

PART II

THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 29 MAY 1979

FROM 28 NOVEMBER 1978

201 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is causing the delay in the signing of the lease agreement between V.B. Perkins & Company and the Northern Territory Port Authority, a matter which has now been in dispute for exactly 6 years?

FROM 27 FEBRUARY 1979

268 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Did the Prime Minister write to the Chief Minister during 1978 concerning the proposal by the Heritage Commission to proclaim the Alligator Rivers region as part of the National Heritage?
2. If so, on what dates?
3. Did the Chief Minister respond?
4. If so, on what dates?
5. Did the Chief Minister object to the proposal?
6. If so, on what terms?

FROM 6 MARCH 1979

312 Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Has a decision been taken on the type of vehicle which will replace the present Holden pursuit vehicles of the Traffic Branch?
2. Will these vehicles be air-conditioned?
3. Has consideration been given by the department to supplying its officers with personal sidearms instead of the current practice of officers purchasing their own sidearms?

343 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Can the minister advise the current position of the \$150,000 advanced by the NT government to V.B. Quinton?

FROM 15 MAY 1979

391 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to the NT Places Names Committee and ask the following:

1. What is the current membership of this committee?
2. How many members of this committee were actually born in the Territory?
3. How many members of this committee are of Aboriginal descent.
4. Have persons of Aboriginal descent ever been appointed to this committee?
5. How many members of this committee reside in Darwin?
6. How many members of this committee reside in Alice Springs?

7. How many members of this committee reside in other Territory centres?
8. What is the normal term of appointment to the committee?
9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the committee?

438 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Is he aware that some farmers in the Alice Springs area have received very little or no incentives from government to expand local production of fresh fruit and vegetables?
2. If so, what action will be taken by the NT government to provide incentives for those farmers in need?
3. What action can be taken by the NT government to provide adequate marketing facilities in Alice Springs for local farm produce?

441 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

How many new positions have been created in the NT Public Service since self-government, excluding compulsory transferees?

443 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. What is the length of the existing pipeline from the sewerage treatment plant at Ludmilla to the Darwin Harbour?
2. Is it intended to extend the pipeline to 800 metres as was originally specified?
3. Is there any money, allocated for this project, remaining?
4. Are tests carried out of the Ludmilla Creek and Darwin Harbour waters and, if so, how often, to measure the effect of the operation of the treatment plant?
5. What are the results of these tests?

445 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Is he aware that a market exists in Japan for chillies?
2. Will he make inquiries and obtain particulars and seeds of the desired variety and propagate the plants to enable trial crops to be planted in 1979-80?

449 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

What assistance can the NT government give the appropriate authorities to hasten the upgrading of radio, telephone and television services for all Territorians?

450 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware that approximately 30,000 Territorians are deprived of local news, weather forecasts and special programs designed for outback Territorians because the ABC and Telecom have fallen down on their jobs of providing these services?

451 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware that adequate radio reception could be afforded to the whole of the Territory by the provision of approximately \$700,000 to supply and upgrade transmitters?

455 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

What is being done to help make Aboriginal communities such as Roper River self-sufficient in -

(a) beef;

(b) fresh vegetables and fruit, such as pawpaw, banana, etc; and

(c) fish?

456 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Realising that bread was baked in most communities in the past, could this and other similar ventures be revived to help make Aboriginal communities self-sufficient and provide employment?

457 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is the present police station to be shifted from Roper Bar to the Roper River Aboriginal community?

If so, is this with the approval of the Aboriginals?

Is this with the approval of the general community, who view the present position as strategic in that it controls the crossing of the Roper River?

Is there justification for this move when there are so many singleman stations needing reinforcement - such as Mataranka?

Will the Police Department consider using an auxiliary force of Aboriginals chosen by their communities to preserve law and order?

458 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

When will Aboriginals use the motel they purchased in Katherine as a hostel instead of using hospital beds for overnight accommodation when requiring X-rays, etc?

459 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Are pension and other cheques collected by Aboriginal Associations instead of personally by the recipients?

Will identification be provided to enable Aboriginals to be identified when collecting their mail?

461 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it envisaged that the Donkey Camp will satisfy Katherine's requirements for soft water for all time, or is this proposal part of an undisclosed plan by the Northern Territory government to provide water for irrigation, hydro-electric power and drinking?

463 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

When does the contract of the Public Service Commissioner expire?

465 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware of the problems being caused in Katherine and other centres by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs policy of regulating the use of social service cheques to promote separate sales outlets for the purchase of supplies by Aborigines and, if so, will he ask the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to allow Aborigines to choose where they spend their money?

466 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Will he ascertain from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs who authorised the Yulnyu Association to collect social security cheques from Aborigines at Djembere (Duck Creek), the deduction of amounts necessary to pay for goods purchased on their behalf by the Baruwai Association and the payment of the balance to the Aborigines concerned?

467 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Does the travelling allowance of \$22.50 per day paid to employees under NT Public Service Bylaw 37(3) represent the amount they are expected to pay for other than motel or hotel accommodation and, if so, are employees instructed to offer this amount to their hosts at stations, Aboriginal communities or "flying camps"?

468 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is the proposal to take water from the Donkey Camp at Katherine designed only to overcome the problem of mineralised water or is it part of a larger scheme to provide water for irrigation and hydro-electric power?

469 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to the hundred or so caravans parked during the wet season at Katherine in schools grounds, at the Health Department, around shops and on industrial blocks and ask: is it the government's intention to allow this practice to continue or will the government force the owners of the vans to use the licensed caravan parks in the town?

471 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Does the NT government recognise the inadequacy of the sitting fee of \$10 per hour for members of the Town Planning Board when the board travels to towns such as Katherine where it may only sit for one hour during a round trip that may take 12 hours?
2. Does it also recognise that the case is exacerbated when the board goes on to Tennant Creek from Katherine thereby entailing a further lengthy travelling period?
3. Does the Minister expect to retain competent members with the requisite abilities to complete their tasks on this level of remuneration?
4. Is it the intention of the Minister to have the meal allowance of \$2.50 increased now that steak costs \$7.00 per kilogram?

474 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Is it a fact that shortage of serviced land in Katherine is preventing the provision of sufficient housing for the 20-odd people on the Housing Commission list?
2. Does the NT government have plans for providing Katherine with a satellite development area as it has for Darwin?
3. Will 5 and 10 acre blocks be available in the Katherine area in 1979?

476 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

On what basis are Housing Commission dwellings in Nhulunbuy being allocated?

480 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. What arrangements are being made to ensure that noise from the operation of the new government printery on the Stuart Highway at Parap will not disturb local residents?
2. What hours is it anticipated that the printery will operate?
3. Is a generator provided at the establishment and, if so, will it be operating full time or for emergencies only?
4. What arrangements have been made to ensure that the noise of the generator does not disturb local residents?

481 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What are the circumstances at Urapunga Station during Easter when an Aboriginal ceremony was interrupted by a tribesman innocently fishing from a dinghy fitted with an outboard motor?
2. In what manner did the Aborigines act towards the fisherman and in what way did they request the fisherman to depart?
3. Was damage caused to the boat and equipment and will prosecutions result?
4. Was the site of the fracas on a pastoral lease adjoining a river, or on a reserve?

483 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Will the Aboriginal community at Duck Creek (Djembore) be connected to the power supply from Mataranka power station?
2. If so, who will guarantee to pay Elecom the costs of line erection, maintenance and power used?

487 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Will the decision to build all houses at ground level affect Katherine which is flood prone and cyclone free?

488 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many adults currently live on each of the Aboriginal settlements and missions in the Northern Territory?
2. How many adults are currently employed on each of the Aboriginal settlements and missions in the Northern Territory?
3. How many adults are currently in receipt of unemployment benefits on each of the Aboriginal settlements and missions in the Northern Territory?
4. How often are updated statistics collected on the above questions?

489 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is it a fact that 14 meat exporters have requested information on service facilities to kill and process beef in the Northern Territory as stated by the Secretary of the Cattlemen's Union of Australia, Katherine Branch, at an industry meeting in Katherine on Saturday 28 April 1979?

490 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

In view of the obvious requirement for processing facilities for beef owned by interests other than meatworks licensees, will he make funds available to enable interested parties to supply this requirement?

491 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is it a fact that the manager of Katherine meatworks indicated that his facilities would not be available for use as service works to kill and process cattle for outside interests?

492 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. How much has been spent by the NT government on the experimental cropping program in the Katherine and Daly River area?
2. What is the amount received by the NT government by way of sales of the crops?
3. Has an analysis been made of the cropping program?
4. If so, what are the results?

493 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. What equipment has been installed in the Alice Springs abattoir to overcome noxious smells from the abattoir?
2. What is the capital cost and installation cost?
3. Does the equipment comply with Department of Health requirements?
4. Does the equipment comply with Department of Industrial Development requirements?
5. What is causing the smell emanating from the vicinity of the abattoirs?
6. What steps have been taken to date to eradicate the smell?

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 29 MAY 1979

7. Why was the Alice Springs abattoir allowed to be built so close to residential land?

8. What would be the cost of re-siting the abattoirs?

FROM 22 MAY 1979

524 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is it a fact that the Brands Register has been awaiting publication for 3 years?

525 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Does freeze-dried beef come under special beef imports when sent to Japan, thus attracting no quota?

526 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is there need for service facilities for local consumption at licensed abattoirs, and service facilities for export at export meatworks?

527 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

(a) Will he investigate the complaint by Mr R.N. Thompson of lot 1198, Fuller Crescent, Katherine, that late reading of his watermeter put him into a higher category for excess water charges?

(b) Will he endeavour to ensure that all watermeters are read by 30 June each year?

528 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

(a) Do local residents receive priority in the allocation of pensioner units?

(b) Do pensioners benefit from the same considerations (such as zone allowance) as public servants?

(c) How much has been allocated to the Old Pioneers Home at Katherine over the last 10 years?

529 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will he investigate why an officer of the Education Department who performed her duties for almost 4 years in the Katherine office was replaced by another applicant for the position?

530 Mr MacFARLANE to TREASURER

What steps does the government take to pay its bill when unfortunate computer breakdowns or human errors cause embarrassment to its creditors?

531 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Does the Department of Primary Industry have a program of field days and like functions to assist in disseminating knowledge to farms and pastoralists?

(b) If there is a program, can it be made public?

(c) What field days or encouragement groups are planned for small farmers with interests in pigs, goats, poultry, small farming machinery,

vegetable growing, flower production, fruit tree growing and horticultural pests?

- (d) If there is no program of field days to assist primary producers, why not?

532 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) Can he supply information regarding the Pioneer Cropping Scheme?
- (b) What provisions have been made to receive these crops?
- (c) What policy or procedure has been provided to market, or assist in the marketing of these crops?

533 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he allocate funds for the provision of a domestic satellite to ensure outback Territorians get reasonable radio, telephone and television reception?

534 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Will he investigate whether a dam above the thirteenth level at Katherine Gorge would enable more "flood prone" land to be used for industrial, commercial and residential purposes in Katherine?

566 Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many (a) pistols, (b) high powered firearms are currently licensed in the Northern Territory?
2. How many firearms have been registered in each of the past 2 years?
3. How many firearms does the Registrar of Firearms estimate are currently owned in the Northern Territory?
4. How many deaths, violent or otherwise, have occurred involving firearms in each of the past 2 years including the current year to date?
5. How many injuries involving firearms, violent or otherwise, have occurred in each of the past 2 years, including the current year to date?

586 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Has the Northern Territory Electricity Commission considered damming Katherine Gorge for hydro-electric purposes and, if so, what conclusions were reached?
2. What are the projected electricity requirements of the area which could be served with power from the gorge and for how long would a hydro-electric scheme be able to cater for those needs?

587 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) What measures are intended to control or eradicate noxious weeds such as parkinsonia, mimosa, salvinia, water hyacinth and many others in the Territory?
- (b) Is it a fact that mimosa was virtually eradicated in the NT when the program was stopped?

- (c) Is it a fact that the Department of Primary Industry has only one weeds agronomist who has 2, possibly 3, assistants?

588 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Does he accept the fact that it is a responsibility of his department to maintain information on Territory meat exports and, if so, is it not also the responsibility of his department to investigate allegations made by members of the Legislative Assembly about processors and exporters engaging in practices detrimental to Territory producers and to take steps to protect the interests of those producers?

589 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

What efforts has he made to interest meat processors in training and employing local labour in all facets of meatworks operations?

590 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Will he set up an authority to enable regular consultations between meat processors and producers to take place for the benefit of the Territory cattle industry as a whole?

591 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware of the concern of cattlemen that cattle weigh heavier and yield higher after arduous transport by road and rail to the eastern seaboard than they weigh at Katherine, and that the difference more than pays the higher freight costs and, if so, what does he propose to do about it?

592 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

- (a) Is he aware of allegations that 100 caravans are being used outside caravan parks in Katherine?
- (b) Does the Northern Territory government concede that with no serviced land available this practice is justified?
- (c) Will the government concede that with flood mitigation action above the Katherine Gorge much land in and around Katherine now labelled "flood prone" could be utilised for residential and commercial use?

593 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) Is he satisfied that the special export quota granted to William Angliss as operator of a North Australian export works has been used as intended by the Australian Meat Board?
- (b) How did William Angliss use the special export quota of 2,000 tons during the closure of the company's Darwin works?
- (c) Was this quota used for Vestey cattle going through other service meatworks?

594 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) What action is the government taking to protect beef producers against arbitrary trim for fat and bruising?

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 29 MAY 1979

- (b) What action is the government taking to ensure beef producers' interests are protected by the installation of electronic scales at all NT killing facilities?

595 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Has the Northern Territory government investigated the desirability of trading beef with South-East Asian countries for petroleum, fertilizer and timber and, if so, with what result?

596 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Has his department investigated the use of tender stretch or similar tenderising processes or will the Darwin housewife have to rely on imported beef for tender beef?
2. Has any effort been made to ensure chefs, cooks and housewives are educated in choosing suitable beef for particular cooking processes?

597 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Will the Northern Territory government issue an indicative price as a guide to producers desirous of getting top prices for their beef?

598 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

- (a) What is the AMIEU view on the proposition for 2 shifts to operate meatworks?
- (b) Does he know if the processors believe that the provision of extra freezing and chilling space would be justified?

599 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

How can the wide price difference paid for cattle in South Australia and the Top End be justified when the end product is sold at the same price to the consumer on the US market?

600 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

- (a) When will the road to Edith Falls be in suitable condition for use by conventional vehicles, including tourist coaches?
- (b) Has he plans to seal this road?

601 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What assistance is the Northern Territory government providing to Mount Isa Mines to enable it to overcome its problem with the ore body at MacArthur River?

FROM 29 MAY 1979

602 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. Has a form recently been introduced at Darwin Hospital which requires a husband of a married woman seeking an abortion to sign a statement indicating his consent?
2. Was the form drafted by the Attorney-General's Department?

3. Is there any legal necessity for a husband's consent to be obtained before a married woman can obtain an abortion in the NT? If so, please provide details?
4. If the answer to 3. is yes, why has such consent in writing not been obtained previously?
5. If the answer to 3. is no, why is such consent now required?
6. Is the husband's consent required either by the hospital, or in law, or both, in the case of a married woman living separately from her husband?

692 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Could the Minister provide accurate figures on crop development programs at Katherine and Upper Adelaide River Experimental Farm?
2. Were they a success?

630 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

It was reported in the Adelaide "News" on Monday 30 April 1979, that a Mrs Kathy Strehlow "had been appointed a special adviser to the Northern Territory on Aboriginal land rights".

- (a) Is this report true?
- (b) If so, when was Mrs Strehlow appointed to the position of special adviser on Aboriginal land rights and for what period of time will the appointment be effective?
- (c) What salary or fees will be provided for Mrs Strehlow during her appointment?
- (d) What specific qualifications does Mrs Strehlow have to fulfil such a position?
- (e) What will be her duties and responsibilities in this position?
- (f) Given that competent advisers on Aboriginal land rights already exist locally in Aboriginal communities, organisations and in the Chief Minister's Department, why was Mrs Strehlow appointed?

631 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- (a) Is he aware that a carton of canned beer costs \$19.50 at Top Springs and a can retails at \$1?
- (b) As the freight per carton is 50¢ will he have, what appears to be a case of exorbitant charging, investigated by the Consumer Affairs Council?

632 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

- (a) Is it a fact that apprentices joining NT government departments are denied accommodation subsidy?
- (b) As full board at Katherine Hostel is \$53 and a first year apprentice's pay is \$80, leaving a youth only \$27 to live on for seven days, will he take the matter up with the Public Service Commissioner to ensure

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 29 MAY 1979

that outback apprentices are not discriminated against?

633 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- (a) Is he aware that his government is threatening legal action against the Girl Guides Association of Katherine to recover \$123 owing for water rates - water account No. 501.71?
- (b) Does he intend to investigate the reason why such a fine self-help body is reluctant to pay this account?

634 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

- 1. Has the Valuer-General valued the house at lot 3540 Basedow Street, Fannie Bay, which was purchased by the Northern Territory government for the interim manager of the Territory Insurance Office?
- 2. If so, on what date was the valuation made?

659 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

What improved market information will become available to Northern Territory cattle producers following the Bureau of Agricultural Economics report on beef price stabilization?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

90 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Why is the content of fluoride in the water at Katherine higher than that as recommended by the Department of Health?

ANSWER

The fluoride content of the Katherine water supply is in fact quite low and is normally of the order of 0.1 milligrams per litre (or parts per million). In such cases the Department of Health supports fluoridation of a water supply to raise the fluoride content to levels which have been proved to reduce very significantly the incidence of dental caries.

200 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. Why have the Construction Safety Act and Regulations not yet been given a commencing date?

2. When is the Act likely to come into effect?

ANSWER

It has come to my attention that this question has been outstanding since 27 November 1978 and I apologise to the honourable Leader of the Opposition for this oversight. He will no doubt be aware the Construction Safety Act came into operation and the Construction Safety Regulations took effect on 29 December 1978.

228 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will he advise what is the policy of his government on the future development of Alice Springs Community College?

ANSWER

The Alice Springs Community College, as a corporate part of the Darwin Community College, will continue to provide a range of vocational and non-vocational courses for Central Australia.

Through its involvement in the newly constituted Training Resources Co-ordination Committee of the Further Education Council, the college will be able to participate in the provision of a range of post-school activities within the Alice Springs region.

The college is making submissions as to funding and administration. These submissions are under detailed examination at present by the government.

256 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will he advise what is the policy of the NT government on the future of Aboriginal residential colleges in the Territory?

Will Yirara Aboriginal College at Alice Springs be funded and supported as a residential college by the NT government when responsibility for Education is transferred in 1979?

If so, will Yirara College be funded adequately to continue its educational and residential program for young Aboriginal students?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ANSWER

1. The Northern Territory government intends to continue the present policy for Aboriginal residential colleges. The colleges will continue to provide courses and support for Aboriginal children who desire to attend senior high schools. These children will continue to complete a transition year at year seven. The colleges will also provide post-primary courses for students who attend small schools where there are no post-primary facilities.
2. It is the intention of the Northern Territory government to fund the colleges as they are currently being funded. As the honourable member may be aware, the 1979-80 budget will be the base line for funding education in the future.
3. The government will do all it can to ensure that adequate funds will be available for Yirara College.

260 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for HEALTH

As grave concern is felt that general practitioners in private practice in Katherine will not be able to compete with the Northern Territory Department of Health after 1 January 1979, will the Minister reassure private practitioners that they will be able to compete?

ANSWER

The concern felt by general practitioners in Katherine is not understood and I hasten to reassure the honourable member that I am not aware of anything in the changeover of the Health Department from Commonwealth to Northern Territory control which should cause any disquiet to general practitioners.

266 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Can the Katherine district office of the Department of Social Security issue cheques in an emergency?

ANSWER

Matters relating to the internal functions of the Commonwealth Department of Social Security are not encompassed by my area of responsibility. However, it is in deference to my honourable colleague that I provide the following information.

