or more in arrears. The Fee consists of 10% of the outstanding instalment balance.

1. The total amount of Arrears Administration Fee imposed on NTHPAS loans during 1987 was \$125 594.30.
2. Arrears Administration Fee was imposed on 462 loans during 1987.

**28. Trade Development Zone Authority  
Trade Missions**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

1. How many trade missions:
  - (a) were convened during 1987;
  - (b) in which cities were these missions convened; and
  - (c) on which dates did these meetings take place?
2. Were the missions separately targeted to types of industry?
3. Outside the trade mission effort, how many potential investors were approached on a one-to-one basis during the calendar year 1987:
  - (a) within Australia; and
  - (b) overseas?

ANSWER

1. The Trade Development Zone Authority does not normally undertake trade missions as a form of promotion. Promotional activities are generally by way of seminars and, to a lesser extent, trade fairs.

Seminars and trade fairs which were held, or participated in, by the authority during the course of 1987 are as follows:

| <u>DATE</u>     | <u>ACTIVITY</u> | <u>LOCATION</u>   |
|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| <u>February</u> |                 |   |
| 10              | Seminar         | Sydney (to Japanese companies participating in the Return Japanese Investment Mission to Australia) |
| 16              | Seminar         | Melbourne (in conjunction with the Australian Chamber of Manufacturers)                             |
| 26              | Seminar         | Bangkok   |
| <u>March</u>    |                 |   |
| 2               | Seminar         | Kuala Lumpur (in conjunction with the Malaysian Manufacturers Assn)                                 |
| 4               | Seminar         | Singapore (in conjunction with the Singapore Manufacturers Assn)                                    |
| <u>May</u>      |                 |   |
| 8               | Seminar         | Singapore (Business Migration)  |
| 11              | Seminar         | Sydney (in conjunction with the Chamber of Manufacturers of NSW)                                    |
| 12              | Seminar         | Kuala Lumpur (Business Migration)   |
| 13-15           | Trade Fair      | Sydney Export 88  |
| 20              | Seminar         | Hong Kong   |
| 25              | Seminar         | Kaohsiung   |
| 27              | Seminar         | Changhua  |
| 27              | Seminar         | Taichung  |
| 28-30           | Trade Fair      | Darwin (NT Expo)  |
| <u>August</u>   |                 |   |
| 10              | Seminar         | Bangkok   |
| <u>October</u>  |                 |   |
| 20              | Seminar         | Taipei  |
| 21              | Seminar         | Changhua  |

- Promotional activities by the authority primarily target manufacturing industry, specifically export manufacturers. However, at overseas seminars, small numbers of people attend in order to obtain more general information about the Northern Territory.
- It is not possible to provide a complete record of the numbers of inquiries generated or companies approached by the Zone Authority. TDZA promotional activities yield a wide range of inquiries on an individual basis to both the Zone Authority and its consultants.

**29. Territory Insurance Office - Claims**

Mr COLLINS to TREASURER

During the period 1 January to 31 December 1987, how many claims have been -

- (a) made on the Territory Insurance Office;
- (b) settled within 48 days of being made; and
- (c) settled within 60 days of being made.

ANSWER

Though short, the honourable member's question will take a long time and considerable expense to answer.

Like all insurers, the TIO maintains such statistics as are necessary for underwriting purposes; however, it is neither practical nor cost effective to maintain statistics of settlement times. To obtain them now would require a search of all files handled by the TIO in 1987. The size of that task can be seen from the fact that in 1987 the TIO handled 3480 claims in the workers' compensation class alone.

I can only indicate to the honourable member that it is TIO policy to handle all claims promptly and fairly. If he has any specific complaints, I would be happy to have them reviewed.

**30. Kulgera Tourist Venture**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Has a government loan been given to Mr Jeff Sutton, or a company with which he is associated, for a tourist venture at Kulgera?

If so -

- (a) when was the application made and to whom;
- (b) what is the amount of the loan;
- (c) what are the terms of the loan;
- (d) who approved the loan;
- (e) how was the loan effected and through which government agency; and
- (f) what security is there for the loan?



ANSWER

No government loan has been given to Mr Jeffery Sutton or any company with which he is associated, for a tourist venture at Kulgera. However, financial assistance in the form of an interest rate subsidy of \$70 000 was provided by the Tourist Commission to the National Australia Bank in support of commercial borrowings by a company of which Mr Sutton is a director to purchase Kulgera Road Side Inn.

This assistance was made available contingent on the directors entering into an agreement which provided for the upgrading of the Road Side Inn involving a minimal expenditure of \$500 000 within 24 months. Many of these improvements are already underway and the Northern Territory Tourist Commission has been monitoring the situation closely to ensure compliance with the agreement.

**31. Beaufort Liquor Fees**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TOURISM

1. How much has the Beaufort Hotel -
  - (a) paid in liquor licensing fees since it opened; and
  - (b) outstanding in licensing fees to date?
2. Over what period of time has the Beaufort Hotel accumulated the outstanding licensing fees?

ANSWER

The licence for the Beaufort Hotel became effective on 17 March 1986. A licence renewal fee of \$43 721.03 was paid in January 1987. A further licence renewal fee of \$31 758.17 was paid in January 1988.

There are no outstanding licence fees to date. The 1988 licence fee will be due and payable on 28 July 1988 and will be based on purchases for the period 1 January 1988 to 30 June 1988.

**33. Police Prosecutors**

Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many Police Prosecutors are there in Alice Springs?
2. How many Police Prosecutors are there in Darwin?
3. How many cases were prosecuted in Alice Springs in February 1988?
4. How many cases were prosecuted in Darwin in February 1988?

5. What was the average time taken per case in Alice Springs in February 1988?
6. What was the average time taken per case in Darwin in February 1988?

ANSWER

1. There are two (2) Police Prosecutors in Alice Springs.
2. There are seven (7) Police Prosecutors in Darwin.
3. 448 offences were prosecuted in Alice Springs in February 1988.
4. 1068 offences were prosecuted in Darwin in February 1988.
- 5.) No records are kept nor can any meaningful assumptions be
- 6.) made about 'average time taken per case' in either Alice Springs or Darwin.

**34. Late Prosecution**

Mr COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Does the Honourable Attorney-General intend to try to reinstate a case before the court in Alice Springs which was recently dismissed by the Magistrate because the Prosecution was late?

ANSWER

No.

I understand the case referred to involved a prosecution in February for a summary offence, which was dismissed under s.63 of the Justices Act, because the prosecutor was not present when the case was called.

Under s.162A of the Justices Act upon a request from the Crown a Justice may reserve a question of law arising in connection with the hearing of a matter. The procedure is used only in a limited number of cases where there is an important point of law to be resolved and the matter is otherwise one of importance. Given (a) the minor nature of the offence; (b) the relevant law in relation to dismissal of matters for want of prosecution; and (c) the delay since the Justice made his finding; it seems unlikely the Justice would agree to state a case. Of course such a procedure would not reinstitute the proceedings rather it would only determine the question of law to be considered in relation to later matters before the Court. In any event, however, from the information before me I consider that in this instance the Magistrate's decision would stand if the question of law was considered by the Supreme Court.

You should note that there is no appeal from a dismissal of a complaint (see s.163 of the Justices Act). I do not consider there are any reasons to amend such a provision which generally follows the applicable law throughout Australia.

**37. Darwin Institute of Technology  
Foreign Student Numbers**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many foreign students attend the Darwin Institute of Technology?
2. What is the total amount of fees received this year from foreign students to 31 March 1988?
3. What has been the cost to DIT of the recruitment of foreign students, taking into account the offices opened in Asia, their staffing and trips taken by DIT staff to Asia in the past year?

ANSWER

1. The total number of overseas students at the Darwin Institute of Technology is 60. This comprises 48 full fee paying students including 6 studying the English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) and 12 Commonwealth government sponsored overseas students.
2. The total amount of fees received to 29 February 1988 is \$171 256. This amount is expected to reach in excess of \$250 000 by the end of July when all fees for 1988 will have been collected. It should be noted that some students are paying their fees using the instalment system.
3. Total cost for the period 1 July 1987 to 29 February 1988 is \$85 586 which includes agents fees, travel, advertising and other administrative expenses.

The number of trips undertaken by DIT staff to Asia involved 16 officers at a total cost of \$40 852. Of this amount, approximately half related to promotion of courses and student recruitment and half to the delivery of off-shore components of courses.

**50. Housing Commission Tenancies**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many Housing Commission tenancies:
  - (a) ceased in -
    - (i) December 1987,
    - (ii) January 1988, and
    - (iii) February 1988; and
  - (b) commenced in -
    - (i) December 1987,

(ii) January 1988, and

(iii) February 1988?

2. What were the tenancy cessations and commencements for each of the above months, 12 months previously?

ANSWER

See following tables.

## HOUSING COMMISSION TENANCY CESSATIONS

| <u>December 1986</u> | <u>1B/R</u> | <u>2B/R</u> | <u>3B/R</u> | <u>4B/R</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Darwin               | 13          | 46          | 145         | 5           | 209          |
| Katherine            | -           | 2           | 10          | 1           | 13           |
| Alice Springs        | 5           | 31          | 12          | 1           | 49           |
| Tennant Creek        | 1           | 5           | 16          | 1           | 23           |
|                      | <u>19</u>   | <u>84</u>   | <u>183</u>  | <u>8</u>    | <u>294</u>   |
| <u>January 1987</u>  |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 12          | 40          | 98          | 6           | 156          |
| Katherine            | 7           | 1           | 5           | 3           | 16           |
| Alice Springs        | 4           | 11          | 20          | 1           | 36           |
| Tennant Creek        | -           | 1           | 18          | 1           | 20           |
|                      | <u>23</u>   | <u>53</u>   | <u>141</u>  | <u>11</u>   | <u>228</u>   |
| <u>February 1987</u> |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 13          | 33          | 75          | -           | 121          |
| Katherine            | 4           | -           | 8           | -           | 12           |
| Alice Springs        | 3           | 23          | 35          | 2           | 63           |
| Tennant Creek        | -           | 4           | 9           | -           | 13           |
|                      | <u>20</u>   | <u>60</u>   | <u>127</u>  | <u>2</u>    | <u>209</u>   |
| <u>December 1987</u> |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 17          | 53          | 107         | 11          | 188          |
| Katherine            | 1           | -           | 4           | 1           | 6            |
| Alice Springs        | 20          | 28          | 24          | 1           | 73           |
| Tennant Creek        | 2           | 5           | 12          | 2           | 21           |
|                      | <u>40</u>   | <u>86</u>   | <u>147</u>  | <u>15</u>   | <u>288</u>   |
| <u>January 1988</u>  |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 16          | 43          | 120         | 5           | 184          |
| Katherine            | 7           | 9           | 12          | 3           | 31           |
| Alice Springs        | 4           | 27          | 25          | 4           | 60           |
| Tennant Creek        | 5           | 2           | 7           | 1           | 15           |
|                      | <u>32</u>   | <u>81</u>   | <u>164</u>  | <u>13</u>   | <u>290</u>   |
| <u>February 1988</u> |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 21          | 56          | 101         | 6           | 184          |
| Katherine            | 3           | 3           | 14          | -           | 20           |
| Alice Springs        | 10          | 28          | 33          | -           | 71           |
| Tennant Creek        | 2           | 6           | 16          | -           | 24           |
|                      | <u>36</u>   | <u>93</u>   | <u>164</u>  | <u>6</u>    | <u>299</u>   |

HOUSING COMMISSION TENANCY COMMENCEMENTS

| <u>December 1986</u> | <u>1B/R</u> | <u>2B/R</u> | <u>3B/R</u> | <u>4B/R</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Darwin               | 10          | 31          | 61          | 2           | 104          |
| Katherine            | 7           | 2           | 10          | -           | 19           |
| Alice Springs        | 9           | 19          | 36          | 1           | 65           |
| Tennant Creek        | 2           | 2           | 12          | 1           | 17           |
|                      | <u>28</u>   | <u>54</u>   | <u>119</u>  | <u>4</u>    | <u>205</u>   |
| <u>January 1987</u>  |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 18          | 43          | 89          | 3           | 153          |
| Katherine            | 1           | -           | 2           | 1           | 4            |
| Alice Springs        | 12          | 20          | 29          | -           | 61           |
| Tennant Creek        | 2           | 2           | 13          | -           | 17           |
|                      | <u>33</u>   | <u>65</u>   | <u>133</u>  | <u>4</u>    | <u>235</u>   |
| <u>February 1987</u> |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 13          | 35          | 88          | 3           | 139          |
| Katherine            | 2           | 1           | 6           | 1           | 10           |
| Alice Springs        | 5           | 15          | 39          | 3           | 62           |
| Tennant Creek        | 2           | 7           | 10          | 1           | 20           |
|                      | <u>22</u>   | <u>58</u>   | <u>143</u>  | <u>8</u>    | <u>231</u>   |
| <u>December 1987</u> |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 14          | 43          | 74          | 5           | 136          |
| Katherine            | -           | 8           | 10          | -           | 18           |
| Alice Springs        | 8           | 31          | 23          | -           | 62           |
| Tennant Creek        | 3           | 3           | 7           | -           | 13           |
|                      | <u>25</u>   | <u>85</u>   | <u>114</u>  | <u>5</u>    | <u>229</u>   |
| <u>January 1988</u>  |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 5           | 54          | 97          | 6           | 162          |
| Katherine            | 4           | 5           | -           | -           | 9            |
| Alice Springs        | 6           | 27          | 30          | 4           | 67           |
| Tennant Creek        | 1           | 2           | 8           | -           | 11           |
|                      | <u>16</u>   | <u>88</u>   | <u>135</u>  | <u>10</u>   | <u>249</u>   |
| <u>February 1988</u> |             |             |             |             |              |
| Darwin               | 14          | 36          | 111         | 5           | 166          |
| Katherine            | 5           | 8           | 11          | 1           | 25           |
| Alice Springs        | -           | 12          | 35          | -           | 47           |
| Tennant Creek        | 3           | 4           | 12          | -           | 19           |
|                      | <u>22</u>   | <u>60</u>   | <u>169</u>  | <u>6</u>    | <u>257</u>   |

Darwin International Grammar School

Mr EDE TO MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is the Mr Koh who is involved with the Darwin International Grammar School that same entrepreneurial disaster area, the Mr Koh who was involved with Raffles and Burgundy Royale when it went bankrupt, and what protection and guarantees has the government extracted from the Darwin International Grammar School concerning the \$8.7m investment that it proposes to make into that school?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, here we go again. Before we even get off the ground, the opposition starts knock, knock, knocking.

Mr Ede interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stuart's question was heard in silence. The minister's reply will be heard in silence likewise.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, if the shadow minister for education wishes to make a personal attack on a shareholder of a company that is interested in building an international grammar school here, then so be it. He can go outside and have that argument.

The answer to the question is that Hishamuddin Koh is a shareholder of the company Education Holdings.

Darwin International Grammar School

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Mr Speaker, the honourable minister did not answer the question. I asked what guarantees and what protection the government had for its investment, given the fact that Mr Koh has been involved already in a number of businesses in the Northern Territory into which the government has put money and especially given the fact that, in some of those instances, the Northern Territory government and ordinary businessmen in the Northern Territory have suffered significant financial loss as a result of Mr Koh's involvement. I think it is fair that the minister advise what protections and what guarantees he has sought and had provided to him with regard to the international grammar school.

Mr HATTON (Chief Minister): A point of order, Mr Speaker! This is question time. It is not statement time for the opposition. The member for Stuart is arguing a case rather than asking a question seeking facts.

Mr SPEAKER: There is a point of order. I ask the honourable member to reach a conclusion and ask his question.

Mr EDE: Mr Speaker, I am asking the honourable minister if he will advise this House what protections and what guarantees have been sought and have been provided by the Darwin International Grammar School in relation to the \$8.7m which he has promised to provide to it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there are ample guarantees for the Northern Territory government. I might say initially that no money will be paid by the Northern Territory government until the school is operational at the beginning of next year. The Darwin International Grammar School will provide an essential service to the Northern Territory people, and the guarantees in relation to the possibility of its going broke are well and truly covered in an agreement with the Northern Territory government. I have indicated very clearly that no up-front money is required and that any money to be provided will be allocated in the budget. The amount is \$1.45m per year over a period of 6 years, and no money is to be paid out until the building is actually constructed.

Darwin International Grammar School

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Yesterday and today, the Secretary of the Northern Territory Teachers Federation, Col Young, said on the radio that he was aware that the minister's office was being flooded with telegrams and letters protesting the government's funding of the Darwin International Grammar School. Are Mr Young's allegations correct?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is the sort of nonsense that we hear from the Northern Territory Teachers Federation Executive. It is trying to beat up a storm over this issue and should be condemned for doing so. I believe that many of the teachers outside this building today are not aware of the facts. Col Young and Bob Wharton have both been deceptive in relation to information.

Mr Bell: Say that outside, Tom.

Mr HARRIS: You should listen!

To say that my office has been flooded with letters is not accurate. I have received 3 letters, 1 from a school and 2 from federation members at regional offices. That is the extent to which my office has been flooded with letters. The Department of Education has received the same letters. The federation executive is trying to beat up a storm by misinforming people in the community, and it stands condemned for that.

Bob Wharton and Col Young, both members of the federation executive, have been playing politics on this issue. To have a person like Bob Wharton, an executive member of the Teachers Federation, seconding motions at an ALP conference condemning the government's handling of education is something which needs to be looked at carefully. I am not objecting to people being members of parties, but I do object to someone who is in an executive position in which he deals with me as Minister for Education moving motions relating to education at an ALP conference. The teachers of the Northern Territory should look very closely at the executive of the Teachers Federation. I believe that, if teachers knew the facts, they would not be demonstrating outside today.

I will point out some of the deceptions that have been perpetrated on the community. The first was the statement from the Teachers Federation that the government would pay \$8.7m up-front to the international grammar school. What a load of nonsense! People in the community believed that.



Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I am sure that, like myself, you heard the question. It was very specific. It asked how many letters and telegrams the minister had received in relation to the government's decision to fund the Darwin International Grammar School. The question was very clear. I can accept that the minister did not understand it but, Mr Speaker, I suggest that you remind the minister of the question and request that he stick to the point.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask the minister to relate his answer to the question.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, I believe that I have answered the question satisfactorily. There has been deception right throughout this whole exercise and the Teachers Federation executive stands condemned for its actions.

#### Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Is it a fact that he knew Hungerford Refrigeration faced a threat of going into receivership about 10 days ago and, if so, why did he neglect to inform either his Chief Minister or the Treasurer? Secondly, is it also a fact that he briefed the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority to try, or that the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority tried of his own volition, to delay the announcement that the company would be put into the hands of a receiver until after this sittings of the Assembly? Thirdly, is it true that the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority, Mr Ray McHenry, flew out to Singapore or other points north on Sunday and will not be available to assist either the minister or the receiver in the following days?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I did not get all 4 points of the honourable member's question.

Mr SMITH: I will repeat them for you.

Mr PERRON: It might have been useful if he had asked them one at a time or had provided me with an advance copy.

In regard to questions about whether or not I was aware of, or tried to defer, any decision by the directors of TIO in respect of whether Hungerford Refrigeration would be placed in receivership, I can assure the honourable member most emphatically that I certainly did not, nor would I at any time even suggest that such a decision should be deferred pending a Legislative Assembly sittings. Clearly, such an action would be grossly improper. It would be absolutely crazy for any politician even to attempt to influence such a commercial decision. My understanding of the situation is that the board of Hungerford Refrigeration has been waiting for some 2 or 3 weeks now for a decision by the federal government on the successful tenderer for an air-conditioning contract for houses at Tindal. The company has been concerned, I believe, about the inordinate and unexplained delay by the Commonwealth. Indeed, it may not even yet have been advised formally whether or not the company, which was one of a small number of tenderers, has been awarded the contract or not.

In response to the honourable member's last question, about the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone, it is true that he left Darwin on Sunday. He is in Singapore. I spoke to him last evening by telephone, as I will be doing

regularly during his trip overseas. Obviously, he is available to advise me in that regard. However, the Manager of the Trade Development Zone is in Darwin and is able to assist with these matters. I can assure the Leader of the Opposition, who clearly does not comprehend what is involved in overseas marketing and Trade Development Zone promotion ...

Mr Smith: It doesn't appear you do either.

Mr PERRON: ... that it will involve a series of meetings in several countries and that will take some weeks. You do not organise such an event involving many people, many activities and considerable expense and then decide at the last minute that you will cancel it and stick around Darwin because the Leader of the Opposition wants to try to create a storm in a teacup. He has my blessing and I would have insisted, had he asked me, that he go on such a trip rather than cause enormous damage to that promotion by pulling out at the last minute.

#### Premiers Conference

Mr DONDAS to CHIEF MINISTER

Compared to the result of last year's Premiers Conference, can he report to this Assembly on the outcome of this year's Premiers Conference and its implications for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for asking this question because, unlike some of the subjects that have been debated here, the Premiers Conference is a matter of extreme interest to Northern Territory people and to our government because it creates the foundation for our ability to determine a budget for the coming financial year. There has been considerable press discussion about the Premiers Conference and I would like to take the opportunity to outline briefly the results from this year's Premiers Conference for the Northern Territory and how those results compare to the outcomes for other states in Australia.

This year, in a combination of financial assistance grants, hospital grants and what is called the Loans Council Program, which is the general purpose capital grants and loans, the Northern Territory will be provided with \$779.6m as compared with \$779.5m last year. To all intents and purposes, it is the same dollar figure as for the previous year. As members would be aware, the clear position put by the Commonwealth in respect of all states and the Northern Territory was that funding would be on an equivalent dollar value to the 1987-88 funding in those particular categories.

The funding was calculated on a premise by the federal government of a 5.5% inflation rate in the coming financial year. I must say that we find that prediction overly optimistic and the states generally are of that view. We are concerned that there may be some higher real cuts if the inflation rate rises above the estimated 5.5%. As a result of negotiations during the Premiers Conference, the federal government has agreed that, to the extent that the inflation rate exceeds 5.5%, funding will be increased by that differential percentage. Put simply, for example, if the inflation rate becomes 6.5%, that will mean, on the advice of the Treasurer, that our funding in these categories will be increased by 1%, thereby maintaining the real cuts that have been applied.

Another aspect of the Premiers Conference is a meeting of the Loans Council. Not being a state, the Northern Territory is not a member of the Loans Council, and our representative at the council is the federal Treasurer. All of the semi-government borrowings and the 'global limits' for semi-government loans taken out by Northern Territory governments since self-government have required the specific approval of respective federal Treasurers. Obviously following negotiation with the Northern Territory and submissions from the Northern Territory as to what moneys are required for putting the essential capital infrastructure into the Northern Territory, those Treasurers have approved the levels of loans.

Last year, our semi-government program was set at \$65m. We have an agreement with the Commonwealth with respect to any operating losses that are incurred by NTEC as a result of the adjustments that have been taking place in the winding back of subsidies for NTEC and in the adjustment process as the gas pipe system comes into place. I understand that, last year, that amounted to some \$6.3m. The preliminary global limit that has been provided for the next financial year is \$95m, and that is a \$30m increase on the basic \$65m. I understand that the arrangement for additional borrowing capacity to meet NTEC operating losses is still in place. That gives us a significantly higher capacity to put in some important capital infrastructure in the Northern Territory and, in that respect, we have done significantly better than the states, all of whom had dramatic cuts made in their semi-government loans programs. I must say that, in this particular area, the Commonwealth government chose to pick out Queensland for special treatment this year, and it has incurred a \$367m reduction in its loans program. Of course, as members will be aware from media reports, the Premier of Queensland has refused to sign the loans agreement and that means that the Commonwealth will need to go into bilateral agreements with the various states which have agreed to the global limits rather than merely signing the general Loans Council agreement.

There is an average of something like an 11% reduction in global limits for the states and additional loans of some 30% in the Northern Territory. However, from the finances that have been provided to the Northern Territory in general funding, the \$779.6m, the Commonwealth has deducted from our financial assistance grants the \$57.5m cut that was recommended by the Grants Commission. It is important to recognise that that figure was never \$44m. It was \$44m plus the negative special grant that we lost in this year's financing. In terms of our base line funding, it is \$57.5m. That has been offset this year by what is known as a special revenue assistance provision for the Northern Territory. A similar provision has been made for Tasmania, Western Australia and South Australia.

Mr Smith: There wouldn't be many people in Tennant Creek who will listen twice.

Mr HATTON: It is interesting that the Leader of the Opposition finds it really boring for people to be informed of what is occurring in relation to the budget.

Mr Smith: It is a very boring delivery.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, that is not a satisfactory situation for us because it still leaves the sword of Damocles hanging over the finances of the Northern Territory with respect to the Grants Commission report. What we have achieved is the right to fight another day. We have an agreement with the Commonwealth to address many of what we believe to be the inaccurate assumptions and calculations that have been made in the Grants Commission's

assessment. We will be doing that with the federal government through Treasury over the coming months.

Before I make my final point, I would like to pay tribute to those people in the Northern Territory who supported this government in what obviously has been a very difficult task. Members are aware that the Northern Territory has suffered rather badly and been discriminated against by the Commonwealth, particularly during the last 2 or 3 years. We all know of the difficulties that that has created for the people of the Northern Territory and for this government in seeking to maintain balanced accounts. I appreciate the support that this government received from federal members for the Territory, particularly Senator Collins, and from the Northern Territory Business Council, in lobbying the federal government. I was very disappointed, however, that the Leader of the Opposition saw fit not to open his mouth publicly on the subject and made no representations whatsoever to the federal government.

Mr Smith: That is not true.