At present the Katherine District Office of the Department of Social Security is not able to issue cheques in an emergency. If an eligible person is entitled to a payment and the situation warrants a counter cheque, this can be issued in Darwin on telephone advice, arriving in Katherine by the next mail.

It is hoped that by the end of the current financial year decentralisation plans presently in hand will make possible payment of counter cheques at the Katherine District Office of the Department of Social Security.

275 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

What assistance or encouragement is being given to production of stock feed for horses, cattle, pigs and poultry in the Territory?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ANSWER

The government provides assistance and encouragement in the production and use of stock feed in the Northern Territory. The division of the Primary Industry monitors the industry structure and its operations including the feed components used, their origin and the amount of feed demanded for the different species of livestock. Regular checks and research on the nutritional value of stock feeds are carried out so that extension advice can be given on the most economic supplements, food stuffs and ration mixtures.

In addition, a development program to encourage the production of crops is being promoted by the government. One of the objectives of this program is to develop a cheaper and more regular local supply of crop and pasture products which are used for the manufacture of stock feeds.

278 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. What is the establishment of -

(a) the Animal Industry; and

(b) the Agriculture,

sections of the Primary Industry Division?

2. Where are the various officers stationed?

3. How many of these officers are involved on field work?

ANSWER

1. The Division of Primary Industry has the following establishment for its several branches:

Animal Production	86
Animal Health	79
Agriculture	42
Scientific Services	32
Administration	27

2. Employees are stationed at Darwin, Berrimah, Katherine, Elliott, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Coastal Plains Research Station, Upper Adelaide River Experiment Station, Douglas Daly Experiment Station, Kidman Springs, Brunette Downs, Timber Creek, Avon Downs and Anthony's Lagoon.

3. With the exception of the clerical/administrative staff and senior executives, all technical, professional and industrial staff are involved in field work at some time.

279 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

What was the cost of operation during the past 5 years of each of the research stations and experiment farms in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The accounting system of the former Department of the Northern Territory did not provide for the positive identification of expenditure incurred in operating individual experiment farms/stations. I regret therefore

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

that I am unable to provide the information sought. However as the honourable member's question does highlight an inadequacy, my department is examining ways and means to introduce a system that will permit the maintenance of such records.

283 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is it a fact that all the saltpans in the Northern Territory are on Aboriginal land?

ANSWER

This matter falls within the area of responsibility of my colleague, the Minister for Lands and Housing.

Mr Perron advises me that he assumes that the question refers to naturally occurring saltpans.

If so, the short answer is no.

He has also provided the following additional information -

1. The largest deposits of salt are to be found in an area of approximately 920 km² of vacant Crown Land located in Limmen Bight in the Gulf District. An official traditional Aboriginal land claim has been registered over the area.
2. A small number of saltpans are known to exist on pastoral leases throughout the Territory; the most extensively harvested pan, particularly earlier this century, being located on Manangoora Station which is also located in the Gulf District.
3. It should be noted, however, that the salt harvesting from this saltpan could not be regarded as an economically viable operation, and is in fact utilised as a supplementary income by the lessee.

288 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Have tests been carried out to measure the noise levels caused by traffic on Bagot Road?
2. If so, what are the results of those tests, and how do they compare with recognised standards for acceptable noise levels?
3. Have tests been carried out to measure the noise levels caused by aircraft in the Ludmilla area?
4. If so, what are the results of those tests, and how do they compare with recognised standards for acceptable noise levels?

ANSWER

The government has not conducted any testing to measure traffic noise levels along Bagot Road. It is considered, however, that these levels would be in the same range as those experienced in similar traffic situations elsewhere.

Levels of noise originating from aircraft operations are assessed by the Commonwealth Department of Transport who regularly publish their determinations, copies of which are available from the Airport Director, Darwin.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

342 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is it a fact that he has written to the Prime Minister requesting the transfer of the Aboriginal housing function to the NT government?
2. If this is the case, has the Prime Minister replied and what are the terms of his reply?

ANSWER

1. Yes, I have written to the Prime Minister about the further transfer of state-type functions from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to the Northern Territory government: housing is one such function.
2. Yes, the Prime Minister has replied. The Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments have agreed to set up a working party to examine the transfer of such function.

362 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

How much has been spent by the NT government on advertising promotion for the Government Insurance Office and the charges and benefits of the new compulsory third party scheme announced on Monday 5 February 1979?

ANSWER

An amount of \$1,669.78 was expended on the printing of an explanatory brochure on the Government Insurance Office; in addition, \$1,272.90 was spent on newspaper advertisements associated with the proposal.

363 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Is he aware that some parents have expressed a need for suitable bus shelters to be established around Alice Springs for school children?
2. Has consideration been given by the Department of Education to the provision of suitable bus shelters?
3. Will bus shelters be provided for school children in the Alice Springs area?

ANSWER

1. The Northern Territory Division of the Department of Education advises that they have not received any requests for the provision of bus shelters for the school children in Alice Springs.
2. As a result of the answer to question 1., the answer is obviously "No".
3. Until such time as a need worthy of such a massive commitment of taxpayers' money can be justified, for a maximum of 10 minutes per day, the government will spend its educational resources in more appropriate ways.

364 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is it a fact that the display of material that is racist in the Northern Territory does not constitute an unlawful act of racial discrimination within the terms of Racial Discrimination Act 1975?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

2. Is it a fact that when Australia ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination it did not declare as offences punishable by law the dissemination of ideas of racial superiority or racial hatred?
3. What action, if any, will be taken by the NT government to encourage the Federal government to change the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 to enable firm action to be taken in respect of people who propagate racist views which are aimed at or have the result of dividing the community on racial or ethnic grounds in the NT?
4. Will the NT government legislate to deal with racism or racial discrimination specifically occurring with the NT?

ANSWER

Parts 1 and 2 - see Standing Orders Nos. 91 and 93.

Parts 3 and 4 - this government does not believe that further legislation on the subject of racial discrimination will in itself cure any problem. It is more properly a matter for better education and understanding by people. This government will actively encourage and promote such education and understanding. The matter is kept under constant consideration and while the government has no present proposals for legislation in this field, if legislative actions were considered necessary by the government, necessary proposals would be developed.

365 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is Mrs June Tapp of Killarney Station subsidised by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to advise Aboriginals on community works?
2. If so, when was Mrs Tapp appointed to this position and what is the amount of subsidy paid per annum?
3. What amount has she received since her employment to advise Aboriginals?
4. What are her duties and responsibilities in this position and to whom is she responsible?
5. Has she provided regular reports to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs on her work since she became subsidised?
6. Is the subsidy likely to continue indefinitely?

ANSWER

See Standing Order No. 91.

366 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Will the remainder of the road into Standley Chasm be sealed and bitumenized?
2. If so, when?

ANSWER

1. It is the intention of the government to seal all of the access road into Standley Chasm.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

2. A preliminary design for the remaining section has been discussed with the Central Land Council. Until their consent to the location and clearances from Australian government and Northern Territory Environmental Authorities have been received, the project cannot be firmly committed to the Works Program.

367 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Have detailed studies been carried out on the suitability of the Todd River site north of the Old Telegraph Station as a recreational lake for Alice Springs?
2. If so, what are the results?
3. What advantages does this site have over other locations?
4. Have environmental impact studies been carried out on this site?
5. If so, what are the results?
6. What is the estimated cost of the recreational lake itself?
7. What other recreational facilities will be provided at the recreational lake?
8. What is the estimated cost of these facilities?
9. What specific employment opportunities can be provided with the establishment of a recreational lake?

ANSWER

1. Preliminary studies of the Todd River dam site were carried out in the 1960's. These included topographic surveys, geological and hydrological investigations and estimates of possible siltation in the storage area. As these studies are not sufficient to establish the suitability of the site, further detailed investigations are being made now. These include more detailed hydrological and geological work, and studies of the catchment area and sediment transport characteristics of the river.
2. The present studies will need to be completed before results can be determined. Completion of a preliminary design, cost estimates and environmental studies will also be required before the final suitability can be evaluated. No decision has yet been made to go ahead with development at this site.
3. The advantages are that the site will provide a suitable body of water quite close to the town of Alice Springs, and it would complement the attractions of the adjacent Old Telegraph Station Reserve. The stored water would provide a reserve emergency supply for the town if the need ever arose. While Todd River would provide an acceptable area of water surface for recreational purposes, other possible sites are larger, but are at a considerable distance out of town.
4. Not as yet.
5. Not relevant.
6. No estimates will be available until investigations have advanced further.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

7. Not yet decided. At the least there would be expected to be picnic facilities, toilets and a boat launching ramp.
8. Not yet estimated.
9. During the construction phase there would be employment for a varying size workforce for possibly a year. It is difficult to be more specific as the final dam size and method of construction have not yet been determined. On completion there would need to be supervision by a ranger, and occasional opportunities would depend on what facilities and concessions were provided.

368 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer to the Federal government's proposal to tax royalties paid to Aboriginals from mining development in the NT and ask:

1. Will mining royalties paid to Aboriginal land owners in the NT be taxed 32¢ out of each \$5?
2. If so, why?
3. Is it a fact that State or Territory government mining royalties are not taxed by Federal government?
4. Will mining royalties which are paid to Aboriginal Land Councils be used for non-profit community advancement projects?
5. If so, why are royalties for non-profit community development being taxed?

ANSWER

See Standing Order No. 91. If the honourable member wishes an answer to this question he should refer it to the Commonwealth Commissioner of Taxation.

437 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Given that the complementary Aboriginal land rights legislation was passed through the Assembly last year and assented to early this year, what steps, if any, have been taken to establish the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority in the Territory?

What action, if any, has been taken by the NT government to record and protect Aboriginal sacred sites in the Territory?

ANSWER

While the complementary legislation in respect of Aboriginal sacred sites has been passed and assented to it has not yet been commenced. The reason for the delay is that there needed to be an agreement between the NT government and the Commonwealth government as to the funding necessary for the administration and application of this legislation. You will be aware that the operational costs of appointing members to the authority, arranging for meetings, employment of staff and provision of equipment represents a considerable cost and at a later date this may well be escalated by the need to provide physical protection of sites which are registered and also the need to pay compensation to land owners on whose properties sacred sites may exist. Agreement has now been reached on these financial arrangements and steps are now being taken to commence

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

the Act. This will involve seeking nominations for 7 members by the Land Councils, consideration of the appointment of 4 other members from disciplines approved by the Administrator and the appointment of a director by the authority who will be the twelfth member of the authority.

The recording of sites in the NT will be the responsibility of the authority to be set up under the legislation although some work has already been done on this by the NT Museums and Art Galleries Board and this data no doubt will be of great benefit to the authority.

439 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Is he aware that in the NT there appears to be inadequate control over the dumping of extremely dangerous chemicals and industrial waste in municipal tips?
2. If so, what action does he propose to take to remedy this situation?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are difficulties in controlling the dumping of noxious materials.

The Darwin City Council, in particular, has examined the possibility of creating a special dump, to cater for these materials.

Because of the high cost of developing and maintaining the facility, a substantial charge would need to be imposed on those using the dump and this could deter potential users.

A committee comprised of departmental and corporation of the City of Darwin representatives met in July 1977 to examine the need for particular treatment of noxious wastes in the Territory.

Since that time, an officer of the Water Division of the Department of Transport and Works has been involved with this problem through his membership of the Australian Environmental Council National Advisory Committee on Chemicals.

I now propose that a committee be reformed to examine the problem in the context of information which may have come to light since July 1977.

440 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Have six employees at Mt Wells Battery received letters advising them that they must relinquish prospecting licences which they hold in the area or lose their jobs at Mt Wells?

If this is a fact, is it intended to take similar action with regard to other public servants who hold prospecting licences?

ANSWER

In the past, it has been common practice for employees of government batteries to engage in mineral prospecting during their spare time and to obtain mining tenements near their places of employment. In most cases, staff have taken up such mining tenements as an off-duty hobby.

However, mining leases and prospecting areas carry obligations that they be worked on every working day, unless exemption has been granted for a specific period.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

My department extends a lenient attitude in respect of bona fide small prospectors and allowances are made for the limited financial resources which they have to fulfil working conditions. This concession could not be supported in the case of a full-time government employee.

In some states, Mines departments require prospective employees to divest themselves of any interests they hold in mining tenements, while in other states the Mining Act strictly prohibits employees of Mines departments from holding any mining interests whatsoever.

After careful consideration, my department decided that members of its staff would not be permitted to continue to hold any interests in mining tenements and would not be supported in any future application for exploration or mining titles whilst remaining members of the staff. Employees have been allowed until 30 June 1979 to dispose of their mining interests, if they wish to remain with the department.

I am unaware of any implications for other public servants.

442 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Was the cattle turnoff for 1978, 290,000 head as stated by him on Thursday 1 March 1979 or 306, 162 head as stated in the Katherine Rural Review, March 1979 issue?

ANSWER

Recently completed statistics show the total turn-off (excluding inter-station and interdistrict turn-off) as 306,794 head.

The turn-off by destination was -

Interstate	180,312	head
Overseas	13,231	head
Territory abattoirs	113,251	head.

444 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Does he intend to have a review or "post mortem" of the 1978-79 cropping program with as many as possible of the people who attended the meeting in 1978 present?
2. Could this become an agricultural advisory body, or will the Minister rely on expert advice from his own department?

ANSWER

1. The government's Cropping Development Scheme has been under constant review during the 1978-79 season by the joint producer/government Cropping Development Committee. A public meeting will be held to examine results.
2. The Cropping Development Committee will advise the government on agricultural matters as will also my department.

446 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Will his department cooperate fully with the Katherine Rural Education Centre by supplying expert and specialist lecturers and demonstrators (such as Mr Peter Flanigan for corrective horse shoeing) whenever possible?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ANSWER

In consultation with my colleague the Minister for Community Development, I have agreed that my department will cooperate with the Katherine Rural Education Centre by allowing staff to act as lecturers/demonstrators whenever possible. I should point out however that the decision to assist in that way must remain a personal one for the staff concerned and that the centre's activities cannot be given priority over departmental essential functions and responsibilities.

447 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

What were the facts of the allegations made by the member for Stuart that the Alice Springs meatworks had acted improperly with regard to its export quota for beef?

ANSWER

Statements by members of the Legislative Assembly are their own responsibility. I am advised that information on exports of meat are supplied on a confidential basis by exporters to the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation.

448 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Realising the value of exports to markets other than the US for beef, does the loss of the Israeli requirement for boned forequarters of beef killed according to Jewish ritual to the Cairns Meat Export Company indicate disinterest on the part of the NT government or the need for a service meatworks to handle Kosher and Hallal kills?

ANSWER

I do not view the fact that the Cairns abattoir has negotiated a contract with Israel for Kosher slaughtered beef as an indication of disinterest by this government in locating similar markets for Territory beef. The plain fact is that through our 2 trade missions additional beef market opportunities have been identified for our producers. Happily it is clear that Australian producers as a whole have moved from a position of "depressed" to "selective" sellers and that this situation should remain for the next few years.

452 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Is he aware of available cargo space on jumbo jets travelling weekly from Darwin to Singapore?
2. Will he investigate the practicability of filling this space with beef, which seems to have a ready market in Singapore?

ANSWER

1. Yes. Cargo space for 16 tonnes capacity is available one day a week on Qantas and cost of freight is 38¢/kg for cargo over 2,000 kg. Investigation reveals this method of export was last used in 1978 when 2 shipments from a local abattoir were flown from Darwin to Singapore and subsequently trans-shipped to Kuala Lumpur.
2. Trans-shipment via Singapore creates 3 major problems which are obvious deterrents to use of this outlet -

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

- strict quarantine controls apply in exporting of beef of foreign origin ex Singapore;
- air freight rates are prohibitive, e.g. 57¢/kg Singapore to Kuala Lumpur;
- lack of adequate freezer-coolroom facilities in Singapore.

3. An office has been established in Singapore by the Australian Meat and livestock Corporation and a liaison has been established with this authority. Additionally, the "Export Now" campaign launched recently by the Australian government and endorsed by all state governments is available as an avenue through which enquiries regarding potential export opportunities may be channelled.

453 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is anything being done to send beef from Darwin to Hong Kong on Cathay Pacific flights?

ANSWER

No beef has been sent to Hong Kong via Cathay Pacific, although information on the cost and quarantine restrictions is readily available at the company office in Darwin.

Further detail on export of beef by air has been supplied in answer to your question 452 of 2 April 1979.

454 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is it possible to produce coffee and cocoa commercially in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The government has no information from either experimental or commercial crops which would enable it to provide a definitive statement on the economic prospects for coffee and cocoa production in the Northern Territory. Both crops have a high labour requirement and this may make their commercial development unattractive.

The government is not conducting any research and development projects on these crops at the present time and has no intention of commencing any in the near future.

460 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Will the Northern Territory government set up an inquiry under the Inquiries Act into beef industry in the Territory with particular emphasis on the following:

1. alleged irregularities in regard to export quotas of the Alice Springs meatworks mentioned by the member for Stuart;
2. excessive profits made by Hooker Corporation Limited as quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald on 28 February 1979;
3. value of credit entitlements as contained in the Ed Souery prospectus for the Tennant Creek meatworks;

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

4. use of special export quota for North Australian meatworks granted to William Angliss and Company;
5. provision of service facilities for local consumption at licensed abattoirs and service facilities for export at export meatworks;
6. arbitrary trim for fat and bruising;
7. installation of electronic scales;
8. variation in yields between various killing facilities;
9. use of local labour;
10. participation by producers and producer organisations with the government agencies and the processors;
11. wide differences in prices paid to the producer in various parts of the Northern Territory for cattle destined for marketing to consumers paying comparable prices;
12. more efficient use of killing facilities;
13. publication of an indicative price;
14. methods of tenderising or making beef more attractive to consumers;
15. marketing methods to promote the sale of beef;
16. why is it more economical for Vestey's to shift their cattle to Queensland than to re-open their Darwin meatworks;
17. the economics of trading beef with South-East Asian countries in return for products such as petroleum, timber and fertilizers; and
18. any other factors relevant to the promotion of a strong and stable industry to assist the Territory's development and progress?

ANSWER

A number of issues raised by the honourable member for Elsey in his request for an inquiry into the beef industry in the Northern Territory have been dealt with by subsequent meetings of cattlemen, particularly at Katherine on 28 April. A recommendation made by the Cattlemen's Association at Katherine was that the Northern Territory government should agree to the formation of a committee of industry and government to investigate the more likely options for reform in the marketing of Northern Territory meat.

I support this recommendation and I hope to be able to advise this House shortly on the composition of the committee.

462 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for HEALTH

How much is paid to Mr M. Maurice and Mr A. Narjic by way of -

- (a) daily sitting fees; and
- (b) other expenses,

for their work on the Liquor Commission?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ANSWER

His Honour the Administrator has determined that the fee for Mr Michael Maurice (being the barrister - member of the Liquor Commission) shall be \$50 pr hour to a maximum of \$250 per day for attendance at hearings or meetings in Darwin, and \$70 per hour to a maximum of \$350 per day for attendance at hearings or meetings away from Darwin. The fee for Mr Aloysius Narjic (being an ordinary member of the Commission) has been set at \$54 per day or part thereof, flat rate. No other fees are payable. All travel and accommodation costs for members of the Commission are borne from the Commission budget.

464 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it intended to reconstitute the Special Branch of the Police Force to counter the activities of subversive elements?

ANSWER

There are no plans to reconstitute a Special Branch at this stage, as there appears to be no immediate need for the creation of such a unit. However, the Commissioner of Police has this matter constantly under review and if the situation changes, he will make an appropriate recommendation to the government.

470 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he investigate whether the freeze-drying process has any application in the Territory as a means of providing protein from feral animals?

ANSWER

Although it would be possible to use the freeze-drying process, there are 2 major limitations -

- the lower marketability of meat as a result of the process;
- the highly doubtful economic feasibility of the process which at a cost of approximately 30¢/kg is prohibitive. This does not include buying costs or freight.

As wet and dry petfood are sold for approximately 60¢/kg and 22¢/kg it is not considered that freeze-drying would be economically feasible.

472 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What is the per capita consumption of electricity in Katherine, Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The annual per capita consumption of electricity in Katherine, Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs based upon units sent out from the Commission power stations and estimated population figures for the 4 centres as at 1 June 1979 are as follows:

Darwin	6,657	kw
Alice Springs	4,616	kw
Katherine	6,621	kw
Tennant Creek	5,200	kw

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Electricity load growths in the 4 centres are currently:

Darwin	10%
Alice Springs	12%
Katherine	9%
Tennant Creek	12%

The comparatively high consumption per capita in Darwin and Katherine could probably be attributed to the use of airconditioners in the wet season. Although Tennant Creek and Alice Springs have a heating component in their electricity bills in the winter, evaporative cooling rather than airconditioning predominates for the southern summer months.

473 Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is it still the practice in the Northern Territory Public Service for prospective employees to undergo a medical examination before appointment to the Service?
2. Did the former Director of the Industry Promotion and Trade Delegation Division of the Department of Industrial Development undergo a medical examination before his appointment to that position?
3. If the answer to question 2. is yes, was the former Director of the Industry Promotion and Trade Delegation Division found to be in a satisfactory state of health on the date of his medical examination?
4. If the answer to question 2. is yes, on what date was the medical examination conducted?
5. On what date did the former Director of Industry Promotion and Trade Delegation Division -
 - (a) take up the duties of his position; and
 - (b) resign?
6. On how many working days during the period that he occupied the position was the former Director of the Industry Promotion and Trade Delegation Division absent from the Northern Territory on -
 - (a) government business; and
 - (b) sick leave?

ANSWER

1. The Australian Public Service Act and General Orders provide for the prospective employee to elect to sit for a medical examination prior to taking up appointment or after taking up appointment and within the 6 month probationary period. Since the transfer of functions the Northern Territory Public Service has adopted the same provisions but has not yet issued guidelines.
2. The former Director elected to sit for the medical examination during the probationary period. However, at the time of commencement of sick leave the medical examination had not been arranged.
3. Refer answer 2.
4. Refer answer 2.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

5. (a) 6 November 1978.

(b) With effect from close of business 30 March 1979.

6. (a) 26 working days including 16 days on South-East Asian Trade Mission.

(b) 20 working days between 5 March 1979 and 30 March 1979.

475 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Does he intend to bring pressure on the Commonwealth Department of Transport -

(a) to have the air navigation regulations up-dated;

(b) to have provision made for business or corporate aviation; and

(c) to curtail the activities of illegal charter operators?

ANSWER

The Commonwealth is currently responsible for air matters in the Northern Territory through the Minister for Transport and his Department of Transport.

Matters raised in (a) and (b) will be taken up as appropriate with the Minister for Transport after consideration of a report on NT Air Matters being prepared by Mr F. Gallagher, Senior Transport Economist, currently on loan by arrangement with the Western Australian government, and consideration of other views that may be provided.

Questions regarding illegal charter operators are matters of law and people with knowledge of illegal charter operations should refer them to the Federal Department of Transport. In this respect, I have been making representation to the Minister for Transport for more than 12 months to have a senior transport department officer based in Darwin so that amongst other duties, he would be on the spot to receive and examine complaints concerning air matters for which the Commonwealth is responsible.

477 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. What position does Mr D. Veal occupy in the Northern Territory Public Service?

2. What are Mr Veal's responsibilities?

ANSWER

The terms and conditions of employment of members of the Northern Territory Public Service do not fall within my area of responsibility.

478 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Who were on the interview panel which appointed Mr N. Ashe as Deputy Director, Institutions?

2. How many applications were received?

3. What are Mr Ashe's qualifications?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

4. Who were on the interview panel which appointed Mr G. Sutton as Superintendent, Darwin Gaol?
5. How many applications were there for the position?
6. What are Mr Sutton's qualifications?

ANSWER

1. Mr F. Cassidy at that time, Deputy Director of Correctional Services, South Australia and Mr G. Godwin, Director, Local Government Division, Department of Community Development.
2. Nine applications were received.
3. Mr Ashe has had extensive experience in correctional services having worked in the Singapore, West Australian and Papua New Guinea services. At the West Australian Institute of Technology, Mr Ashe has completed:
 - the diploma of Welfare Psychology;
 - the diploma of Public Administration;
 - the certificate of Personnel Management; and
 - the diploma in Personnel Management.
4. Mr N. Ashe, Deputy Director (Institutions); Mr R. Donnelly, Deputy Director (Field); Mr J.E. Williams (Superintendent Grade 2).
5. Nine applications were received.
6. Mr Sutton has had extremely wide ranging experience at all levels of prisons operation and management. He has worked in the Queensland, Papua New Guinea and ACT services before coming to the Northern Territory. Whilst in New Guinea, Mr Sutton filled a number of positions including those of Inspector of Prisons, Senior Inspector and culminating in Assistant Commissioner. Additionally he was at various times in charge of 3 major institutions and Officer Commanding Papua New Guinea Correctional Services Training Centre.

479 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Further to question 448, does he recognise the fact that if a service meatworks to handle Kosher and Hallal kills in the Territory was established, then contracts such as that between Israel and the Cairns abattoir need not be lost?

ANSWER

No.

482 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What steps are being taken to reconstruct the original Elsey Homestead on its actual site as a tourist attraction and as part of the NT heritage?

ANSWER

No action is presently proposed to reconstruct the original Elsey Homestead on its actual site.

However, the National Trust of Australia (Northern Territory) has received a grant under the National Estate program for 1978-79 to carry out pre-

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

liminary archaeological investigations prior to capital works on significant sites and structures.

Included in this program is an item for preliminary field investigations to determine the exact site and building layout of the Elsey Homestead (We of the Never, Never).

484 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What steps is he taking to get district allowances for pensioners in line with similar allowances for public servants?

ANSWER

Some preliminary consideration has been given to the appropriateness of district allowances for pensioners in the Northern Territory. There are many technical problems, not the least of which is the fact that such an allowance would be treated as income and may affect the level of pension provided by the Department of Social Security.

The government recently announced concessions for pensioners. Other measures to provide relief are being examined.

485 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Will he appoint a community worker to work with black and white communities to facilitate understanding across the cultures, as requested by the Katherine Regional Parish Council of the Uniting Church of Australia?

ANSWER

The Katherine Regional Parish Council of the Uniting Church has not placed a submission before my department in its own right, but rather invited the Aboriginal Advisory and Development Services to do so. The AADS is an agency of the Uniting Church which is specifically concerned with work among Aboriginal communities and groups. This agency has submitted for funds to employ 2 community workers to facilitate the development of better cross-cultural understanding in the Katherine region.

The submission showed an appreciation of the community development principles which are the basis of my department's approach to community work. However, it is felt that far more consultation should be had between the AADS and other organisations already working in the Katherine area. This consultation should most certainly be extended to the Aboriginals.

Before making a decision regarding this submission, further discussions are being carried on between the Aboriginal Advisory and Development Services and officers of my department to discover what form of assistance if any, the AADS may need to extend consultation and to firm up the details of the program they are proposing.

486 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Do the Greek and Chinese communities obtain permits under the law to use fireworks on feast and holy days and, if so, what precautions are taken to ensure that the fireworks are used in a safe manner and are prosecutions launched when they are misused?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ANSWER

Yes, permits are obtained under the Explosives Act. Conditions under which the permits are issued include -

- limitations on the size of fireworks;
- times they are to be discharged;
- where they are to be discharged; and
- who can discharge them.

Additionally, the permission of the Fire Brigade and City Council is required before such a permit is issued. Notification to the Police is required as well.

Prosecutions are launched when the persons responsible for the misuse are caught, however, in instances such as the last Greek Easter celebrations where over 2,000 people were in attendance, it was impossible to detect who was throwing the bombs.

Regulations are being drafted to restrict the sale of reloading powder, which has been the main ingredient in the bombs used at the Greek Easter celebrations. It is not our intention, however, to restrict the person who genuinely uses the gunpowder to reload his own cartridges.

523 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Is he aware of the statement contained in the Ed Souery prospectus for Tennant Creek meatworks (page 54, paragraph 3) that -

"The grant of 2,000 tons (of export quota to the Alice Springs meatworks) was at the time equivalent to a grant of something in excess of \$2,000,000 in value."?

2. Does he agree with this particular statement in the prospectus?

ANSWER

1. I presume Mr Speaker that the "prospectus" to which you refer is a report prepared by consultants for Edward Souery and Company Pty Ltd on the establishment of a Tennant Creek meatworks. I am aware that the statement to which you refer was contained in that report.
2. The value of the quota to the Alice Springs meatworks presumably would need to be measured in terms of the company's profitability in meeting its contractual arrangements. In the absence of supporting data or access to the books of account of the Alice Springs meatworks, I am unable to comment on the accuracy of the statement made.

494 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware that road works on the Stuart Highway, Berrimah, have now been going on for more than a year? Is he aware that small businesses in the vicinity have suffered severe losses due to poor access to Berrimah Road? Can he inform the House how much longer the operation will take? Does the government intend to compensate businesses in the region which have suffered those losses?

ANSWER

The government is aware of the inconvenience to the shopkeepers in the Berrimah area. You will appreciate that the contract was not one of ours and this was not a matter of avoiding responsibility. By re-routing the road, we have alleviated this problem of inconvenience to a certain degree. I am not too sure when the contract expires but, as far as we are concerned, the matter is well in hand. Compensation will be a matter between the shopkeepers and their own legal advisers.

495 Mr VALE to Mr SPEAKER

This Assembly last year passed a motion requiring all members to lodge with the Clerk details of their financial affairs. This requirement, which is unique in Australian parliaments, has been in operation for almost 12 months. Can he advise if any person has sought to inspect the statements of any of the members in the register and, if so, who made the inquiry and was he or she granted access to the files?

ANSWER

I am advised by the Clerk that a Mr Peter Julian Hansen made a request to inspect the statement of pecuniary interests in the register under Mr Everingham's name and was granted access to that. Also, the Clerk advises that Mr Hansen requested to view the pecuniary interests of all ministers.

496 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he advise the present waiting period for appointments for treatment at the Dental Clinic?

ANSWER

The waiting time for patients visiting Northern Territory dental clinics varies considerably. For most patients who require immediate attention, there is a twice-daily period held in the Darwin clinic and a once-daily period held in most other clinics for emergency work in the dental field. For people requiring dentures or replacement of dentures, there is a waiting time of 4 to 6 months and for most people requiring an annual check-up or a periodic check-up the waiting time is about 10 to 12 months.

While I am on my feet, I would just like to make a point that has been brought to my attention by the department. The waiting time that people are subjected to could be reduced very substantially if people went out of their way to keep appointments that they made with the dental clinics. Honourable members might be interested to know that up to 100 appointments per month are broken in the Darwin Dental Clinic alone. Given that a normal appointment would take 30 to 40 minutes, that is an awful lot of lost time where some people cannot be treated and staff stand around without a full workload. I am sure that, if any honourable member gets a chance to defend the position of the department in this matter and

encourage people to be prompt and attend appointments that they make, it would be a great service to the whole community.

497 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Did the Territory Development Corporation recommend to the Northern Territory government that a special purpose lease be granted to Barkly Tablelands Export Meat Company Pty Ltd to operate an export abattoir at Tennant Creek?

ANSWER

The TCD in its first deliberations on the question of the Tennant Creek abattoir made a qualified recommendation to the government that it accept, in the first instance, Barkly Meats. On reconsideration of the question, the TDC advised the government that they had no hesitation in saying that both operators would be capable of operating an abattoir in Tennant Creek.

498 Mr BALLANTYNE to TREASURER

Is the Treasurer aware of reports that, if liquor taxation was increased by 1%, the price of beer would rise by 8 cents a glass? Can he inform the House if this projection is correct?

ANSWER

In the press of late, there have been unfounded allegations that there would be a rise in liquor tax and that, if the liquor tax was lifted by 1%, this would in fact lead to an increase in the price of a glass of beer by something between 5 cents and 8 cents. I can assure honourable members that the effect of such a hypothetical increase would be no such amount; it would be nearer to the figure of 1 cent per glass of beer.

499 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it true that Barkly Tablelands Export Meat Company would have been able to complete their construction of the site within 4 months of a decision in their favour?

ANSWER

We doubt very much whether the Barkly meat people would have been able to live up to an expectation that they had raised with us. I must say that the government took a fair while to make its decision on the Tennant Creek abattoir; it was not taken lightly. In the final analysis, because one company was already established in the meat marketing business and was, in fact, slaughtering cattle, they had an advantage over the other outfit which, at the time that it made its application, was not financially in business for itself. The decision was made on that basis.

500 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to TREASURER

When will the Batchelor Town Plan go on display?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, all town plans take far longer than we would hope. However, the Batchelor Town Plan has been receiving some priority in the past few months and I am informed that the plan, after having gone to the Town Planning Board, will go on display in Batchelor on 23 May. It is

proposed to hold a public meeting in Batchelor about 7 to 10 days after it goes on display and explain the plan to residents in Batchelor.

501 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

My question relates yet again to the question of the introduction of legislation to control the use of antibiotics in stock feeds. Can he advise the House who comprise the technical working party to examine and develop this legislation and when it is likely that they will report to the minister?

ANSWER

I have not got that information in front of me at this stage. I will report back to the honourable member later in the day.

502 Mr VALE to Mr SPEAKER

Can he advise whether Mr Peter Hansen was required to present to the Clerk of this House his bona fides and, if so, what were they?

ANSWER

I request the honourable member to place the question on notice because the question is directed to the Clerk through me. I will find out the information the honourable member requires.

503 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is it a fact that the Minister for Industrial Development himself recommended to the Cabinet that it adopt the Territory Development Corporation recommendation that the special purpose lease be granted to Barkly Tablelands Export Meat Company for an export abattoir at Tennant Creek?

Mr EVERINGHAM: If I might intervene at this point. In my view, the question is an improper one. The honourable Leader of the Opposition should be aware of the principles of Cabinet secrecy and solidarity and certainly, so far as I am concerned, there will be no answer given to that question.

Mr SPEAKER: The question, in my view, is a proper one and should be answered if the Minister should so desire. The honourable minister has no requirement to answer questions if he does not want to and he has a further recourse to have the question placed on notice.

Mr STEELE: Mr Speaker, I stand behind the Chief Minister in this respect although I would say to you, Sir, that in the portfolio arrangements as disclosed in this House and elsewhere, it is well known that I have the carriage of primary industry matters and, in that context, obviously, I would be placing before Cabinet matters of that kind.

505 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is he aware of reports circulating in the community that widespread and significant taxation increases will be introduced by the government? Can he indicate the truth or otherwise of these claims?

ANSWER

I am aware of the continued series of unfounded assumptions and allegations that the government is on the verge of implementing vicious tax

increases. It does concern me that such unfounded claims continue to be repeated in the press day after day and I think that they cause unnecessary concern to the community in the Northern Territory. The only explanation that I have for the continuation of these allegations is that the opposition believes that it is in the throes of an election campaign. You will recall their election campaign when they had an impeccable source in Canberra who predicted a \$14m taxation increase for the Northern Territory a couple of years ago. Just before self-government, we heard again from them that, without any question of doubt, the Northern Territory would be some \$50m to \$60m short in its funding for the Northern Territory as a result of self-government. Of course, at that time, the Leader of the Opposition was waging a campaign against self-government and was doing all he could to scare and motivate the people of the Territory to oppose what has been the most beneficial constitutional move ever to take place for Territorians. The attitude of the opposition in attempting to scare the public about tax increases and the financial viability of the Territory generally does nothing at all for its credibility and I believe that its record on financial affairs over the past 2 years is in a mess. It plucks figures out of the air which have no basis or foundation whatsoever. I think that it is about time that it had a good hard look at its responsibilities to the electorate.

506 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is Edward Souery and Sons being loaned \$1m for the establishment of an abattoir at Tennant Creek? Has the Territory Development Corporation secured a first mortgage on the loan over the land and buildings?

ANSWER

The processes that will finalise the transfer of moneys to the Souery Company have not been completed. At that time, there will be a first mortgage arrangement which will be satisfactory to us.

507 Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Would the Chief Minister advise of any proposals to substantially increase the penalties for illegal use of motor vehicles in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The present position as to what may be broadly called illegally using a motor vehicle is two-fold. Firstly, if intent to deprive the owner of the vehicle can be proved, the offender can be charged with simple larceny and sentenced to a maximum of 2 years imprisonment. This is pursuant to section 135 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act. However, as the intent to permanently deprive the owner of his vehicle is usually difficult to establish in the case of wrongful use of motor vehicles, the offender is usually charged with illegal use of a motor vehicle. This is pursuant to section 49A of the Police Offences Act which provides for a maximum fine of \$1,000 or imprisonment for a maximum of 6 months or both.

Under the proposed criminal code which is in the process of being drafted at the present time, and which will certainly be released for public comment long before it goes through this House, pursuant to the combined effect of proposed clauses 392(15)(a) and (b) and 393, any illegal use of a motor vehicle is deemed to be theft for which the offender can be sentenced to imprisonment and hard labour for a maximum term of 10 years. Proposed clause 292(15)(a) provides that use or attempted use of, inter alia, a motor vehicle, without the consent of the owner or person in lawful possession thereof, shall be conclusive proof of intent to

permanently deprive the owner of it. Proposed clause 393 provides for the penalty for theft. Furthermore, if the offender is convicted of stealing or attempting to steal a vehicle with intent to use it in the commission of a felony, it is additionally provided in proposed clause 399 that he is liable to be imprisoned for a minimum term of 6 months.

508 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Apart from the driving in of a peg, which the minister performed so capably at Tennant Creek, when will construction on the Tennant Creek abattoir commence, and when is the abattoir expected to commence its operation?

ANSWER

We expect construction of the abattoir to be completed by the end of the year and I am hopeful that they will be able to process a small number of cattle by this time. This is just to ensure that the abattoir is operational and that its recruitment program can take place knowing that there will be a full season ahead of it.

509 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can he inform the House when the final report of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission will be tabled in this House, bearing in mind that the commission dissolved some 17 months ago?

ANSWER

The reports of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission do not have to be tabled in this House as a statutory requirement. However, they have been in the past and I have been seeking recently the whereabouts of the final report of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission so that I could table it in the House and complete the record. However, the report is still in the draft stage and is held by the last Chairman of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, Mr Clem Jones. I have sought from Mr Jones a date when he expects the report to be printed so that I can then obtain copies. Consequently, I cannot give a specific date to the member for Port Darwin.

510 Ms D'ROZARIO to CHIEF MINISTER

What are the reasons for the change in the public service home sale scheme whereby eligible public servants can now apply to purchase only the house in which they currently reside?

ANSWER

The reasons for the change are many and varied. One is that the government is not a speculative builder providing a range of houses from which people can choose to buy. Would-be tenants of public service houses are given the choice of 2 houses when they first move in. One would assume that this provides an opportunity to make a preference and it is reasonable to assume that the purchase of that house which they have chosen to rent would be satisfactory. However, if the honourable member for Sanderson chooses to put this question on notice, I would be prepared to supply her with further details. I can only say that I believe that, in the matter of attracting staff to the Northern Territory, the public service housing scheme, as it presently stands, is quite satisfactory. I know of no other home sales scheme anywhere for staff, certainly outside the public service, where anyone has such a choice of housing as

is and will be the case with the new Territory scheme. People will have the choice of 2 in the first place and, if the house is good enough for them to move in and rent it, surely it should be good enough for them to purchase.

511 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he inform me if the contract for building the new Nhulunbuy High School has been let and, if so, what are the estimated starting and completion dates?

ANSWER

I understand that the contract should be let within the next couple of weeks and the construction period should commence within several weeks of that. The overall construction period, I understand, is expected to be about 18 months. That should give the honourable member some idea of the time span.