Mr Coulter: He made some representations but they were negative.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, my information is that, in fact, the Leader of the Opposition was urging from behind the scenes that the Territory's funding should be cut in order to make life hard for the Territory government and to improve his own stocks in the community. I would like to think that that did not occur but I am afraid my sources are pretty good. I believe that members of the ALP organisational wing were promoting that cause also. That is absolutely disgraceful. I believe that the stunt pulled by the Australian Teachers Federation was disgraceful as well. It was an attempt to play stupid, dangerous politics in the context of the Premiers Conference with a letter that was both nonsensical and inaccurate.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I appreciate that the bulk of the Chief Minister's answer has been relevant to the question which was directly related to how the Northern Territory fared at the Premiers Conference and the implications of the Premiers Conference for the finances of the Northern Territory. The Chief Minister has now strayed from that subject and is making a snide, bitter, personal attack. If he wants to do that, I am prepared to take him on in this House at any time. However, Mr Speaker, I would suggest that it is in the interests of this House and in the interests of your authority in it, that you rule that the Chief Minister confine himself to answering the question.

Mr COULTER: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable member has not yet raised a point of order? What is it?

Mr LEO: Mr Speaker, my point of order was made very clear at the outset of my remarks. The Chief Minister is not addressing himself to the question and I would suggest that, for the sake of this House and your own standing in it, you rule that he confine his answer to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: The Chief Minister will relate his answer to the question.

Mr HATTON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In fact, I was answering the question.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Chief Minister has just reflected on your ruling and should be asked to withdraw his last remark.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, the question asked me to report to this Assembly on the outcome of this year's Premiers Conference and its implications for the Northern Territory. I was referring to a matter that was directly relevant to the Premiers Conference. It concerned a scurrilous letter from the Australian Teachers Federation under the signature of one Di Foggo, containing false allegations in respect of the Darwin International Grammar School, with the clear intention of encouraging the federal Treasurer to reduce the finances to the Northern Territory. That letter could have done untold damage to the funding of government services, including educational services, but I am pleased to report that its impact was so negligible that the Commonwealth did not even mention it. I raise the matter because it is an example of the type of dangerous practice which the Teachers Federation is indulging in with the collusion of the opposition. The letter was an attempt to undermine the ability of the Territory government to put its case to the federal government in order to protect the finances of the people of the Northern Territory. I am pleased to say that the federal government saw through that stupid nonsense and, in fact ...

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Chief Minister has the advantage of having both the question and answer written down in front of him. I would suggest that you direct him to confine his answer to the question and that he stick to his script rather than continuing to trip off into fairyland in an effort to evade the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr HATTON: We are becoming used to the opposition's tactic of trying to disrupt us by continually raising spurious points of order.

My point is that some very good Territorians, including Labor politicians, have been prepared to stand up and fight for the Territory. It is a shame that some other people in the Territory have been playing stupid little games which actually threaten the livelihood of members of their own organisation. Fortunately, the federal government respects the fact that we have been managing our finances responsibly and was not prepared to listen to the nonsense contained in the Teachers Federation letter. It has provided us with reasonable finances and, whilst it will be tight, we are confident that we can bring down a balanced budget without any major shocks to the Northern Territory community.

#### TIO Involvement in Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

Unfortunately, personal explanations have to be given at the end of question time and I do not have the opportunity now to respond to that outrageous nonsense from the Chief Minister.

Is the Treasurer aware that the TIO's involvement with Hungerford Refrigeration encouraged local businesses to extend credit to the company? Is he aware that the TIO's involvement was taken as a de facto guarantee of that company's future, and will he now advise the House whether it is his intention to ensure that the TIO makes good any losses incurred by local businesses through their involvement with Hungerford?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is indeed heartening to see that the Leader of the Opposition is now concerned with the fate of Hungerford, particularly in relation to people who may have suffered or are in financial difficulties as a result of his actions. It is to the Leader of the Opposition's shame that a book has been compiled detailing actions of his which have brought this company into the political sphere.

Mr Speaker, I will not digress from the question but, in answering it, I would like to say that the Leader of the Opposition has raised the matter of Hungerford Refrigeration as an issue at 3 very strategic times: the first was before the federal election, the second was before the Barkly election and the third is today. He had to raise Hungerford as an issue today for his own political survival, because he is under threat from the fellow behind him who laughed first.

I can advise honourable members and the Leader of the Opposition that the Territory Insurance Office has assured me that it will look closely at those in hardship, particularly those who have consistently supported the company in the past.

#### Trade and Tourism Links with Guam

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

During a visit to Guam last year by a group from Darwin, including the Chief Minister and myself, discussions took place regarding the opening of trade and tourism links with the island. Can the minister advise the House of any further developments since then and whether there is any opportunity for long-term trade links with the area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Department of Industries and Development has followed up the visit referred to by the honourable member. An officer has visited Guam to hold discussions with air force personnel concerning specific needs for goods which the Northern Territory might be able to supply, either locally sourced or freighted through Darwin from elsewhere in Australia. An extensive report has been prepared and is now being evaluated and discussed with people who may be able to participate.

One of the severe difficulties we have to face in providing services to Guam is transportation. Air links are not particularly frequent and sea links are even less so. I have been approached recently by a company from Western Australia which is proposing to run charter 707 services from Western Australia to the Philippines and to Guam to supply some of those places with Australian food products. The company is interested in the possibility of making Darwin a stop on that particular route and in ascertaining what might be available here that would fit into its plan. It is very early days at the moment and it would be a brave man who would predict that such trade would commence and become regular because there are so many approvals to be obtained along the line.

It is notoriously difficult for any operator to try to break into the Australian air transport system and compete with international airlines. In particular, companies such as Qantas go to enormous lengths to eliminate or reduce any competition. There are also difficulties in obtaining approval in

places like Guam. I understand that the American armed forces operate on a basis of approved manufacturing facilities which are inspected by American officials and approved prior to their taking any large quantities of goods from those particular establishments. If the transportation does not involve large quantities, some of those systems may be bypassed and perhaps that may pertain in our case. We will continue to pursue this possible new destination for Territory-produced goods or goods transited through the Northern Territory which may have an economic benefit to the Territory. If something firm results from it, I will keep honourable members informed.

#### Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

On 3 April 1987, did he say in a press release that the investment of Territory funds in Hungerford Refrigeration could be justified by: '(1) an assessment provided by a leading firm of chartered accountants into the company's prospects; (2) a report provided by a professor of mechanical engineering into the company's technological viability; and (3) large export orders that had already been secured by the company'? Will he now table the list of large export orders that had been secured by the company at that time together with the departmental or governmental assessment of that list, the assessment of the leading firm of chartered accountants together with the departmental or governmental evaluation of the assessment and the report of the professor of mechanical engineering with the department critique of that report?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition might table his list of questions so that I can keep track of what he is asking. Fair is fair. Could I perhaps have ...?

Mr Smith: I want you to table the reports.

Mr COULTER: Could I have a list of the questions, Mr Speaker? He has asked an inordinate number of questions.

Mr Bell: It is called a question without notice. Answer it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for MacDonnell will maintain silence. I think the minister's question is quite reasonable.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, the list of questions is quite long and I will provide the Leader of the Opposition with the answers during the course of these sittings.

Mr Smith: Will you table the information or not? It is a simple question.

Mr Bell: It has been in the paper for 2 days and you have not done your homework.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will not countenance continued interjections from any member, particularly not from the member for MacDonnell who has been warned more than once during these sittings.

Alice Springs Central Business District

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES AND ENERGY

What action is the government taking to ensure that the central business district in Alice Springs north of Stott Terrace will be connected with natural gas?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I think the honourable member is alluding to an issue in Alice Springs which is controversial at the best of times: the tunnelling or trenching of roads. That becomes particularly controversial when it concerns roads that have been upgraded or constructed recently. I am not aware of current negotiations between the company wishing to reticulate the gas and its discussions with the Alice Springs Town Council and the Department of Transport and Works. I believe that some other roads are involved in this reticulation and I will provide the member for Sadadeen with details of the current status of this worthwhile project. It has become complicated because of the trenching and the opening of roads. I understand that the preference of the Department of Transport and Works would be for tunnelling. However, that particular method involves a cost penalty. As I said, I will provide the member for Sadadeen with the latest details of the negotiations.

Borrooloola Community Health Centre

Mr REED to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has a contract been awarded for the construction of the new Borrooloola Community Health Centre and, if so, can he provide details of the project?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Katherine for his question. I am well aware of his interest in that region. Many of his constituents visit that area frequently. After some lengthy negotiations regarding that particular tender, I am pleased to announce that a contract was signed recently with L & R Builders of Tennant Creek for a sum of approximately \$638 000. Of course, that represents a considerable saving on that project. I think the original budget figure was about \$830 000. The contract should take about 30 weeks to complete. I believe work was commenced during the last week or 2.

The extended negotiations on and assessment of the tenders reflect a vexed question amongst contractors in the Northern Territory at the moment, that of abnormally low tenders. Whilst there is a need to examine fully the merits of the lowest tenderer, in the end it was recommended by the Tender Board that the lowest tenderer be bypassed on this occasion. The second lowest tenderer was L & R Builders of Tennant Creek. That will be excellent for the Tennant Creek community itself. On my recent visit there, members of the local building fraternity were quite delighted with the injection given to their local work levels. I find it quite interesting that now the Tennant Creek business community is finding it most appropriate to deal directly with the Northern Territory government, through its ministers, to establish just what is happening with regard to the community's welfare.



Proposal to Amend Firearms Act

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Following public remarks he made recently regarding his government's intention to amend the Firearms Act without prior consultation with the firearms specialist groups and after being told quite definitely and exactly what the gun lobby did and did not want in respect of his idea to introduce a permit to purchase all firearms, and taking into account the changed views of the Premiers of New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania in relation to amending their state gun laws, what does the government intend to do now?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Koolpinyah for this question because there is no doubt that firearms legislation has been one of the more interesting political issues in Australia, particularly over the last 6 months. In one respect, I think the honourable member for Koolpinyah is inaccurate in her assumptions. In fact, our government has been working very closely with the various firearms specialist groups. Indeed, the legislation that we have in the Northern Territory provides what are probably the best gun laws in the country and that was put into place in close consultation with the gun community. At the moment, any proposals for amendment to our legislation are being discussed fully with the gun lobby and the executives of the various sporting shooters associations and so on. I believe there is to be a meeting this Friday evening to discuss the legislation.

With respect to the question of the permit to purchase which the honourable member raised particularly, I must advise the House that we have never pressed the point for a permit to purchase but, at the moment, we are faced with a situation where the Commonwealth government has threatened blatantly that, in any state or territory that does not have, amongst other things, a permit to purchase, it will use its customs and excise powers to block the transmission of any firearms into that state or territory. Whether the federal government is capable of achieving that in the states is one question, but its overriding powers on almost everything in respect of the Northern Territory place us in a particularly vulnerable position.

Last year, there was a lot of heat and hullabaloo with special Premiers Conferences being called by Mr Hawke and company to which we were dragged for an urgent debate on guns. I might say here that the gun lobby has since corresponded with me thanking me for putting some rationality into the debate, and that correspondence came not only from within the Northern Territory but also from around Australia in respect of the nonsense that was being propounded by the Labor states and, in particular, by the previous Premier of New South Wales who thought he would make an election issue out of the matter. Recommendations from the Australian Police Ministers Council were due to be discussed last week at the Premiers Conference. It was very interesting to note that, when we reached that item on the agenda paper, the Prime Minister recommended that additional agenda items, including firearms matters, be dealt with by way of correspondence and not be debated at all at the Premiers Conference.

Certainly, Labor governments in this country have learnt their lesson about taking illogical stances in respect of firearms. That is not to say that we should not have strong firearms legislation and reasonable and proper controls. That is also supported by the gun lobby. As far as possible, it is important to avoid the abuse and misuse of firearms and their potential to

become a threat to society. We believe that our laws in general require amendment. Before the fuss was raised by New South Wales, we were examining a series of amendments in preparation for holding discussions with firearms groups. We are still discussing those. They include such things as procedures for appeal, the re-registration of weapons, the duration of shooters' licences and permits to purchase. We were being driven to that by the Commonwealth government's threat to use its powers to force us either to enact such provisions or it would ban the transmission of any firearms into the Northern Territory. That was a clear and open threat made at the Police Ministers Conference by the federal government. We have been able to obtain much more rationality from the federal government but there is still much more work to be done. In consultation with the gun lobby, we will examine our legislation through the proper processes. When we have reached what we believe is a reasonable and fair arrangement, we will be in a position to advise exactly what we will or will not do. That will be done by way of debate on bills brought before this House.

Darwin International Grammar School

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

At this morning's stop-work meeting of teachers, Col Young said that the Darwin International Grammar School had received land for the establishment of that school at no cost. Is that true?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that is not correct and that is another example of misinformation being provided to the community. It is disappointing. I do not mind people having a say against a particular proposal but the fact is that the Darwin International Grammar School will be required to pay full market value for its lease over the property which may be converted to freehold title after 12 years upon request by the school. It is a condition of government support that the site be used only as a school. Again, we hear carping from members opposite. Unfortunately, teachers have been misinformed once again by the executive of their federation on this very important issue.

The demonstration in front of the Assembly has caused a great deal of disruption to the children of Darwin and their families. It is this misinformation which is causing the teachers to react in this way. If they have the facts and the truth, they will discover that Col Young, Bob Wharton and the Northern Territory Teachers Federation Executive are doing all this for their own political ends. I might add that they have even issued a roster of teachers from different schools to picket the Assembly, not only today but throughout these sittings.

Mr Speaker, I would like to indicate to you the type of nonsense that is being issued. This is from a paper in relation to an industrial campaign relating to DIGS. It indicates that groups of teachers 'should continually troop in and out of the public gallery'. That is the sort of nonsense that they go on with. There is a list of things involved in the deception by Col Young and Bob Wharton who have issued this information. A whole range of untruths need to be refuted. If the teachers knew the facts, I do not believe that they would be standing out there. They would be in the schools where they are supposed to be. What we are doing is establishing an international grammar school to cater for kids from right throughout the Northern Territory.

Mr Ede: They don't care about our kids. They just want to get a few bucks for themselves.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, the member for Stuart should be condemned for that statement. He knows that we are concerned about the kids in the Northern Territory. He is not concerned about the kids in the Northern Territory; he wants them to go interstate. He is not interested in bringing them back here where they should be educated. What about the children at Tennant Creek and in the Barkly region? They need access to education. We do not have boarding facilities that will cater for all of them at the moment. This is part of the whole process.

If Col Young and Bob Wharton want to play politics, they should stand for election, as they have in the past, and they will be beaten again. If they want to stand for the Teachers Federation executive, that is fine but they should keep out of politics.

#### Reduction in Qantas Services

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for TOURISM

What effect will the recently-announced reduction in Qantas services through Darwin have on the incoming tourist market?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there are some difficulties with the proposal by Qantas to cut its 3 services per week down to 2. On the one hand, the new scheduling of the services will allow better flexibility for stopovers for international travellers going out of Australia. However, with the new services, it will certainly be almost impossible to provide direct connections into Darwin from European countries, apart from the UK. I am sure all members are well aware that the northern European tourist market is very important to the economy of the Northern Territory, particularly in the wet season. Most of our visitors who come to the Top End in what are low peak periods as far as the domestic market is concerned will no longer have direct access. I have raised this question with the local manager of Qantas and he is aware of the problem.

Yesterday, I arranged an appointment for the Chairman of the Tourist Commission, Bob Doyle, with the Marketing Manager of Qantas. He is travelling to Sydney today to undertake discussions which, hopefully, will alleviate some of the connection problems. We have asked the General Manager of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation to join with us in putting pressure on Qantas because it also was unaware of the connection problem for inbound tourists. We are certain that Queensland will also suffer on the circular routes that come in through Darwin and go out through Cairns and, in some respects, that could have an effect on the long-term promotion of the market in Queensland. The Tourist Commission is well aware of the problem and I believe we are taking the right steps to try to overcome it.

#### Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

When was he first aware of the fact that TIO had nearly doubled its original exposure in Hungerford Refrigeration from \$750 000 to about \$1.4m? Secondly - and I hope he can answer 2 questions at once - why didn't he see fit to inform the public of the fact that his original statement of the total Territory exposure to the company no longer reflected the truth?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer is very simple. The opposition's mentality would have it that this company should have its business discussed on the front page of the newspaper every day. When the TIO Board made its decision on behalf of policyholders to enter into the Hungerford venture, it was always envisaged that there might be a need to provide increased capital for the company. The Leader of the Opposition should remember very well when extra money was required because it was required as a direct result of actions by him which led to a curtailment of credit. It was required when he first started opening his mouth, when he first became a debt collector for the Queensland companies, when he first came into this Assembly and told ...

Mr Smith: It appears that I will be a debt collector for Northern Territory companies now.

Mr COULTER: ... everybody that Hungerford was no good and that we should close it down because it had a problem. Its problem was that it needed money to maintain a liquidity position, as a direct result of the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. That is a fact and it can be demonstrated.

Mr Smith: Prove it.

Mr COULTER: That is no problem.

The Leader of the Opposition tried to play the white knight yesterday when he told the workers: 'I have come among you to help you'. He was rightly thrown out of the place because the people involved had had enough of him. He closed the place down and then had the nerve to turn up there. However, I digress.

I believe that the TIO provided additional moneys in 2 stages. The first, I believe, involved up to \$250 000 and then there was a further \$500 000 that actually went into the company.

Mr Smith: When?

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I will provide you with the dates. I think the question asked when it was brought to my attention.

Mr Smith: That is right.

Mr COULTER: A document delivered to me on 7 September 1987 stated: 'In view of these problems and the repeated claims that creditors are not being paid, all of which related to the inadequate funding, the TIO Board has decided, after lengthy discussions, that a further injection of funds amounting to \$500 000 should be made to allow the new management a clear run in getting the company onto a profitable footing'.

There was an additional amount of money. I was advised that: 'Following the move to Darwin, which will not be completed for another 2 weeks, and following new overseas orders, trade credit has not been extended to the company in Darwin, most of this part being forced to operate on a cash basis. This is in addition to similar problems ...'. The advice continued: 'The TIO Board has therefore decided to earmark up to \$250 000 for temporary cash-flow assistance over the next few months. At this stage, only \$100 000 is provided'. That advice was sent to me on 14 May 1987.

Mr SMITH: Mr Speaker, I ask the minister to table the document he is quoting from.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Ludmilla.

Mr LEO: A point of order Mr Speaker! The Leader of the Opposition has asked you to direct that the Treasurer table the document he has quoted from in this House. He is obliged to table that document.

Mr SPEAKER: Which standing order is the honourable member referring to?

Mr LEO: Mr Speaker, I am sure that the Clerk will confirm that the document must be tabled under standing order 255, which refers to documents relating to public affairs.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister shall table the document unless he declares that it contains some confidential material from which he has not quoted.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I read sections from a range of documents which are of a confidential nature. The Leader of the Opposition asked for information on certain matters and I will ensure that ...

Mr Smith: It is the old tale. You are not prepared to let people look at the full story. You quote selectively.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, these are confidential documents.

Mr Smith: That is disgraceful.

Mr COULTER: You asked me for a date and I simply read from my notes concerning the dates and amounts of money. I answered your question.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, may I speak to the point of order?

Mr SPEAKER: The point of order has been ruled on.

#### Shipping Service Between Singapore and Darwin

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT AND WORKS

In spite of the often-expressed scepticism of the opposition concerning this government's continuous work to establish trade links and infrastructure to support local businesses, I believe that negotiations have been taking place to provide another sea link from Darwin. I ask the minister to advise the House of what is happening in relation to the establishment of a regular shipping service between Singapore and Darwin.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer is very simple. Already the local firm of Perkins Shipping Pty Ltd provides an extremely valuable 5-weekly service carrying a mixed cargo. It is the objective of this government to provide frequent and more regular calls to and from the Port of Darwin and one particular target is Singapore, from which transshipment is available to any other port in the world. Darwin's geographic position enables us to provide land transportation to the southern part of Australia. Singapore is some 5 days' shipping time from here and it is obviously logical to use one central road corridor to the south and, in due course, the rail corridor, to provide access from southern Australia to the major markets of South-east Asia.

During my recent visit to the area, I contacted about 10 shipping companies, 4 of which showed significant interest in providing a service. We have provided them with up-to-date information on available freights and projected freights and we trust that, perhaps very shortly, we will see the introduction of a regular, frequent and extremely valuable feeder service to and from Singapore.

### Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

In question time yesterday, I requested the Treasurer to table certain documents relating to his public statements on the viability of Hungerford Refrigeration. Will he now table those documents?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform the Leader of the Opposition that I will be making a ministerial statement on Hungerford Refrigeration. The question he alluded to yesterday will be fully answered during the course of that ministerial statement.

### Pearling Licences

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Why haven't the successful applicants for the 5 licences for cultured pearls recently advertised been informed and allowed to get on with opening up the new fields?

Mr Leo: Because Nick didn't get one.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is interesting to note the interjection from the member for Nhulunbuy. He seems to have some information whose source we would be really interested to know.

Following the agreement earlier this year with the Commonwealth on what has been termed an 'offshore constitutional settlement' whereby the various fisheries in the Northern Territory and Commonwealth waters were divided up by agreement between the Commonwealth and the Territory, the pearl oyster fishery was to be managed by the Northern Territory joint authority in accordance with the laws of the Northern Territory. In fact, that joint authority is an authority under the OCS agreement comprising the federal and Territory ministers responsible for fisheries. Decisions in regard to the pearl oyster fishery in the Northern Territory are to be determined by that joint venture.

As honourable members will be aware, applications for participation in the Northern Territory pearl industry closed on 15 February this year. I advised the House that 21 applications were received to participate in that industry. Between 15 February and mid-April, applications were assessed by 3 officers, 1 from the Commonwealth, 1 from the Northern Territory and an adviser who was an ex-Western Australian public servant who was a participant in a scheme for the development of the pearl industry in Western Australia. That adviser is a very knowledgeable person. To date, however, the joint authority has not made a decision on the recommendations of the joint working party and, at this stage, I cannot advise honourable members when a decision will be made.

### Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

When a TIO management team took control of Hungerford Refrigeration, when was the decision taken to halt production in the company's Queensland plant in

order to relocate in the Trade Development Zone? When was the management team in a position to resume full production in the Trade Development Zone? For the export orders received by Hungerford and quoted by him on 3 April, what were the contract delivery dates?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will include the answers to those questions in my statement to this House. As I understand them, the questions are: when did the TIO assume control, when did production halt in Queensland and when did it start up again in the TDZ, and what were the delivery dates for the export orders of which I spoke on 3 April 1987?

#### Air-conditioning of Preschools

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Acknowledging the recent requests by preschools for the installation of air-conditioning, could he explain his department's policy and what action he intends to take to accede to these requests?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have been set up! I thank the honourable member for his question. I think that every member of this Assembly has been lobbied on occasion by various groups interested in education issues, particularly in relation to the preschools located in their constituencies. The matter of air-conditioning is not as straightforward as it may seem. In fact, some professionals believe that air-conditioning is detrimental to the good health and welfare of children attending preschools. Preschools differ from primary schools because they are set up to assist students in the transition from the home to the school environment. The 4-year-olds who attend preschool move frequently in and out of the preschool building and there is a professional opinion that frequent movement in and out of an air-conditioned environment could be detrimental to health. I acknowledge that there has been concern and, in fact, the government changed its policy. We acknowledged that there was a need to install air-conditioned withdrawal areas in new preschools and that is what the government is doing.

We are also looking at the design of the buildings and their location because we want to ensure that we take account of the natural environment and the prevailing winds. This can make the surroundings much more pleasant than they are at present in some situations. We are also looking at schools that have a particular problem with heat. We have investigated those with a view to having air-conditioned withdrawal areas.

I inform honourable member that I am aware of the concerns that he and other members have expressed in relation to air-conditioning in preschools. There is an opinion that it would be detrimental to health if the whole areas were air-conditioned. That is being examined by the government as well, and I might also say that we are seeking to ensure that all primary schools are air-conditioned. There are some primary schools that still lack that facility and I am sure members would be aware of that.

Thus, the whole issue of air-conditioning in preschools is being examined. We are installing air-conditioned withdrawal areas in new preschools and we are examining older schools with a view to installing air-conditioned withdrawal areas if required. We are also seeking professional advice in



relation to whether or not it is detrimental to health if a preschool is air-conditioned.

#### Company Charges for Children's Travel

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I remind him that, in December 1978, a specific company decided to charge adult rates for children under the age of 13 or 15 without consulting the Northern Territory government or the communities concerned. Could he advise what action he has taken to ensure that, in future, such decisions are taken in consultation with the government and the communities affected?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can advise the honourable member that discussions were held with the company relating to its charging of adult rates for children. That action was acknowledged readily by the company and it indicated that it would rectify the matter. The honourable member suggested that the company ought to be able to consult its records and provide recompense. The company has been advertising and suggesting that communities might provide it with a list of people affected, including dates of travel etc, and it would be more than happy to reimburse them. I have had the assurance of the company that it will not reintroduce such a system. I understand that it regrets the action that was taken.

#### Services to Intellectually-disabled Persons

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

He gave a commitment prior to the 1987 election that special services and facilities would be provided to intellectually-disabled adolescents and adults. Can he advise the Assembly what steps he has taken to fulfil that commitment?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for his question. This follows on from an adjournment speech by the member for Koolpinyah last night. In order to ensure the future of all Northern Territorians, we made commitments in relation to such persons. The number of disabled persons who now reside permanently in the Northern Territory has grown. Some years ago, if somebody had a disabled child, he or she was taken from the Territory to reside elsewhere. As we mature towards statehood, this government recognises that we must provide facilities for all Territorians to ensure that their future is secure in the Northern Territory and they do not have to go elsewhere. To that end, we gave commitments prior to the last election, in particular in 3 areas of providing respite care for the parents who have ...

Mr Bell: I didn't think your election promises mattered.

Mr DALE: They don't to you, but this is another proof that in fact ...

Mr Bell: They don't to the people at Yulara.