512 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

If, as he says, the public service housing scheme is operating so admirably - and I certainly hope it is - why is it necessary to buy a house on the open market at a fairly high price of \$89,000 for the gentleman to run the Territory Insurance Office?

ANSWER

The simple answer is that it was cheaper than building one. In fact, the current executive houses which are in the process of being built for the Northern Territory government run out at very much the same price and, in any event, there are none available. If the Territory Insurance Office is to be established by 1 July, it was necessary that the Northern Territory attract a suitably qualified executive to take command of that insurance office. I understood, Mr Speaker, that it was the desire of all honourable members of this House to see the Territory Insurance Office up and running at the earliest available date and indeed getting into the full field of general insurance business. If private enterprise has to offer good housing accommodation to its executives to get them here, I see no reason why the government should not do likewise. In any event, the Territory Insurance Office is to be a statutory corporation outside the public service. We trust that it will make profits and, in due course, the cost of that house - I think it was \$87,000 or \$89,000 - will be repaid to the public purse by the Territory Insurance Office.

513 Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the government reviewed the Apprentices Act and, if so, when will amendments be introduced into this Assembly?

ANSWER

My department is in the process of reviewing, in consultation with other interested bodies, the Apprentices Act. Unfortunately, I have not been able to pay as much attention to this particular matter as I would have liked. We had hoped to introduce the legislation at this sittings of the Assembly but I do not expect that it will be possible to do so now. Certainly, I look forward to the legislation being introduced at the next sittings.

514 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can he inform the House, either now or at some time today, whether or not the house that is being purchased on behalf of the general manager of the insurance office has a certificate of compliance with the Darwin Building Code? This is given, of course, by the Building Board, the Chairman of which is none other than Mr B. Wyatt?

ANSWER

I will undertake to find out whether the house concerned has a certificate of compliance.

515 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to TREASURER

Given a considerable debate outside this House on the government's quarterly accounts, would he please clarify what the accounts represent? Will he also indicate why there are receipt and expenditure variations between each quarter?

ANSWER

I do feel that it is necessary, even amongst the giggles from the opposition, to give a simple explanation of what exactly the quarterly accounts are. This is appropriate having regard to the fiasco that has been perpetrated through the press over the first two quarterly statements issued by this government, although there was a notable absence of this with regard to the third. I would like to point out principally that the quarterly accounts as gazetted by the government are, in fact, a statement of account and not a statement of the financial performance of government. This is a very basic point that the opposition never seems to have been able to grasp to date. They have never understood that the quarterly accounts could do anything other than represent 25% of the year's finances for a government and that they should all be equal. They have clearly indicated that that is the only way they can see them happening. They have no comprehension at all of the cyclical curve in either expenditure or revenue of all governments. They have persisted continually with a campaign to influence and undermine the confidence that the people of the Northern Territory have in this government with unfounded allegations that there will be over-expenditure or under-expenditure or not enough money raised during the year.

They have also drawn other unfounded allegations that, if we do not get enough money during the year, we will have to raise taxes. Of course, taxes would take effect in the following year anyway and would not help us out of a problem in the current year if that was the case. I do feel, Mr Speaker, that there has been a great deal said in the press that has caused confusion in the community. I believe that it was done deliberately and I feel that it is timely to repeat that the opposition should take a very strong look at its responsibilities to the electorate as an opposition. We trust that the well-publicised financial wiz that the Leader of the Opposition is now getting on his staff will inform him of some of the facts of financial administration.

516 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

He may recall that his predecessor assured this Assembly last February that the juvenile detention centre at Malak would be occupied within a few weeks. Will the acting minister advise whether juvenile offenders are in fact in residence at Malak?

ANSWER

Advertisements are to appear in the national and local press on 18 May for house parents to manage this centre. We anticipate that these people will be recruited and the centre will be operating by the end of July.

517 Mr OLIVER to TREASURER

The government's recent submission to the Grants Commission highlighted the present low taxation levels in the Northern Territory as compared with other states. Does this indicate that the Northern Territory will be obliged to increase those taxes, as was reported in the press?

ANSWER

Again, we have an example of press speculation that results from releases by the opposition. Because the Grants Commission have studied the Northern Territory's financial situation and we have represented that we are charging in the Territory less state-type taxation than exists in the states, the opposition have drawn the conclusion that that obviously means that taxes have to go up. They have said it continuously and they have said it loudly. I believe it is just another example of scaring the community deliberately to try to undermine the confidence in this new Territory government.

The specific answer to the question is that the speculation about tax increases is not warranted. The government remains a free agent in taxation matters. The Grants Commission cannot direct the Northern Territory government to increase taxation and neither can the Commonwealth government. To draw any conclusions about whether or not the grants Commission will accept the Territory government's arguments for its specific disabilities, as far as revenue-raising is concerned, simply belies a comprehension of the normal Commonwealth-state financial relationship and also belies an understanding of how the Grants Commission have fitted in with that relationship over the past 30 years with those states that have been claimants.

518 Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it the intention of the government to proceed with the Employment (Leave of Absence) Bill at this sittings?

ANSWER

It is not the intention of the government to proceed with that bill at this sittings.

519 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

I have noticed in some areas that impact barriers have been placed around fibreglass electricity distribution boxes and pillars. Can he inform me whether similar barriers will be placed around all distribution pillars in the future?

ANSWER

The short answer is no. Very simply, the Electricity Commission has a policy of putting barriers around distribution boxes where there is a need, particularly where these boxes are exposed to traffic hazards on intersections and in car parks, but not as a normal matter of course. One of the prohibitive factors is the very high cost of these barriers.

Another factor is that quite often barriers do nothing to enhance the aesthetics of the area.

520 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In view of the fact that the mining of the extremely rich uranium ore at Nabarlek is about to commence almost immediately, has an appointment been made by the Department of Health for a specialist position to oversee radiation monitoring in the uranium province?

ANSWER

I would ask that I have a few hours to get the information on that today.

521 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he advise if a decision has been made to introduce uniform roadline markings in the Northern Territory? If so, will Victorian criteria be used, for example, priority roads?

ANSWER

I understand from the Department of Transport and Works that it has been decided to adopt the Standards Association of Australia practice in respect of linemarking. We will be advising local authorities in this respect and, at the same time, we will be looking at the aspect of priority roads for cities and towns in the Northern Territory.

522 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is it a fact that a process of accelerated allocation of houses from the public housing stock in Darwin is being afforded to persons arriving from southern cities who are to be engaged in the mining industry?

ANSWER

The procedure which has to be gone through for a person to achieve an out-of-turn allocation in the Housing Commission is very detailed and very comprehensive. The matter goes through a range of committees before a decision is finally made that a person can jump the housing list and receive immediate accommodation. At this stage, there is no particular time limit on a person's residence in the Northern Territory although there is good argument for this and some states have a 3 month residential criterion before one can apply for emergency housing. This is aimed at stopping people coming across the borders, if they are in dire circumstances on one state, to get accommodation in an emergency situation. The Territory is a fair way away from most large centres of population and people have to travel a fair distance to come to the Northern Territory. It is unlikely that people would do so just to get accelerated priority for housing. The Housing Commission will look at every case of need and, unfortunately, it is getting an increasing number of applications for out-of-turn allocations from people with some very sad stories about their accommodation situation including living in cars with children and so on. Each is dealt with on its merits although a fairly hard line has to be taken on this because there is a reasonably long waiting list for housing and each person who is housed out of turn puts that waiting list back by one house. There are people on the waiting list who are in difficult circumstances through paying rents to the private market that, on their particular incomes, are fairly high. These people are

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prepared to sit and wait their turn and so a hard line has to be taken towards out-of-turn allocations. If the honourable member gives me some specific details, I can inquire into the matter and advise her about any particular applicants or their background.

535 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is the minister able to give any indication when the landbacked wharf will be operational?

ANSWER

The tenders for the main wharf contract close on 24 May 1979. The contract has a construction period of 86 weeks and is therefore due for completion after that in March 1981. The wharf will be operational immediately and future stages will be undertaken progressively. I might just add that a 20-tonne portal crane and bulk hopper will go with the wharf and this is included in the 1979-80 capital works proposals at \$2.5m. The design and manufacture of the crane will have a lead time of 15 months from the date of placement of the order and the erection and commissioning will require 3 months. The order must be placed by January 1980 so that the crane is ready for installation when the wharf is completed.

536 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Would he inform the House what measures are proposed for the control or eradication of the spread of noxious weeds such as parkinsonia, mimosa, salvinia, water hyacinth and many others in the Territory? Is it a fact that mimosa was virtually eradicated in the Northern Territory when the program was stopped? Incidentally, it has taken hold completely in the Adelaide River area. Is it a fact that the Department of Primary Industry has only one weed agronomist with only 2 or possibly 3 assistants?

ANSWER

I am sure you would not like question time to extend into the night so I would ask the honourable gentleman to place his question on notice.

537 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

The Liquor Act has not established any trading hours for licensed premises. What is the Liquor Commission doing about this?

ANSWER

During the passage of the Liquor Bill, the government, with the support of the opposition, made a deliberate decision not to specify trading hours for licensed premises within the act. This was based on the premises that the community should be able to operate trading hours for liquor outlets that were in keeping with their particular community.

For the time being, the Liquor Commission is continuing with the hours that were in existence before it took over. It has started an inquiry on the broad issue of trading hours for licensed premises throughout the Territory and has received many submissions. The commission has already sat in Alice Springs and Darwin and has received many written submissions from people who cannot appear before it. It is anticipated that later in the year the commission will be including in its annual report its recommendations on future trading hours for respective communities.

538 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is it a fact that a certificate of compliance in respect of a house at Basedow Street which was purchased by the government for the manager designate of the Territory Insurance Office was issued by the Building Board only at 4 pm yesterday? Is it further a fact that the modifications

required to obtain the certificate of compliance were only completed at 7.30 am today? .

ANSWER

The answer to the first part of the question is that a certificate was not issued yesterday; it was issued this morning. I think that would probably cover the second part of her question as well.

539 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In view of the increasingly higher values of land in urban areas and realising McMillan's Road cemetery will be filled some time, has consideration been given to the installation or a feasibility study on the installation of a crematorium in Darwin and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

The Darwin City Council has conducted extensive investigations into the feasibility of installing a crematorium in Darwin. However, due to the high capital costs and the relatively low population in Darwin, the installation of the unit will not be economically viable for some time to come. I must add that some of the ethnic groups within our community have requested that a crematorium be built in the Top End. The remaining life of McMillan's Road cemetery is 5 years. After that, a new cemetery will be opened on land near the Thorak Reserve. As far as a crematorium is concerned, there is no answer at the moment.

540 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has he received a submission from the Environmental Council of the Northern Territory for funding a study of conservation priorities in the Reynolds River/Daly River area of the Northern Territory? If so, what action has he taken on the submission?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the honourable member's question. However, I will obtain the information and supply it to him at a later hour.

541 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has consideration been given to reviewing the current B5 zoning which applies generally along the Esplanade and side streets, including parts of Mitchell Street?

ANSWER

The zone B5 in the Darwin Town Plan is a tourist industry zone which is designed to specifically limit the prime area of Darwin to tourist-type development. This has received a great deal of criticism since the Darwin Town Plan was adopted. The Department of Lands and Housing planning section will undertake a review of that particular zoning with a view to coming up with an interim use to which land in the area may be put so that the severe economic loss to certain owners of land in the area will not continue.

542 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

The minister's department customarily puts on display plans for proposed road constructions in Darwin and other areas of the Northern Territory. Curiously, this has not happened with the proposed Ludmilla-Fannie Bay connector and associated works to be carried out by the city council. Will the minister undertake to have those plans put on display as soon as possible so that the people affected may have the benefit of seeing them?

ANSWER

After the Town Planning Board has heard all the objections, the Department of Transport and Works will place the plan on display. I can understand the honourable member's concern for some of the planning proposals that involve her electorate and I sympathise with her. I am against some of those proposals myself.

543 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for HEALTH

People in wheelchairs and those pushing prams find it difficult to move from the car park into the Alice Springs Hospital. Can he give me an assurance that a ramp will be constructed against the offending curbing to allow easier access?

ANSWER

That would be a reasonably simple matter to have fixed and is one that could be done at a local level in Alice Springs. I would not think that there would be much money involved and I will undertake to satisfy the honourable member's request.

544 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

A residence on East Point Road is being modified for the Chairman of the Electricity Commission, Mr Dryer. Is it a fact that the Housing Commission bought this residence from the Commonwealth at a cost of \$19,000 and is now offering it for sale to the Electricity Commission at a cost of \$54,000 in virtually the same state?

ANSWER

I think the house to which the honourable member refers is not on East Point Road but at Myilly Point. However, the house which has been earmarked for use by the Northern Territory Electricity Commission for its commissioner was in fact taken over by the Northern Territory government for \$19,000. If I recall my instructions on this matter, the house was to be transferred to the Electricity Commission for the same price as it does require some fairly extensive work to be done on it and it will not be a cheap house even when it is finished.

545 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can he inform me whether a decision has been made on Nhulunbuy government housing in relation to the recent inspection which looked at possible ways of improving cross-flow ventilation and or installing some form of air-conditioning to the already existing ducting?

ANSWER

The situation in Nhulunbuy has not escaped the Northern Territory government's attention. Well before self-government, there were complaints that houses occupied by public servants in Nhulunbuy which were built by Nabalco were not airconditioned whereas those occupied by Nabalco employees were airconditioned. After an inspection by government officers, it was decided that work would be undertaken to install fans and improve ventilation in these houses. However, the government is not prepared, in this instance, to aircondition the houses.

546 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Have funding arrangements been completed between the Northern Territory and Commonwealth governments for the financing of standby generators at Berrimah?

ANSWER

The officials of both the Northern Territory and the federal government treasuries are still negotiating the financial arrangements for the Northern Territory for the next financial year and this particular item is on the program.

547 Mr VALE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Will he undertake to conduct a study into the introduction of a meat-marketing authority for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

We have been considering the introduction of such an authority and officers of my department have travelled Australia looking at abattoirs and talking to the various state authorities. We are also analysing the Prices Justification Tribunal Report on beef marketing which identified no areas where either the producer or consumer was being deliberately ripped off. Should the government decide to establish a marketing authority for beef, it will be important to ensure that the powers and functions of the body are suited to the industry situation in the Northern Territory. We will be seeking the views of cattle-producer organisations, meat-works managements, union representatives and the transport industry before reaching any final decision. At a meeting last month which was attended by the Chief Minister and those Top End cattlemen interested in the future marketing of beef, officers of my department presented a series of papers for discussion and I am looking forward to receiving the views of industry organisations in due course.

548 Mr HARRIS to TREASURER

Does the Northern Territory government receive detailed telephone accounts for each government department or is the government bulk-billed?

ANSWER

Each separate extension number is not separately billed for the Northern Territory government. The main government exchange, number 895511, has some 1600 extensions and is billed under 80 different charge numbers. In the case of the Public Service Commissioner's Office, the 79 extension exchange operates under one charge number during office hours with 12 after-hours lines which are subject to individual billing. The Health Department operates an exchange on 802911 and all calls are billed on one charge number in respect of the 700 extensions.

549 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer the minister to a statement that he made in February this year. When does his government propose to introduce legislation to enable over-the-counter land sales on time payment?

ANSWER

The latest information I have on this matter is that legislation may not

be necessary. The department is currently consulting with the Department of Law to ensure that procedures can be implemented under existing legislation to enable us to sell land over the counter.

550 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I thank him for his earlier expressed concern about planning proposals affecting Fannie Bay. Will he undertake to have the Ludmilla-Fannie Bay connector road plans put on display as I do not believe that these are subject to any Town Planning Board decisions.

ANSWER

Yes.

551 Mr HARRIS to TREASURER:

Is the Treasurer able to give to me the total government phone bill for last year?

ANSWER

I have had some forewarning of this question. I have been able to establish the bill incurred by the Northern Territory executive in 1977/78 although that is probably not the full answer that the honourable member requires. He was probably referring to all government phones in the Northern Territory. However, for the area that we were responsible for, the cost of postage, telephones and telegrams was \$324,001. No separate figures for telephones is available but it is estimated to be 80% of the total cost. I point out that that was for the year 1977/78 which was the year before self-government and the year for which a full and detailed figure is available.

552 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

My question concerns the so-called Gilson litter report which contains a recommendation to the members of the beverage and packaging industry group that they develop a detailed recycling plan to be presented to the government. Has this been prepared and presented and, if so, will the Chief Minister make it available to members of the House?

ANSWER

The Gilson report has yet to be debated in this House and I hope that time will be found during these sittings to enable its debate. The beverage or packaging industry may have regarded the preparation of a detailed submission to the government as premature until such time as this House has expressed its views on the report and its recommendations. I do believe, although I make no categorical assurance to the honourable member for Nightcliff, that tentative proposals are being formulated and a figure of \$300,000 has been mentioned as that which the beverage and packaging industry is prepared to put into a plan involving recycling and the possible elimination of litter as one of the major menaces of life in the Northern Territory. I will certainly undertake to find out definitely whether the industry has put forward a definite proposal to the Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission, but I very much doubt whether there is anything as firm as that at this stage.

553 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What arrangements are proposed for the re-routing of Bagot Road traffic

during the construction of the Bagot Road - Stuart Highway overpass?

ANSWER

I would hope they would come down the Nightcliff - Fannie Bay connector road.

554 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has the government made a decision on the future use of the grounds previously used by Flagstaff House?

ANSWER

At this stage, the government has taken no decision on the future use of the site. Under the current Darwin Town Plan, I think the site is an 02 site. However, the government is open to proposals on this matter.

555 Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In view of the fact that uranium mining will commence at Nabarlek within the next 2 weeks, is the Northern Territory government able to provide adequate monitoring and supervision at the commencement of the mining operation? What steps will be taken at the commencement of the mining operation to ensure that workers' safety and environmental safeguards are implemented?

ANSWER

The Department of Mines and Energy has had an inspectorial staff visiting Nabarlek for over 2 weeks on a day-to-day basis. This is because there has not been any accommodation available for them on the site and they have had to either fly or drive out and then had to come back as the demand required. Accommodation is now available at Nabarlek and, as of Monday last, 3 officers of the department have taken up permanent residence. The monitoring equipment will be installed as one of their first functions and, apart from the monitoring of the radio-active parts of the area, they will also be involved in industrial safety and general mines' safety practice on the site.

556 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Can the minister advise when the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into Welfare Needs will report on its findings?

ANSWER

In about 6 to 8 weeks.

557 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer the honourable minister to the answer given to my previous question. As the government now proposes that the proposed Leanyer subdivision will be sold through private agents, is it a fact that the government does not now propose to introduce legislation to enable over-the-counter land sales to be made on time payment?

ANSWER

The answer to the question overall is no. The government is not proposing to get out of its undertaking to sell land over the counter in the future.

The subdivision she refers to is a considerable way off as far as turning land off is concerned and we propose to put both blocks that are currently available and those that will be available through other minor subdivisions which are under way now around Darwin on sale over the counter as soon as we possibly can. The fact that a percentage of the new subdivision at Leanyer was proposed to be put to private subdivision will only support the government's moves to have land available to the community on an application basis rather than holding them up and putting them to auction from time to time.

558 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is the minister aware of the importance placed on technical education in the report of the Williams committee which inquired into education and training and what does he intend to do about it in the Territory?

ANSWER

The honourable member quite rightly referred to the Williams report which will be discussed at length by ministers in Melbourne at the end of this month. The Williams report was a 1500 page document primarily devoted to the transfer from school to the work place. I have asked the Department of Education to explore the possibility of resurrecting the idea of establishing a technical college or senior technical high school in Darwin. It is useful here to look at a few figures and, if I may, I would like to use some notes.