Mr DALE: We will get onto that later.

Mr Bell: We will indeed.

Mr DALE: Mr Speaker, the first project was to provide full-time residential care for socially-incompatible, disabled adolescents and adults.

Mr Bell interjecting

Mr DALE: Mr Speaker, I am sure that all the people listening on radio will note that the member for MacDonnell continually interjects while I talk about this most serious problem that has needed to be addressed by the Northern Territory government. It is quite clear that the opposition members, particularly the member for MacDonnell, have no concern whatsoever for the disabled people of the Northern Territory or for the parents of those disabled people. He can interject as much as he likes. I will stay on my feet until I can convince him that we in the Northern Territory government will certainly look after these people.

The second project was to fund community-based organisations to enable them to provide full-time residential accommodation for an additional 6 severely intellectually-disabled children aged between 5 and 16 years. The third project was to provide funds for evening and weekend care for disabled children up to the age of 5 years.

In relation to the first project, we have identified a suitable property at No 28 Girraween Road, Howard Springs. We advertised through the usual channels but, in the advertisements seeking changes to the zoning of that particular area, it was referred to as a facility for disadvantaged youth. Unfortunately, those words were totally incorrect.

Mrs Padgham-Purich: So I was right.

Mr DALE: Certainly, you were right. Last night, the member for Koolpinyah rightly pointed out that error. Of course, the error was noticed by the department and it was rectified in subsequent advertisements. The people living in that area have been given a comprehensive briefing. That was delivered by hand yesterday so that they would be fully aware of the type of people to be accommodated in that facility. Of course, the sale is subject to consent approval by the Northern Territory Planning Authority and that will be discussed at its meeting tomorrow. That should be well and truly up and under way. I will not go on at any great length. The capital cost of that project is about \$240 000. The operational, ongoing annual budget for that is about \$360 000, Mr Speaker, so you can see that, in ensuring the security of the people of the Territory, we put our money where our mouth is.

The second project, the multiply-disabled children's urban facility, will be placed at 46 Chapman Road, Nightcliff. That will provide housing for 6 multiply-disabled children. The capital cost involved is about \$220 000, with an ongoing commitment of a further \$0.25m in operational costs. The third facility is being negotiated with the Spastics Association, and that facility will be set up at the Henbury Avenue establishment.

I want to point out to the member for Koolpinyah that, of the 3 projects, it is interesting to note that 1 is in the electorate of the Chief Minister, 1 is on my own electorate and the third is in Koolpinyah. We certainly look forward to the people down in Koolpinyah ...

Mr Bell interjecting.

Mr DALE: That is not properly represented and therefore we have to protect the people down there in some way.

Mr Speaker, we are happy that the people in the rural area will be able to provide a much-needed facility for these people and the appropriate respite care that their parents are looking for.

#### Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Can he confirm that, on or about 6 April 1987, he had a meeting with the Northern Territory Traders Association which is, of course, the credit association for the Northern Territory, and can he confirm that, at that meeting, the association informed him of serious concerns it had about the credit-worthiness of Hungerford Refrigeration and, therefore, its potential impact on local suppliers? Can he further confirm that another meeting was held later on the same day at which the association repeated its concerns to the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority, Mr McHenry, and the Directors of Hungerford Refrigeration, Mr Hawke, Mr Temple and Mr Hungerford? At that meeting, was the association requested to withdraw its criticism of Hungerford and, indeed, to apologise to Hungerford for raising those concerns?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, without being specific about the date, I can certainly confirm that I had a visit from 2 persons representing the association to which the Leader of the Opposition has referred. They expressed concern to me that Hungerford Refrigeration had a reputation in Brisbane as a slow payer of bills. They were concerned about the company coming to the Territory and doing business here. They went further than that and said that they would be recommending to members of their association that they be very cautious, or words to that effect, about providing Hungerford Refrigeration with credit.

I recall being somewhat critical of the stance adopted by those 2 people. I did not believe that they were giving Hungerford Refrigeration a fair go at all. The company had been brought to the Northern Territory from Queensland and restructured to some extent. I felt that they were doing a great disservice to a company that was trying to get on its feet in the Northern Territory and also doing a disservice to Northern Territory industry by forcing the company, contrary to government policy, to deal with interstate suppliers. I am sure that they left the meeting feeling quite unhappy because I thought that they were doing a great disservice to the Northern Territory. Subsequent information which I have received, more by rumour than anything else, has led me to be very suspicious of the motives of this organisation.

Mr Smith: Good old character assassination stuff.

Mr PERRON: Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition would certainly know all about character assassination. He is an expert.

In regard to the second meeting referred to by the Leader of the Opposition, I do not recall having any knowledge that the representatives of this organisation met with other parties. They may well have done so. I certainly had no role at such a meeting, nor do I know what transpired there.

Impact of Brisbane Expo on Northern Territory Tourism

Mr REED to MINISTER for TOURISM

Does the Tourist Commission consider that the Brisbane Expo will impact on the tourism industry in the Northern Territory this year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is quite apparent that the Brisbane Expo will impact on Northern Territory tourism. The degree of that impact has not yet been fully assessed. We believe that it will have a negative impact on tourism in the Top End and a positive impact for the Centre and the Tennant Creek area. Bookings held by government tourist bureaus throughout Australia have increased on those held at this time last year. The percentage increase ranges from about 14% to nearly 39% in some of the bigger bureaus and the volume of business that has been written is well above budget expectations. It is a fact, though, that April and May have been quieter months than expected. Obviously, we have a problem in that many people will travel up through the Northern Territory, but will turn off at Tennant Creek and then proceed to Brisbane. The Tourist Commission has spent considerable sums of money to address that problem and will continue to do so. The aim is to promote more extensively the areas north of Three Ways, including Katherine, the Top End generally and Darwin as a dormitory.

I have asked the commission to provide me with information on current sales on a weekly basis to determine whether the drop in tourism in Darwin is likely to be a major problem or not. It does not indicate, at this time, that it will be, but certainly the Brisbane Expo will have some economic effect on the Top End. We have had discussions with a number of the major tour operators to ensure that their packages offering Brisbane Expo visitation extend their tours from Brisbane, up through Mt Isa and into the Northern Territory. I believe some of those packages are selling quite well at this time.

In answer to the honourable member's question, yes, there will be an impact. It is a positive impact in the southern part of the Territory but, to a certain extent, there could be negative effect in the Top End.

Chairmanship of Rural Land Use Advisory Committee

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

Given the public rancour attached to Mr Grant Heaslip's dramatic and sudden departure from his position within the CLP, is the Chief Minister confident that Mr Heaslip should remain as Chairman of the Rural Land Use Advisory Committee?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have no problem at all with Mr Heaslip continuing in that role. He was carrying out that role long before he became President of the Country Liberal Party. He was carrying out that function as a representative of the cattle industry along with many other representatives of various groups who comprise the Rural Land Use Advisory Committee. That has nothing to do with his participation in the Country Liberal Party. In respect of the suggestion about rancour, I would place on public record that certainly I have no reason to question the integrity of Mr Heaslip in any way.

Mr Bell: Tell John Hare that.

Mr HATTON: I see no reason whatsoever that anything that may be occurring within my party should affect any government work. We have always disputed the false allegations made by those opposite concerning appointments of persons who happen to hold positions within our political party. The same thing applies in reverse.

#### Leasing of Vehicles

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT AND WORKS

Recently, he announced that the Northern Territory government would undertake a pilot scheme for the leasing of vehicles. What are the likely advantages that may flow from such a pilot scheme?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the tenders that were assessed and the contract that will be signed shortly indicate that the obvious advantages are immediate savings on the costs of operating part of our vehicle fleet. The system that is being adopted is a full-maintenance leasing system. It is used elsewhere in Australia by major companies. Of course, the member for Casuarina would be well aware of the potential value there and the existence of those schemes. In fact, he initiated the early moves towards assessing the feasibility of such a scheme.

The government has adopted a cautious approach. We are looking to running a 120-vehicle pilot program to assess the overall feasibility and merits of such a scheme compared to our traditional system of purchasing vehicles and maintaining them either through our own resources or, as happens for half the vehicle fleet, through the private market. This 120-vehicle scheme should save us approximately \$85 000 directly and there would be other, more subtle, potential long-term savings if the scheme were to proceed into a broader field but those savings would relate to the need for government to provide maintenance facilities etc. There will always be some remaining requirement that government have plant maintenance facilities for its heavy equipment and for essential vehicles that are kept by government. In line with our reduction in manpower, we would look for any savings in manpower through natural attrition.

There were 14 tenders in all, and they revealed some very interesting facts. We gave people the option of 2-year or 3-year lease periods and one might have thought initially that the 3-year period would have led to cheaper rates but, in fact, consistently throughout all the tenders quite the opposite applied. In almost all cases, a 2-year lease period rate was lower than a 3-year. That demonstrates quite clearly something that we have believed in the Department of Transport and Works for some time which is that, in the second and third years of the life of a vehicle, maintenance costs very quickly overtake any benefits in cost savings on the capital investment. The variation in the range of figures quoted by the companies was almost eightfold from the lowest to the highest. I wonder whether the companies that submitted the higher tenders were suggesting Mercedes Benz vehicles for our public service! The rates at the bottom end of the tender were very competitive. I am hopeful that, when we monitor the system in 12 months time, we will see some merit in the system and some direct and indirect savings for the government.

Sponsorship of Commercial Television Program

Mr TUXWORTH to CHIEF MINISTER

During the promos run on the commercial television station last night advertising the late night football game, the subtitles on the screen indicated that the program was brought to viewers with the compliments of Steve Hatton, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory. I raise this because I had a phone call from an interested viewer. Did the Chief Minister pay for this out of his own kick or did Territory taxpayers contribute to it? If the taxpayers contributed to the cost of the transmission, what was that cost?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I was advised yesterday afternoon that, because the mini-series 'Vietnam' commenced last night, Channel 8 was unable to broadcast the program. It hoped to broadcast it later that evening but it needed some financial support. It approached me, as the Chief Minister, and asked whether we would be prepared to provide some assistance. It was interesting - and I am sure, Mr Speaker, you would appreciate the irony - that, for once, people outside the Darwin area had access to the live broadcast of the game via Imparja Television ...

Mr Tuxworth: Not all of them.

Mr HATTON: Those who had access to Imparja Television had access to the broadcast of the game and the people of Darwin did not. I took the decision that we would provide some financial support and that was provided by way of government funds. I am sure the member for Barkly would be well-experienced and briefed in such practices. It is a practice that the government has engaged in for many years and I certainly do not apologise for it. I know there was very strong interest in the north Darwin community in that game. Because of the hour, the cost was not excessive. In fact, for a cost of \$500, it was able to be telecast.

Television for Remote Communities

Mr TUXWORTH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Mr Speaker, I support what the Chief Minister has done because I had occasion to do it from time to time myself. I think I did it in relation to cricket as a result of your representations.

Given the fact that many communities are still not receiving television from the satellite, do not have access to commercial signals and require government assistance to receive television, will the government review its policy in relation to providing assistance for groundstations for remote communities such as Pine Creek, Elliott, Borroloola, Hooker Creek and others, which currently do not have the resources themselves to obtain a groundstation to take Imparja Television in order to view what everybody in Darwin had last night for \$500?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as the honourable member rightly indicated, it is not the policy of the government to provide groundstations for the reception of such services. It would be a very expensive exercise. I would have to receive advice, however, on the obligations of Imparja itself as the licence holder.

Certainly, the government has taken a decision not to become involved in that area. I will have a look at the matter and determine exactly what it would cost if such action were taken.

Mr Tuxworth: Not a lot of money.

Mr PERRON: I am told that it would cost heaps.

#### NT Women's Scholarship Award

Mr DONDAS to CHIEF MINISTER

Could he provide details regarding the recently-announced NT Women's Scholarship Award?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I was pleased to announce this fellowship at a function to celebrate International Women's Day held on 8 March this year.

Mrs Padgham-Purich interjecting.

Mr HATTON: It is very sad to hear such comments from the only woman member of the Legislative Assembly. It is sad that the member for Koolpinyah missed that function because she would have found it very instructive and informative.

This announcement puts yet another election promise into action. Even more importantly, it is another concrete example of this government's steadfast commitment to advance the status of women in the Northern Territory. The NT Women's Fellowship Award is worth \$15 000 and will be awarded annually. Each year, it will enable an applicant to travel interstate or overseas to undertake a course of study or training, a research project or practical work experience. The applicants must have been resident in the Territory for at least 3 years and will be expected to show that the work will benefit the Territory and Territory women.

The amount being made available for this fellowship is relative to the present value of a postgraduate award for study at an Australian university or college of advanced education with the additional cost of an economy overseas return air fare if necessary. Having said that, I must point out, however, that the main purpose of the award is not to enable applicants to obtain higher academic or formal qualifications. Nor is it to be used in other cases where alternative funding is readily available or where the purpose of the application can be fulfilled in the Northern Territory. Quite simply, this fellowship is geared to cater for the real needs and aspirations of a wide range of Territory women. Far from being an ivory-tower award, the basis for selection is that applicants can show that the knowledge and skills obtained will be of direct and continuing benefit to the community. The award will be advertised soon in the press and on radio. Applications will close on 29 July 1988 and detailed information is available from the Office of Women's Affairs.

Mr Speaker, it occurred to me while I was in Newcastle Waters to launch the last great cattle drive that the women of the Territory are our quiet achievers. As Henry Lawson asked in one of his classic poems, where would the drover be without his wife?

Mr Bell: Author, author!

Mr HATTON: You would have heard me give the author's name if you had been listening.

Mr Bell: No, the author for your answer.

Mr HATTON: As I thought to myself while at the colonial ball in Elliott, who would organise such important and inspiring community events were it not for women like Margaret MacLean of Elliott? Women in the Territory today, just as much as were their forebears, are unsung heroines. All too often their achievements are overlooked.

Since I became Chief Minister 2 years ago, my government has been listening to women as they voice their needs and concerns. We have been sensitive to their interests. The results can be seen in our actions on issues such as domestic violence and child abuse. The only time that members opposite concern themselves with the needs of women is when they want to score a few cheap political points. It is not surprising that they have not had much to say on the subject since they have no record to speak of. All they have done is undermine our initiatives. We have been busy building a secure future for the men and women of the Territory. This government has been a quiet achiever in its own right. Mr Speaker, you will recall that last year I tabled a report on women living in remote areas. This study examined the diverse experiences of Aboriginal women, women on pastoral properties and women in tourist and mining communities. It looked at their concerns, their aspirations and the barriers they faced.

When I announce the recipient of the inaugural NT Women's Fellowship Award in October, this government will have broken down one of the last barriers and will have widened the choices available to Territory women, wherever they live and whatever their backgrounds. I am confident that, in time, this scheme will produce a group of NT women fellows who are leaders in their fields and whose work will enhance the lives of other Territorians. It is a small but important step towards ensuring that the talents and achievements of women in the Territory are no longer overlooked but are recognised and rewarded.

#### Radiographer for Alice Springs

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Is the government still trying to obtain the services of a radiographer for Alice Springs or does it intend to keep sending x-ray photographs to Darwin for expert interpretation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, of course we are trying to obtain a radiographer for Alice Springs. That goes without saying. I have received expressions of interest from at least 2 private companies that wish to provide radiography services and I will be calling for expressions of interest in the provision of private radiology services for the Alice Springs area. In addition, we are advertising and even looking overseas for an appropriate person to be employed in the Alice Springs area.



Duplication of Vanderlin Drive

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In relation to the future duplication of Vanderlin Drive from Patterson Street to the McMillans Road roundabout, will he or his department consider the construction of noise abatement devices between the roadway and residences directly abutting the road?

Mr Bell: This is the third time you have asked this.

Mr PALMER: No it's not. I asked him to move the road last time.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can give an undertaking to the member for Karama - subject, of course, to his acceptance of my advice - that, in association with the Minister for Conservation, I will examine appropriate means of noise abatement for people living on the part of Vanderlin Drive that is to be duplicated.

Freeholding of Special Purposes Leases

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

My question relates to the continuing saga of CLP land deals. It concerns the vexed question of the conversion of special purposes leases and I am sure the minister will have the answer on the tip of his tongue. Will Radio 8HA be forced to pay market value to convert its special purposes lease from leasehold to freehold, as the minister said publicly, or will it be allowed to convert its special purposes lease at no cost, as his department has advised?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question is an example of Mr Bell's approach to his role as the opposition's ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister will refer to the member by his correct title.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I apologise. The member for MacDonnell's approach to his role in this Assembly and his role as an elected member does no credit to him or his colleagues. As the member for MacDonnell has pointed out, I have said on a number of occasions that there will not be any conversion of special purposes leases without payment. Such a payment, if not made at the time when the lease was obtained, would be made - at market value - at the time of converting the lease.

The member for MacDonnell has claimed untruthfully on a number of occasions that conversions have been made without payment.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I would ask that, if he is unable to produce an answer that he understands himself, the Minister for Lands and Housing at least ensures that his answer does not offend against standing orders. I request that he withdraw the word 'untruthfully'.

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

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I believe that, in order for me to withdraw that remark, it must be established that my comments were untrue.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! You have requested that the Minister for Lands and Housing withdraw the word 'untruthfully'. Either he should do so in an unqualified fashion ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the minister to withdraw.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I thought that I could speak to the point of order. However, if you rule that I cannot, I shall not.

Mr SPEAKER: No, I am sorry. I have ruled.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the remark but, again, I point out that the member for MacDonnell has made certain statements which have no basis in fact. I have challenged him publicly on occasions regarding those statements and have asked him to withdraw them or to produce some facts to support them, and he has been unable to do so.

As I said at the beginning, I shall say exactly what the member for MacDonnell has said regarding special purposes leases. Actually, the honourable member obviously is not satisfied with doing things in a sensible and honest fashion and I shall go into some detail regarding this matter.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable minister has just referred directly to the integrity of an honourable member of this Assembly. In fact, he used the word 'dishonest' in association with the member and, for the sake of this House, Mr Speaker, he must withdraw that reference.

Mr BELL: By way of clarification, may I speak to the point of order, Mr Speaker? I do not mind being referred to as 'insensible'. I do object to being referred to as 'dishonest'.

Mr SPEAKER: Will the honourable minister relate to me what he said that has led to the point of order being called by the member for Nhulunbuy?

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I said that the honourable member did not proceed in an honest fashion.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, if I might speak to the point of order, I ...

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! You were deliberating, I believe.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Have you a further argument?

Mr BELL: Yes, Mr Speaker. I believe that reference to Hansard will confirm that the adjectival phrase used by the Minister for Lands and Housing was 'sensible and honest', suggesting that that was not the case with respect to my dealings in this matter. As I said before, I will allow my electorate to judge whether I am insensible. However, I do object to the reflection that I am dishonest.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the inference that the honourable member was sensible and honest.

Mr Bell: Thank you!

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, on 13 March an article entitled, 'Pay Ups by Leaseholders Are Scandalous - Bell', appeared in the Sunday Territorian. The article contained allegations made by the member for MacDonnell that he had uncovered a scandal in the Department of Lands and Housing over the conversion of commercial special purposes leases to freehold title. The honourable member cited the example of Mr George Brown of Alice Springs who, in 1984, paid \$35 000 to have his special purposes lease converted to freehold. He then said, and I quote:

'But a secret Cabinet decision in 1986 allowed the conversion without any charges', Mr Bell said. 'This means Mr Brown and others like him may have been made to pay many thousands of dollars for something that only 2 years later would have cost them nothing. How many are in the same position? This is absolutely outrageous and a major scandal. Governments elsewhere would be forced to resign'.

The article also said:

'The NT government is facing dozens, possibly hundreds of court actions from people who paid to have their special purposes leases converted to freehold previous to 1986', Mr Bell said.

And further on:

Mr Bell said he had received legal advice that people who had paid to convert their leases into freehold 'certainly appear to have the right to have that redressed'.

On 14 March, a media release was issued stating that the honourable member had shown his ignorance of land matters in the Territory. The release stated that there was a simple equation for people converting their special purposes leases to freehold. If they had paid when taking out the lease, conversion would be at nil cost. If they had not paid when taking out the lease, they must pay before converting to freehold.

The issue became complicated when it was discovered the next day that an officer in Alice Springs had sent out letters to 60 holders of special purposes leases offering them free conversion. Actually, the letters were not offering free conversion; they offered the ability to request the minister to offer a free conversion. As a result, I issued another release on 14 March reaffirming my position and stating that the officer had made an error because he had assumed that all 60 had paid when taking up their leases whereas, in fact, 10 had not.

However, I also pointed out that final approval rested with me and, in fact, none of the 10 who had not paid had converted their special purposes leases to freehold without cost. I pointed out also that no secret Cabinet decision had been made in 1986 to allow free conversion of commercial special purposes leases to freehold. The only decision had been made by the then Minister for Lands, now the Chief Minister, and that was to expand the categories of special purposes leases which could be converted to freehold.

The issue became further confused 2 days later on 17 March when a memorandum signed by the Chief Minister on 29 March 1986 was leaked to the media. One of the recommendations approved by the Chief Minister in the ministerial was: 'approve the conversion of remaining special purposes leases to more appropriate forms of tenure, and establish the general conversion purpose policies outlined below'. That was: 'Commercial - conversion to fee

simple at no cost where covenants have been complied with'. This was generally taken at face value by the media as supporting the member for MacDonnell. The Chief Minister was set up by a particular reporter on a morning show for a debate with the member for MacDonnell and he did not know ...

Mr Ede: Didn't know what he was on about.

Mr MANZIE: Well, it was put together in such a way that it was very hard to make sense of what was occurring because, again, the member for MacDonnell was throwing in matters which were not based on fact.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I will emphasise for the Minister for Lands and Housing that my question was very specific. It related to the freeholding of the Radio 8HA lease. The honourable minister is reading at length a prepared answer from his department on this matter. He has been on his feet for some 10 minutes now and he has failed to mention the Radio 8HA lease.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the honourable minister wish to speak to the point of order.

Mr MANZIE: Yes, Mr Speaker. The honourable member is now trying to get out of a situation that he has been playing around with for a long time. He has made accusations against me and he has made statements which were not based on fact. It all hinges around a special purposes lease and Radio 8HA. I am not going to let him get away with it. If he wants to make accusations, he will hear the answers. I will ensure that the community is fully aware of the way this member goes about his role and the untruths and the aspersions he casts on members of this community. It is something that he has to live with.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, I am not going to sit here and tolerate being referred to as casting untruths here or elsewhere.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the honourable member wish to make a point of order or not.

Mr BELL: Yes I do, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I suggest you make it in a more gentlemanly manner.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, I ask you once again to request the Minister for Lands and Housing to refrain from using terms like 'untruths'. I may occasionally have to tolerate that in ABC interviews with the minister, but I do not have to put up with it in this House. I ask you to direct the Minister for Lands and Housing to withdraw the word 'untruths' forthwith.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order. I ask the honourable minister to withdraw that remark. The minister will relate his remarks to the question.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw, but I reiterate that the honourable member is quite keen on making statements which are not based on any facts or which are unsubstantiated. I certainly intend to make the community aware of the situation so that people can make a judgment which is based on facts.

The government's position has been consistent throughout this whole debate and the bottom line is that leaseholders must pay at some stage before

converting their commercial special purposes leases to freehold. The people who obtained conversion at nil cost were those who paid when taking up a special purposes lease, paid rent over the years which covered the unimproved capital value of the lease at the time when it was taken up, or who had paid a combination of up-front payments and rental which covered the unimproved capital value of the block at the time it was taken up.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I believe that the minister is deliberately showing contempt for the Chair. You asked him to confine his remarks to the question. He is not confining his remarks to the question. It is my belief that he is showing contempt for the Chair.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I ask the minister to relate his comments to the question.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, obviously, an answer regarding special purposes leases, claims of conversion at no cost and special deals deserves a complete answer regarding government policy and it requires information to counteract the baseless accusations which have been made by the member for MacDonnell. It is obvious that he does not like the facts being made available to him and he does not like the community to understand the way he carries out his job. He has this particular mental block regarding how business is carried out. The reason is that he bases his ideas on normal ALP actions. When you look at what occurs with the ALP in areas right around Australia and the sort of problems ...

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! There is no possibility, under any interpretation of any speech made in the history of the Westminster system, that the particular drivel that just came out of the minister's mouth could be considered relevant to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is a point of order, and again I remind the minister to relate his comments to the question.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I have made it perfectly clear that those who have not paid will do so before their leases are converted to freehold. Throughout this whole farcical debate, the opposition and the member for MacDonnell have been unable to give a single example of such a conversion taking place, and that includes Radio 8HA. There is no scandal and there was no scandal. There have been no secret Cabinet decision and there will be no court actions.

The member for MacDonnell has made much of a ministerial document which he says supports his claim. It is unfortunate that he has been unable to read the document in its entirety because, if he did so, he would find that it negates his arguments. In fact, the background for the recommendations for freehold conversion of commercial special purposes leases argues that lessees of commercial special purposes leases would have paid whatever was required by the legislation at the time of issue of the SPL. This has been consistently interpreted by the department and successive ministers to mean that conversion to freehold will be given only to those people who have paid for their leases. Whether they have done so through an up-front payment or accrued rental payment at conversion, or a combination of these, is entirely irrelevant. Again, that goes for Radio 8HA. If the member for MacDonnell has one example where such an action - which he claims has occurred hundreds of times - has occurred, I challenge him to produce it. Otherwise, he should do the right thing and admit he made a mistake, and apologise publicly for some of the things that he has said.

Northern Territory Traders Association

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Does he recognise the fact that the Northern Territory Traders Association represents 70 established and reputable Territory companies? Secondly, did he state yesterday in this House that he had suspicions about the association's motives in giving him early warning about Hungerford Refrigeration's creditworthiness? Thirdly, will he now advance that smear with supporting information or will he retract it completely and apologise to the association?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot remember the exact words I used yesterday but no doubt they are recorded in Hansard, as that is what Hansard is there for. I now table a letter which I wrote to the organisation following my meeting with its representatives last year. The Leader of the Opposition may find that letter of some interest.

Mr Smith: Are you going to answer the question?

Mr PERRON: That is all I have to say about it.

Closure of Rolls for Municipal Elections

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the impending municipal elections and the usual criticism from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in relation to the issue of rolls, can the he advise this Assembly on procedure and publicity for the closure of rolls for the forthcoming municipal elections?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as usual, the member for Stuart has made remarks about the closure of electoral rolls. It seems that every time there is an election the first thing we can look forward to is a complaint from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition about early closure of the rolls. True to form this year, he jumped on the same tired old bandwagon over the local government elections and put out his normal line. Unfortunately, on this occasion, he not only displayed his usual, naked political adventurism but, worse, he demonstrated his total ignorance of the appropriate legislative requirements in respect of local government elections. I am more than happy to take this opportunity to dispel the gobbledegook of the member for Stuart.

On Territory Extra on 16 March, he complained about the procedures, criticised me as the minister responsible and even lambasted the Electoral Office. He said: 'There has been no advertising put around the place to tell people we are going to close the rolls. You could draw a sinister conclusion that that is basically to keep the newcomers off the roll'. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition then went on to inform listeners that he was writing to me as minister responsible to tell me, and I quote, 'I really think he has gone overboard on this one'.

As I pointed out in my reply to the member for Stuart, the dates for local government elections are determined by the Local Government Act and Local Government (Electoral) Regulations. Section 45 of the act stipulates that an election for each council is to be held on the last Saturday in May of each

leap year. Section 51 says: 'Nomination day is the last Friday which is not a public holiday in April of the leap year in which the election is to be held'. Regulation 10 states: 'Close of roll is at 6 o'clock in the afternoon of the last Friday in March each leap year'. Therefore, relevant dates for the 1988 elections were: closure of rolls, Friday 25 March; nomination date, Friday 29 April; and polling day, Saturday 28 May.

As I further explained to the member for Stuart, the practice of fixing election dates by enactment eliminates uncertainty regarding when rolls are next due. When electors fulfil their responsibilities by enrolling for Commonwealth and Territory elections, they are enrolled automatically for local government elections, provided that they reside within a municipal area. The closure of rolls was advertised on public and commercial radio and in the press in the weeks leading up to the closing date. The closure advertisement was translated into 4 Aboriginal languages and broadcast by CAAMA. Information concerning the closure of rolls was also distributed to town camps and Aboriginal organisations in Alice Springs.

Mr Speaker, confronted with the facts, the wild allegations of the member for Stuart collapsed like a pack of cards. Contrary to his assertions on Territory Extra apparently, the closure of rolls was advertised properly and adequately. The only sinister conclusion any sane person could come to is that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition must have been suffering from another of his well-known paranoid hallucinations.

#### Northern Territory Traders Association

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Yesterday he said, in answer to a question: 'Subsequent information which I have received, more by rumour than anything, has led me to be very suspicious of the motives of this organisation'. He was referring to the Northern Territory Traders Association. Will he provide this House with information to support that smear or will he withdraw the smear?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am glad the Leader of the Opposition is taking an interest in what he sees as an unwarranted smear. He might refer to the comments that one of his colleagues made openly just a couple of days ago in this Assembly about a Mr Koh and his involvement in the Northern Territory. I guess that really he should have a look at that and see if some internal discipline might be warranted.

As the Leader of the Opposition just quoted, I said that information that I had received had led me to be very suspicious of the motives of this organisation, and I stand by that. It is an expression of opinion, and that is my opinion which I gave to this House yesterday. I need do no more than reiterate that that is my opinion.

#### Women's Advisory Council

Mr DONDAS to CHIEF MINISTER

It was reported recently in the press that a new convenor and new members had been appointed to the Women's Advisory Council. What is the role and the new composition of the council?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as honourable members would be aware, the Women's Advisory Council was formed in 1983. It was intended to provide a mechanism for communication between government and the women of the Territory. Over the last 5 years, the council has proven to be highly effective in this capacity. It has allowed the government to test ideas and has kept us up to date on issues of concern to women. I can assure this Assembly that the Women's Advisory Council is no paper tiger. At times, it has offered hard-hitting advice on the effect of government policies on women and, on other occasions, it has been persistent in advocating action for change.

The Women's Advisory Council can be proud of its legacy. The remote areas report, the drug and alcohol services survey, the sexual assault referral service in Alice Springs, measures to prevent domestic violence - these and other initiatives have been made possible through the work of the Women's Advisory Council. In its 5 years of operation, the Women's Advisory Council has established itself as a means of genuine consultation between the government and the community. I would particularly like to pay tribute today to Mrs June Tuzewski, under whose able convenorship the council has flourished, and those women who have served on the council as members. Their dedication has earned the respect of communities throughout the Northern Territory.

I confidently predict that the new convenor and the members of the Women's Advisory Council will carry on this fine tradition. Ms Schmolke, the new convenor, is a public relations executive who has lived in the Northern Territory for 20 years. She is a Justice of the Peace and has a background of wide involvement with community organisations, including Red Cross and the Penguin Club. Having lived in Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and Darwin, Ms Schmolke will bring to the council an understanding of the Territory's diverse communities and an appreciation of their diverse needs.

Eight new members have been appointed to the Women's Advisory Council increasing its membership to 14. It was decided to widen the scope of the WAC by including representation from Yulara and Borroloola for the first time since the council was established by the CLP government 5 years ago. The new members of the council are: Annette Milikins and Beryl Mulder from Darwin; Josephine Stone from Alice Springs; Kathrina Bryen from Yulara; Nerolie Golder from Nhulunbuy; Heather Galvin from Billengarrah Station via Borroloola; and Mary Yarmirr from Croker Island. Katherine's representative, Stephanie Hill, will continue on the council for a further year.

Ms Beryl Mulder has been actively involved in many ethnic community organisations since she came to the Territory. She is now working in the new regional office of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in Darwin and therefore is well placed to voice the needs and concerns of women from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Ms Mary Yarmirr is a respected elder of the Minjilang community on Croker Island. She is a trained teacher and has been vice-chairwoman of the Minjilang Council for 8 years. Ms Kathrina Bryen is a coordinator of the Yulara Child-care Centre and an elected member of the Yulara Town Advisory Board. Nhulunbuy's representative, Ms Nerolie Golder, works for Nabalco and is responsible for the development and implementation of the Nabalco equal employment opportunity program. She has had wide experience of the industrial aspects of women's employment issues.

Ms Heather Galvin from Billengarrah Station via Borroloola is active in many community organisations in the Gulf region including the Isolated



Children's and Parents Association. Ms Annette Milikins is well known for her work in the welfare field. She has lived in many remote centres throughout the Territory and is currently developing a protective behaviour program in cooperation with schools and community organisations. In addition, she is a board member of the YWCA. The Alice Springs representative, Ms Josephine Stone, is a member of the legal profession and is President of the Zonta Club in that region.

It is obvious that the new convenor and the representatives are extremely well qualified for their appointments. They bring to the council a wealth of experience and a diversity of views. I have no doubt they will ensure the council remains a genuine forum through which the women of the Territory can voice their opinions and aspirations and that the Women's Advisory Council will continue to play its part in ensuring that our government is responsive to the needs of the entire Territory community.

Mr Speaker, I noted some comments made during the adjournment debate last night by the member for Koolpinyah who seems to be under some misapprehension as to our government's role in consulting on and addressing the genuine concerns of women from a wide range of backgrounds throughout the Northern Territory. It is a shame she is not in the Chamber this morning. As it happens, I am hosting a luncheon today for the members of the Women's Advisory Council. I would like to invite the member for Koolpinyah to come along there and express her views on women's matters to the Women's Advisory Council. If she thinks it is a paper tiger, I wish her luck.

#### Angiography Procedures at Royal Darwin Hospital

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Is he aware that angiography is a highly-intrusive radiographic procedure where patient risk increases with any delay in the process? Is he aware that, for the past year, patients undergoing angiography at the Royal Darwin Hospital have had a 1-in-2 chance of the procedure being disrupted by equipment failure, and that delays have now become so common and so intolerable that the unit has had to be shut down?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it would have been beneficial if the member for MacDonnell had given me some notice of a question which relates to so much technical detail.

Mr Smith: Technical detail?

Mr DALE: He has asked me a question about whether or not the equipment is working properly. I would be quite happy to take some advice as to whether or not that is the case. The angiographic unit in Room 4 at the Royal Darwin Hospital was acquired in 1979-80. A new table was acquired in 1986. Its condition is not very good at the moment and the proposed replacement date is in the coming year. We are aware that the unit has probably seen out its useful life but that is what happens with highly-technical and very expensive equipment. Let me say that the cost of that piece of equipment will be some \$900 000. We have a full program for replacement of all equipment in the radiology section at the Royal Darwin Hospital.

It has been interesting recently to see how the Leader of the Opposition's denigration of Hungerford Refrigeration virtually put it out of business. He was spokesman for health for a short time whilst the member for MacDonnell was

apparently away in the scrub somewhere. He beat up an incredible story. He used a young boy from Darwin to create the impression in the minds of that child's parents that things were not working as well as they should be in the radiology section of the Royal Darwin Hospital. He caused those parents so much trauma that, while he was running around town trying to get all facets of the media to cover the story ...

Mr EDE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The minister has deliberately moved from answering the question to telling us a story about something completely unrelated. Under standing orders, he has to relate his answer to the question.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I would urge you to dismiss that point of order on the simple grounds that the minister has the right to present an answer as fully as he believes is appropriate. The question concerned radiological matters at Royal Darwin Hospital. The incident to which the minister is referring arose in the radiology unit at the hospital and is perfectly relevant to the question. If members opposite do not like what they are hearing, that is their problem for asking the question.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The information being given by the minister is directly related to the question.

Mr DALE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When the parents of that child discovered that they had been misled about the services available at the Royal Darwin Hospital, naturally they started to make public statements expressing their concern about what they had been led to believe. The effect of that flowed through to the general public. The Minister for Transport and Works explained yesterday that the most important thing in business is confidence. There is nothing more important than confidence in the provision of radiology services and health services generally. Once again, members opposite see their role in the Northern Territory as running around the place, not only denigrating industry and causing a lack of confidence in industry, but also using 11-year-olds and the parents of those children to denigrate the health services of the Northern Territory without any good reason whatsoever.

I gave the member for MacDonnell the opportunity to inspect the premises at the hospital. By the way, that was at the same time that the honourable member was interfering politically in the employment of a former employee of his within my department. That is the time that the appointment was cancelled so that the member for MacDonnell could accompany the secretary of the department on an inspection of the equipment in the radiology section. There is equipment at the Royal Darwin Hospital that is approaching the end of its worthwhile life. That is a fact of life. One cannot simply throw out a \$1m piece of equipment when it is halfway through its useful life just to satisfy all of the carryings-on of the members opposite.

I am quite happy to advise the member for MacDonnell if he did not take advantage of his inspection of the radiology section at the Royal Darwin Hospital on Monday of this week. I will give him further details of the program. The advice that I have has been compiled on the advice of Dr Sutton, Mr Phil Thornburn, who is medical engineer, and also the person who is in charge at the radiology section at the moment.

File on Radiography Equipment at Royal Darwin Hospital

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. Will he confirm that the file on radiography equipment in the administrative section in the Royal Darwin Hospital is missing? What action has he or his department taken to locate that file? Can I assist by providing him with this schedule - which I trust would be part of a file - which indicates that the previous answer given by the minister this morning is quite wrong. The replacement dates of 4 out of the 10 pieces of equipment have been passed long ago.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I do not regard that as being a supplementary question. I regard it as seeking additional information on a wider topic. I would advise all honourable members that I have been fairly lenient with supplementary questions. If the procedure is to continue in respect of supplementary questions, I would remind honourable members to adhere strictly to the rules.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I must admit that I am a little stunned. A moment ago, I talked about interference in the public service by the Leader of the Opposition. We have him on the record of this House saying that, if he were a public servant, he would take information out of files within the public service. In fact, he encourages it.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Standing orders provide that, if the minister wishes to reflect on the behaviour of a member of this Assembly, as he is doing by suggesting that I have been thieving public documents or whatever, he must do so by way of a substantive motion.

Mr DALE: Mr Speaker, I did not mention the member for MacDonnell. My comments have all been about the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr DALE: Perhaps I can create a point of order now, Mr Speaker. It would appear that the member for MacDonnell supports the Leader of the Opposition in that. I suppose I am to believe that, if there is a file missing from my department and then it is handed across the floor of this House to me, I can take it that the member for MacDonnell found it, and I thank him.

Freeholding of Special Purposes Leases

Mr REED to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

During the adjournment debate last night, the member for MacDonnell claimed that the 8HA radio station in Alice Springs had been able to convert its special purposes lease to freehold title for the sum of \$85. This was in contrast to Mr George Brown who paid \$35 000 to obtain freehold title for his special purposes lease. Can the minister inform me if this is the case and, if not, what are the facts?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for MacDonnell certainly is a man of great limitations and, last night, I think he nearly reached them. I must admit that I was astonished at what the member for MacDonnell said last night. I honestly did not believe that he would be foolish enough to continue his farcical and unjustified attacks on conversions of special purpose leases to freehold title. I find it absolutely astonishing that a man, who claims to be so aggrieved when it is suggested that he may not be telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, should have the gall to try to mislead the House in the manner that he did last night. Last night, the member for MacDonnell continued his campaign of innuendo against the lands portfolio. He claimed that Mr George Brown had suffered a great injustice.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member cannot imply that any honourable member has tried to mislead the House. I ask him to withdraw that remark.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the remark.

Mr Bell: It is about the tenth such one you have made this week too.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister will be heard in silence.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, last night the member for MacDonnell claimed that Mr Brown had suffered a great injustice at the hands of the government because he had been forced to pay market value for his block of land when he converted it to freehold title. The honourable member's evidence for this alleged injustice was that 8HA had been given freehold title to its lease for a sum of \$85.

I have news for the member for MacDonnell. He is wrong yet again. I am getting sick and tired of his countless allegations which, time and time again, have been proved to have no foundation in reality. Surely his leadership ambitions must stop somewhere, Mr Speaker? The fact of the matter is that 8HA has not - I repeat, has not - been given freehold title to its special purposes lease. I made that perfectly clear when the matter was first raised and I made it clear that, if 8HA wanted freehold title, it would have to effect that within the confines of government policy and it would have to pay market value for that land. That is what would happen. I made that clear in my answer to a question yesterday morning. Mr Brown has not suffered from discrimination at the hands of the government. His case falls within the simple guidelines ...

Mr Ede: Is that right?

Mr MANZIE: Too right. I heard that interjection. His case falls within the simple guidelines set down by successive ministers for the conversion of commercial SPLs to freehold title. Quite simply, Mr Brown had not paid for his SPL before conversion and, therefore, he paid for it when it was converted. It was very simple.

The member for MacDonnell tabled a number of letters during his adjournment debate speech last night which, he said, backed up his case. One of those was a letter to Mr Brown from the then Minister for Lands and Housing, the member for Flynn. This letter was sent in response to a query from Mr Brown about why he had been required to pay for his SPL while a Mr and Mrs Smith, who held SPL No 315 in Alice Springs, were not required to pay at

conversion. I intend to inspect the letter tabled by the member for MacDonnell because it does not appear to read in quite the same way as the copy that I have been supplied with by my department. The member for MacDonnell read the following passage from the letter:

In 1986, however, the policy was expanded to allow for a greater number of categories of special purposes leases to be converted to freehold. Part of this policy allowed for conversion at no cost.

My copy of the letter does say that, but the second sentence is considerably longer than the one quoted by the member for MacDonnell. In my copy the paragraph reads:

In 1986, however, the policy was expanded to allow for a greater number of categories of special purposes leases to be converted to freehold. Part of this policy allowed for the conversion at no cost in those instances where the lessee paid a market value premium at the time of securing their lease. This occurred in Mr and Mrs Smith's case.

Mr Speaker, I think that that makes the matter very clear. I table a copy of that letter.

As I said, I will inspect the letter that was tabled by the member for MacDonnell last night and, if the 2 copies tally, and I expect they will although perhaps they will not, then I will be forced to ask why the member for MacDonnell quoted only part of the relevant sentence from it. I would like to know also why he saw fit to claim in this House repeatedly that 8HA had been granted freehold title for its special purposes lease at a cost of \$85 when, in fact, the title had not been converted at all - and he knows that.

This behaviour from a man who claims to be squeaky clean, eek-eek, and who becomes so upset when his word is questioned, is absolutely outrageous. I find it disgusting that he has the nerve to mislead this House in such a manner and, at the same time, to subject me to allegations of improper behaviour. This is intolerable conduct from the member for MacDonnell. He has shown a lack of intellectual capacity: he cannot understand a simple explanation.

In the beginning I thought that the member for MacDonnell was a reasonable fellow who had a problem with understanding the facts. I thought that, if I explained them very slowly and carefully and perhaps wrote them in big capital letters, he might understand. However, when I heard his performance in relation to the letter, I realised that the facts had no connection with this matter and that he was not interested in them. The only conclusion I can come to is that he is so preoccupied with becoming the Leader of the Opposition that he will say or do anything to get a run in the media and to make himself look good in this Assembly. I am afraid that the only thing he succeeded in doing on this occasion was to tarnish his image even further.

He referred to my answer in question time yesterday as 'calumny'. I will just quote the definition of calumny given by the Australian edition of the Collins Concise English Dictionary. It is: 'The malicious utterance of false charges or misrepresentation'. The definition of 'malicious' is: 'Motivated by wrongful, vicious or mischievous purposes'. Mr Speaker, it is very plain that the member for MacDonnell is guilty of a malicious utterance and utterance of false charges or misrepresentations and that he is motivated by wrongful, vicious and mischievous purposes.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! You have already ruled against the use of such terms as those used in the minister's answer to this question. You also ruled against it several times yesterday. The minister is persisting and I request you to do something a little sterner than ruling him out of order. My point of order is that, if the minister wants to make those accusations about me, he must do so by way of substantive motion.

Mr SPEAKER: I am advised that there is a point of order. Whilst May has allowed the use of the word 'calumny' in the House of Commons, I must ask the minister to withdraw the words he has used.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the quote from the Collins dictionary defining the word 'calumny'.

Mr Bell: That is not good enough, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I asked the minister to withdraw and he did so.

#### Flood Mitigation in Alice Springs

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What action, if any, is the government taking in relation to removing sand from the bed of the Todd River in the town section to deepen the river and thus reduce the potential for flooding in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Sadadeen for his question. To give credit where it is due, I must say that, 2 years ago, he mentioned the possibility of the mining or removal of sand from the bed of the Todd as a flood mitigation measure. As a result of his inquiries, a great deal of work has been carried out on investigating the feasibility of mining sand from the river. However, I would like to discuss that proposal together with a range of other options that are being considered in relation to flood mitigation.

At this stage, I cannot tell the member for Sadadeen exactly what action will be taken. He will appreciate that the flood mitigation studies are continuing and that further talks may be desirable with a range of people and organisations. It cannot be questioned that the need for specific flood mitigation measures is somewhat urgent. The Alice Springs flood in late March peaked at a level of 3.97 m on the Todd River gauge upstream of Wills Terrace, above the previous highest measured level of 3.46 m in March 1983. Overall damage was not as severe as in 1983, but the cost will still be several million dollars in damage to private residences, commercial property and government and council departments.

Flood mitigation measures carried out or in progress before the March flood included the provision of floodplain maps to show the effects of flooding in various degrees, adoption of a land use policy to minimise future flood damage, the establishment of a flood warning system, the setting up of a counter disaster plan to cope with flood emergencies, an assessment of potential flood damage which included identification of flood-prone buildings, and the production and distribution of flood information pamphlets throughout areas likely to be flooded. Measures initiated since the flood include: the reappraisal of the Telegraph Station site for a flood mitigation dam, surveying and mapping by the Department of Lands and Housing of the extent of the flooding, surveying of the Todd River bed to assess silting and scouring,

the authorisation of removal of excess sand from the river bed by private contractors and the engagement of the Centre of Resources and Environmental Studies of the Australian National University to carry out a flood damage study.

Of course, the most important measure is the construction of the flood mitigation dam. Honourable members would be aware, because it was publicly announced well in advance, that the government is carrying out hydrological and geo-technical testing of the spillway area of the Telegraph Station site. A trench has been dug and experts will assess the suitability of the area for construction of a dam wall and report to the Power and Water Authority. After that report is received, the government will be in a position to examine the flood mitigation options available to it.

I stress that the government has gone to great lengths to avoid becoming involved in emotional side issues about the Telegraph Station site, despite provocation. It is our intention to gather the necessary scientific information and assess it thoroughly before any further steps can be taken. I reject completely the spurious claims about lack of warning of moves to conduct these tests at the Telegraph Station site. We could not have been more public in our announcement at a well-attended media conference, and full details were then put to an Alice Springs public meeting by an officer of the Power and Water Authority and the Minister for Lands and Housing.

I would like to pay particular tribute to John Van Hoven, the officer in the Water Directorate, for the work that he has carried out on this particular project. He has dedicated himself to the project, and I would like to express my personal appreciation of the work that he has done.

I was disappointed to hear comments from the Director of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority which implied there had been a lack of consultation, particularly when he knows full well that he was invited to the minister's office to be briefed on the government's intention before the public announcement was made. I was disappointed also by criticism of the fact that I met informally with Aboriginal people in Alice Springs to talk about flood mitigation problems. I was asked by those who attended that meeting not to talk publicly about the detail of what was discussed, and I have honoured that agreement despite desperate provocation from members opposite. I will not be speaking about the details discussed at that meeting and the actions that have taken place. I intend to maintain the confidence that I have established with those people and I will not be speaking about that publicly. It is time that this was taken ...

Mr Ede: You haven't been asked to.

Mr COULTER: I have been, Mr Speaker. I have been asked on numerous occasions and I will supply him with details of what information was requested.

This will not be an issue that will be reported on the front page of the Centralian Advocate. I will deal with this in the proper manner and resolve this problem. I commit myself to resolving the flood problems in Alice Springs but it will not be done to the accompaniment of reports on the front page of any newspaper.

It should be clearly stated that the government has a very firm intention to institute adequate and reliable flood mitigation measures for Alice Springs. We will not be distracted by debilitating tangential debates about

recreation facilities, alternatives that are not really alternatives, ridiculous claims about Bond Springs Station or any other nonsense that might be dragged across our path. The issues of the actual removal of the sand and the causeway are being actioned at the moment, and I have spoken with a group of potential contractors. It will make quite a substantial difference to the cost of sand in Alice Springs, despite the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's claim that it is 'dirty' sand. I guess there is 'dirty' dirt too, in his definition.

We believe that the price of sand in Alice Springs will be reduced dramatically as a result of this action. There are several actions that must occur before we get into the actual removal of sand. Because the member for Sadadeen brought this to my attention, I will keep him fully informed of the results of those discussions.

Northern Territory Indonesia Joint Trade Working Party

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Could he confirm the establishment of the Northern Territory Indonesia Joint Trade Working Party and, if so, what progress has been made to date towards achieving its objectives?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, certainly I can confirm that a Northern Territory Indonesia joint working party on trade has recently been reactivated. By way of some history for honourable members, the working party was first convened in 1981 and included representatives from the Northern Territory and Indonesia. The group met in Surabaya in January 1982 and again in August 1983 but, unfortunately, the meetings of the group lapsed subsequently.

Earlier this year, the Department of Industries and Development was instrumental in reforming the working party. The Northern Territory representatives include the Department of Industries and Development, including Nortrade. The member for Jingili is on the working party, as are a number of Darwin businessmen with an interest in trading with Indonesia. In addition, the Indonesian Consul to the Northern Territory, Dr Joseph Halim has been invited to attend meetings of the group. The working party met on 2 occasions recently and a further meeting is scheduled for the end of the coming week.

The working party has been established to facilitate trade and other commercial activity between Indonesia and the Northern Territory. Its terms of reference are: to identify reciprocal trade opportunities; to encourage communication and transport facilities between Indonesia and the Northern Territory; to provide introductory and information services for businessmen or government officials; to improve the efficiency of administration and regulatory procedures affecting trade; to improve cooperation between similar interests in particular industries with a view to promoting joint ventures; and to explore opportunities for bilateral trade in commodities where the same means of transportation can be used in either direction.

During a recent visit to the Northern Territory, the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, His Excellency Ambassador Roesman, expressed support for these initiatives and undertook to promote the working party through appropriate Indonesian officials and with business groups in Indonesia and government leaders. To date, the group has spent some time in identifying factors



conducive to an increase in commercial activity between Indonesia and the Northern Territory, and in identifying impediments to such increased activity. Contacts have also been made with Indonesian trade officials in Sydney and Canberra and arrangements are in place for members of the working party to meet with a high-level Indonesian trade delegation that is to visit Australia in July.

The establishment of the working party is tangible evidence of the government's desire to improve trade relationships with its South-east Asian neighbours. To further this aim, subject to negotiation with my Indonesian counterpart, I propose to lead a trade delegation to Indonesia later this year. During this mission, on which I will be accompanied by members of the working party, we would hope to identify opportunities for trade between Indonesia and the Northern Territory and to establish the contacts necessary to further this objective.

Members of the working party are working enthusiastically in an endeavour to improve commercial activities between the 2 countries. For their part, Indonesian representatives, in particular Dr Halim and Ambassador Roesman, have been very supportive of these initiatives, and I look forward to some success from these efforts in the future.