Enrolment patterns in government schools over the last 3 years in the Northern Territory demonstrate that 20%-25% of Darwin students who complete year 10 do not proceed to year 11 and that two thirds of the students who enter year 11 do not proceed to year 12. To express this another way: 75% of students who have completed year 10 in Darwin schools over the last 3 years have not proceeded to year 12. The highest drop, incidentally, is between years 11 and 12. In Queensland, by contrast, in 1976 - and this is the only year for which I have figures - the comparable figure is a 60% dropout for years 10 to 11, which is roughly consistent with our own, but only 13% dropout between years 11 and 12. The reason is that there were 11,617 students enrolled in year 11 courses in ordinary secondary schools in Queensland in that year but there were also 11,317 enrolled in technical high schools. I think it gives a very graphic demonstration of the impact on school leaving of children between years 11 and 12 in school. We can no longer ignore figures like that.

The Darwin High School was originally designed as a technical high school. For some strange reason, a reason which is quite beyond my comprehension, there has been some reluctance among professionals and teachers to establish a technical high school in Darwin. I have asked the department to examine the proposal. I believe that, with the Chief Minister working on a complete new set of rules for apprenticeship training, it is high time that the education base started to look at the same thing. It is quite obvious that our highest unemployment rate comes from our lowest-trained children.

It is hoped that the emphasis of a technical high school or technical college would be sufficient to reduce indentureship by one year for instance. This is not a move to replace conventional education which leads to university courses. I do believe that, with the lack of qualified people who are oriented towards trade courses, we in the Northern Territory ought to address ourselves to this problem now. This is a very expensive proposal. Technical high schools are expensive because of the very sophisticated equipment required. To provide a technical high

of a 600 to 650 student capacity, we would probably have to look at between \$5m and \$6m. That is expensive but, of course, supporting unemployed youth is also very expensive.

559 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

In reply to a question last session about jenny crabs, he advised that the fisheries department was undertaking a detailed review of barramundi fisheries and would include in that a study of the jenny crabs. Can he advise the House whether any recommendation has been made to him and what the results of the recommendations are likely to be regarding jenny crabs?

ANSWER

The barramundi report has been finalised. It is an internal departmental report and we are studying what policies the fisheries section must adopt for the future conservation of barramundi and other species. As far as the jenny crabs are concerned, I have no information with me this morning. I will try to find something out for the honourable member later in the day.

560 Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is he aware that lecture notes emphasising various forms of sabotage of public facilities and public utilities are being distributed in the Darwin Community College. What does he propose to do about it?

ANSWER

In answering the honourable member's question, I find the matter far more serious than the "rubbish" interjected from the other side. I think it is time the public is informed of what is contained in those lecture notes to let them make up their own mind. I cannot pre-judge the issue, quite obviously, because it is a matter in which the police force is involved. For reasons contained in the Crimes Act, it is a matter in which the Commonwealth Police are also interested. It is far too broad an issue to canvass in question time. When I move the adjournment this afternoon the House and hopefully the press will hear exactly what the honourable member for Arnhem describes as "rubbish".

561 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Can he yet supply an answer to question 201 on notice from 21 November. What is causing the delay in the signing of the leasing agreement between V.B. Perkins and Company and the Northern Territory Port Authority?

ANSWER

I cannot supply an answer at present.

562 Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he inform me whether reports are true that the Commonwealth is negotiating the sale of the railway track between Darwin and Larrimah?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, I am not certain whether the reports are true or not. I have heard these reports myself. I have written to the federal Minister for Transport regarding Commonwealth Railways, notably the disgraceful condition of the railway yards at Salonika, further in towards town and

and through the wharf area. It is a situation that would not be permitted to occur in any other capital city in the world yet the Commonwealth Railways can get away with grass growing as high as you like, rubbish, weeds, old railway tracks and rolling stock in a delapidated state. I have sent large photographs on 2 occasions - one in about September or October last year and another in the last 2 weeks - to the federal Minister for Transport and asked him to do something about it. It is a measure of the deal on transport that the Northern Territory gets that this situation is allowed to persist by that department. I will undertake to find out whether the railway lines are being sold overseas and I will provide an answer to the honourable member later in these sittings.

563 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it planned to redirect some traffic through the extended Hudson Fysh Avenue and Gregory Street if that proposal is approved by the Town Planning Board during the building of the Bagot Road - Stuart Highway overpass?

ANSWER

No.

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

564 Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to give more information to the honourable member for Stuart in reply to a question he asked yesterday. The information is that the person who made the request to inspect the statements for each minister in the register of pecuniary interests was Mr Peter Julian Hansen, an employee on the staff of the Leader of the Opposition. Mr Hansen's interest in inspecting the statements was in relation to business and land holdings of the ministers and the duties of each as a minister. Mr Hansen inspected all the statements with the exception of that submitted by the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy. The Clerk was not able to inform the minister, as required by the Assembly's resolution, before the time at which Mr Hansen wished to inspect the register.

565 Mr TUXWORTH: Yesterday the honourable member for Arnhem asked a question in relation to a specialist position in the Health Department relating to the inspection and monitoring of uranium mining in the Nabarlek area. Oversight of the uranium mining in the Alligators River region is the responsibility of the Environmental Health Division of the Northern Territory Department of Health. The selection of a well-qualified radiation physicist has been made and the offer awaits acceptance by the person concerned after approval by the Public Service Commissioner. Meanwhile, the Australian Radiation Laboratory is giving close support and liaison will continue with this organisation during the mining operation.

567 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is there any indication when the electricity reticulation in the Port Darwin area will be installed underground?

ANSWER

My understanding is that undergrounding work on McMinn station is just about complete. I also understand from the Electricity Commission that there is no justification in terms of load for the commission to underground power to the Darwin city area. The commission is currently embarking on a program of upgrading the overhead wiring to the Larrakeyah area. It is not economical to underground power to Larrakeyah. The commission anticipates completing this work in the Larrakeyah area this dry season.

568 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Can he advise whether the functions of Dundas House at Parap are to be changed and, if so, what other arrangements will be made to accommodate the children who are currently cared for there?

ANSWER

Dundas House could possibly be replaced by 2 family homes which would perform receiving-home functions. In addition to the family homes, the department's foster-care program is providing additional resources for the care of children. The capacity of the department to provide care for these children will remain quite adequate as there is considerable excess capacity in Dundas House. Within the new framework, children will be provided with family-type care which is far more appropriate to their development and emotional needs than the present institutional model.

569 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

I have asked questions on previous occasions about the future of the Darwin Hospital. There are many people who are still concerned about that project, and the fact that all existing emergency facilities presently at that hospital are to be removed. Will the minister consider giving his attention to the emergency service, including operating facilities at the Darwin Hospital.

ANSWER

As I have said on previous occasions, I am not unsympathetic to the proposal to maintain a facility in the Darwin Hospital area. The criterion for maintaining such a facility is to service as many people as possible, at the most economic cost, and to get the best benefit we can for the community. The Department of Health is of the opinion that the Darwin Hospital will be able to retain some minor services for acute occasions when emergency services are needed but, for the main part, the operating theatre and casualty sections will be transferred to the Casuarina Hospital to provide the best service possible to the people.

One other factor creeps into it and that is the Northern Territory is involved in a cost-sharing arrangement with the Commonwealth for maintaining hospitals. While they are paying 50% of the bills, we will have to put up a pretty good case in order to retain the present operation of the Darwin Hospital. It is unlikely, now that we are about to open Casuarina, that the Commonwealth would agree to pay the 50% of the cost of running 2 substantial operations. It is a matter of servicing the people in the

most economic way and providing the best service we can for the money.

570 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can the Minister yet advise on the future use of Carpentaria College?

ANSWER

This matter has a long and sorry history and, at this stage, I cannot advise the honourable member what use the college will be put to. We have arranged for the various mortgages and other matters to be transferred to the Northern Territory government. Until such time as we clear certain matters with the liquidator, the matter will remain unresolved. After we do clear these matters, it is proposed that an advertisement will be placed in the newspaper to seek expressions of interest in the premises. We already have some expressions but we feel the community should have the opportunity to submit proposals for the use and upgrading of the buildings. Until such time as we have settled all outstanding legal matters, I am afraid we cannot even go so far as to seek these expressions of interest in a formal way.

571 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Owing to the number of disadvantaged school students in isolated areas of the Northern Territory, will the minister give consideration to providing further assistance above that which is already available from the Commonwealth isolated school children and tertiary student allowances?

ANSWER

There are many disadvantaged and isolated children in the Northern Territory. The position in the past has been that, with the Commonwealth administering schools in the Northern Territory, we had no system of additional state grants available to children in isolated areas. The Commonwealth assistance to isolated children will continue after the transfer of the function. I assume the honourable member is talking about cash assistance rather than the broader issue of accommodation, tutorials etc. It will be a matter for the government, in the light of its budgetary strategies, to work out what level of additional assistance it can provide. This ranges from that provided by a state like Victoria which really has no isolation problems - it has some students in remoter areas, but it naturally has a fairly low level of additional assistance to isolated children - to a state like Queensland which is the most generous state by a long way. I have indicated publicly that the Northern Territory government will be providing additional financial assistance to isolated children. I will be arguing in Cabinet for as much as I can get because that is my ministerial responsibility. The level is yet to be determined.

572 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it true that, as a result of the establishment of the new Alice Springs railhead, the subsequent realignment of roads will cut through at least one Alice Springs business office? Will you assure the House that businesses in the Alice Springs area will not have their enterprises affected as is happening out at Berrimah?

ANSWER

As far as this relates to me, the town planning aspects have to be processed and I believe we make the rules at that time rather than decide to knock down businesses in advance.

573 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I will ask the same question of the Minister for Lands and Housing. Is it true that, as a result of the establishment of the new Alice Springs railhead, the subsequent realignment of roads will cut through at least one Alice Springs business office? Can the minister assure the House that businesses in the Alice Springs area will not have their enterprises affected as is happening out at Berrimah?

ANSWER

No proposals have yet been put to either myself or to the Town Planning Board to propose realignment. I cannot say that any business will be affected. Before any business is affected, that new scheme would have to go on display as an amendment to the Alice Springs Town Plan and there would be plenty of opportunity for people to object and to let their views be known.

As far as the second half of the question is concerned, that will depend on the type and extent of roadworks required. As we all appreciate, any roadworks cause some disruption, but this will be minimised as much as possible.

574 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Despite repeated requests from the northern farmers for information, there has been no reply. When will the public be told just what is grown at Berrimah farm and for what purpose?

ANSWER

The main agricultural activities at the Berrimah Experimental Farm are associated with horticulture, plant introductions, plant quarantine, seed increase, the growing of pastures of hay and holding animals involved in intensive experiments. New plant introductions are evaluated for productivity under local conditions and seed of the promising ones is multiplied for larger scale testing. The stilo and bullrush millet growing adjacent to the Stuart Highway are part of this program. I am disappointed that the northern farmers have not been able to provide themselves with adequate information as to the activities of Berrimah Farm. I will be shortly holding a field day out there to which they will be specifically invited.

575 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the estimated cost of the proposed overpass to be constructed at the Bagot Road-Stuart Highway intersection and what other options will be considered to relieve traffic at that intersection?

ANSWER

I ask her to place the question on notice.

576 Mr OLIVER to CHIEF MINISTER

I understand some assistance is being made available for the formation of a mounted police unit in Darwin. Can he please tell me what that assistance is and could it be made available also to the Alice Springs district for a local mounted police unit?

ANSWER

Whilst other states of Australia still retain Cossacks - and South Australia is one of the leading protagonists of this form of law enforcement - it is not the intention of the Northern Territory government to establish a mounted police unit as the honourable member for Alice Springs appears to infer. However, the Commissioner of Police has indicated that the police department will make available assistance to members of the police force who are interested in establishing a type of mounted unit which could be used on ceremonial occasions. I think I detailed in a previous session the type of assistance. I think it will be in relation to equipment and accoutrements for the horses. It certainly will not involve paying the feed bills or buying the horses as far as I am aware. I believe this assistance could be made available in Alice Springs as much as it could be made available in Darwin. If there are policemen interested in Alice Springs, and presumably there are, I suggest that they speak to the assistant commissioner in charge of the southern division.

577 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Will he make a statement to the House during these sittings detailing the measures to be taken by the Department of Primary Industry for the control of noxious weeds in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I believe that we can provide that information. If he placed his question on notice, that might be the best way for him to get that sort of information.

578 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Yesterday, a report prepared by the Hospital Advisory Board on the conditions of the furniture, fittings etc at the Darwin Hospital was tabled. In that report, a suggestion was made that consideration be given to leasing part of the Darwin Hospital complex for private purposes when the Casuarina complex is completed. Could he inform me if he has given consideration to the board's suggestion and is he able to given any details of such a proposal to the Assembly?

ANSWER

The idea of establishing a private hospital in the Northern Territory, particularly in Darwin, has been floating around for a long time and it has never really got off the ground. The transfer of the present operations at the Darwin Hospital to Casuarina has opened the door to the possibility of a section of the existing Darwin Hospital being leased or sold to an entrepreneur for use as a private hospital. I do not have any particular feelings for or against the introduction of a private hospital in Darwin. I think that private hospitals can play an important role in any community. I believe too that they must be conceived in the community in the sense that the private practitioners must support them and they must be run by competent operators. In the event of any such group of

entrepreneurs making an offer for the use of all or part of the Darwin Hospital for private hospital use, I am sure the government would look at the offer. So long as there was absolutely no cost involved to the government and there was some return in it, the offer would have to receive some consideration.

579 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

I refer to the dreaded Ludmilla-Fannie Bay connector road which has my support. Can he advise the House if provision will be made for bicycle tracks and, if so, are there any other bicycle tracks provided in Darwin or likely to be?

ANSWER

Perhaps we should change the name to the Nightcliff-Fannie Bay connector and that will leave me out of it. Yes, there is a provision for a bicycle track in the contract. I believe that other plans are in hand to provide bicycle tracks in other places. I do not know that all those plans are available but, certainly, in the next few months, those plans will be made public.

580 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has a contract been let for the painting of the interior and exterior of the Nhulunbuy Area School? If not, can he tell me the reason for the holdup in this most important work?

ANSWER

I am afraid I cannot provide a definitive answer. I will certainly seek the information. The cyclical maintenance program for bush schools right throughout his electorate, that of the honourable member for Arnhem and a number of other electorates leaves a lot to be desired. I know the honourable member was not talking about a bush school. It seems to me that the government had better undertake a complete examination of this system of maintenance under which the contract is primarily let to the private enterprise organisation to do its own assessment and follow-up work. It seems that the companies that are getting the contracts are spending far too much time assessing and not enough time doing. In other words, they visit a school in an outlying area, do an assessment of the requirements of that school and, instead of coming back a week later, they come back 3 months later and find other things that need doing. The work itself never seems to get done. It is a constant complaint. It seems to me that the system leaves a lot to be desired. In respect of both those issues, I hope to be able to advise the honourable member later.

581 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has he received a submission from the Environment Council of the Northern Territory for the funding of a study of the conservation priorities in the Reynolds River-Daly River area of the Northern Territory? If so, what action has he taken on the submission?

ANSWER

I hope to offer the Leader of the Opposition some information later today.

582 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he advise the amount of revenue received by the government from the Liquor Commission since the Liquor Act came into force earlier this year? Does the government intend increasing liquor licensing fees?

ANSWER

The Liquor Commission came into being on 12 February this year. At that stage and up until 31 April, it had collected about \$1.2m in revenue. The issuing of fees has been discussed in this House before, particularly during the debate on the introduction of the Liquor Commission Bill and there is no doubt that the Northern Territory has the lowest liquor fees in Australia. In most cases, they are historic and, almost since the time they began, they have not been reviewed. The government has no plans to move imprudently into this area and we are waiting the first report of the Liquor Commission which will be tabled some time in August or September. I would hope that it has some recommendations as to what direction we should pursue, both as a government and as a society, so far as licence fees are concerned.

582A Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I understand that a proposal has been put forward to extend the Stuart Park Primary School sporting area. Will the additional area be used solely for school activities or will it become a public area under the control of the city council?

ANSWER

I have only preliminary information on this question. The land involved, on preliminary investigations, would seem to cover both a portion of land which is apparently within the school reserve and a portion of vacant crown land and, therefore, boundaries would have to be amended. If this oval goes ahead, I would propose that it vest with the city corporation - they have not been approached on the subject as yet - with a view to having the oval available for use by the school, both during and after normal school hours, and by the community after school hours. As this matter is in a very preliminary stage, I cannot really commit the city council as they have history of not liking to take over the maintenance of too much open public space where they find it is particularly uneconomical.

582B Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

The Health Department recently issued a statement expressing its concern about accidents occurring at the recently established roller-skating rink in Darwin. Could the minister advise whether the Department of Health had discussions with the management of that centre before issuing its statement or after in order to seek positive ways of reducing the accidents?

ANSWER

I am aware that a press report came from the department. I am not aware of its content and I am not aware whether there was any communication between the parties. I can say that there is absolutely no communication with myself about the matter, so I do not know the background of the press release.

583 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Because of the recent wet weather in Alice Springs, the edges of Undoolya Road have deteriorated to an unsafe condition. Following on from my question in the last sittings, can the minister please advise me when Undoolya Road will be upgraded?

ANSWER

The Alice Springs Council is responsible for the condition of the Undoolya Road and the works manager from the council has raised the matter with government officers in Alice Springs and investigations are still proceeding. The council has not included this road in the list of projects for which it is seeking financial assistance for 1979/80. However, should the council wish it to be included, I am sure their list can be amended to allow this project to proceed.

584 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When is it expected that the reconstruction of the Stuart Highway, which was recently commenced between the 12 and 13 mile, will be completed in that location?

ANSWER

There is just too much fine detail to be remembered. I am afraid that I cannot provide that information at the present time.

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

585 Mr STEELE: The information I would like to provide is to the honourable member for Nightcliff in respect of her 2 questions outstanding. The first question was: what are the names of the committee working on the antibiotic content of foodstuffs and when will the report be prepared? The reply is that the committee is a working party within the Division of Primary Industry and it has examined all aspects of the control and quality of animal feed and antibiotic content is one of a wide range of aspects to be considered. Members of the committee are selected to represent the animal health and chemistry units in the division.

The second question related to jenny crabs and I have no further information for the honourable member other than that contained in my letter to her of 3 November 1978.

603 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer him to the NT News of Wednesday 28 March in which there was a report of a rape case in Darwin. Will he introduce legislation to ensure that the names of victims of sexual assault will not be published unless otherwise ordered by a court?

ANSWER

I understand that this particular case was investigated by the Department of Law at my request and an understanding had been reached between the court and the press that the name of the victim would not be published. For some reason of oversight or inadvertency on the part of the paper, the name did get into print. This had caused me to request the Policy Unit of the Department of Law to investigate whether the Northern Territory should amend the law as it presently stands to automatically prohibit the publication of the names of people involved in certain types of criminal proceedings. Such a course necessarily brings with it inherent risks in that it is in the nature of muzzling the press. We are told repeatedly that much of the fabric of our society depends upon the liberty of the press to publish what it believes to be in the interest of the public. Naturally, the government is viewing this whole question with a great deal of concern. We are looking for precedents that may have been established elsewhere and I should be able to report to this Assembly by September on the government's view as to whether it would be in the interests of the public to legislate to automatically preclude the publication of the names of persons, innocent victims though they may be, involved in certain types of criminal offences.

604 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Now that a number of areas within the Territory have been declared Aboriginal land under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act, can he advise what action is being taken by the Department of Mines and Energy to process applications for mining interests which have not been dealt with for some years?

ANSWER

There are about 270 mining leases and applications relating to Aboriginal land that have not been dealt with and some go back as far as 1972. In order to clear the backlog and get a satisfactory working relationship, I have already had preliminary discussions on 2 occasions with the Northern Land Council in Darwin and I am looking forward to having discussions with the Central Land Council to get some ground rules for the handling of mining applications in that area. The progress we have made to date has been encouraging. There will be further discussions at a departmental level between officers of the Department of Mines and Energy and the land councillors themselves and we hope to have some formal ground rules by mid-July, that both parties find acceptable and which we can adopt to handle the outstanding claims.