Tiger Brennan Drive

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Mr Speaker, my question is in 2 parts. First, will he accept personal responsibility for the traffic bottleneck which has arisen as a result of the opening of the latter section of Tiger Brennan Drive and, secondly, what does he propose to do about it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, unfortunately I am not able to take all of the credit for what is the consequence of a very positive development of our road system - the recent opening of stages 1, 2 and 3 of Tiger Brennan Drive. Certainly, a bottleneck is occurring at the intersection of Frances Bay Road and Woolner Road. What is happening is that traffic from the industrial areas on the Stuart Highway, Palmerston etc are taking advantage of that diversion through Hook Road and travelling along that new section of high-quality road into the city. Of course, that is taking pressure off the Stuart Highway itself. As a consequence of what is happening now, the department is looking at some minor modifications that may need to be made in the interim at that intersection and on Hook Road. These are very minor. In the long term, we will see a great advantage from that section of the road. The next development will be the entry to the CBD that is proposed for 1989-90. That will go on the drawing board next year and bring traffic to McMinn Street. That will provide better access for the ever-growing flow of traffic from Palmerston and the rural area.

The project was completed over a couple of years and we need to acknowledge that about half of the money came from the Australian Bicentennial Roads Development Program. Hopefully, we will have the connection to the city. I say 'hopefully' because it appears there may be some reduction, nationally, in total road funding. It is reported in this morning's Sydney Morning Herald that alarm has been raised by the automobile associations that the Cabinet Expenditure Review Committee apparently has proposed a cut of \$50m in the roads program which would mean about a 10% cut in next year's program. That would be quite disastrous.

The article by the Australian Automobile Association indicated that the importance of roads does not lie simply with traffic comfort and expedient entry to and from cities etc. More importantly, there is a direct relationship between road standards and road accidents and fatalities. The association estimates that some 75 additional fatalities and some 2500 additional accidents may result from further reductions in road funding. That was acknowledged recently by the Minister for Transport and Communications, Mr Morris, when he gave some examples of reductions in accidents and fatalities. An example was the Wyong bypass in NSW. The number of accidents fell to 28 per annum on the new road from 38 per annum on the old road. Similar examples would verify the very clear relationship between road standards and accident and fatality levels.

Perhaps I should call, once again, on the dubious influence that the members of the opposition have with the federal government. I urge them to press for a reasonable attitude towards road funding for the Northern Territory and other remote areas. It is understood that the emphasis next year will be on providing higher standard arterial roads to and from ports because they have some alleged economic value. We all might question what additional value there is in saving 5 or 10 minutes in traffic time to and from ports that take 6 or 8 weeks to clear their containers. There is no increase in the number of containers going across those roads. What we need is a fair distribution of funds to the remote, developing areas of Australia in order to provide better and safer facilities.

Mr Ede: The Tanami Highway.

Mr FINCH: Including, as the honourable member for Stuart says, the Tanami Highway. It will be roads within the Northern Territory that will suffer as a result of a 10% cut and a shift towards higher standard roads in major metropolitan areas in the south-eastern bloc which will have a very dubious additional value to the national economy.

#### Radiology Services at Royal Darwin Hospital

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Has he now established a review team to evaluate radiology services at the Royal Darwin Hospital? Who selected the team and why has the minister decided against appointing an independent peer group review as the opposition suggested?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, one of the healthiest things the government can do in the Northern Territory is not take on board recommendations of the opposition. That is a fundamental health issue. I am very pleased to be advised that, in fact, there is a file missing from my department. I am advised that it was an inactive file. It was a general file about capital equipment 1985-86 and not specific to the radiology section. It reminds me of my period as a policeman. If I was wandering down the street and I saw somebody being ...

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The minister has been asked a specific question concerning a supposed review that has been established.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have advised honourable members on previous occasions that this part of the parliamentary sittings is broadcast on FM radio. Whilst members of the public have difficulty in hearing clearly when members are interjecting, I also have difficulty hearing points of order when cross-Chamber chatter continues.

Mr SMITH: Mr Speaker, the minister was asked a specific question concerning the setting up of a review into radiology services at the Royal Darwin Hospital. The minister was starting to meander, to use a polite word, into his experience as a policeman. I do not see the relevance of that.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister will relate his remarks to the question.

Mr DALE: In replying directly to the question that the honourable member has asked me, I would also like to make some remarks in respect of a previous question which was asked of me in this Assembly this morning. It concerned the tabling of some documents. I am informed that a file is missing from the section. In the past, if I was wandering down the street and saw somebody with stolen property in his possession, I could charge him with being unlawfully in possession of that property. If the opposition is to retain any credibility whatsoever, it ought to justify how it came to be in possession of apparently stolen goods.

In response to the honourable member's question about a review of radiology services in the Royal Darwin Hospital, that is nothing new. I said in this House some 12 months ago that I would be reviewing all sections of the new Department of Health and Community Services in order to create efficiencies and thereby save funds. Members will recall that I had to find some \$5m in savings in the new department. I am pleased to say that, despite the fact that it was an arduous task, I am able to compliment the staff of my department because we have been able to provide effective health services throughout the Northern Territory and to come in on budget for the year.

I have been conducting investigations into the efficiency of all sections of the Royal Darwin Hospital and the radiology section is no exception. I hope the member for MacDonnell has not confused that with an inquiry I initiated recently as a result of the Leader of the Opposition's efforts to use the media to convey an impression to the people of the Northern Territory and the parents of the young child concerned that he was not given appropriate treatment at the Royal Darwin Hospital. The purpose of that inquiry is to determine whether that child was given the best possible treatment available at the Royal Darwin Hospital.

#### SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to draw your attention to my previous ruling. Whilst May states at page 433 that the word 'calumny' has generally been held to be in order, I have given further consideration to the matter. I believe that the word 'calumny' and its derivatives, when applied to members' statements, are as unparliamentary, if not more so, as the word 'lie', when similarly used. Under these circumstances, in future I will not permit its use in reference to members' statements.

Merger of DIT and  
University College of the Northern Territory

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Over the last few days, there has been considerable media speculation regarding the merger between Darwin Institute of Technology and the University College of the Northern Territory. Could he give us a position statement?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I must admit that I was most concerned that the type of questioning being put forward through the media in relation to the University College had won out in this whole exercise. It is a complete nonsense. It is important for us to remember that we are committed to arriving at a negotiated agreement as far as the merger is concerned. There is a danger that, if the questioning in the media continues to take its present line, people in the community will start to become frightened about what is to happen. I acknowledge the work that is being done by the student and academic unions to try to keep the matters that are being discussed within the right forum. As you would be aware, Mr Speaker, working parties have been established to discuss the issues of how we are to proceed to a merger.

The comments made by Dr Carmel Gaffney from FAUSA and Janie Mason from the UACA this morning spelt out my desire that they approach the merger in a responsible manner and do not become involved in a slinging match in the community. There will be no winners or losers. We are aiming at providing a university for the people of the Northern Territory that our students will be proud of and the people who are part of that university will be proud of. We are aiming at bringing the institutions together in a new format. The government intends to ensure that courses not only have, but are seen to have, high standing throughout the world. The government's concern with the standing of courses is what led it to involve the University of Queensland in the University College. This is not to say that the courses at the DIT are of poor standing. Their standing cannot be questioned because they are nationally accredited, and the community needs to be made aware of that.

We are now in the process of trying to bring together the groups involved, including the academic and student unions. We have working parties addressing the merger issue and the members of the various groups will need to work together to arrive at a satisfactory proposal. That is under way, and I would urge people not to listen to any nonsense that is published in the media. We are moving in a responsible manner to build a sound future for Territorians. We believe that will be the result of the entire exercise.

I indicate to honourable members that it is my intention to make a statement on this matter during the course of the August sittings. I am unable to do so at this time because the Higher Education Planning Group has only just put the working parties in place. They will be reporting to me in mid-July prior to my statement in this House.

Radiography Equipment at Darwin Hospital

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Is he aware of an engineer's report compiled this year into the status and reliability of radiography equipment at Royal Darwin Hospital? Does that

report identify 9 major units as being out of action, beneath diagnostic standard or unreliable, and will he explain how he expects the medical staff to treat patients at the hospital using equipment which has been left to deteriorate to this extent?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it amazes me that the opposition appears to have a program aimed at destroying the credibility of various services in the Northern Territory. Health services are obviously at the top of the opposition's agenda. Hungerford Refrigeration was one of its former projects. I have called for an evaluation report on all aspects of the Royal Darwin Hospital and that started as soon as I became minister some 12 months ago. Honourable members do not seem to be complaining about the cleaning at the Royal Darwin Hospital. We were able to assess that function and, if my memory serves me correctly, we were able to make savings of about 20% in respect of the work force there. I was moving towards the privatisation of that section. We were able to negotiate with the union and the people involved and a satisfactory result has been achieved.

That is an example of what I have been doing right throughout the hospital. The Royal Darwin Hospital has 47 separate departments. The radiology section is a very important and integral part of the operation of that hospital. I will be making a ministerial statement on the Royal Darwin Hospital later today. I have made that available to members of the opposition to read overnight and I take it that they will have some positive and worthwhile criticisms to make and will not simply adopt the negative attitude that we have had from them as a result of stolen files and the like.

I pointed out to honourable members last week that I have a list covering the status of the equipment in the radiology section at the Royal Darwin Hospital. I told honourable members at the time that the list and the program that we have under way have been brought together by the now ex-director of the radiology section, the engineer that I have no doubt the honourable member opposite is alluding to, and one of the people from the radiology section at the Royal Darwin Hospital. It is a comprehensive report.

Mr Smith: What are you doing about it?

Mr DALE: It is programmed. The members opposite are saying that one can walk into a radiology section and say that various items will be replaced. Some of the equipment is worth in excess of \$1m. There is a regular program in place. In 1985, an expert was called in to assess the situation at that time. Since that assessment was made, we have purchased 5 pieces of new equipment. The expert radiologist at the time reported that, in fact, the equipment in the radiology section at the Royal Darwin Hospital was satisfactory and working well. We have an expert maintenance engineering section at the Royal Darwin Hospital. By the way, that is another area that I will be looking at closely in the near future to ensure that it is achieving the aims that the Royal Darwin Hospital requires.

It is wrong of the opposition to maintain its scaremongering campaign which is sapping the confidence of the people of the Northern Territory and damaging the morale of the 1400 staff at the Royal Darwin Hospital who treat some 100 000 to 120 000 patients per year. The sooner this impotent opposition puts its mind to some of the positive aspects of what is occurring in the Territory, instead of simply being negative for the sake of negativism, the sooner we might get somewhere in terms of maintaining the confidence of the very dedicated staff at the Royal Darwin Hospital.

Constitutional Referendum

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, there is what I believe to be a most alarming provision in the Constitutional Alteration (Rights and Freedoms) Bill currently before the Commonwealth Parliament relating to just terms. Would he advise the House on the provision which, I understand, blatantly discriminates against Northern Territorians?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I agree completely that the provision relating to 'just terms' in the referendum bill is both alarming and most discriminatory. Basically, it proposes that the Commonwealth, states and territories will be able to acquire property only on just terms anywhere in Australia with one exception - the Northern Territory. In other words, the Commonwealth will be able to acquire from a Territory body politic without just terms, and it cannot do this anywhere in the states. The referendum proposal, as it is drafted, discriminates against Northern Territory Crown property in a most savage and unfair way.

I ask, Mr Speaker, how you can justify a basic guarantee of human rights such as the guarantee of 'just terms' entrenched permanently in the Australian Constitution when it provides for an exclusion to suit the convenience of the Commonwealth? Either it should apply to everyone or not at all. The expressed justification for the exclusion, as derived from the reasoning of the Constitutional Commission, cannot be substantiated. What it is really saying is that, once the Commonwealth sets up a new Territory government and transfers property to it, it should be able to take any Territory property it likes from that government at any later time as the Commonwealth sees fit and without payment. Such a view calls into question the bona fides of a Commonwealth government in granting self-government. What is good enough for every other government or person in Australia is not good enough for the Territory apparently.

It ignores the fact that the assets of the Territory government belong to the Territory community as a whole and are not just the product of Commonwealth transfers. Territorians are entitled to constitutional guarantees just as much as everyone else in this country. For too long, Territorians have been discriminated against constitutionally and it is about time that ended. If the referendum goes through in this form, it will constitute a permanent threat to the self-governing Northern Territory and its property.

On Friday of last week, I telexed various members of the federal parliament regarding this matter, including Senator Fred Chaney, Senator Bob Collins, Senator Grant Tambling, Hon John Howard, Rt Hon Bob Hawke, Rt Hon Ian Sinclair and Mr Snowdon. I would like to read to honourable members the text of that telex:

I must express to you my extreme alarm and concern at one proposal contained in the proposed package of constitutional referenda which would appear to discriminate against the Northern Territory in a totally unjustified manner.

Clause 3 of the Constitutional Alteration (Rights and Freedoms) Bill 1988 would constitutionally guarantee to everyone in Australia

protection against acquisition of their property by the Commonwealth, by the states or by Territorians without compensation except, and I repeat except, the property of a self-governing body politic such as the Northern Territory.

There can be no basis for the Northern Territory government to be singled out in this discriminatory way. This is contrary to every concept of equal treatment and fair play. What is constitutionally good enough for every other person, body or government in Australia must surely be good enough for the Northern Territory.

Mr Leo: We are a territory, not a state.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, the text of my telex continues:

I certainly do not accept that this provision can be justified by the reasons given by the Constitutional Commission first report April 1988, volume 2, pages 616 and 617, as adopted by the explanatory memorandum of the referendum bill, page 6. These just do not stand up to scrutiny against the need for equal and fair treatment under the constitution. If the Commonwealth wants to transfer property to a new self-governing Territory, it can decide in advance what property it wishes to retain. It does not need an express exception in a constitutional guarantee of just terms of general application to any property in the Territory operating for an unlimited period of time to do this.

In the case of the Northern Territory, the Commonwealth had 1 year to acquire property back from the Territory after the grant of self-government. This period has expired. There is no need to continue an exception as to the requirement of just terms in the case of the Northern Territory for this purpose. If the reason for the exception is to avoid the need for the Commonwealth to pay just terms to the Territory for any Territory land granted by the Commonwealth as Aboriginal land, then the question must be asked: why shouldn't the Commonwealth be liable for compensation in the same way as it would in the states? Apart from Aboriginal land, there would be nothing to stop the Commonwealth at any time in the future acquiring back any Territory government property for any purpose without compensation. If this referendum bill is passed in its present form, it would have the potential to destroy the Territory as a self-governing entity to the detriment of all Territorians and their public assets.

The referendum bill should not proceed in its present form unless this discriminatory constitutional provision, aimed specifically at the Northern Territory government and no one else in Australia, is removed.

Mr Speaker, to comment on the member for MacDonnell's interjection ...

Mr Leo: Nhulunbuy.

Mr HATTON: My apologies, it was the member for Nhulunbuy. I am glad he clarified that. It is exactly because we are a territory that this federal government, in this particular referendum, wants to demonstrate to the whole of Australia and to every Territorian that, as far as it is concerned, we are still a Canberra territory. We are not prepared to accept that on behalf of

the Northern Territory people. It is about time the Commonwealth and the people of Australia recognised that Territorians are Australians too, and are entitled to the same rights as other Australians and this, as much as anything else, gives an impetus to the demand for us to move towards statehood as soon as possible.

#### Constitutional Referendum

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it the Northern Territory government's intention to support the Commonwealth government's proposed amendments to the Australian Constitution in the areas of one vote one value, constitutional recognition of trial by jury, constitutional recognition of the role of local government and, indeed, a change to the Constitution which would allow the Houses to sit for 4 years?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that matter is being examined in detail by our government before we adopt a specific position on it. We shall not respond on a gut reaction. I have made a specific comment today in respect of an aspect of the constitution which is of particular urgency to the Northern Territory. However, we will not adopt a firm position on the constitutional issues until such time as the matters have been thoroughly examined. I can assure the honourable member that, at that time, every person in the Northern Territory will be informed about the position of this government in respect of any constitutional amendments.

#### Under-age Drinking

Mr REED to MINISTER for TOURISM

Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Tourism in relation to his responsibility for the Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission.

Parents, the general public, the police and the licensees of liquor outlets are genuinely concerned about what appears to be the increasing incidence of under-age drinking. If under-age drinking is a problem within our community, what are we doing about it? As it appears that the problem is difficult to address under existing legislation, what changes in legislation are proposed and what progress has been made towards effecting those changes?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, under-age drinking has long been recognised as a problem in the Territory by public health and community organisations, licensees, parents and others. The Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission has received a stream of correspondence requesting amendments to the legislation to deal with the problem. Members of the Australian Hotels Association have informed the commission that they support more stringent controls. In this context, I have directed the commission, in conjunction with the Northern Territory Police Force, to work towards providing legislation to make it an offence for any person to supply liquor to a person under the age of 18 years on licensed premises or in a public place unless the person receiving the liquor is in the company of his parent, guardian or spouse who is over the age of 18 years. I might add that such an amendment to the Liquor Act has the unqualified support of the police.



This amendment would deal only with a hiatus in the existing law. At present, it is an offence for a licensee or his employee to sell or supply alcohol to a person under the age of 18 years in licensed premises. It is therefore impossible at present to stop another person over the age of 18 years supplying alcohol to a minor, although it is an offence for that minor to consume the alcohol.

A further amendment is also foreshadowed to provide that persons under the age of 18 years will be prohibited from entry to licensed premises except licensed restaurants, dining areas of hotels and taverns, licensed clubs and roadhouses or other areas the commission may exempt from time to time. Such an amendment will allow licensees to refuse entry to their premises to persons whom they suspect to be under age. This practice has already been undertaken by many licensees. It will exclude persons under the age of 18 from environments such as hotels and discotheques which are mainly geared to drinking alcohol. Under-age persons are usually present on such premises at a time when they should be in the care of their families.

In regard to premises which serve food, it is considered that the existing policy should be continued. If an under-age person is with his legal guardian or spouse over the age of 18 years, there should be sufficient supervision and it will be the responsibility of the person in loco parentis to determine whether the charge can drink or not. This policy is consistent with the Territory lifestyle of families attending clubs, restaurants and dining areas at hotels for meals. I trust the member for Katherine's question has been answered to his satisfaction.

Letter Circulated by Acting President of CLP

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer him to a letter circulated to Country Liberal Party members by the Acting President of the Country Liberal Party which says in part: 'There are too many party members pushing their own vested interests'. In that context, can he confirm that senior and influential party members, Helen Galton and Graeme Lewis, recently joined the Darwin public relations firm run by John Hare, the Secretary of the Country Liberal Party? Will he also confirm that, shortly after they joined the firm, the government awarded a major ...

Mr COULTER: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Under standing order 109, this question clearly falls outside the standing orders and I ask that it be disallowed.

Mr EDE: Mr Speaker, standing order 109 states: 'Questions may be put to a minister relating to public affairs, to proceedings pending in the Assembly, or to any matter of administration for which he is responsible'. The matter that the Leader of the Opposition is about to raise is one for which the Chief Minister is clearly responsible and the Leader of Government Business should have waited until the Leader of the Opposition had finished the question and then he would have understood what it was about.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order at this stage. I would like to hear the whole of the question before I make a ruling.

Mr SMITH: Your wisdom is infinite, Mr Speaker.

Can the Chief Minister confirm that, shortly after Mrs Galton and Mr Lewis joined that firm, the government awarded a major contract for that firm to

promote 10 years of self-government? Can he confirm that that contract was not put out to tender, and can he tell the Assembly how much that contract was worth?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the link that the Leader of the Opposition is seeking to make is both mischievous and irrelevant to the issue.

Mr Smith: Tell the people out there. Tell Shane Stone that.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is quoting from a letter. I assume he has a copy of the letter because I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that I have not seen that letter.

Mr Smith: That does not surprise me at all.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, given the Leader of the Opposition's penchant for selective quotation, I would not be prepared to accept that as a total statement of what is in a letter that allegedly has been circulated by Mr Stone. I can confirm that I will seek information to confirm details of contracts that have been let in respect of self-government celebrations. I can confirm that a contract has been let. The principal contract as I understand it - and I stand to be corrected - was with a local company called Barr Woollard Cawse. It may have engaged the public relations firm with which Mr Hare is associated. I will try to have that confirmed and I will seek the details associated with the self-government celebrations.

While I am on my feet, I will take the opportunity to advise the Assembly that we certainly intend to ensure that we celebrate 10 years of successful self-government in the Territory. We will be taking the time to recount the dramatic improvements in the lifestyle and circumstances of people right throughout the Northern Territory that have resulted from self-government. The Northern Territory community as a whole will have a good opportunity to celebrate this most significant occasion in the Northern Territory's history. I am sure that all Territorians will be delighted with the celebrations. It will be a good chance for Territorians to reflect on life before self-government in the days of full colonial rule by Canberra and the frustrations that Territorians lived with in those times, and contrast that with the dramatic improvements in the quality of life, services and facilities and the growth and security that have flowed over those 10 years to all Territorians.

Extensive work has been done to overcome 70 years of Commonwealth neglect, particularly the Commonwealth neglect of the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory. As a government, we inherited circumstances amongst the Aboriginal communities of absolute destitution and total absence of community services and facilities right throughout the Northern Territory. There is a long way still to go but we have had only 10 years in which to overcome 70 years of neglect of the Aboriginal people and other people throughout the Territory. All Territorians can take the opportunity to reflect back on what it was like before 1978 and on the significant improvements in our lifestyle and the benefits that have flowed to Territorians from having a government that they have elected to make decisions on their behalf.

Landscaping Along Rapid Creek

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Some time ago, I wrote to the minister and requested the upgrading and landscaping of the narrow area of vacant Crown land between the Jingili Water Gardens and McMillans Road along the eastern bank of Rapid Creek. Could he advise what progress has been made on consideration of my request?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I confirm that the honourable member made representations regarding the equestrian access to that area. I have been informed that representatives of the Conservation Commission, the Department of Lands and Housing, the Darwin City Council and the equestrian community have met to consider the establishment of a bridle trail along the eastern bank of Rapid Creek. I have been informed that there is insufficient room to establish a trail between the rear of the blocks and the eastern bank of the creek, although I understand that there is a similar but lesser problem on the western side where there is currently a route along the clear survey line at the rear of property boundaries. The Department of Lands and Housing and the Conservation Commission are evaluating the cost of and justification for a permanent bridle trail and no further upgrading will take place until that evaluation is completed. At that stage, we will be in a position to assess what action is appropriate.

Anderson Proposal

Mr TUXWORTH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise whether negotiations with Warren Anderson for the development of this precinct have been concluded and, if not, what stage have they reached? Can he give an indication as to whether citizens will have an opportunity to peruse and comment on the development proposal? Finally, can he give an undertaking that the financial arrangements relating to the precinct redevelopment will be put to this House before they are concluded and signed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can advise honourable members that negotiations are proceeding. They certainly have not yet been concluded. As honourable members know, the proposal is for the redevelopment of this government precinct, particularly the construction of a new parliament house and a supreme court. An interdepartmental negotiating team has been formed, headed by the Secretary of the Department of the Chief Minister.

Some rough concept designs have been developed and I would anticipate that, within the next week or so, they will be ready for consideration. I can advise honourable members that, quite naturally and properly, we will refer consideration of the design and structure of the new parliament house to the New Parliament House Committee of this Assembly. That committee will be very actively involved in the processes of approval for what will eventually become the new parliament house for the Northern Territory. Equally, the proposal for a new Supreme Court building will be discussed closely with those who will operate in it, the people who have to physically make the court work. It is intended that, when the concept designs and layouts are finalised, they will

be made available for public comment. We see the development as a very significant community asset. Obviously, the community needs to have an input and to accept that this is an appropriate direction to move in.

I am not prepared to give any undertaking in relation to the question about financial arrangements. There are 2 reasons for that. Firstly, we certainly have not concluded the financial arrangements. Secondly, as I have advised publicly, there will be no commitment from government until financial arrangements have been finalised and accepted by Cabinet. The concept, design, layout and the whole financial package must be approved by Cabinet before any commitments are made. Timing is vital if we are to achieve one of the principal objectives of the project which is to create a fiscal stimulant for the economy now rather than 3 or 5 years in the future.

As honourable members would be aware, if construction could commence this year, it would have a significant stimulative effect on the economy this year. To achieve that, decisions would need to be made during the year. Obviously, our government would be responsible for answering any questions and ensuring that people are fully informed of the circumstances. Really, it would depend very much on what the timings were before I would be prepared to make a commitment one way or the other on advising this House in advance of the financial arrangements. However, I repeat that we will be working very closely with the New Parliament House Committee on the assessment of the new parliament house, and with the courts on the court structure. We will seek public comment on the displays and layouts of the proposed precinct.

#### Mining Conference and Trade Exposition

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What was the outcome of the recent Mining, Petroleum and Suppliers Conference and the attached Trade Exposition?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can certainly advise the member for Karama about the Trade Exposition. There was much criticism about the Trade Exposition suggesting that it was not well-attended and that people did not become millionaires overnight as a result of the expo.

Mr Smith: And many of them would have been misled. Yes?

Mr COULTER: As the Leader of the Opposition says - and he happens to be an expert on the subject - people were misled. A number of contracts were written at the showgrounds that provided opportunity for great stimulus to the Northern Territory economy. I guess the largest would have been that arranged by a helicopter company from Western Australia which, as a result of the expo and the investigations its representative was able to carry out whilst he was here, will base its entire operation in the Northern Territory in future. That operation includes 9 helicopters that it will be operating from here.

That is simply one example of a whole range of contracts that were undertaken. In particular, one large loader was bought on site and the new owner insisted that he drive it home. It was a very large, 4-wheel-drive loader and the new owner of the machine had to be talked into leaving it on the stand. There were a number of other examples. We had people from London who have developed an all-terrain vehicle capable of traversing marshlands. In fact, it is seagoing. The representative flew from London to the mining

expo which enabled him to present his product in the Northern Territory. I understand he was very impressed by the amount of activity that is occurring in the Northern Territory.

Other people arrived from Sweden who were able to develop contacts here for the development of their company's product. The ISO assistance, which the Northern Territory government has now entered into to establish an officer within the Office of Industrial Supplies, will concentrate solely on the mining industry, and \$100 000 has been provided to the Office of Industrial Supplies to enable that officer to service the mining industry as a result of the activities following the mining expo. His job will be to ensure that local companies obtain a slice of the industry that is developing in the Northern Territory and which is a bright shining star, not only for the Territory, but for the nation as a whole.

Martin Committee Report on  
Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority

Mr EDE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is it his intention to table, during these sittings, the report of the Martin Committee into the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority which has now been with the government since July 1987, and is it true that the Chief Minister has expressed his dissatisfaction with the report, due to the committee finding in favour of the authority and its policies and procedures, and has consequently ordered that the report be buried?

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! When a point of order is raised and I raise my voice, I would ask the honourable member for Stuart to accede to that request. What is the point of order?

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, under standing order 112, questions should not be asked that relate to hypothetical matters or request an expression of opinion. The member for Stuart was promoting a hypothetical situation concerning the Chief Minister, and requested an opinion from me of what the Chief Minister thought about the matter.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I do not believe there is a point of order. Whilst the honourable member may have made some remarks which could be construed as hypothetical, his specific request or question was whether the report would be tabled.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, following your ruling, I will certainly address that part of the question, which I believe was in order. I have received the report and have requested that a Cabinet submission be prepared so that Cabinet can determine what action it will take. At this stage, I intend to recommend that the report be circulated in certain quarters before its release and tabling in this Assembly. That will allow me to receive comments which will enable me to make ...

Mr Ede: Is the Sacred Sites Protection Authority one of them?

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I am endeavouring to answer a question, but if the member for Stuart wants to provide further information to the House regarding the matter, I am quite happy to sit down and let him do so. I thought that he wished to elicit some information about when the report would be tabled. If he would like to remain silent, I will provide that information. However, if he wants to provide his own information, I am quite happy for him to do so.

Mr Speaker, I intend to present Cabinet with some options regarding the tabling of the report. When Cabinet has made its decision, I will be able to proceed further.

#### National AIDS Forum

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recently the Federal AIDS Taskforce and the National Advisory Committee on AIDS were replaced by the National AIDS Forum. Is he able to advise the House whether the Northern Territory is represented on that National AIDS Forum?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am able to advise that a Darwin woman has been appointed to the National AIDS Forum. She is Miss Bernadette Hudson, the team leader in the AIDS education program for Aborigines in remote communities run by the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services. I have mentioned the tremendous success of that program in previous sittings of this Assembly.

Apart from being the only Northern Territory representative, Bernadette is the only Aboriginal person appointed to the forum, which comprises members of the National Council on AIDS. In my opinion, she is an excellent choice to represent the Northern Territory. She has worked in the area of Aboriginal health for several years and will be able to provide valuable advice from an Aboriginal point of view. Her appointment to this federal body is an indication of the high regard in which the Territory's Aboriginal AIDS Education Program is held in Australia and overseas. Bernadette was, in fact, one of the key people in establishing the program in remote communities. Development of this unique education program was a team effort under the capable guidance of Dr Shirley Hendy of the Royal Darwin Hospital's Communicable Diseases Centre. Bernadette will be working alongside people such as Professor Peter Karmel, Chairman of the Australian Institute of Health, providing advice to the federal government on AIDS issues. These include medical, legal and scientific aspects as well as education, research guidelines and policy matters. Bernadette will be able to contribute a great deal to the forum's work. She will continue to head teams visiting remote communities in the Territory program. I was concerned that her appointment might mean that she could not continue her work here. However, part of the value of her knowledge in the forum will be her feedback on the effectiveness of the program she is involved in here.

Earlier this year, at an international conference in Sydney, Bernadette presented a paper on AIDS in Aboriginal communities. She has been invited by the World Health Organisation to act as an AIDS consultant to the Pacific island nations. I am very pleased indeed with Bernadette's success in this

field. She, among others, is very dedicated to the task of educating Aboriginal people on the AIDS situation. It is tremendous to see the work of an esteemed Territorian being recognised at the national and international level.

#### Roadside Advertising Signs

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I would like him to assure me that, in the compilation of his department's report on roadside advertising, full consideration will be given to the concerns of small businesses in the Litchfield Shire and in country towns along the Stuart Highway for whom such signs are the most productive form of advertising.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member is undoubtedly aware that the anticipated policy on roadside advertising has been proposed by a committee which has broad community representation. That policy has been circulated in the community for comment. Sadly, not much objective comment has come from the community. However, the Department of Transport and Works has summarised and assessed the comment which has been made and is preparing a submission for Cabinet to enable the formulation of a policy which will not only take into account the needs of the small businesses referred to by the honourable member but, just as importantly, address safety issues such as location and size of roadside signs. There are some difficulties in balancing all considerations but the matter will be before Cabinet before too much longer.

#### Screw-worm Fly

Mr REED to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Can he advise whether screw-worm monitoring procedures have resulted in the capture of any further flies?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to be able to advise the House that monitoring to date has not produced any further evidence of screw-worm flies in this area. I will briefly outline for honourable members the monitoring program that is under way at present.

A grid of 26 traps has been set up over an area with a 50 km radius from the Port of Darwin. Whenever possible, these traps have been cleared daily, with flies being identified on the same day. Six sentinel animals, each of which has an incision on the rump, are located at Berrimah Agricultural Research Centre, the Angliss abattoir and the police stables. Stock inspectors have inspected domesticated animals in the Berrimah-Howard Springs area and will continue inspecting concentrations of stock. Local authorities, Emergency Services, the Conservation Commission, police and health officials have all been briefed on the subject. The Commonwealth and interstate authorities have been made aware of the situation and the actions that have been taken.

Discussions between the Department of Industries and Development and the Agricultural Quarantine Inspection Service have taken place to improve the disinfestation of stock and stock vessels arriving at the Port of Darwin.

Reconfirmation has been sought of the identification of the specimens that were sent to Canberra which first brought word back that they were indeed screw-worm flies. I point out to honourable members that the science of identification of insects is very complex. At times, there are incorrect identifications. Because this is such a serious matter, we will continue to have the insects studied by experts to ensure absolutely that they are the screw-worm fly. It would be a tragedy if they ever get a hold on mainland Australia. We are doing everything that can reasonably be expected. I am pleased to say that, to date, the results have proved completely negative.

#### TDZ Consultancy Payments

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Did the Trade Development Zone Authority pay nearly \$0.5m in consultancy fees in 1986-87 and was one of the chief recipients of those fees Mr K.K. Yeung who was paid a retainer to attract business to the Trade Development Zone plus fees for obtaining letters of intent, plus a success fee for business established at the zone, plus reimbursement of his costs incurred? Are those fees to Mr K.K. Yeung and other consultants approved by the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority and how many businesses have been established at the Trade Development Zone as a result of Mr Yeung's efforts.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the nature of the agreement with Asian consultants who promote the Trade Development Zone is well recorded in Hansard, as the Leader of the Opposition would well know. I recall rereading those questions and answers in Hansard not so long ago and most of the information that he seeks is there.

The fees are paid under contracts which are approved by the Trade Development Zone Authority. As for individual accounts submitted under those contracts, there would be a hierarchy of approval procedures in the Trade Development Zone administration such as accord with the usual audit and accounting requirements.

As for the people for whom K.K. Yeung could claim credit, there is a very long list of people whom we are dealing with continuously as prospective tenants of the zone. In addition, what we have always termed the flagship of the Trade Development Zone, Darwin International Textiles, is a Hong Kong company that operates also in China and Guam. It resulted from promotional activities in Hong Kong and K.K. Yeung is certainly very much to the fore in all of the trade zone's promotions and follow-up contact in that region. It would be unfair of the Leader of the Opposition even to hint that funds paid to this consultant to date as reflected in actual people in the zone to date is all that the Northern Territory has for its money. As I have pointed out in this House many times, as have previous ministers responsible for the zone, you cannot promote a trade development zone in a place like Asia overnight and expect to obtain instant results. The exercise is long and expensive and requires governments to have the courage to follow through. Every state in Australia has agency representation in Hong Kong trying to attract investors and offering incentives. We are not alone in this expensive exercise. We are trying to promote the Northern Territory in order to create employment and diversify our economy which is the very reason for the zone's existence.



Forfeiture of Vehicles under Liquor Act

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TOURISM

Instances have occurred where a vehicle owner has had no knowledge that his vehicle was being utilised for the carriage of liquor into a restricted area. On discovery, the vehicle has been forfeited although a person other than the owner has committed the offence. Does he intend taking any action in relation to the mandatory forfeiture of vehicles seized in connection with offences against the restricted areas provisions of the Liquor Act and why should the owner be unduly penalised by loss of the vehicle?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, late last year Cabinet noted the report by Dr d'Abbs on restricted areas and it directed that the relevant authorities and departments consider the recommendations and report back to Cabinet. The report judged the restricted areas provisions to be a qualified success but it suggested amendments to various provisions, particularly in respect of those dealing with forfeiture. A working party of the authorities and the departments has met and it considers that it is necessary that there be extensive consultation with the affected communities before any final report is made to Cabinet on the restricted areas provisions. However, I can foreshadow that the working group is to recommend the policy that the restricted areas provisions be amended to allow some mechanism so that forfeited goods - for example, vehicles - will be able to be returned in situations where the vehicle clearly does not belong to the offender or such a minimal amount of alcohol is involved as to make that forfeiture draconian. Obviously, there is majority support for forfeiture to remain for those offenders actually undertaking grog-running. I believe that this is a very commonsense approach to the problem in the communities, and the resolution of this problem will be to the satisfaction of the communities.

Martin Committee Report on  
Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority

Mr EDE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In answer to my previous question, he stated that he would circulate the report so that he could obtain comments on it. Will he undertake to this House to circulate the report to the authority itself so that the authority will be able to comment on it and make a submission before the matter goes to Cabinet?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for Stuart must have listened to some extent and picked up a portion of my answer. As a matter of fact, I intend to circulate the inquiry report to a number of areas, and I believe that it would be beneficial to ask the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority to comment on the recommendations of the report as I believe it would be appropriate also for certain Commonwealth agencies to comment on it. I shall be asking for those comments so that I may present them to my Cabinet colleagues when I present the entire report together with recommendations. I will advise the House that it may be appropriate, after those recommendations have been made and as a result of my Cabinet discussions, that some changes be made to the legislation. Who knows?

One of the groups to whom I will not be giving prior notice in this regard is the opposition because, unfortunately, members of the opposition have a habit of trying to engender conflict in respect of government and Aboriginal relations. Their prior record has been most unfortunate in this regard. This morning's question time and the nature of the questions about the Martin Inquiry are indicative of the attempts by the opposition to create such conflict. However, I will be asking for the report to be commented on by the appropriate people. I presume that the members of the opposition have a copy of the report and that it is a legal copy, because they are pretty good at obtaining and stealing information from reports and ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the minister to withdraw that remark.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the remark, but I consider that there probably is a prior knowledge ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order, the honourable minister will withdraw without comment.

Mr MANZIE: I withdrew the remark about stolen documents.

Mr EDE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The minister has withdrawn a remark regarding stolen documents. He made a specific assertion that we were stealing, and that is the remark that must be withdrawn and withdrawn unreservedly.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not believe there is a point of order. I think there was only one reference to 'steal' or 'stolen'.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I believe that there is a knowledge of the contents of the document amongst the members of the opposition, but I will not reflect on how that information has been obtained by them.

However, I intend to proceed with this matter in a steady way, to enable the appropriate people to give their comments regarding the matter. I wish to ensure that, at the end of the day, we have a system regarding the protection of sacred sites in the Territory that works effectively and without conflict, and that achieves the objective which is - and all members of this House would be in agreement with the objective - to ensure that sites of significance to Aboriginal people are protected. We want to end with a situation which does away with the conflict and the problems that the present act seems to present to government and to all Territorians. I hope that we can resolve the situation to the benefit of all Territorians.

Contract for Self-Government Promotion

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he confirm that the contract to promote the government's 10 years of self-congratulation - sorry - 10 years of self-government will cost taxpayers about \$300 000, and will he explain to the House how senior CLP figures Helen Galton and Graeme Lewis and CLP secretary John Hare are involved in that contract? Thirdly, how will he convince taxpayers that their funds will not be used to promote the Chief Minister and the Country Liberal Party in that exercise?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, a question of almost identical format was asked yesterday and I advised the honourable member that, when I obtained the information, I would answer it. I will do so when I receive the information.

Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

Last December, he announced the introduction of a trial Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. What progress has so far been made towards the introduction of that scheme?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, most elements of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme are already in place in the Northern Territory through the CLP government's community policing initiatives. The modified Neighbourhood Watch Scheme which I announced in the last sittings aims to deter crime, especially housebreaking and sexual assaults in homes, to improve community education on home security and crime prevention and to heighten community awareness of suspicious behaviour. Three areas in Darwin's northern suburbs have been identified for examination for possible inclusion in the Neighbourhood Watch pilot program. These areas are Nightcliff, Millner and the Leanyer-Woodleigh Gardens area. The actual trial will involve 2 of those areas.

I might say that, when I announced this pilot program, the Leader of the Opposition made a public statement to the effect that the profile of his own electorate had changed and that it was not an appropriate area for a trial because the kids had grown up and, as a result, crime rates would not be as bad as they might have been a few years ago. I urge the Leader of the Opposition to spend a bit more time in his electorate because I must advise him that it has the highest crime rate in Darwin.

Mr Smith: You are blaming me for that, are you?

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I am certainly not blaming the Leader of the Opposition for the crime rate. I am just giving him a bit of electorate information to assist him in his job as the local member for Millner, and urging him to spend a bit more time in his electorate. If he believes in a low crime rate in Millner, obviously he is not spending much time in his own electorate. It is sad to say that Nightcliff has the second highest crime rate in Darwin. That has been a matter of some concern to me as the local member, as I am sure it is to the Leader of the Opposition who is one of my constituents.

In the development of this program, letterbox drops were made about 2 weeks ago explaining the basic elements of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Door-to-door interviews were to be conducted in those areas during the weekend of 21-22 May. By the end of this month, police expect to be able to choose 2 areas for the trial. That will be followed by public meetings in those areas to get the program under way. The proposal is for a starting date of 1 July. The introduction of the scheme has already attracted interest from insurance companies wishing to provide sponsorship.

Neighbourhood Watch relies for its success on support from the community, and that cannot be emphasised enough. I urge people to participate actively in this Neighbourhood Watch pilot program because it will only work if the police and the community work together. I can advise that, in my role as the member for Nightcliff, I will be encouraging the Nightcliff community to become actively involved in any trial program that may be conducted in my electorate. If the Millner area happens to be chosen, I am certain the Leader of the Opposition will provide similar support in that area. If it is in the Woodleigh Gardens area, the member for Leanyer would be only too pleased to actively encourage people. It will need promotion from within the community to get it off the ground. Unfortunately, previous trial programs such as that involving the engraving of valuable possessions with identifying numbers have received very limited community response. I note that the Leader of the Opposition is nodding his head. That trial was conducted in the Millner electorate and I think there were only 1 or 2 responses.

Mr Smith: No, there were more than that.

Mr HATTON: There were certainly no more than 5.

Mr Smith: There were 20.

Mr HATTON: The police gave me a number lower than that. In any case, the number was far too low to have been of any effective value.

As I said earlier, Neighbourhood Watch is one of a number of initiatives in our community policing program aimed at crime prevention. Those initiatives include the Cops on Campus program, the work of the Police and Citizens Youth Club and a range of other activities throughout the Territory. The overall aim is to involve the community in its own security and crime prevention rather than adopting what, unfortunately, has become a modern trend in which the community washes its hands of problems on the basis that they are matters for the police. The fact is that, if we want to have a safe society in which crime is avoided and minimised, every member of society needs to become actively involved and accept his or her responsibilities as a citizen in this area, as much as in any other area of society.

Letter Circulated by Acting President of CLP

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer him once again to the now very public letter written by the Acting President of the Country Liberal Party. In point 11 of the letter, the acting president writes: 'I have had a gutful of the antics in this party, both organisational and parliamentary wing. If you want me to remain in the presidency, be prepared to buckle down and work towards good government'. Now that the acting president has joined the rest of the community in recognising this problem, will the government give a commitment to lift its game and start working towards good government?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is so bereft of anything to say that he has to quote an internal letter of the CLP which discusses party matters which have absolutely no relevance to this House. I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that we are continually working to provide good government for the Northern Territory and to improve the performance of government generally. We will continue to do that in the future. There is one thing that is absolutely certain: the community has absolutely no faith in the Leader of the Opposition or his cohorts who are regarded as a joke in this society.

Local Government Scheme

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

In the early days of self-government, I was involved in the introduction of local government within Aboriginal communities. The minister has now reaffirmed a program to encourage Aboriginal communities to join the local government scheme. Can he advise how many Aboriginal communities have joined the scheme and are there many communities still giving consideration to the scheme?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, local government is very much in the news in the Northern Territory this week with the local government elections coming up. Perhaps the Northern Territory is the only place where local government is really in a growth mode. 12 community government councils are now established in the Northern Territory and that is an increase of 4. A further 4 community government councils are to be established in the very near future as well. Progress is being made towards another 12 and those are spread right throughout the Northern Territory from Yuendumu, Ngukurr, Galiwinku, Gapuwiyak, Hermannsburg, Santa Teresa, Batchelor, Adelaide River, Daly River, Port Keats, Dagaragu and Kalkaringi to Yirrkala.

If the member for Arafura were here, he would be able to tell us how good community government is for communities in the Northern Territory. The people at Nguui adopted community government very recently and have gone ahead in leaps and bounds in that very short period of time. Indeed, the member for Arafura was the immediate past president of the Nguui Council.

There is no doubt at all that the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory are embracing local government with great anticipation of what it will bring them in the way of being able to cater to their own needs. The community government scheme in the Northern Territory is being looked at by all the states because it has so much to offer, and yet we find that those organisations that are established in the Northern Territory to cater for the needs of Aboriginal people living on Aboriginal land, the land councils, are working actively against community government in the Northern Territory.

Of recent times, we have been close to a community government scheme at Belyuen and at Ngukurr, yet the land councils have gone to those communities after representations from the Office of Local Government over a period of years to establish community government in those areas. The land councils have told blatant lies about the ability of community government to cater for the needs of the people in those areas. They have said that it does not give a community power to make by-laws for its community that have the strength of

the Territory law behind them. They have told them a range of things such as that and, in fact, they have frightened the people of Belyuen and Ngukurr and had them write letters under duress saying that they would not take up community government at this time. Within a couple of weeks, when they had had it explained to them, they wrote back indicating that they really want to embrace community government because it will give them the ability to look after their own needs.

I believe that the land councils should stay right out of what is not their business. They are responsible for land. We have seen an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander proposal that is fully supported by the land councils and is not based on boundaries worked out over time in consultation with the people. With community government, we have exactly that in place. It takes years of consultation to put a community government scheme in place because it deals with traditional boundaries. Then we find that body, which is supposedly established to look after the needs of Aboriginals, actively working against it. It is shameful. I do not believe it is reflecting the wishes of the Aboriginal people. I am sure that, if the member for Arafura were here, he would back me up on this. I know that it is his view and the view of many other people on the benches opposite but they do not have the guts to say so.

Mr Ede: Make a ministerial statement.

Mr McCARTHY: They do not have the guts to say that they support community government. It is supported around the country except by the land councils because they believe it will undermine their own position. I think it is shameful. I would ask the members opposite to get up and say that it is shameful because they know that it is. They know that the land councils are out to protect their own meagre interests. I believe that is disgraceful and I think that my statement on that should have the support of every member of this House. Community government in the Northern Territory will grow because it has the support of the Aboriginal people.

Mr Leo interjecting.

Mr McCARTHY: It may not have the support of the member for Nhulunbuy ...

Mr Leo: It certainly does have, but if you will not listen to the problems, there is no point in trying. You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr McCARTHY: Where are the problems?

Mr Speaker, the process of getting community government up and running in the Northern Territory will take time. It will take time to have it all in place, but let us not have this organisation set up to support Aboriginal people working against us.

#### Constitutional Referendum

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

Noting the long and detailed answer he provided yesterday on the matter of land acquisition in the coming referendum on the Australian Constitution, I would like to ask a very straightforward question. Does he support the concept of one vote one value, will he support the proposed amendments to the Constitution which will enshrine in the Australian Constitution the concept of

one vote one value and, if he will not support that principle or, indeed, that referendum, why not?

Mr COULTER: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Under standing order 114, a question fully answered cannot be renewed. That question repeats virtually verbatim one that has been answered fully.

Mr LEO: Mr Speaker, I would like to speak to the point of order. I recall quite clearly the question asked yesterday and the Hansard will bear me out, I am sure, with absolutely scrupulous clarity. In fact, I asked the Chief Minister what his government's position was. Now I am asking the Chief Minister what his position is.

Mr Hatton: You cannot ask for an opinion.

Mr LEO: I am not asking for an opinion; I am asking what his position is. Does he support the principle of one vote one value? It is very simple.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. There is a difference between yesterday's and today's questions.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question contains a number of potential conflicts. I am asked, firstly, whether I support the principle of one vote one value and, secondly, whether I support the referendum motion on one vote one value. Of course, that is working on the presumption that the referendum bill provides appropriately for the recognition of one vote one value. A very simple, almost simplistic argument, is put forward by members opposite when they say that one vote one value, in a democracy, means that every person is equal and therefore each vote that is cast should have exactly the same power as any other vote. The fundamental principle underlying that is that electorates should all be of the same size. As I understand it, what that proposal is all about is to go from a 20% tolerance to a 10% tolerance.

That is what the argument is about. It is also to enable the federal Constitution to impose conditions on the sovereign states of Australia. As do a multitude of these questions in the referendum, it raises a multitude of questions about where our federation rests today. Are we to accelerate the drift towards a centralist government in Australia or are we to support the principle of a federation of states in Australia? Those are very serious questions that need to be analysed properly and carefully, as do the issues. One of those issues ...

Members interjecting.

Mr Leo: You really are a wimp. You are a wimp.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Nhulunbuy will withdraw that remark.

Mr Leo: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I would advise honourable members, and this is not the first time, that this part of the parliamentary day is broadcast and, despite the fact that some members might not want to hear either the question or the answer, I believe a fair number of Territorians in the community do, and I ask all members to maintain silence during both the question and the reply.

Mr HATTON: To the interjection from the member for Barkly, perhaps the town of Tennant Creek might be interested in hearing the answer if people there listen to their radios.

Mr Tuxworth: They wouldn't listen twice.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I thank you for those comments.

The member for Nhulunbuy, who is chuckling away in the corner over there, is quite obviously trying to put forward some simplistic question ...

Mr Leo: I just want to know what you are doing.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, if I am to answer the question comprehensively, I will deal with the issues that are involved in such apparently simple questions as, 'Do you support one vote one value?'. As I have said, my government has not yet fully considered the position of the balance. Australia has an imbalance with 80% of its population tucked into a 10% corner in the south east. If all electorates were the same size, power would flow increasingly to the major cities. The concentration of political power in the cities and inevitably the concentration of political attention on the cities and away from the country are serious matters that need to be considered. I know the Labor Party has no interest in this question because it sees its power base as being in the cities.

I am not prepared to make a clear and unequivocal statement because it is essential that the people in the rural areas of Australia, who earn most of the wealth for Australia, should have a reasonable, political voice in the national, state and Territory parliaments. If that means stepping away from the pure concept of one vote one value, so be it. To answer quite simply, I am not prepared to say that I am for or against the referendum. In broad principle, I agree with one vote one value, but it must be balanced against ensuring that there is adequate political representation for the people in the more remote areas of this country. I am not prepared to make an unequivocal statement until I and my government have properly analysed that question.

#### May Day Celebrations

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

During his address to a May Day gathering in Darwin on Monday 2 May, author Frank Hardy stated: 'The Northern Territory should be proud that it is the only state in Australia that has a public holiday and calls it May Day'. Could the minister confirm if Mr Hardy's statement is accurate and advise in what manner the other states of the Commonwealth celebrate the day that we in the Northern Territory refer to as May Day?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am led to believe that the May Day celebrations were originally a harvest celebration in Merry Old England. Later, the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics liberated May Day to celebrate its successful October revolution.

Mr Smith: That is nonsense.



Mr Bell: It was in the 1880s.

Mr McCARTHY: You better consult your encyclopaedia. The disparity between October and May results from the western world's Gregorian calendar which is out of step with the one used by the Soviets.

In the later 1940s, we in Australia appear to have done our own holiday duffing when the 40-hour week was introduced. Typically, we could not agree when to celebrate this momentous occasion. This year, Western Australia and Tasmania have a holiday on 7 March, Victoria on 14 March, Queensland and the Northern Territory on 2 May, New South Wales and the ACT on 3 October and South Australia on 10 October. In all but the Northern Territory, it is known as Labour Day. The 10 October holiday in South Australia is getting a little bit closer to the actual revolution. While we did not have rocket launchers parading through the civic square, workers did manage to burn a few effigies this year. I do not believe the date should be cause for concern however ...

Mr Setter: Subversion.

Mr McCARTHY: ... in the hotbed of Jingili. I can assure the honourable member that the Territory is not the only place to celebrate this holiday, nor is it a sign of impending revolution.

#### National Wage Increase

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

Given that the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission awarded a \$6 wage increase to all wage earners on 2 February this year, that the draft orders were ratified in the Territory on 3 March and that the private sector paid the increase to all its workers within 2 weeks of receiving advice from the commission, why has the government still not paid the wage increase to its own workers over 3½ months later?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware that we have not paid it to all workers. In fact, we have paid it to some. As far as I am aware, those few that are still outstanding are refusing, for whatever reason, to take it. I will have that checked. These workers have ongoing disputes over conditions and, for that reason, have refused to accept any of the other benefits that have been granted to them. I will have the matter checked and come back to the honourable member.