605 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for HEALTH

The design of the Casuarina Hospital only provides for patient care in a totally enclosed and airconditioned environment. What arrangements are made for those patients who are not suited to this particular type of care?

ANSWER

The concept and design of the Casuarina Hospital was given to us by our well-meaning friends down south. It was taken from the design of a hospital in Canberra which, not unreasonably, would have a totally enclosed environment. To my knowledge, there is no provision in the hospital for people to recuperate in an outdoor environment but I will raise the matter with the department to see if I can provide the honourable member with some information that may satisfy her on this particular issue.

606 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Previous mention has been made in this House of the possibility of a new mining act. Can he give any indication of progress on this matter?

ANSWER

The compilation and formation of a new mining act has been going on now for about 18 months. Two drafts have been prepared for comment by various persons, industries and land councils. We are in the final stages of compiling the third or fourth draft and, if all goes well, we should have it ready for introduction in the September sittings.

607 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware that a number of cattle were taken recently to the wharf for live shipment and were found to be unbranded? They were subsequently taken to the 12-mile and branded there before being shipped.

ANSWER

No, I was not aware of that. It sounds like a serious matter. Perhaps the honourable gentleman would like to give me some more information.

608 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Block 8 appears to be continually under repair. Could he please inform me when this work is to be completed.

ANSWER

The question really belongs in the portfolio of my colleague the Minister for Transport and Works under whose department various governmental contracts are carried out. However, I do share his concern that the upgrading and completion of block 8 seems to be a never-ending job. Perhaps the honourable member would wish to redirect his question.

609 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has the government yet made a decision about the future use of the Fannie Bay Gaol site and, if not, when does he anticipate a decision will be made?

ANSWER

The government has not taken an attitude on this matter to date. The last time the honourable member for Fannie Bay asked this question, I indicated that the government would be appreciative of any suggestions people had for a possible future use. If I recall rightly, my office received one representation on the matter. We would certainly be

interested in hearing other suggestions. However, at this stage, no decision has been taken and I cannot give a date as to when a decision will be taken. We do not regard the matter as one with any particular urgency.

610 Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

I am aware that immigration is a responsibility of the federal government and I feel that the federal government realises that we are responsible to the people of the Northern Territory. Can he inform me whether consultation with the Commonwealth takes place in matters relating to the boat people who frequently enter my electorate?

ANSWER

It seems to me that the honourable member of Port Darwin is taking this matter in a very personal way but perhaps not as personally as the lady at Myilly Point who sighted a boat right under her window. It had not been sighted by anyone else up to then. We certainly do consult with the Commonwealth government and, in particular, with the Minister for Immigration, Mr McKellar, in relation to the refugees or boat people as they are called. The Northern Territory government has made a number of suggestions to the Commonwealth government in relation to what many people regard as a problem. We have suggested that, in view of the Australian government's indicated willingness to accept a reasonable quota of these people each year, the people who do come to Australia by boat should perhaps be regarded as queue jumpers. We have suggested that part of an island such as Christmas Island should be turned into a reception centre for boat people.

It now appears that the Indonesian government is going to move rather more quickly than the Australian government and has made available one of the islands in the Indonesian Archipelago for use as a reception centre. I understand that the Australian government was one of the governments at the recent meeting in Indonesia with the representatives of the People's Republic of Vietnam which was prepared to commit itself to a specific sum of money for the preparation of this island as a centre for the reception of refugees. It would seem to me that, although some of the suggestions that the Northern Territory government has made to the Commonwealth have not been accepted, others have been forced on the Commonwealth by pressure from outside. I can assure the people of the Northern Territory that this government will endeavour to see that the interests of the people of the Northern Territory are kept fairly and squarely in mind by the people who make the decisions in Canberra.

611 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Having regard to the fact that 2 young cyclists were killed on the Northern Territory roads over the last weekend and a further one was seriously injured, what steps does the minister propose to take to accelerate the construction of bicycle tracks in the Northern Territory towns?

ANSWER

I do not know whether the honourable member has been misinformed about certain happenings. Certainly, there were 2 deaths, but it would appear to me that the death in Alice Springs occurred because an 8-year-old was riding on the airport road. That would be a thing that I would not allow my child of 9 or 10 to do. That is not to say that cycle tracks should not be established in the suburban areas of Alice Springs and Darwin. I would be inclined to say that young children should not be riding along major highways.

612 Mr VALE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is he in a position to persuade the Katherine meatworks to provide a further killing facility for export cattle?

ANSWER

There has been much interest in this particular question. Under the Northern Territory Abattoirs and Slaughtering Act, it is only possible to compel abattoirs to kill for local consumption in a licensed abattoir area. Under the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation Act, section 11(1)(b), the AMLC can compel an export establishment to kill on consignment. However, there are doubts as to the effectiveness of that section, which I understand the Commonwealth government has under review. I made representations in October last year to Mr Sinclair, the Commonwealth minister, urging him to make any necessary amendments so that all export meatworks can be compelled by the AMLC to kill on consignment.

There seems to be some misconception regarding certain loans to Northmeat. These loans do not constitute equity in the company and do not entitle the holder of the loan to dictate to the management as to how it should conduct its business. In fact the loan in question is still in the name of the Commonwealth. I understand that the possibility of transfer to the Territory government has been complicated by the fact that the Commonwealth was in the process of renegotiating the terms and conditions of the loan with the principals of the company at 30 June 1978. I am hopeful that the question of the transfer of the loan will be resolved.

613 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What was the outcome of the inquiry into the high cost of liquid petroleum gas in Darwin?

ANSWER

The inquiry that was carried out by the Department of Mines and Energy was conducted in all centres in the Northern Territory and revealed that only in one place, Darwin, was there any indication of unreasonable charges for LPG. The government looked at the possible ways that the overcharging situation could be rectified - by controlling the distribution of the product or by encouraging competition to come into the Northern Territory and so create competition between the operators and the vendors of the products which would result in a more reasonable price being made available to the public.

In the first instance, the government does not particularly want to be involved in the production, marketing and retailing of LPG anywhere in the Northern Territory; it is something that is best left to private enterprise. So far as the second part of the exercise was concerned, we contacted several companies in different states and asked them whether they would be interested in setting up in the Northern Territory. Each company indicated that the market was too small or geographically difficult for them to service. We also looked at the possibility of controlling the price of the product in some form or another but we became bogged down in the legalities of the day. The matter has since been referred to both the Prices Justification Tribunal and another Commonwealth body that has jurisdiction in the matter. It would be impracticable for the Northern Territory government to control the price.

614 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he inform me what steps are being taken to improve power supply of the tropo-scatter system operating between Cox Peninsula, Gove and Groote Eylandt and which has caused many intermittent breakdowns since the cyclone?

ANSWER

I am aware of the difficulties that have been caused on that tropo-scatter system as a result of power failures. However, it is my understanding that the power supply is not a responsibility of the Northern Territory Electricity Commission or the Department of Transport and Works and is in fact the responsibility of Telecom. That being the case, I will take the matter up with Telecom to see if I can obtain the necessary information to satisfy the honourable member.

615 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Will he confirm that the provision of housing for Timorese people, who have arrived in Darwin this year as a result of the agreement between the Australian and Indonesian governments, has placed some strain on the provision of public housing. Has the Northern Territory government approached the federal government with a request for additional housing funds to help overcome this problem?

ANSWER

I will seek to obtain some detailed information for the honourable member and provide it during these sittings.

616 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Why have roadworks been undertaken at the 19-mile on the Stuart Highway opposite the pumping station on the McMinns Bore Road and will these improvements carry on down the McMinns Bore Road to the first dangerous right-angled bend?

ANSWER

I understand there is a very dangerous 'S' bend on the dirt road that comes out onto the Stuart Highway opposite McMinns Bore. The reason for the roadworks is to get rid of that 'S' bend and to make it a right-angled bend into the Stuart Highway.

617 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

My question relates to the working party that was set up to advise the minister on stockfeeds and particularly on the use of antibiotics. When is the working party expected to report to the minister?

ANSWER

I have asked the committee to report to me by the end of the year at the latest.

618 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

A study of foreshores was conducted some time ago. Has that foreshore-management study, together with its recommendations, gone before Cabinet as yet?

ANSWER

No, the foreshore-management study itself has not gone before Cabinet. The management study, which was talked about late last year, was completed and has been on display after consideration by the Town Planning Board earlier this year. However, there are further studies underway both as a result of that foreshore-management study and as a result of applications to the government from proposed developers of marinas in Darwin. The government is having a report prepared for Cabinet on this subject.

619 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it a fact that water rates are charged to owners of vacant allotments even where the water meter returns a reading of zero and, if so, why?

ANSWER

It is a bit like council rates. If you own a block in the middle of town, you pay the rates regardless because that amount of money goes towards servicing the whole of the urban area. I think that is the reason why we do charge the flat rate.

620 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he please inform me when the Sadadene High School will be officially opened?

ANSWER

I suppose that some would have it that it should be officially opened when it is fully equipped, I will give further information on that later. My understanding is that it will be some time in August.

621 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware that a 25-feet-wide harvester which costs about \$80,000 was purchased for the Experimental Farm at Katherine. Is he aware that this type of machine is suitable only for harvesting sorghum in paddocks of about 1,000 acres rather than the 10-acre blocks at the Experimental Farm? In fact, they had to knock down fences to get it in. What has been the fate of this virtually useless machine?

ANSWER

The honourable gentleman is better informed than I am. Perhaps he would like to place his question on notice so that we can both obtain up-to-date information.

622 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Does the Liquor Commission intend to reduce the number of liquor licences in the Northern Territory? How many new licences have been granted since the new law came into force?

ANSWER

I am not aware that the Liquor Commission has any immediate program to reduce the number of licences in the Northern Territory but people have expressed concern that there are far too many licences in the Northern Territory. In fact, the Northern Territory has more licensed premises

per head of population than any other state or territory in Australia. The commission will hopefully reflect on this particular issue when it brings down its first report later this year.

In relation to the second part of the question, I believe that, since the commission came into operation 3 or 4 months ago, there have been 2 new licences issued and 3 have lapsed in that period.

623 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware that a wide cross-section of women's organisations, including the Country Women's Association, the Women's Electoral Lobby and the Darwin Women's Centre, support the establishment of an office of women's adviser to the Northern Territory government? If so, will the Chief Minister establish such an adviser within the Northern Territory Public Service?

ANSWER

I have heard reports in the press that a number of people are suggesting that the Northern Territory government should appoint a women's adviser. I have received a couple of letters from the Women's Electoral Lobby suggesting that I take that step and I have replied requesting that they support their suggestion by, for instance, a statement of the duties of the women's adviser as they see it. To date, there have been calls by this organisation - certainly I have not heard of any calls by the Country Women's Association for the appointment of a women's adviser - and the calls seem to be based mainly on the fact that such appointments have occurred elsewhere. There has been little suggestion on what the role or duties of a women's adviser would be in the Northern Territory.

In the federal house, one sees a great dearth of female members, especially in the House of Representatives where I cannot recall that there is one female member. When one looks at other state parliaments one finds that there are not very many women members of state legislatures yet we in the Northern Territory have the good fortune to have 4 women members. When you consider that we have a total of 19 members, almost one fifth of those members are women. One can hope, without wishing any disrespect to you or any other honourable member here, that the number of women members in this House will continue to grow. I would think that it could be taken that the need for a women's adviser by the Northern Territory government could be some indication that the 4 honourable members of this House are not bringing to the attention of the government matters which they believe the government should be bearing in mind in relation to women's affairs. Whilst I am not suggesting that the government would adopt the course on that view alone, I certainly would suggest that there have not been any approaches made to me by any of the honourable women members of this House concerning particular matters where the government might have a peculiar need for a women's adviser.

624 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is it the policy of his party to restrict the consideration of issues to either a male or female category or does his party acknowledge that problems are not unique to one particular sex but are inseparable in present-day living and will he give due attention to that?

ANSWER

I do not know whether I should suggest to the honourable member for Nightcliff that she might possibly improve her thoughts and general

outlook by reading, with some considerable degree of care, the policies of the Northern Territory Country Liberal Party. I think that it would improve her mind to have a sound knowledge of the policies of this fine party of which I am the parliamentary leader. The Northern Territory Country Liberal Party draws no distinction, and neither do I, between what should be the rights of all citizens in the Northern Territory and I do not think there should be any distinctions made on the basis of sex, creed or colour. I hope that that situation would be well understood by all honourable members in this House.

625 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What is the position in relation to supplies and equipment at Sadadene High School?

ANSWER

The position was outlined in this place a couple of sittings ago. The lack of supplies for that high school stems from an original bid by the Department of Education which was substantially reduced, unilaterally, by the Federal Department of Finance. After an inadequate amount of money was allocated to the Department of Education for plant and equipment and stores for use throughout Northern Territory schools, the Department of Administrative Services got its oar into the act and we all know what delays occur when we have multiple federal departments trying to supply goods and equipment to the Northern Territory.

The community has been widely told through the press that the Sadadene High School has been poorly treated. I do not believe it has. A special establishment grant of \$22,500 was made in respect of that school - \$90 per child attending. Incidentally, another problem arose out of the high school being so popular and that resulted in far more enrolments than was originally envisaged. That figure of \$90 per child is 4 times the average normally given for the establishment of such schools. In addition, there was a \$10,000 library grant, despite the library cuts, which I think was a generous allocation.

The main problem at the moment is in the technical studies area in relation to benches and similar equipment. There was a delay in the provision of such things as carpets, bookshelves and other hardware. Consumables have been well looked after in the new high school and we envisage that, by the end of June, the final bits and pieces which are deficient at this stage will be provided to the Sadadene School.

626 Mrs O'NEIL to CHIEF MINISTER

A member of the Chief Minister's personal staff recently attended a well-attended public meeting at Darwin where the possible functions of a government women's adviser were widely discussed. Has the Chief Minister received a report of that meeting from his staff member and, if not, will he request a report without further delay?

ANSWER

It is very interesting that after days of languishing in this House without receiving any questions at all, one should suddenly become the centre of attention from 2 of the honourable female members opposite. I am aware that a member of my staff attended a meeting which was convened by the Women's Electoral Lobby at a school in the Casuarina area a few weeks ago. I understand that the attendance at that meeting was in the order of 40 and that representatives of various community groups attended.

My staff member furnished me with a report on the nature of the meeting and a couple of days later I received a letter from the Women's Electoral Lobby which I referred to earlier this morning. As a result, I sent a reply to the Women's Electoral Lobby asking them to outline what they saw as being the duties of a women's adviser. When I receive a reply to that, I will give the matter my further consideration.

627 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

The provision of health services to rural areas right throughout the Northern Territory is steadily improving. What measures is the government taking to see that the same improvements will occur with dental services?

ANSWER

I think that all honourable members and most of the public are well aware of the deficiencies that we have suffered for quite some time in the dental area - deficiencies that we have been working steadily to overcome.

The Department of Health has created several additional positions for dentists. Further to that, it intends to improve the program of occupational dental therapy for children in schools and is planning to extend this program to the Aboriginal community and has started a training program for Aboriginal workers in the dental therapy field. Further to this, in an effort to try to extend the wing of the dental unit into the countryside, it has placed an order for a mobile dental unit for some \$170,000 which will be delivered later this year. It is anticipated that we will get another one next year.

While some aspects of the dental problems that we have experienced are being overcome, we are still having extreme difficulty with the recruitment of an orthodontist. We believe that we have an orthodontist that will take up his duties in the Northern Territory shortly, but the response to having orthodontists working on a salary for the department is very disappointing and we anticipate further delays in this area.

628 Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the recommendations of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Expenditure that Northern Territory forestry operations should be placed on a care-and-maintenance basis, is it true that the Forestry Branch is proposing to establish a further plantation of a quarter of a million trees on Melville Island?

ANSWER

I gave a great deal of careful consideration last year to the report of the committee. Of course, that parliamentary committee viewed a particular year's program of the Northern Territory Forestry Branch and it came to the conclusion that the Northern Territory forestry program was not a particularly viable one. This occurred shortly before 1 July last year and it caused the Northern Territory's then executive a considerable degree of concern because it appeared the Northern Territory might lose valuable revenue which was being expended in the forestry area. Certainly, whilst Northern Territory forests may not be as productive as those in some other parts of Australia, there is no doubt that reasonably valuable resources are being established or preserved in some areas. Honourable members may have noticed that, in the administrative arrangements which followed self-government, the Northern Territory Forestry

Branch was placed under the administrative control of the Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission because forestry in the Northern Territory is largely a matter of preservation of our existing resources rather than the planting of exotic species.

There is also the social aspect of the work of the Forestry Branch in the Northern Territory. Forestry commissions in other states do a great deal of work for people in rural areas. It is the desire of the Northern Territory government to maintain as many job opportunities as it can in areas of the Northern Territory where these opportunities are not readily available. For that reason, the Northern Territory government has not taken any steps to close down Northern Territory forestry operations on Melville Island or at Murganella where they principally occur. At Murganella, there is no actual planting and the natural resources of cypress pine are preserved from fires and encouraged to regenerate. On Melville Island, there has been planting of exotic species, including certain pine varieties, and there has been experimental plantings of other varieties. In recent years, the best results have been obtained from the planting of *pinus caribbea* of which there have only been very small plantings, if any, on Melville Island since about 1 July last year.

The Northern Territory government, during the course of the second half of last year, commissioned a fact-finding inquiry into the Northern Territory Forestry Branch's previous operations by officers of the Queensland Forestry Commission and the government has had that report now for some time. I would be happy to make this report available to honourable members. In fact, I think that it could be tabled before the conclusion of this Assembly. As I recall it, the Queensland forestry officers were impressed with the rates of growth that had been experienced in *pinus caribbea* and compared them favourably with growth rates for that variety in Queensland. It may be that there is a future in the growth of *pinus caribbea* as an exotic species in the Northern Territory, not only for timber but also for seedlings. I understand, and some inquiries are being made into this, that there are considerable markets for seedlings of *pinus caribbea* in South-East Asia.

In any event, those are the broad outlines of the inquiries that I have made into the forestry area since it has come under my control and I am certainly happy to table this report in the Assembly. I believe that the forestry operations in rural areas should not be closed down because they provide work opportunities and, wherever possible, if it can be established that it is likely to be a viable operation, Northern Territory forestry operations should be expanded.

635 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is it the intention of the government to complete the Dripstone Community Health Centre that was severely damaged by the cyclone whilst still under construction?

ANSWER

The Department of Health does have a program to continue with construction of that health centre. The original plan that was envisaged in the Commonwealth days was very substantial and, because the department and the government are now reviewing the role of health centres in the communities of the Northern Territory, it is not likely that the development of the Dripstone centre will be on the grand scale that the original plan proposed. It is hoped that this program will proceed within the next 12 months, but that will be a subject for budgetary consideration.

636 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Who ordered the police investigation into the material contained in lectures given by Mr John Tomlinson at the Darwin Community College?

ANSWER

Certain material was brought to my attention by officers of one or other of my departments. This material contained instructions on how one could undermine the existing order of the state as well as guidelines for the preparation of bombs and explosive devices. I therefore requested the Police Commissioner to carry out an investigation into the nature of the training that was being undertaken by students in a certain course at the Darwin Community College. It occurred to me that the college would have been happy to have supplied the investigating officers with full details of the course that it was providing to these people. The police investigation met with a complete lack of cooperation on the part of the administration of the Darwin Community College and, indeed, it is surprising that the honourable member for Arnhem was able to offer to the Minister for Education a complete set of lecture notes and transcripts when the administration of the Darwin Community College refused to supply this information to the officers of the Northern Territory Police Force who were investigating what they believed could well have been a breach of the law.

637 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Are there any definite plans for a small travelling rural library?

ANSWER

Once the Casuarina Library is opened, hopefully it will be able to provide this service to the rural area.

638 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Can he advise us of the progress on the realignment of the intersections of Trower Road, Bagot Road and Progress Drive, commonly known as "Crystal Corner".

ANSWER

The intersection that the honourable member refers to has been programmed in next year's budget. We tried to get it in this year, realising the

importance of the reconstruction of that intersection. We were unable to do that but we hope that we can get stuck into that particular work towards the end of this year.

639 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What initiatives has the government taken to retain a regular shipping service to Darwin from the eastern coast?

ANSWER

Members will remember the excitement that was caused when the federal government advised the Chief Minister late last year that they proposed to take the Darwin Trader off the east coast run to Darwin. At that time, the Chief Minister advised the federal Minister for Transport that that was not on. We have had consultants looking into alternative services on the east coast to Darwin run and they have reported back that, in the long term, they do not consider the Darwin Trader to be a viable proposition to service Darwin. I will be in a position to further advise the House as these negotiations proceed.

640 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I thank the minister for giving me a copy of the Chandler Report late yesterday afternoon. I had not received an invitation to study it earlier, despite his statement to the press yesterday morning that I had. Now that he has kindly made the report available to me, will he make copies available to the public?

ANSWER

I will consider the matter.

641 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for HEALTH

The Ilpapa Swamp in Alice Springs is a breeding ground for mosquitoes and other vectors which could lead to the spread of disease. What steps are being taken to reduce this risk?

ANSWER

I do not think it is any secret that the Ilpapa situation has been a very unsatisfactory one. My understanding is that the Department of Health has been agitating since about 1974 for the swamp to be cleaned up because of the disease that is likely to be spread by the mosquitoes breeding in that area. If certain diseases were to become established in the Centre, they could have a very adverse effect on the tourist industry. The Department of Health has long taken the view that the best way to solve the Ilpapa Swamp situation is to re-use the water either by treating it in a complete and satisfactory manner so that it can be used as town water, which is common practice in some parts of America, or by using it on crops. I do not think the department's stance has changed at all in the last 4 or 5 years and I feel that any persons - be they town planners, local government authorities or whatever - who can hasten the prospect of the water being re-used on a crop would be doing the community a very great service.

642 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has the government decided upon a new set of criteria to apply to organisations who wish to receive grants-in-aid? If so, has the government taken any steps to inform organisations, who have been in receipt of such

grants, of the new criteria?

ANSWER

The answer is yes. About 300 organisations have been informed of the new criteria or guidelines that are to apply for community grants-in-aid to various sporting organisations and community groups.

643 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has the Housing Commission given any consideration to converting the Gove government hostel from single-room units to double-room units to cater for married couples and provide a better standard of accommodation for single people?

ANSWER

I am very much aware of the problem that the member for Nhulunbuy alludes to. I have been involved for some years trying to find some resolution to the rather unsatisfactory standard of accommodation that exists at the Gove hostel. At present, the hostel is being administered by the Department of Community Development. However, there is every possibility that the administration of the building will eventually go to the Housing Commission. I have asked the Housing Commission to do a study of the hostel with a view to looking at the feasibility of converting it to a more satisfactory standard of accommodation for single officers than the existing 10' x 9' rooms. These rooms are certainly not up to the standard of accommodation that anyone would expect single officers to reside in for any great length of time.

644 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to Saint Margaret Mary School at Parap. Since the cyclone, it has not been used as a school but as a creche and is now vacant. Has the minister's department given any consideration to its future use and has he had discussions with the owners of that school, the Catholic Church?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the problem that the honourable member for Fannie Bay suggests. There has been no contact with my office in this regard. I do not know if there has been any contact with the Department of Lands and Housing. I am not quite sure of the status of the land though I presume it is owned by the Catholic Church. If that is the case, it would be up to them to come forward with a proposal for assistance or surrender of the lease or for conversion to some other possible use. I will inquire into the matter.

645 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is the minister aware of the current controversy surrounding the chemical substance 245T? Can the minister comment on this controversy?

ANSWER

The only information I can give the honourable member is that both the department and the government are watching the developments that occur with this particular product. We get a report every week from Canberra from the National Health and Medical Research Council. These people are our mentors in this particular matter and, if there are any developments, I will advise honourable members.

646 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Are sufficient loan funds available to meet the demand from people seeking loan funds through the Home Finance Trustee?

ANSWER

The answer to the question is yes. Quite recently, I approved a transfer of some funds from one particular loan scheme to the \$20,000 housing loan scheme which is administered by the Housing Commission and which was formerly called the Home Finance Trustee Loan.

647 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I have asked this question on several other occasions and it is in regard to the ruins of the old museum and the naval headquarters. They have now been through 5 wet seasons. Would the minister give me some assurance that work will commence on the old museum site and the naval headquarters before the sixth wet season?

ANSWER

I can assure the honourable member that the work is programmed to commence on the old museum site and naval headquarters before the next wet season. A feasibility study has been carried out as to how the museum site may be developed and I should be making an announcement on that proposal shortly. Planning for the rebuilding of the old naval headquarters for use as offices for His Honour the Administrator are well advanced and provisions are being sought in the 1979/80 budget with the object of beginning work before the end of this dry season. I would point out, however, that the part of the structure which survived the cyclone has been given treatment to guard against further damage until re-building recommences.

648 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Does the Government Printing Office take on jobs outside official printing and, if so, for whom, at what price and when? Will this competition with private industry continue?

ANSWER

The government policy generally is not to compete with private enterprise. The Government Printing Office prints for the Territory government, the Commonwealth government and the Northern Territory statutory authorities. I doubt that there will be any departure from this policy.

649 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What are the reasons for the delay in the taking of oil from the Mereenie fields west of Alice Springs and will he be able to assure the House that the Mereenie project is economically viable?

ANSWER

In answer to the second part of the question, if I was an entrepreneur and I had 40 million barrels of oil at \$15 a barrel sitting in the ground, I would think I was sitting on a very good thing. There is still a lot to be done before the Mereenie project becomes a reality. There is an agreement to be reached between the traditional owners and the Central Land Council and the company. The company would have to establish markets and

it would have to look at its refining responsibility. Before it goes into its refining responsibilities, there is no doubt that it will have to do further exploratory work and this too depends upon the agreement that must be reached between the land council, the traditional owners and the company. Developments will not happen overnight but there are certain factors that can proceed reasonably quickly.

The government has been keen to test run some of the crude oil through the powerhouse to see whether any damage would be incurred upon the engine so that, in the event of the product being satisfactory, the Electricity Commission will be able to plan our future so far as local oil reserves are concerned. Last week, there were plans to take oil from the well and it was anticipated by the company that the oil would be taken from within the casing. The technical people who manufacture the engines advised the government that the oil that is stored in the casing has been there for 7 years and suffers from a vertical density separation caused by being stored vertically and it would not really be satisfactory for testing purposes so far as the commission and the engine manufacturers are concerned.

We also worked out that, if we had a 7 inch casing and it was 6,000 feet deep, there would be 10,016 gallons stored in the casing. The oil that would be required by the commission and the test people would be from the reservoir itself so we would have to dispose of the oil that was in the casing because it is unsuitable for the tests. I told the company that it would not be satisfactory to us for the oil to be run over the ground or sprayed into the air; it should be tanked, taken away and disposed of satisfactorily. My idea of disposing of oil satisfactorily in a place like that would be to put it on the roads to keep the dust down but that is a matter for the company to decide. Providing that the company is able to get trucks in, the test should go ahead in the next week. Honourable members can be well assured that the environmental aspects of the whole operation will be watched carefully.

650 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Following on from my question regarding the Ilpapa Swamp, can he tell me what the current situation is relating to the proposed farm adjacent to the sewage ponds?

ANSWER

I think it was in the 1960s that it was first proposed that a sewage farm be established adjacent to the ponds in Alice Springs. In recent times, there has been some objection to those ponds under the town planning processes and, until further information is placed before the Town Planning Board, the project that we proposed to commence this year has come to a halt. We had proposed that a 50-hectare farm be established at the cost of some \$700,000.

651 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware that there are navigation hazards in the inner Darwin Harbour such as submerged buoys and wrecks which have not yet been cleared. Could he advise us why they have not been cleared by the Port Authority? Is it because of a shortage of funds or some other reason?

ANSWER

I ask her to place that question on notice.

652 Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise what steps his department proposes taking to upgrade the section of the Stuart Highway which passes through Heavitree Gap in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The railway line reconstruction is scheduled to reach Alice Springs in November 1980. Plans are in progress to meet that contingency so that the reconstruction through Heavitree Gap will be on schedule when the line reaches Alice Springs.

653 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has the government assumed responsibility for maintaining the section of Fred's Pass Road which provides the only means of access to the Elizabeth River Estate in the Hundred of Strangways? If the answer is yes, why has the road not been maintained to acceptable rural standards?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide that information. I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

654 Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The minister previously announced the formation of a working party to advise the government on the establishment of a Northern Territory teaching service. Has that working party formally met and what are its tasks?

ANSWER

The working party to inquire into and report to the government on the establishment of a Northern Territory teaching service has met formally. I have asked the working party to examine the 4 available models of teaching services which operate in the region: Papua New Guinea; New South Wales, which is still trying to come up with a proposal for a commission after about 6 years; the ACT; and South Australia, the most modern. I have asked the working party to have particular regard to the teaching service system that applies in the state of South Australia and to look at all the other teaching services with a view to modifying or adapting the South Australian system to the Northern Territory context. The working party had proposed that it receive full-time release from duty for about 3 months. On advice, it was not really considered necessary by the government that full-time release be applicable in the circumstances. I have asked the director of the Northern Territory division - I cannot make any instructions or orders in relation to staff - that he provide to the working party a full-time research officer and assistant. I understand that the working party will meet for a 2-week session immediately following the school vacation. I would anticipate that, shortly after that 2-week meeting, it should be in a position to put out its initial thoughts to the teaching profession for reaction. I would expect the working party to come up with recommendations sufficient for the government to indicate its attitude in time for the conference of the Northern Territory Teachers Federation in August in order that we might proceed with legislation in the September and November sittings so that the Northern Territory Teaching Service may properly commence on 1 January 1980.

655 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

The East Point Reserve Trustees have been asking for some considerable time that the former East Point golf course be incorporated into the reserve for the benefit of the public. Will the minister be making an announcement without further delay on the future use of that area of land to end speculation that it might revert to a full golf course or be used as a country club?

ANSWER

No, I am not prepared to put forward a government statement to end all speculation on the matter. The government is obviously interested in looking at all options that are put forward for any proposed use for this vacant crown land. There are a number of courses open for the use of the particular land in question. I think the government should keep its options open until such time as it has sufficient information to make a decision.

656 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Has a decision been made to build a toilet block on Yirrkala beach front? If so, when will the project be completed.

ANSWER

I cannot actually say when it is to be completed, but I can advise that the project most certainly was not held up by the Department of Health. The honourable member mentioned this to me a couple of days ago and I gained the impression that the Department of Health had been responsible for preventing the project from proceeding. The advice I have received from the department is that they have been encouraging the development of this project for about 5 years. The honourable member will note on page 290 of the report on environmental conditions that they have accounted for themselves quite plainly in relation to this particular subject.

657 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for HEALTH

In view of the increasing number of people who will work at Jabiru, what plans does the Health Department have to provide routine and emergency health care in that area?

ANSWER

The Department of Health has maintained a medical service at Jabiru since 1974. Although it was a limited one, it maintained continuity. The department plans to develop a health centre in the area when the uranium project gets underway. My understanding is that the department will go to tender before 30 June for a project that will involve a small out-patient and hospital holding unit where patients can be held before they are transferred to Darwin. This development will be completed by 30 September so that the welfare of all the people in the town is catered for.

658 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Would he confirm that there has been a delay of several months in the completion of the Casuarina library and can he explain the reasons for that?

ANSWER

I will seek the information and provide it later in the sittings.

660 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What stage has been reached in the plans for the proposed new museum and art gallery?

ANSWER

At the moment, there are 4 persons who are vying in a competition for the design of the museum. The competition date closes on 30 June and, after 30 June, a judging panel consisting of myself, the Minister for Transport and Works and the Director of the Museums and Art Gallery will select one of those persons to get on with the job.

661 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

I refer to the report "A Review of the Northern Territory Barramundi Fishery" prepared by Darrel Grey and Roland Griffin. Will the minister table the report in the House so that it can be debated and the government's views may be made public?

ANSWER

I will table the report as soon as I can.

662 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for HEALTH

Will the health care available at the township of Jabiru be available to other people who live in the area and, if so, on what terms?

ANSWER

Yesterday, I indicated that Jabiru would have a health unit consisting of an outpatients consultation unit and a small holding hospital. Some 15 beds will be available to the community of Jabiru. Whilst this facility may be built at Jabiru ostensibly for the uranium mining operation, it is reasonable to say that, consistent with the department's policies right throughout the Territory, all Health Department facilities are available to all the people of the Northern Territory at any time on the basis of need. The Jabiru health facility will be available to everybody on the same basis as health facilities are available to members of the community throughout the Northern Territory.

663 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Will the minister table today his department's survey on environmental conditions on Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

The short answer is no. Our policy is that all reports coming from respective departments and authorities go before Cabinet before they are presented to the House.

664 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Will he confirm that part of the area of land currently occupied by railway houses at Parap is to be made available for private development? Will he advise what will happen to those people who are currently living in houses on that land? Will they be re-allocated a house in that area if they so desire?

ANSWER

The government does propose to release a portion of land in the Parap area currently occupied by railway houses and still covered by a railway reserve. Two private developments will be medium density units. Other developments in the area will include the construction of Housing Commission medium density units and a large number of the existing houses will be upgraded and made cyclone proof. In regard to the tenants in the area, assurances have been given by both myself and the Housing Commission to the Australian National Railways that disruption to people's lives and accommodation will be kept to an absolute minimum. As far as it is humanly possible, they will be guaranteed accommodation in the area. In some cases, it will be necessary to re-locate people for a period of time. They will be offered alternative accommodation until their houses are upgraded or these medium density units are constructed. In all cases, we will seek to cooperate with the tenants. Even though many of these persons are occupying accommodation which, under the terms of the Housing Commission allocation system, they would not strictly be entitled to, we have guaranteed that they will continue in that type of accommodation. We are doing everything in our power to make life peaceful for them.

665 Mr VALE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer to this week's edition of the Darwin Star which would tend to indicate that the honourable member for Victoria River, like the honourable member for Elsey, gained the impression that it was the government's policy to centralise rural education in Darwin. If the honourable member for Elsey had his way all rural education would be centred in Katherine. Could the minister clarify the government's policy in this regard?

Mr DOOLAN: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I claim to have been misrepresented. I did in fact say this and cancelled it very smartly afterwards. I went to some length to cancel it. It was not actually written by me and I did go to some pains to suppress the article which I had originally intended to publish. I said that school accommodation facilities were to be centralised but I made no mention of a rural college. I retracted what I said anyway.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

ANSWER

It would probably be a more appropriate vehicle if the honourable member for Victoria River used the misrepresentation provision of Standing Orders. In fairness to the honourable member for Victoria River, he did approach me some time yesterday saying that the story had apparently been prepared by officers of the Leader of the Opposition's staff and that he completely denied the story. He agreed to suppress the story and I understand he did everything he possibly could to suppress it. I did the same with the replies which were prepared. I do not hold the honourable member for Victoria River at all responsible for the article, but rather the Star for capitalising on what they saw as a good government-knocking exercise.

The government's policy is to provide a better deal in education for rural Territorians. The government wants to offer to all rural people, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, a better deal than they have had in the past. It is essential that, when government seeks to carry out such a policy, it should seek the views of people in the rural areas. In the adjournment debate I floated 2 options. I will repeat those options. Firstly, if the government

was to erect a secondary or late primary residential facility in Katherine, there would be a substantial benefit to educational facilities in the Katherine area. It would provide greater resources for rural children and children generally in Katherine because the increase in teacher numbers would result in an increased range of electives available to them, particularly in year 12. I also pointed out, for the consideration of rural people, the benefits to be obtained by having a residential facility in the larger centres. What I was asking the people to do was to let the government know which one of these 2 options they wanted the government to pursue.

Mr Speaker, if the rural residential facility was to come under government policy in response to a community wish and was to be set up in Katherine, you, Sir, would be one of the first to approach the government about excursions to the major cities for the purpose of that cultural development and quite rightly so. What the government has to look at, in addition to the needs and requirements and wishes of rural people, is supplying the best service available. I think that rural people have to consider, if indeed they want that type of residential facility, where they want it and for what reason. All the government is trying to do is to float the options to the people and then let them tell us which one of those options they want.

666 Mr BALLANTYNE to CHIEF MINISTER

Last year the Chief Minister indicated that he will be looking at reviewing the licensing provisions under the Firearms Act. Can the Chief Minister tell me when new legislation will be introduced into this Assembly as this particular act has caused many problems?

ANSWER

I recall signing a Cabinet submission on the review of the Firearms Act in the last couple of weeks. There is a Cabinet meeting this Friday and I think it will probably be considered at that meeting. If it is accepted, I imagine the drafting instructions will be prepared and, presumably, a bill will be made ready for the September sittings of this House.

I would imagine that there has been consultation between the Police Commissioner and firearms groups on the proposals up to this stage. I met with interested groups early last year to discuss the matter with them. In any event, I will ensure that there is consultation with those organised groups before the legislation is drafted in its final form. Obviously, when it is introduced in September, there will be a period of 2 or 3 months until the November sittings for it to be considered and amendments to come forward.

667 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Have the terms of the Commonwealth-Northern Territory housing agreement been decided upon as yet?

ANSWER

The final draft of a Commonwealth-Northern Territory housing agreement has been prepared and is about to be posted to the Commonwealth government for their perusal and, presumably, acceptance. I would hope that the agreement is signed before 1 July this year.

668 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In view of the encouraging remarks that were made regarding the Darwin Trader problem yesterday, will the minister be seeking confirmation of the federal Minister for Transport's assurance that the vessel will not be taken off the run until a suitable alternative arrives? I understand that he will have the opportunity to meet with the federal minister, Mr Nixon, tonight.

ANSWER

It is true that Peter Nixon will be in Darwin tonight and I will be talking to him. It is interesting that Mr Nixon chooses to use the VIP jet in preference to the iniquitous air travel facilities that we have to use most of the time. It is also interesting to note that he has not chosen to use the Darwin Trader as a mode of travel. Perhaps the mechanical difficulties of getting to Darwin might have deterred him. I certainly will be taking the matter up with the minister when he arrives.

669 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

There have been problems in the past with regard to single teacher accommodation. Is the minister going to review the whole aspect of single and married teacher accommodation for the Territory after 1 July?

ANSWER

I am sure that members will recall that, when we were discussing in the House the prospect of building a new high school in Nhulunbuy, I made the comment that there is little point in spending several millions of dollars on building a high school if we cannot get teachers to go there. The same still applies. I have recently discussed this matter with the Chief Minister and I have written to the Public Service Commissioner with a view to discussing with him the problems of the government's future housing policy in remote areas. I have also written to the Minister for Lands and Housing asking for discussions to take place with the Housing Commission so that the government can work towards the formulation of a policy which will provide adequate and appropriate housing for single officers, particularly those in the professional levels.

670 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Could he inform the House on the future of Carpentaria College?

ANSWER

That matter is not in the province of the Minister for Education at the moment. The government as a whole is examining the future of Carpentaria College site and it lies more within the province of the Minister for Lands and Housing.

671 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

After the 1,245 head of buffalo were shot and left to rot, what plans do wildlife officers have to shoot out any more buffaloes?

ANSWERS

This questions seems to have arisen out of the debate that took place yesterday afternoon. As far as I am aware, there are no plans by the Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission officers to shoot any further

buffalo or feral animals. I have issued a direction that such plans be brought to my attention in future and that efforts be made to ensure that the carcasses of the feral animals concerned be disposed of on the best economic basis possible.

672 Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the government made a decision on the future of Murgarella?