#### Kormilda College

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Over the past few days, there has been considerable media speculation about education. Statements have been made on the airwaves that Kormilda College is to be handed over to private interests. Will he comment on that statement?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. There has indeed been some misinformation circulating about Kormilda College. The current position is that Kormilda College is in a transition phase from a

government school to a private school. The next step towards privatisation has been agreed to by the Northern Territory government. I am sure that honourable members would be aware of the concerns that government had in relation to the cost of students at that particular college and the need for it to provide access for traditional Aboriginals. The college will be handed over to an interim board and that board is in place - Kormilda College Incorporated. That will occur on 1 July.

As the minister, I will still have control in respect of the activities of Kormilda College. However, the direction that we are moving in is to have Kormilda College completely privatised by the beginning of next year. There is some concern about how that is to occur and I will be paying particular attention to that in the near future. The agreement that has been reached will allow the school to expand its efforts to attract enrolments, particularly from traditional Aboriginal areas. I would say again that it is unfortunate that there has been a great deal of misinformation. The Teachers Federation has made comments to the effect that Kormilda is operating well short of its capacity. Even the member for Stuart has commented in relation to the capacity at Kormilda College, mentioning a figure of 450 vacancies.

Mr Ede: I said it needs another 450 students to be viable.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, far from having difficulty in filling places, Kormilda has a waiting list. It is limited in the sense that it does not have sufficient classroom space to take in a full complement of boarding students at present.

The government is giving Kormilda the opportunity to obtain funds from the private sector. The school will also have the normal assistance from government by means of the 10% interest subsidy and 5% capital repayments. The school intends to have classrooms built for the senior secondary area, Years 11 and 12, by the start of next year. As we have been saying for some time, schools like this give people a greater range of educational choices and take a load off the government system.

I congratulate all those involved in the Kormilda exercise. It is not an easy task. We have to ensure that the needs of traditional Aboriginals are met. The government has paid particular attention to that and will continue to do so. FEPPi has been closely involved and there has been a great deal of consultation in the communities about the direction Kormilda is moving in. FEPPi's members are to be congratulated for the way they have been involved in that consultation process. I believe that Peter Harris is the person who will bring the Kormilda project together and I wish him every success, together with the college staff.

I have said that I see Kormilda as complementary to and not opposing the Darwin International Grammar School. It is important that both facilities exist. The Darwin International Grammar School is also looking at attracting Aboriginal students but the situation at Kormilda ...

Mr Ede: There are not enough kids to go around.

Mr HARRIS: That is nonsense! The member for Stuart should curl up in a corner following his remarks about the Darwin International Grammar School the other night. I ask honourable members to read what he had to say and to look at my response. Unlike members of the opposition, we are interested in students in the Northern Territory. We want them to pursue their education in the Northern Territory and we will be continuing to follow that objective. We

will provide opportunities, whether the member for Stuart likes it or not, for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to have access to education in the Northern Territory. This government fully supports developments at Kormilda. We also want to make it very clear that we will ensure that Kormilda looks after the interests of the traditional Aboriginal people.

#### Royal Darwin Hospital - Loss of Accreditation

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

If he has read the 1987 Annual Report of the Royal Darwin Hospital Management Board, he will have encountered the following statement: 'There is a loss of accreditation of the Royal Darwin Hospital, due principally to a shortfall in quality insurance programs and the failure of the previous board to examine the perceived full extent of its power under the Hospital Management Boards Act'. What does he intend to do about this?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware of that situation. It is a matter which has been discussed previously in this House. I suppose the best way of describing the accreditation process is as one of peer assessment. We are certainly keen to gain that accreditation again and the Chief Medical Officer is working steadfastly towards that goal. Let me say, however, that it has absolutely nothing to do with the actual provision of services to the public at the Royal Darwin Hospital. It is an issue of peer assessment and accreditation will not be given until the professionals go through the process. It must also be noted that a great number of major hospitals throughout Australia do not have this accreditation either.

#### Katherine Water Supply

Mr REED to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

An article in last night's NT News suggested that the Katherine water supply was contaminated. What action has been taken by the Water Directorate of the Power and Water Authority to ensure that the water supply in Katherine is not contaminated, and can he assure the people of Katherine that their water supply does not pose a health risk?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the NT News of 24 May 1988 indeed carried an article under the heading 'Diarrhoea Incidence Raises Fear'. At first, I was not sure whether it was referring to the performance of the opposition in the Legislative Assembly yesterday, but I read further and discovered that it referred to the Katherine water supply. The Power and Water Authority has denied the press report that pollution in the Katherine water supply is causing residents to suffer from diarrhoea. Katherine's water supply is sterilised and filtered, and is considered to be one of the cleanest in the Territory. Samples taken yesterday at 9 different locations and incubated last night indicated that the supply was clean of organisms. As the dry season approached, Katherine's water supply was blended with more bore water and some residents might have noticed mild effects as a result of that. This was done to ensure there would be no danger of the supply running short during the dry season. Katherine's water supply has been tested and the level of chlorine throughout the system was found to be sufficient to ensure disinfection.

Officers of the Power and Water Authority have liaised with health authorities on the matter. They have been advised that 8 cases of diarrhoea have been treated at the local health centre and all these involved travellers. I understand that the pharmacist who advised the NT News is personally afflicted with giardia and automatically blamed the water supply without having the facts checked. The Minister for Health and Community Services may wish to elaborate further on the matter.

#### Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

In November 1986 the then Minister for Industries and Development, the member for Flynn, stated that 12 firms had signed letters of intent to enter the Trade Development Zone as the result of work done by the authority's sub-consultants. Can the minister confirm that, 18 months later, only 2 of the 12 companies have commenced operations in the zone? Secondly, does he accept that a failure rate of 10 out of 12 is commercial nonsense, and whom does he hold responsible? Thirdly, can he confirm that the sub-consultants were paid fees for getting those letters of intent signed and that those fees total approximately \$90 000?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, clearly I cannot provide all that information off the cuff. It is probably correct that 2 companies of the 12 which signed letters of intent have commenced operations in the zone. I do not think that it is true to say that 10 of the 12 have failed. The Trade Development Zone Authority is working constantly on the people who have been to the Northern Territory to examine what the zone has to offer for them, and various negotiations have been occurring continuously with those people, even with people who came down in the first group back in 1986. Negotiations are taking place with these people. There is a range of reasons why the negotiations are sometimes very slow and why sometimes people who are brought fairly well up to the wire, as it were, with letters of intent, subsequently do not proceed. I believe it would be untrue to say, without close examination, that 10 of the 12 have walked away never to return.

In fact, we are now dealing with 1 particular applicant who had reached the stage of a B and P application which was rejected in Hong Kong, we believe, without good grounds. A subsequent appeal has indicated that the gentleman can reapply and possibly be accepted. Thus, there is a possibility that even those who seem to have fallen away completely may come back into the system again. It is very difficult to say exactly who has fallen out of the system totally.

As to the honourable member's question about the amount of money that has been paid to consultants as a result of the issue of letters of intent by those people, I cannot give him that information off the cuff.

#### Public Service Unattached List

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for LABOUR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES and LOCAL GOVERNMENT

How many public servants remain on the so-called unattached list and what action is the Public Service Commissioner's office taking to place those public servants in full-time, permanent and productive positions?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the last figures that I have been given on those people who are excess or potentially excess is 60 or thereabouts. I do not have up-to-date figures in my hand, but there were approximately 60 people on that list. The Department of Labour and Administrative Services, through the Public Service Commissioner, has responsibility for attempting to place those people in positions as they become available within the public service. Unfortunately, a number of the people who appear on the excess list are people with professional qualifications and it is very difficult to place them within the public service. There is a procedure that has to be undertaken with people who cannot be placed, but it is the government's intention to place as many as possible. That is an ongoing process. We have brought that number down from about 150 some 3 months ago and therefore there is progress in that regard.

#### Task Force Report on Aboriginal Health Workers

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Has he received the task force report completed in February 1987 recommending a career structure for Aboriginal health workers in the Department of Health and Community Services? If he has, when does he intend to make a decision on it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, certainly I have. It will come before Cabinet at its next meeting, on 7 June.

#### Crop Production 1988

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Given the wide variation this year in the wet season, what are the latest estimates on crop production in the Northern Territory and the effect this will have on Top End users?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, early season conditions in our cropping areas were generally favourable and we were expecting a very good cropping season this year. Dry conditions late in December and January reduced the establishment of later planted crops. However, the prolonged wet conditions delayed rice establishment in the Adelaide River area. Just under 9000 ha of crops was established with the majority of this area being grain, sorghum and maize. All districts - the Douglas Daly area, the Katherine area and the Adelaide River area - experienced a short dry spell in January and a prolonged dry spell from late February through March. Although total seasonal rainfall was 95% of average in Katherine and 65% of average in the Douglas Daly, the dry spell particularly late in the season generally reduced the performance of most crops.

As usual, there is considerable variation in crop performance depending on local, seasonal and management factors. Harvesting of crops has commenced and final yields will be known when harvesting is completed in the next 4 to 6 weeks. Maize and soya bean crops were severely affected by the dry spells. Maize particularly is flowering, and soya bean suffered seedling mortality after successfully establishing.

Sorghum and mung bean crops in both the Katherine and the Douglas Daly districts are variable. Some crops sown earlier have yielded or are expected to yield well with slightly over 5 t per hectare being harvested from one paddock of sorghum in the Douglas Daly. Reduced or severely reduced yields are expected in the Katherine district, particularly from crops sown late or in areas that experienced poorer rainfall. A similar situation exists for sesame with a few better crops and many poorer crops.

The only commercial peanut crop grown this year has performed excellently and has a yield slightly over 3 t per hectare from the area harvested to date. This top quality crop has attracted a premium price from the Queensland Peanut Marketing Board and part of it may be retained as seed for sowing in the Northern Territory and in Queensland next year.

Grain head moulds developed on grain sorghum crops in the Douglas Daly district when humid and wet conditions coincided with crop maturation. Such moulds occur fairly frequently in the tropics and have the effect of reducing the palatability and quality of the grain which is important for our product as it is used for animal feedstock. Mould can also produce mycotoxins which can be poisonous to animals. Unfortunately, farmers in the Top End have suffered adverse growing conditions for the third year in a row, resulting in reduced yield and a total crop well below expectations of the area planted. Plantings which were expected to yield in the order of 11 000 t of sorghum and maize are now expected to produce less than 6000 t. The requirements of Top End users of these types of grain are for approximately 10 000 t, thus a significant shortfall exists between the anticipated harvest and the end user requirements.

#### Replacement of Ambulance at Yulara

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

He will be relieved to know that my question is not about radiology equipment. It is in relation to an equally embarrassing problem for the minister and the government. I refer to the government's election promise to replace the Yulara ambulance. I preface my question by reminding the honourable minister of my comments in last night's adjournment debate when I commented that a potentially fatal situation had developed with respect to the petrol fumes and oxygen mixture in the back of the cabin of the ambulance and that the ambulance itself has stripped a distributor shaft.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! What is the question?

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, I simply want to ensure that the minister is in full possession of the facts. When will the government honour its election promise to replace the Yulara ambulance?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am pleased that the honourable member raised this issue. It is interesting to note that he has run out of all information relative to the radiology section of the Royal Darwin Hospital. Last Friday night, at about 8.30 pm, the ambulance was required to do a halfway meet on the Docker River road to collect a patient who apparently had been bitten by a snake. It was a 240 km drive out there so the ambulance did not do too badly.

During the exchange of the patient from one vehicle to another, apparently they needed to stabilise him and ensure that he was fit enough to continue.

For some reason, I am told that the ambulance motor was left running. If you leave the engine running, fumes enter the vehicle itself. On the drive back, the patient was fairly fit but the doctor became sick. He was a little uncomfortable on the way back because fumes had not cleared from the ambulance.

The technical services manager at Yulara investigated the report that there might have been some problem with the fuel system in the vehicle. He took the vehicle out the next morning to test it. He did everything to try to recreate the situation as it had existed on the 280 km journey. He put it through some rigorous tests and, in the process, did some damage to the gears. The vehicle is broken down at the moment and our technical services people are working on it. I am informed that there is a standby unit there.

As I have said many times in this House, I have had conflicting information from Yulara from all sorts of people. The advice has been from some that they need an ambulance and from others that they do not. I can only take my advice from professional people and, as I told this House a little while ago, I went out to Yulara myself after all sorts of people including the secretary of the department, the regional director and the assistant regional director had been there to negotiate health services in the area. I went there with a deal to put in a new ambulance and I was advised by the doctor that that service was not required, and that it would be a waste of taxpayers' money. I have not had a submission put to me since that time indicating why we would need to replace the ambulance at Yulara.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
National Wage Increase

Mr McCARTHY (Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government):  
Mr Speaker, to clarify an answer that I gave previously to the member for Stuart on a delay in payment of the wage increase, orders to vary awards had to be raised and signed by the unions and processed through the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. There was some delay in that regard. It takes up to 4 weeks to reprogram the computer to change approximately 14 000 public servants' pay entitlements. This has been done for most of the groups, and the increase will be paid to those public servants on the next pay day.

Negative Special Grants

Mr SETTER to TREASURER

The federal Treasurer will be bringing down an economic statement this evening. As a result of the Premiers Conference which the honourable Treasurer attended recently, is he optimistic that the Territory will no longer have to face the quaintly-titled negative special grants that have characterised reports of the Grants Commission in the past 2 years?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, all Territorians and, indeed, all Australians will be anxious this evening to hear the economic statement that will be delivered by the federal Treasurer. I am pleased to say that the one-off negative special grant in 1987-88 will not be repeated in 1988-89. There were some positive sides to the Premiers Conference and the amount of money that was received by the Northern Territory, and that included a useful increase in hospital grants. Although the financial assistance grants for 1988-89 have been offset correspondingly, there will be a marginal benefit to the Territory through

indexation in the future. There was a higher grant component of the Loans Council capital program, meaning that the Northern Territory will save approximately \$1m per year in debt-servicing charges and, most importantly, a very substantial one-off special revenue grant of \$57.5m which effectively offsets the Grants Commission recommendations for this year.

With regard to tonight's statements, of course, we have now seen that the Prime Minister is a man of his word and he will not implement a gold tax during the life of this parliament ...

Mr Ede interjecting.

Mr COULTER: We have one of the best and most appropriate forms of mineral royalty payments in Australia, as the member for Stuart has just mentioned. I wonder if his colleagues in Western Australia and Victoria would be pleased to hear of the gold tax and I wonder about the future political careers of the members for Bendigo and Kalgoorlie and a number of other people. We will see what the federal government's reaction to this particular tax will be. Of course, another interesting point that has been leaked, mostly to the newspapers, concerns financial assistance to private schools which has been foreshadowed in tonight's statement. All in all, it will be interesting television tonight, Mr Speaker. We will wait and see what emerges from it.

#### Policy on M-rated Videos in Schools

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Does his department have a policy on the showing of M-rated videos within schools and, if so, what is it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of the answer to that question at the moment. I will provide the honourable member with an answer at a later hour.

#### ANSWER TO QUESTION Television for Remote Communities

Mr PERRON (Industries and Development): Mr Speaker, I wish to answer a question asked of me earlier in these sittings by the member for Barkly. The member for Barkly asked whether the government's policy towards the matter of financial assistance to remote communities which wish to broadcast Imparja Television will be reviewed.

Firstly, I would like to give members some brief background information on this issue. I understand that there is some confusion in the community regarding the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Community Scheme, called BRACS, and Imparja's quite separate obligation to provide 8 transmitters for its service in the Territory and South Australia. On 15 September 1987, the federal government announced that BRACS would be implemented to provide remote Aboriginal communities with satellite receive-and-transmit facilities for the provision of ABC radio and television. This financial year, the federal government has allocated \$505 000 which will provide services for up to 14 Aboriginal communities. Eventually, 74 communities across Australia are expected to be serviced by BRACS, 28 of them in the Northern Territory. BRACS will not, and has never been intended to, provide communities with the capacity to receive and transmit commercial television. I think that that is a bit of a shame. I understood that people who had facilities to receive ABC



satellite television faced a lesser cost to convert to be able to receive Imparja services also, but it seems that the Commonwealth scheme to enable many Aboriginal communities to receive the ABC, in a sense is not designed to help them receive Imparja as well.

As a condition of the central zone RCTS licence, Imparja is under an obligation to provide receive-and-transmit facilities in only 4 Territory communities. Those communities are Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Nguiu. Imparja is also required to provide 4 such sites in South Australia. Imparja is under no obligation to provide those facilities at any other location. Furthermore, I am advised that it does not plan to install such facilities in any other community within the foreseeable future. I hope this has cleared up any confusion that honourable members may have experienced.

Turning to the government's policy on financial assistance to remote communities, neither the federal nor the Northern Territory governments have any form of financial assistance available to remote communities for the transmission of the Imparja service. The federal government will help remote communities on licensing and technical matters but I am advised that this assistance is of a superficial nature. For the present, the Northern Territory government does not intend to provide direct funding to remote communities to enable them to transmit the Imparja or ABC service, as each community would require a transmitter costing approximately \$10 000 to \$30 000. I understand that the exact price depends on the size of the transmitter required to service the community involved. With conceivably over 100 communities wishing to transmit Imparja in the Territory, the financial scope of such a task would be possibly in the order of \$3m. That is certainly beyond the Territory government in today's climate of fiscal restraint.

I am advised, though, that experience in Canada and Alaska has shown that, where a community forms an association to purchase and maintain a television transmitter on a cooperative basis, this has been proven to be the most effective way of providing a satellite television service. Communities which wish to broadcast Imparja or the ABC may wish to take this option which could possibly be pursued through the avenue of the community's local council. I am also advised that individuals can obtain receiving dishes for between \$4000 and \$8000. A number of houses can then be connected by cable rather than requiring rebroadcast facilities once the signal is received on the ground.

Contract for Self-Government Promotion

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

I remind the Chief Minister that it is now more than 48 hours since I first asked him to provide some simple answers to some simple questions relating to the celebrations of 10 years of self-government. Will he now inform the House whether senior CLP members, John Hare, Graeme Lewis and Helen Galton are involved in the contract to provide public relations for those celebrations through Neilson McCarthy Hare? Is the total promotion contract worth about \$300 000? Was the contract awarded through the normal tendering process and, if not, why not? Is this another example of cronyism between the government and its friends in the CLP?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, since the Leader of the Opposition, in the years he has been in parliament, has been unable to identify any examples of cronyism, it is impossible for him to ask whether this is another example. I will confirm that this also is not an example of cronyism. I have undertaken to give the answer. Towards the end of question time today, I will give a comprehensive answer on the arrangements for the public relations and marketing campaign for statehood.

The Leader of the Opposition has been trying to beat up a storm over nothing. He is trying desperately to recover from a disastrous 2 weeks in the Assembly. I can assure him that he has got it wrong again. I will give a complete breakdown on how the contracts were arrived at and how we have worked to ensure that the work goes to local businesses and not interstate businesses.

Road Funding Scheme

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the likely impact on the Territory of the new road funding scheme outlined in last night's economic statement by the federal Treasurer?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not able to advise in specific terms the outcome of last night's mini-budget statement pertaining to roads. However, a preliminary assessment is that the federal government has pegged back its commitment to roads in 1988-89 from the current \$1250m to \$1215m and, whilst that is a cut in actual dollars of \$35m, in real terms it would represent about \$100m. That is a real concern. We are all realists and recognise that there has been a need to curtail overall spending by the federal government. It is unfortunate, however, that a consequence will be that the Northern Territory, which is still developing its road infrastructure, is to be cut short again. Honourable members would be well aware that, following last year's cutbacks, we had a very limited expenditure on new capital works in the roads program and it is quite possible that next year will be tighter still.

Another aspect of the federal Treasurer's announcement was that the previous bicentenary road development fund and the Australian land transport program fund are to be consolidated into a single new fund called the Australian Centennial Roads Development Program. I wonder if that means that the federal government is putting back the road funding system by 100 years!

Mr Bell: It means that Labor will be in government federally for another 100 years.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, I would assume that the member for MacDonnell would be most interested in some of the other features of this new, you-beaut program. Although we do not yet have specific details, we know that there is to be a new category of funding for roads defined as having national significance and high economic benefits.

Mr Bell: The Olgas Road?

Mr FINCH: Unfortunately, it does not include the Olgas Road. It does not include all those roads to the honourable member's remote communities. As far as we can determine, it does not include roads that represent economic development in respect of tourism such as the Kakadu Highway and so on. Hopefully, with a little pressure from our honourable colleagues opposite, and lobbying by all honourable members who have remote electorates, we may be able to have included in this new, you-beaut classification roads that bring significant economic benefits to the Territory. Of course, the preliminary description includes roads, which have high traffic frequency, to ports. As I mentioned the other day, the justification for this is that it will cut the time taken to transport containers to the cities by about 10 minutes, even though it may take 6 weeks to have them cleared from the terminal. I am sure that will give a great boost to the national economy. What it is doing, as far as I can see, and as we feared last year, is pushing the emphasis onto Sydney and Melbourne, providing arterial roads to and from ports and airports for the convenience of those more densely-populated areas. Certainly, this may cut travelling time by about 10 minutes but, at the same time, roads in the electorates of MacDonnell, Stuart, Arnhem, Nhulunbuy and maybe even Barkly, will be put on the back burner. As far as we can ascertain, they do not have priority in the eyes of the federal government.

What we need is a concerted effort by all honourable members to ensure that the federal government is aware of the potential for development in remote areas, and for the need to provide safe and reasonable all-weather access to all communities in the Northern Territory. Hopefully, our honourable colleagues will give some thought to this matter which is critical to the development of our road infrastructure.

#### Needle Exchange Program to Combat AIDS

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I remind him of the needle exchange program which is part of the public campaign to prevent the spread of AIDS. My question is in 2 parts. Is he aware that the aiding and abetting provisions of the Criminal Code are an obstruction to this legal exchange program? Secondly, how does he plan to amend legislation to enable the needle exchange program to continue to supply needles without that supply being treated as an offence?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in these 2 weeks of sittings, I think this is the first time that the opposition has been anything like up to the mark. After question time, I will be tabling a bill to amend the Poisons and Dangerous Drug Act. I am sure that all the points that the honourable member has asked about will be covered by that. He will have opportunity to make some input.

I am very much aware of all the impediments to trying to handle the various issues relating to the AIDS or HIV problem in Australia and, for that matter, throughout the world. This government is trying to address all of those problems in a responsible way. We are very much aware of the problems with AIDS and of the need to arm the police with sufficient legislation to enable them to combat the illegal use of drugs. As I say, I will be tabling a bill after question time.

#### Federal Lands Acquisition Bill

Mr HANRAHAN to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

I note that the federal Minister for Administrative Services, Hon Stewart West, has introduced a Lands Acquisition Bill into the federal parliament and that the legislation would have the effect of allowing the Commonwealth to set up a federal mining regime for the first time. Does he see this action as an intrusion into the rights of the states and the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is a timely question indeed. I have with me the speech which was delivered last night by Hon Stewart West on this particular issue. It is frightening as a matter that affects state rights and the rights of people in the Northern Territory. The Commonwealth government was established to look after a couple of things. Our founding fathers decided that we could trust it with the post office, the army, customs and immigration. Today, it is responsible for 177 different organisations and departments. It has an education department - with no students. It has a very large bureaucracy involved in health matters - and no patients. It would appear, from this legislation which is before the federal parliament, that it will be involved in mining.

There are some very frightening aspects of this policy, including compulsory acquisition. Clause 41 of the legislation that was tabled last evening states that compulsory acquisitions are to be authorised by the minister rather than by the Governor-General as is the current requirement. Not only can it become involved in mining, it can rip off any bit of land it wants anywhere in Australia to establish a mine. Not that it will, Mr Speaker. What we are concerned about is that it will take over all the heavily mineralised zones in Australia and stop anybody from mining them. We do not have a progressive federal government at the moment. We have a government that is out to retard mining and it has demonstrated that time and time again. Take the example of the so-called conservation zone at Kakadu on which nothing has happened. We still do not know its boundaries and Coronation Hill is still in limbo. We have had no decision on whether that mine will be allowed to proceed even though there are \$1250m worth of minerals out there, including platinum.

The minister said last night that he believed that 'the process will enable non-controversial acquisition by the Commonwealth of land in public parks to be achieved expeditiously whilst, at the same time, providing sufficient safeguards to ensure that the acquisition powers are not abused'. The Governor-General is removed from the process and the power is placed in the hands of the minister. The process is to provide protection of the states' rights and ensure that environmental and heritage issues are adequately addressed. I would like to see that happen when this Commonwealth mining legislation comes into effect.

Clause 24 relates to exploration and mining on Commonwealth land. In his speech, the minister said:

The government's policy for access to Commonwealth land for exploration and mining does not apply to national parks and Antarctica. The existing Lands Acquisition Act allows for mining and exploration on Commonwealth land. The government has accepted a set of policy principles which it believes should apply in order that a multiple land use policy may be facilitated. Mineral exploration and development on Commonwealth land will be allowed to proceed where these activities do not preclude the purpose for which the land is designated and where they comply with all relevant Commonwealth, state and territory laws and policies. The Commonwealth will acquire mineral rights only where the principal purpose for acquisition precludes mineral development.

Our founding fathers would turn in their graves today if they could see some of the powers which the Commonwealth government has decided to take on. It was set up to run the post office, defence, customs and immigration and is now involved in 177 different departments and organisations. I will be very interested tomorrow, at the Mining Ministers Conference in Adelaide, to ask Mr Kerin just how far the Commonwealth sees itself intruding on this states' rights issue. It does not have a mining act and it does not have a conservation act pertaining to the states. I believe it is an unnecessary intrusion by the Commonwealth into an area which should be dealt with solely by the states.

#### Manganese Poisoning on Groote Eylandt - Research

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I remind him that BHP announced recently that it will carry out research in relation to manganese poisoning on Groote Eylandt. Will the Northern Territory government contribute anything towards that research?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would have to seek advice on the precise details of assistance other than the services of Professor John Matthews of the Menzies School of Health Research who has been investigating the syndrome for quite some time. If the member is talking about direct financial input into it, I would need to take advice on that. I will provide the information later.

#### Cullen Bay Marina

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

This morning, I heard an announcement that the Cullen Bay Marina proposal will proceed. Is he able to give the House details about the commencement of that particular project, the proposed ferry terminal and associated developments such as housing?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. He himself was involved in working towards the development of Darwin's first marina which is awaited with great excitement by the majority of Darwin's population. A development agreement, which is virtually a contract with the developer

detailing conditions and entitlements etc, will be signed today by the government and the developer.

The marina was conceived in 1981. A number of potential sites were examined and, in 1983, Cullen Bay was identified as a most suitable site. I suppose the decision was also taken in relation to the potential development of Myilly Point. In 1985, the partners involved in the development applied to the government for land in the area. There was a necessity for rezoning under the Town Planning Act and the project was explained to the public through displays and models etc. The town planning processes of public exhibition and comment were completed in April 1986. A full environmental impact study was completed in July 1987. There was a very rigorous process of assessing the impact on the foreshores of the harbour itself and on the environment generally.

The agreement that is to be signed today outlines the responsibilities of the government. These are limited to the funding of the public facilities such as a ferry terminal and charter boat facilities. The ferry terminal was originally proposed as a stand-alone project to be located at Parliament Park but, following an approach from the developer, the government saw merit in combining it with the marina. This will also give the developer some flexibility in consolidating those water-related activities.

The government's contribution is to be \$6m in 1988 values and, for the facilities that are to be provided, we see that as excellent value. That figure is in accord with the proposal for the Parliament Park project some 3 years ago. The facilities will include a terminal building, toilets and a kiosk as well as the pontoons and wharfs etc associated with water recreation and charter boat activities. That infrastructure will be much welcomed by the people who operate ferries on Darwin harbour. At the moment, they have to contend with facilities in the harbour that are not really appropriate to their needs. Their vessels are knocked around during storms and high winds and, of course, facilities for the public are totally inadequate there at the moment. We are therefore looking forward to the next 12 months.

With a positive agreement in place, the developer will now have the opportunity to sell his proposal to potential investors and financiers and to complete the technical requirements under the contract. These include a full technical appraisal which needs to be approved by the various government authorities.

We look forward to seeing this much-needed, tourism-related facility. It could be compared with an investment like Yulara in terms of providing diversity for tourists. We have airline systems coming into place and, hopefully, a new airport terminal. We have modern hotels. As well as the obvious natural attractions of Kakadu and Litchfield parks, we need to provide other options, and we see water-based activities and fishing becoming very attractive to our overseas tourists.

Moneys Owed by Burgundy Royale

Mr TUXWORTH to TREASURER

Can he confirm whether the moneys owed to the Northern Territory government for water, power and sewerage services, and payroll and liquor taxes by Burgundy Royale or the operators of the Beaufort Hotel have been paid in full by the liquidator? If they have not, could he specify those moneys which have yet to be paid?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will give the latest information I have which dates from last week. It is my understanding that no money has changed hands at all at this stage, even for the purchase of the development itself. That would include, of course, moneys owing to the Northern Territory government for power, water and sewerage charges. As I have informed honourable members on many occasions, the Northern Territory government is well protected under the scheme of arrangements that has been entered into with the liquidator. As of last week, I understand that the principal, Westpac, has not yet got its hands on a cheque either.

Mr Tuxworth: How much was outstanding, as of last week?

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I will get a meter reading on that figure and provide it to the honourable member.

#### Northern Territory Involvement in Nuclear Fuel Cycle

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he outline the damage likely to occur to the Northern Territory's economic prospects as a result of the campaign of lies and misinformation embarked on by the Leader of the Opposition ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will withdraw that reference to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr PALMER: I withdraw the reference which you found offensive, Mr Speaker.

Will he outline the damage likely to occur in view of the obvious campaign of misinformation embarked on by the Leader of the Opposition in relation to the nuclear fuel cycle and the Northern Territory's further involvement in that cycle?

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Clearly, the question should be disallowed because it contains an opinion. The words 'obvious campaign of misinformation' clearly convey an opinion. Questions should be comprised of fact. I would ask that you seek some advice because, in my opinion, the question should be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is very easy to supply the answer to such a question, and I thank the member for Karama for asking it. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition and I will be debating the nuclear fuel cycle on talk-back radio next Monday. It will be interesting to have a forum where the people of the Northern Territory can obtain a full understanding of the Leader of the Opposition's in-depth knowledge of the nuclear fuel cycle. It is very easy to use scare tactics and phrases like 'nuclear garbage dump', as the Leader of the Opposition does from time to time.

Mr Speaker, it must be remembered that we are talking here about a proposal to create up to 15 000 jobs during construction, 5000 jobs during operation and a potential multiplier effect for 20 000 people. Then there is

this NIMBY philosophy that crops up. Of course, that stands for Not In My BackYard. Everybody says, 'What a great idea, but not in my backyard'.

Mr Ede interjecting.

Mr COULTER: Of course, it is difficult, but if we don't have the courage of our convictions and realise the opportunities in the Northern Territory to get that value-added downstream processing in place, we should not be in this Chamber. Let the people judge, but not by the tactics which are being used by the Leader of the Opposition. His use of expressions such as a 'nuclear garbage dump' does him no credit at all.

During the recent mining exposition, I was visited by Gustav Tham from Swede Power. It is interesting to note that Sweden has built its nuclear repository just offshore, underneath the sea, and on a fault line. Yet here, in one of the most geologically-stable parts of the world, we are worried. Did any buildings fall down in Tennant Creek? Was there much damage in that regard? We are talking about 5000 m down in the earth and we are worried about the artesian basin which goes down about 300 m or 400 m. That is nonsense. Let the people of the Northern Territory judge on talkback radio next Monday when the Leader of the Opposition will have the opportunity to expound his in-depth knowledge of my proposal.

The one country in the world that should be terrified of nuclear power is Japan. It suffered the horrific devastation of 2 nuclear explosions. It is the most densely-populated country in the world. There are more people there per square metre than anywhere else in the world, and it is the most geologically-unstable area in the world. It suffers earthquakes, typhoons and extremes of temperature. Nevertheless, the people in Hiroshima today enjoy electricity provided by nuclear power. Yet, in the Northern Territory, one-sixth of Australia, we are worried that we cannot find a small space on the top of the dirt to drill a hole to bury something.

Mr Speaker, that is the reason why Australia has gone backwards on world markets and why we were becoming one of the world's greatest potential banana republics: we refuse to have a go. It is easy for honourable members opposite to identify with that because, as I have said in this Chamber during debates in the last 2 weeks, they have never once created anything except trouble for the Northern Territory.

#### Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Last week, in his speech on Hungerford Refrigeration, the Treasurer stated that that company first became known as a TDZ prospect in September 1986. Was the government informed by the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority that Hungerford Refrigeration had lodged an annual return for the year ended 30 June 1986 with the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs in Queensland and that that annual return was available, as I understand it, from October 1986? Did the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority inform the government that the annual return indicated that the total liabilities of the company exceeded the assets of the company by \$185 000? How did this piece of information persuade the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority and the government to sink taxpayers' funds into the company?



ANSWER

Mr Speaker, quite clearly, the question from the Leader of the Opposition is absurd as a question without notice. I suggest that he place the question on notice. However, I remind him of a fact that he well knows. Taxpayers' funds used to assist Hungerford Refrigeration by the TDZ are totally secure. He is aware of that but he has implied in his question that somehow taxpayers' funds are committed. The honourable member is so devoid of positive initiatives for the Northern Territory that, as the Minister for Mines and Energy said, all he wants to do is dance on the grave of Hungerford Refrigeration. However, the company is not finished yet despite the best efforts of the Leader of the Opposition to nail the coffin lid down. The company may be able to get up and bite him on the ankle sooner or later. I suggest the honourable member rationalise his question into either a letter to me or a question on notice.

#### Women's Issues at Yulara

Mr SETTER to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the Yulara Corporation responded to the issues relating to living conditions for women raised in the study of women living in remote areas?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. When I raised matters relating to the Women's Advisory Council last week, I thought that the member for MacDonnell might raise this particular question because he professes a keen interest in the subject.

Mr Bell: Bring it on for debate. It is No 9 on the Notice Paper. What a wimp!

Mr DALE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable member opposite should be asked to withdraw the comment he made referring to the Chief Minister.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, my defence is truth.

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

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, I withdraw unreservedly and apologise to the Chief Minister.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I can assure the honourable member that his barbs are very blunt by the time they get across to this side of the room.

In February 1986, the Women's Advisory Council commissioned a study into the special needs of women living in remote areas of the Northern Territory, be they Aboriginal women, women living on pastoral properties, in mining towns or in tourism resorts. As part of that study, members of the Women's Advisory Council met with Yulara Corporation executives in December 1986 to discuss a range of issues relevant to women working at Yulara.

Members will recall that I tabled a remote areas report in October last year. Part of the report identified problems associated with the living conditions for some women at Yulara. These problems were associated with accommodation, the absence of child-care facilities, inadequate street

lighting and the lack of female representation on the Town Advisory Board. Recognising that adequate community services and satisfactory conditions are crucial if we are to develop a stable work force at Yulara, the NT government decided to act on the issues raised in the report.

The following measures are now in place. Improvements to staff accommodation have been made with the building of 120 one- and two-bedroom units with individual facilities and 56 of these units are now occupied. I can advise honourable members that it is the intention to go to a second stage of the development to complete the task of separating staff accommodation from the main commercial spine into what will essentially become a residential area at Yulara. The location of the residential subdivision away from the tourist thoroughfare will prevent unwelcome intrusions on staff privacy which have been an ongoing concern for staff at Yulara. A child-care facility, licensed at present to cater for 10 children, opened in November 1987. The unit employs a full-time coordinator and 2 part-time assistants. This facility will be expanded to cater for 20 children. Funds have been identified and work has commenced on the provision of underground powerlines to upgrade the street lighting. Women are participating in the decision-making processes in the Yulara community. Of the current membership of the Town Advisory Board, 2 out of 7 members are women, with 1 vacancy.

Mr Speaker, the speed with which the government has acted on these matters is indicative of our genuine concern for the needs of women, especially for those who work and live in remote areas and, obviously, that includes the important new area of Yulara.

#### Policy on M-rated Videos in Schools

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is he in a position to reply to the question I put yesterday relating to the policy on M-rated videos in schools?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I had intended to answer that question if the honourable member had not raised it during the course of this question time. There is some concern in the community that the policy of the department is being abused. In 1986, a circular was distributed to all principals. I would like to go through it because I think it is important. The following guidelines were produced to assist in relation to the screening of films and videos for student viewing:

1. the screening of films and videos during normal classroom hours should be restricted to material which has clear relevance to the school's education program;
2. prior to the showing of any film or video material, teachers should ensure that they are familiar with the content and satisfied as to its suitability for the intended purpose and audience;
3. normally, only film or video material with censorship rating of G or C should be shown to students who have not attained the age of 12 years;

4. in any case where material rated PG or PGR is to be screened for an audience of students under the age of 12 years, the prior approval of the school principal must be obtained;
5. in any case where M-rated material is to be screened, the audience should be restricted to students who are 15 years of age or over and the approval of the school principal must be obtained beforehand.
- 6A. if a principal considers it desirable to seek parental permission prior to the screening of any film or video material, parents should be advised of the purpose, title and censorship classification of the material to be screened;
- 6B. where parental permission has been sought but not obtained, students should be excluded by teachers from the classroom or area in which the video or film material is to be shown;
7. in no circumstances should material with a rating of R, X or AO be screened for student viewing.

Mr Speaker, there are 3 other points. I will just read out the final one:

10. schools seeking permission to vary these guidelines in any specific instance should address such a request to the appropriate superintendent.

Mr Speaker, I was concerned when the member for Sadadeen raised this issue because I was aware that there were instances, as I mentioned at the start of my answer, in which that policy was being abused. I have asked the Secretary of the Department of Education to recirculate the policy to ensure that teachers and principals are aware of it and that it is enforced. The government does not accept that M-rated videos should be shown willy-nilly throughout the school system. The policy is very strict and the principals are responsible for ensuring that, if there is any abuse, it is stopped immediately.

#### Policy on M-rated Videos in Schools

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will he also distribute those guidelines to school councils so that the parents may be aware of them?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have no problem in meeting that request.

#### Air-conditioning Equipment in Schools

Mr EDE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I am quite sure that he is aware that the resource centre library at Milingimbi and various offices and classrooms of a temporary nature in the education faculty at DJT are unusable because they happen to have installed Hungerford Refrigeration air-conditioning equipment which has broken down. Has his department been able to negotiate some arrangement for the repair of that air-conditioning equipment, which I believe was under warranty from

Hungerford, by some other body so that those areas can be made operational again, with the prospect of the costs being recouped from Hungerford at a later date?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, certainly, I was aware of some minor problems with the completion of the air-conditioning system at Milingimbi. I believe that those minor difficulties can be addressed and possibly, even at this stage, have been addressed by the contractor.

Mr Ede: There has been a problem at Milingimbi for 8 months.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the member for Stuart is exaggerating once again in an effort to emphasis a point and, once again, is denigrating this company.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The minister will be allowed to answer the question without a running commentary.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the technical problems with the installation at Milingimbi were not insoluble. In fact, I understand that the contractor is moving expeditiously to have them dealt with. Similar problems arise in bringing new plant into operation under many contracts. The difficulties at Milingimbi were not insoluble. The basic system is quite sound; in a technical sense, it is a fine product. I emphasise that the problems were minor. If they have not already been attended to, they will be attended to in the very near future.

#### Supplementary Questions

Mr DONDAS to SPEAKER

In prefacing my question, Mr Speaker, I wonder whether you would give the House a ruling in relation to supplementary questions. Yesterday morning, I attempted to ask the Minister for Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government a question in respect of local government within Aboriginal communities, and I clearly indicated the fact that I wanted to ask a supplementary question. I was denied that right. I intended to ask the question this morning. This morning, the member for Sadadeen was able to ask a supplementary question of the Minister for Education.

Yesterday, the minister had indicated that some resistance was being experienced from Aboriginal land councils to the setting up of local governments. My consequential question to the minister would have been: 'Is he experiencing any resistance from the federal Labor government in regard to the setting-up of local governments?' Yesterday, I considered that to be a very important supplementary question.

ANSWER

I advise honourable members that I will give the matter of supplementary questions some further consideration and advise the House at a later date. In fact, yesterday and on previous days, following some abuse of the system of using supplementary questions, I was ignoring additional questions.

Local Government Scheme

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

This follows from the question I put yesterday about the success of local government within Aboriginal communities. He advised that there was some resistance from the Northern Land Council and other Aboriginal land councils. Is he aware of any resistance from the federal Labor government in regard to the Northern Territory's policy of trying to establish local government within as many Aboriginal communities as possible.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question because it is an interesting one. All honourable members would be aware that the federal government is calling on the states to establish local government for Aboriginal people and to support local government for Aboriginal people throughout the country. Yet, we find that it is not being supported necessarily by one federal minister who recently came out in support of a call from the Northern Land Council for a 5-year moratorium on community government in the Northern Territory. I find that rather amazing. I spoke to the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and queried that matter and asked him why the community government scheme currently in existence in the Northern Territory could not be the basis for his proposal for an Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander Commission. The minister has since written back to me and indicated that the community government scheme would not be suitable for that purpose. I do not particularly see his reasoning for that.

I have written also to all state Ministers for Local Government and the federal Minister for Local Government indicating my concerns with regard to the attitude of the federal minister and the land councils to community government. I understand that, because of comments I made yesterday in this House, it is likely that today the Director of the Northern Land Council will call again for a moratorium on community government for Aboriginal people. I find that rather amazing considering that it is sought to put the ATSIC proposal in place within 6 months. Why would someone call for a moratorium of 5 years on community government for Aboriginal people when ATSIC is being thrust down the throats of Aboriginal people in less than a year? In fact, it was intended to occur within 6 months. Fortunately, that has been put back to a year. I find that absolutely outrageous.

It is obvious to me that some deal has been made between the land councils and the federal minister in this regard, and I would like to make it quite clear that the Northern Territory government will not allow for a moratorium of 5 years on community government. We are committed to local government for Aboriginal people and we are committed to the federal government's policy in this regard.

Pet Meaters and Buffalo Shoot-outs

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

If it is not appropriate for him to answer the question fully, perhaps the Minister for Lands and Housing can respond also.

Can he assure me that the interests of pet meaters will be taken into full consideration in any further shoot-outs of buffalo in the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign, and that these small businessmen will be

given first option to shoot out any area before the minister sends in his men to eradicate the species?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can assure the honourable member that it is my firm policy, which is well-known within my department, that every possible economic use of animals be exploited prior to what is termed shooting to waste. As honourable members are aware, BTEC means that a substantial number of animals in the Northern Territory must be destroyed over the next 2 to 3 years. I have directed that, wherever the government has an influence on this matter, after harvesting is done by ordinary mustering by the landowner, pet meaters are permitted to slaughter animals in the field. Also, there is an ability for landowners to negotiate with safari operators so that game hunting can take place as well on those properties where animals are to be destroyed.

The matter becomes complicated where different forms of ownership of land are involved. It is principally the private landowner who has control over animals on his land. When it comes to Crown land, the responsibility is divided between the Department of Lands and Housing, which administers all ordinary Crown land, and the Conservation Commission which administers large tracts of land that contain buffalo. Both the department and the commission have responsibility for eradicating disease from lands under their control and they primarily accept the rule. However, the Department of Industries and Development is responsible for the progress of BTEC and it liaises closely with the other authorities involved.

I can assure the honourable member that the subject of access by pet meaters to animals on Crown land has been raised with me within the last 48 hours. I have asked for a special liaison to be established between the Department of Lands and Housing, the Conservation Commission and my department in order to plan more carefully the access by various parties to Crown land to obtain benefit from these animals prior to shoot-outs being conducted. I am sure that the honourable member or the pet meaters concerned will be quick to bring to my attention any situation where they believe liaison has not taken place satisfactorily.

#### Federal Treasurer's Economic Statement

Mr FIRMIN to TREASURER

I refer to the answer given to my earlier question by the Minister for Transport and Works in which he highlighted the possible \$100m cutback for outback road funding in the Northern Territory. I presume the less populous states will suffer as much, if not more, than ourselves. Can the Treasurer advise me what restraint the Commonwealth government has shown in respect of its outlays in last night's economic statement?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, honourable members will be aware that a meeting of conservative premiers attended by the Chief Minister prior to the Premiers Conference produced some very startling information and statistical data which showed that, whilst the states had truly practised restraint, the federal government had not. Last night, we were told that the federal government was reducing its expenditure by 3%. We all know that the states suffered a cut of 4.2% at the Premiers Conference and that the Northern Territory, whose funding was reduced by 5.5%, suffered most of all. The truth is that, when we read

the fine print, we find that the Commonwealth is talking about a 3% reduction over 3 years.

Treasury officers have been working during the evening and early this morning to analyse the figures and I can inform honourable members that the Commonwealth performance in respect of its own expenditure cuts can only be described as irresponsible and totally inadequate. It has announced cuts of \$982m. However, it is clear that virtually all of these cuts can be attributed to the states and the Northern Territory. While the final numbers have not yet been clarified, it is possible that the Commonwealth has not decreased its own outlays at all. This is a disappointing result. The states and the Territory have all indicated that they are prepared to do their bit to exercise restraint for the good of the country. We had hoped and expected that the Commonwealth would do the same. It seems to me that it is 'do as I say' not 'do as I do'. That is a very disappointing result when one considers that the Commonwealth received an unexpected windfall of over \$1000m as a result of the fringe benefits tax. In terms of federal government restraint, the economic statement is very disappointing. Indeed, it is both irresponsible and totally inadequate.

#### Fire Services in Larrimah

Mr REED to CHIEF MINISTER

In April, I wrote to him on behalf of the residents of Larrimah advising that the township is without any fire protection equipment and requesting that consideration be given to providing some equipment to the town. Is he able to advise whether any equipment will be provided for use by resident volunteers in fighting fires?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for Katherine has been doing a sterling job, not only in his own electorate but in the areas surrounding his electorate, particularly to the immediate south, where Larrimah is located. On 19 April this year, the member for Katherine wrote to me seeking the provision of some firefighting equipment for the Larrimah brigade. Unfortunately, the Fire Service was unable to provide any equipment directly to the Larrimah centre because it does not come within the fire control region of the Fire Service. However, I am pleased to say that the director of the Fire Service has been able to make some arrangements. Some equipment will be available to the brigade in Larrimah by July of this year. I thank the honourable member for bringing the matter to my attention.

#### Equipment for Courses at DIT

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will he carry out an investigation into problems with the supply of equipment to some courses at the DIT? I cite specifically the journalism course where, after 18 months in the course, students still do not have such basic items as tape-recorders or facilities to undertake interviews. That is just one example. Will he investigate these problems?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will examine the matter and respond to the member for Stuart later. I might say that he has the opportunity to raise such matters during adjournment debates.

Mr COULTER (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, I ask that all further questions be place on notice.

Mr Speaker, you would be aware that yesterday the House adopted the report of the Standing Orders Committee. I ask that you recognise the Minister for Health and Community Services who wishes to be the maiden speaker under the new standing order.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
Manganese Poisoning on Groote Eylandt - Research

Mr DALE (Health and Community Services): Thank you, Mr Speaker. What an honour this is!

In response to the member for Arnhem's question regarding Northern Territory funding of research into manganese problems on Groote Eylandt, I advise that the government is not specifically funding that research. However, as I said earlier, we provide significant funding to the Menzies School of Health Research, which is involved in the research team and has had significant input. In June 1987, the department hosted a seminar in Darwin at which one of the major speakers was Professor John Court. There is another problem over on Groote Eylandt in that there are insufficient general practitioners. The people at Alyangula have a doctor available for 2½ days per week. He also services Umbakumba and Numbulwar. I have recently approved in principle, after negotiations with the Angurugu Council, the part funding of another doctor who will be spending a great deal of his time researching the manganese problem.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
Contract for Self-Government Promotion

Mr HATTON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition raised a question in respect of the 10-year self-government celebrations. He has exercised great impatience in seeking answers to that question, presumably because he is trying to beat up a storm. One of the reasons why I have taken some time to obtain the answers is the fact that I have not been directly involved in the determination of any of the contracts. I have had to seek the information from within my department.

I can advise that, several months ago, expressions of interest were called for commercial involvement in the ongoing campaign for statehood for the Northern Territory. The significance of 10 years of self-government was to be a lead into the campaign for administrative purposes. Following the consideration of various expressions of interest in respect of the statehood programs, 2 of the expressions of interest were finally selected: Mattingly Woollard Cawrse and Neilson McCarthy Hare. Those 2 organisations were requested to present a joint submission on an awareness, public relations and marketing campaign in respect of the statehood program. The government has paid them for the preparation of such a submission.

Mr Smith: How much?

Mr HATTON: I am not certain of the figure, Mr Speaker. I think it is something in the order of about \$2000, but I will not stand fixed on that figure. I have not been directly involved in the details of that particular contract and it was not related to the question asked by the the Leader of the Opposition. I have received that submission and it is being considered.



The contracts are being considered on the basis of Mattingly Woollard Cawrse performing advertising functions for the self-government celebrations. Those 2 organisations are working on the self-government celebrations whilst we are assessing their submissions in respect of the statehood program. The Protocol Unit of my department has been charged with the responsibility of overseeing the self-government celebrations as it has done in the past. I would stress that, because of the significance of attaining a decade of self-government, the 1988 celebrations will be a community program. In fact, all centres across the Northern Territory will be involved from 1 July in a wide range of events and activities. The program of promotion also involves many commercial operators, all of which are Territory based. These include Iloura Television Productions, Channel 8, Imparja Television, the NT News, community groups such as the Greek Community, sporting associations across the Northern Territory, presentations, public relations, Roka Graphics and many town and community groups. The Mattingly Woollard Cawrse and Neilson McCarthy Hare groups are also involved in the preparation of this program.

As well, several government departments have been involved in preparing information and material for the celebrations. The celebrations will involve flag-raising ceremonies, static and mobile displays in most centres, public events such as concerts, firework displays, sporting events, the planting of an avenue of trees to celebrate 10 years of self-government, a major Territory-wide schools competition - the 9 category winners of which will be attending the NT day at Expo 88 in Brisbane in October - and a number of events including a state dinner in Alice Springs on the night of 30 June and in Darwin on the evening of 1 July.

The purpose of celebrating 10 years of self-government cannot be underestimated. We need to remember the generations of Commonwealth neglect up until 1978. We need to reflect on the enormous development that has occurred in the Territory over the last decade in all aspects of Territory life and we need to look forward to a future based on the remarkable achievement of the last 10 years.

It has been 10 years of spectacular development and diversification in the Northern Territory and 10 years of work by the Territory people to build a future for themselves. During June and through to self-government day, I hope that all Territorians will stand back and reflect on the frustration, anger and feeling of impotence that we lived with when we were being governed totally by a public service in Canberra. We should remind ourselves of those frustrating years of impotence and look at what we have achieved as a community over the last 10 years. Whether people have liked some of the decisions that have been made or not, at least those decisions have been made by people elected by them and the people of the Territory have had the opportunity to make their decisions by means of a ballot box. After 10 years, it is time for us to make an effort to reflect so that we can build on that to look forward to the objective of statehood for the Northern Territory.

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