ANSWER

I am surprised that I should receive such a question from the honourable member for Arnhem. I was not aware that the government was required to make a decision on the future of Murgarella. It is a Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission base for a ranger and it is also the base of a forestry plantation. I use that term loosely because the forestry unit does not plant trees there; it carries out work, builds firebreaks and so on to ensure that there is natural regeneration of the quite substantial stands of natural cypress that exist in the Murgarella area. This has continued on a care-and-maintenance basis over the past couple of years. The government employs 3 of the traditional owners of the land to work with the forestry unit. Incidentally, I understand that these 3 traditional owners gave their approval for the shooting of the buffalo that we were talking about yesterday afternoon. As far as I am concerned, the future of Murgarella is not in doubt. If any organisation such as the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service wants to close it down, they have not told the Northern Territory government of their intention to do so. If they try to do that, they will find that there will be a certain amount of resistance on the part of the NT government.

673 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can he confirm that an auction of residential land will be held in Alice Springs late in June this year?

ANSWER

I have some good news and bad news in response to that particular question. The bad news is that the sale of land in Alice Springs for residential purposes will not take place in June but in July. The good news is that it will not be an auction; it will be the first instance of a new government policy of over-the-counter sales. There was to be an auction of land in Alice Springs in June. However, a recent decision was taken to approve measures designed to release land over the counter as distinct from auction. The preparation of proceedings has necessitated a delay of one month before we will be able to release that land.

674 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What is to be the future of Carpentaria College?

ANSWER

I am not sure if the honourable member was in the House earlier in these sittings when I answered the same question from the honourable member for Nightcliff. The answer was that there were still some matters outstanding which have to be settled between the liquidator and the Northern Territory government. These matters are in the process of being submitted to Cabinet for a decision. Until such time as those matters are decided, the land and buildings cannot be released for any other purpose. However, after certain decisions are made, the government proposes to invite

expressions of interest from various parties as to what the future use of Carpentaria College should be.

675 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

When does the department propose to allow more autonomy for the running of health services in Tennant Creek, Katherine and Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I should explain that the Department of Health started a program of devolving power in the remoter areas some 4 or 5 years ago by instigating a system of regions and subregions for the administration of its affairs. The regions are essentially Darwin, Alice Springs and Gove. Within those regions, the department has subregions based around Katherine and Tennant Creek. As of 1 July this year, the department will be giving more autonomy to Katherine and Tennant Creek and even to some of the smaller areas. The department has been conscious of the difficulties that were caused by long lines of communication and with people having to go back to Alice or Darwin to get an authority from head office to do something that was necessary at the time. If we are to improve health services, that sort of system has to change and we hope the change will start to devolve in about a month's time.

The sort of services that are likely to receive more autonomy include the control over the aerial medical units in Alice and Darwin which, when they spread to Tennant Creek and Katherine, will be most effective for the people in those regions. The regions are becoming more autonomous by being involved in the recruitment of staff in their respective areas, particularly at the interviewing stage. Previously, someone was sent from head office to another state to conduct the interviews or someone from Canberra did it on an agency basis. More power will be given to remote areas and this will be to the benefit of all the people in the Northern Territory.

676 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he confirm that, because the outfall from the sewage treatment plant at Ludmilla is shorter than originally planned, it is exposed at low tide and effluent can be seen floating towards the sea? What action will the department take to rectify this situation?

ANSWER

I am unable to confirm that. I understand that, during excessive high tides, some flooding of the manholes has taken place and caused the odour problem. The department is taking steps to rectify this.

677 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is the minister in a position to give the House details of funding that has been approved to various organisations of the Territory's International Year of the Child program.

ANSWER

To date, I have approved varying amounts totalling over \$22,000 for a multitude of programs. The individual details are: \$1,300 to the Corporation of the City of Darwin for a "fun in the parks" program; \$6,000 to the Aboriginal Women's Resource Centre of the Uniting Church; \$4,000 to the Arts Council of Australia to extend Pipi Storm Circus and

to allow children in remote areas to have cultural experience involving drama, music and mime; \$5,000 to Brown's Mart to extend the kids' convoy scheme; \$2,621 to the School Library Association for a story-teller, Patricia Scott, to travel throughout the Territory and to hold workshops in the various centres; and \$3,450 for equipment costs to establish pilot programs for Darwin family centres on child care.

678 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

When does he expect the new Planning Act, which was passed at the last sittings, to come into operation?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, I do not have a specific date. I am anxious to have the new Planning Act commenced as soon as possible and I understand that there are a range of activities which have to be undertaken and procedures to be set up by the department before the act can commence operation. Some of those are associated with the Lands Acquisition Act because the Planning Act requires referral on some matters to the Lands Acquisition Act. The Lands Acquisition Act, having been approved but not commenced as yet, requires persons to be appointed to boards and procedures to be set up; the delay is unfortunate. However, I cannot give any indication, at this stage, as to how long the delay will be.

679 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Following on from the minister's recent announcement, the government has provided finance to enable St John Ambulance to provide ambulance services in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. Is it the government's intention to extend similar assistance to other major centres? If so, to which major centres and when are those services likely to commence?

ANSWER

The government has a very keen desire to see St John take over the ambulance services throughout the Northern Territory. The previous system that has operated in hospitals often meant that the gardener, the wardsman or whoever happened to be available at the time drove the ambulance. The department has been conscious of the deficiency and they have been keen to see St John Ambulance play a more positive role. A contribution has been made to the St John Ambulance Brigade to enable it to set up in Tennant Creek and Alice and I believe that funds have been transferred to the organisation. Premises in Tennant Creek are due to be opened at any time. In Alice Springs, new premises are programmed for construction in the next 12 months.

We are also very keen to see the St John organisation spread its wings to Katherine. I have received several representations over the last 6 months about the need in Katherine for an ambulance service. The people in the community were disappointed when the hospital was not able to station an ambulance at football matches, baseball games, rodeos and whatever. I appreciate the problem, having suffered the same sort of inconvenience in Tennant over the years. The reality is that St John, in order to succeed in Katherine, needs the wholehearted support of the community. They hope to set up in Katherine by the beginning of next year and envisage having a St John organisation that will function with the ambulances already in the area. This way, they can be placed anywhere in the community as the need arises.

Plans are also in the pipeline for St John to take over the control of ambulance services in the uranium province once the demand increases in the next 12 months. Provided funds are available and St John have the physical capacity to be organised, some St John ambulance people should be operating there within 9 to 12 months.

680 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

I refer to a statement he made on 5 January regarding health services in the Northern Territory. In that statement, he announced that the government will be investigating their proposal to strengthen alcoholism services in the Northern Territory. Will he advise on the progress of those investigations to date?

ANSWER

I am well aware of the statement made on 5 January but I am not quite sure what services the honourable member refers to. The Department of Health and the Department of Community Development have an involvement in this field and are both very conscious of the deficiencies in the services relating to alcoholism. I believe there is a role in this particular field for the Education Department because one of the prime methods of overcoming alcoholism is by way of education at an early age.

The Department of Health is primarily concerned with the treatment of identified alcoholics and works in tandem with the Department of Community Development to provide complementary services such as support to Alcoholics Anonymous and other drug dependence organisations. The government will assist self-help organisations in the community. If the honourable member would like to put on paper exactly what services he is concerned about, I will do my best to see that he gets the information.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

681 Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Fannie Bay asked whether I could confirm that the provision for housing of Timorese people who arrived in Darwin this year as a result of the agreement between the Australian and Indonesian governments has placed some strain on the provision of public housing. She further asked if the Northern Territory government has approached the federal government with a view to alleviating the problem. Initially, I directed any inquiries to the Department of Immigration to establish exactly its role in this situation. I am informed that all Timorese immigrants are subjected to the same conditions as any immigrant but, since all those coming to Darwin have been sponsored by family or friends, none have been required to spend any time in migrant villages before coming to Darwin. Where families are intending to migrate, they are required to make a declaration to the effect that they have arranged accommodation in Australia and, in most cases, new migrants have lodged with their sponsors or in housing found by their sponsors while they await their turn on the housing list.

I can assure the honourable member that, while Timorese people are accepted as approved migrants and therefore may add their names to the Housing Commission's housing list, their presence is not causing undue extensions of waiting time or any other undesirable effects on other applicants on the Housing Commission's list. Since the Housing Commission treats Timorese applicants in the same way as other applicants, it is impossible to extract from the housing list the exact numbers of Timorese people presently waiting their turn for housing. The Housing Commission informs me that some Timorese people are in fairly cramped conditions whilst waiting for accommodation from the Housing Commission. They will be housed in the

normal fashion when they reach the top of the Housing Commission list.

I do not see that there is a specific problem to be addressed by the Northern Territory government. If a problem does exist, and I am just reading between the lines here, it may be that certain persons are sponsoring Timorese immigrants and undertaking to accommodate them when, in fact, they do not have sufficient accommodation and perhaps they are living in cramped conditions. The honourable member could perhaps take up with the Immigration Department whether its checks are adequate to confirm that sponsors can provide suitable accommodation. The question then arises whether the primary point is to allow these people to immigrate or fuss over whether or not they will live in cramped conditions. I believe that they are probably very happy to come out here and face the difficulty of getting their own accommodation.

682 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

When is it likely that some assistance will be given to people who were insured with Northumberland Insurance Company? He is well aware that legislation was passed in November 1974 to offer some relief but it was never assented to.

ANSWER

I apologise for not having seen this matter through. I referred it to the Department of Law some months ago and was awaiting a Cabinet submission. Now that she has reminded me of it, I realise that I have not received a Cabinet submission. I had better put some salt on someone's tail. I will try to obtain some sort of informal answer before too much longer.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

683 Mr DONDAS: The honourable member for Fannie Bay asked whether I could confirm that there have been delays in the construction of the Casuarina Library. I have been informed that the completion date for the Casuarina Library has been set back some 4 to 5 months. There are some compelling reasons for this. The original design brief, let by the previous federal Department of Construction, was inadequate in so far as it did not suit the requirements of the library services. I speak of such matters as ceiling design lighting, lack of flexibility within the area and the fact that the original design required an extremely high maintenance cost per year; for example, the original brief required exterior surfaces to be painted. As these problems became apparent, the brief was re-documented in some aspects to provide more flexibility within the library building and create a better facility for the general public. The current completion date of the building is programmed for the end of November this year.

690 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

As a result of changes in the Commonwealth-state hospital cost-sharing agreement announced in the mini-budget by the federal Treasurer, Mr Howard, the various states will receive \$200m less towards hospital costs in 1979/80. Can he inform the Assembly what is the Northern Territory share of this \$200m loss?

ANSWER

I would like to make it clear from the outset that the financial arrangements between the Commonwealth and the states have yet to be finalised and, to this end, there is a meeting in Sydney next week between the federal and state ministers for health to cover the final implications of the Treasurer's announcement last week.

From my understanding of the situation, the Treasurer has made certain comments about cost sharing and cuts in expenditure. To date, we have not received from the Commonwealth the detailed analysis of where these particular cost sheddings are to come from. The honourable member is very keen to play up the prospect that the Northern Territory will make serious cost cuts in the health field in the next few years as a result of the Treasurer's statement. I find this to be a particularly interesting line of attack because we are now in the sixth month of having inherited from the Commonwealth a health service that they have administered for about 25 years. I do not think we have had sufficient time to muck it up, so we can only assume that the health service - until we have finally finished reorganising it in 2 or 3 years' time - is in pretty good shape so far as the Commonwealth is concerned. I am sure honourable members would accept the premiss that the Commonwealth would not give us anything that was of a substandard nature. The Commonwealth has handed to us infrastructures such as the Casuarina Hospital which will require additional funds from the Northern Territory's point of view to open and maintain. I find it very hard to accept the premiss that we will have cost cuts this year because, if we do, we would not be able to open Casuarina. I just do not think that the Commonwealth would put forward such a proposal. It would be preposterous.

691 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he tell me why the public only know of the killings of feral animals after they have been killed by wildlife officers and not before.

ANSWER

I imagine that the public is made aware of the killing of some feral animals before they are slaughtered. The Department of Lands and Housing calls tenders for the shooting of feral animals and obviously people do have the opportunity to profit in that way. In relation to the shooting of buffalo in the Murgarella area recently, it was the middle of the wet season and because the buffalo were in great numbers and were doing a great deal of damage to the environment in that area, it was considered necessary to conduct a shoot out at that particular time. I do not think that the government could give any undertaking that the shooting of feral animals would be brought to the notice of the public before or after the event in any particular case.

692 Mrs D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When was the last year that the Northern Territory road rules were published and when is it next proposed to publish a comprehensive set of

Northern Territory road rules?

ANSWER

I will seek the information for the honourable member.

693 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Will federal restrictions on health spending reduce Northern Territory government programs in rural areas?

ANSWER

The short answer is no. The Northern Territory government is particularly committed to maintaining the existing rural health programs and, in some cases, extending them. One of the initiatives that we have been able to take since assuming the responsibility for health has been to create new positions in the Aboriginal health worker training program. Indeed, there has been a new training unit for this particular program opened in Darwin this year. I believe that these programs and the ultimate improvement of environmental health in remote areas is an important initiative that the Northern Territory is not only bound to maintain but also to expand. I cannot see any cuts coming in this area at all.

694 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

In the mini-budget last Thursday, the federal Treasurer announced that the bed cost per day for patients with the doctor of their choice will increase from \$40 to \$50. When will the Northern Territory hospitals start charging the patients of private doctors this extra \$10 per day?

ANSWER

I stand to be corrected on this, but I understood that the federal government proposed to introduce these charges on 1 September. The Northern Territory would not be doing anything before then.

695 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Could he inform the House of the likely release date of the residential blocks in Malak and Leanyer subdivisions.

ANSWER

Stage 1 of Malak has been released progressively since 1974 and stage 2 of Malak is currently turning blocks off. The last of a total of 409 lots in stage 2 will be ready for release by December 1980. As far as Leanyer subdivision is concerned, the number of lots to be turned off is still the subject of negotiation and consultation with private developers who will be invited to participate in the subdivision of Leanyer. We expect that there will be between 820 and 1000 lots turned off in Leanyer. Those lots should become available by about July 1982.

696 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In view of the federal government's decision to abolish the homes savings grant on houses valued at more than \$40,000, what steps is the Territory government proposing to take to ensure that people buying their first house in the Territory are not disadvantaged in relation to other Australian first-house buyers?

ANSWER

The honourable member should be aware that Northern Territory persons seeking to purchase their first home in the Territory are already advantaged to some degree by the fact that we do have in the Northern Territory a Home Finance Trustee loan. It is no longer called the Home Finance Trustee loan but it is a loan administered by the Housing Commission and is not normally available to Australians other than those in the ACT. As well as that, through this government's initiative, we have a policy whereby stamp duty is not payable on the first home purchased in the Northern Territory by any member and I understand from Treasury sources that a great deal of the homes sold in the Northern Territory are first-home purchases and that is very good to see. Therefore, that concession is being very much used in the Northern Territory.

Since the announcement in the mini-budget that there will be ceilings placed on the amount of the home-savings grant by the federal government, representation has been made to the federal government seeking some exemptions from this ceiling as far as the Northern Territory is concerned on the basis of the increased cost of housing and land in the Northern Territory. However, at this stage, I would be unable to indicate the likely outcome of that representation.

697 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is the district allowance designed to cushion public servants from the higher costs of services and goods? If this is so, how do people like pensioners and others on fixed incomes cope with the higher cost of living in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The district allowance is a taxable allowance granted to public servants in the Northern Territory and it is intended to offset the high costs of living in the Territory. It is clearly recognised by this government that pensioners on fixed incomes are at a disadvantage. We are at present investigating various incentives which could be offered to elderly people to encourage them to remain permanently in the Northern Territory. As part of this effort, we introduced a number of pension concessions earlier this year. Those pensioners receiving a full social security, aged, invalid or widow's pension, or a full-supporting parents benefit, or a service pension are now entitled to the following concessions: \$10 rebate on quarterly electricity accounts; \$70 rebate on motor-vehicle registrations and third-party premium insurance costs; 50% rebate on council rates; 50% rebate on basic water and sewerage rates. The needs of pensioners and particularly the aged have a high priority with this government. We intend to offer every support we can to help relieve the pressures on such people and to encourage them to stay. Further extensions to the pensioner concession scheme are being explored.

698 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

This question concerns the future of Dhupuma College. Can the minister inform me what steps or decisions have been taken to retain the college at Gove?

ANSWER

The government has taken no decision to close Dhupuma. It is the government's intention to continue with it. It is necessary to come to grips with the problem of the tremendously high per capita cost which pertains to students using it as a transitional school in the higher primary through

to junior secondary level. The per capita cost at the moment runs out at something like \$24,000 per year per student. Quite obviously, any government would have to address itself to such a problem. It would seem that the most efficient way to bring down that per capita cost would be to make better use of the facility rather than seek to close it.

Recently, I arranged for the principal of Ngukurr school - who, incidentally, is the only fullblood Aboriginal principal in the Northern Territory - together with the president of the council and a mother selected by the council, to go to Dhupuma to familiarise themselves with the layout of the place and its uses. The purpose of their visit was to see what role Dhupuma College could have in the training of young adults by way of short courses in trade training and so on. The report I received from the principal of Ngukurr School was tremendously encouraging.

What we will be doing is to arrange for similar visits from a wide range of Aboriginal communities around Arnhem Land and the islands to the north that associate themselves with Dhupuma so that the communities themselves are aware of the facilities available for relevant training of Aboriginal people at Dhupuma College. It is a very well equipped place, particularly in the technical studies area. It would seem to me that six 10-week courses should be offered to Aboriginal people at Dhupuma to equip them to take work within the councils themselves and remove the need to bring Europeans in to do the work. If the move that the government has made towards community government is to have any meaning at all, it must be backed up with training facilities for Aboriginal people. I know of a couple of communities where positions for typists and routine bookkeepers are available but there is no expertise among the people. I think that this is a further use to which we can put Dhupuma. The government is looking at ways not only to keep it open, but to enhance its value to the community.

699 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Did he see an article in yesterday's Northern Territory News where the federal Minister for Transport, Mr Nixon, was quoted as saying that there was never any question of allocating extra funds to the South Australian government for the sealing of the South road? Will the minister take steps to remind the federal Minister for Transport that indeed Mr Sinclair did make such a promise to the people of Alice Springs in 1977? Will he take steps to ensure that the current Minister for Transport honours that promise given by Mr Sinclair?

ANSWER

I have had his arm up his back as far as it will go but it does not seem to have done the trick. I do understand, although it has not been confirmed, that the South Australian Minister for Transport will allocate \$4.3m for the Stuart Highway reconstruction in this financial year. The funding comes in the form of an untied grant and it is not up to the federal authorities to dictate to the states as to where that money will be spent. I believe it is called cooperative federalism.

700 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has the ABC ever conducted a survey of outback Territorians to find out whether programs such as national and local news and weather forecasts are able to be picked up by people away from the main centres of population?

ANSWER

I think the honourable gentleman should ask the ABC. We are very concerned that the broadcast is not effective and that it is not getting to the people that it should be reaching. We have made many representations to the ABC people. In fact, they come to Darwin often these days. The staff of the ABC is also very concerned and has made representations on behalf of Territorians many times.

701 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What is the government's intention regarding the provision of library facilities in the Darwin city area to replace the old Darwin Public Library?

ANSWER

My department is actively investigating the future siting of such a library. Space has been a problem. When I have further information, I will give it to the honourable member.

702 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he yet in a position to advise the House what type of assistance will be given to people disadvantaged as a result of the collapse of the Northumberland Insurance Company?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to inform the House what assistance the Northern Territory government can make because the question will have to be considered by Cabinet. Nevertheless, I received a briefing paper from the Department of Law last Friday. It appears - and I am speaking from memory - that the receiver of the Northumberland Insurance Company is in a position to distribute quite substantial sums of money that he has received on account of the creditors and the policy holders of the Northumberland Insurance Company. Nevertheless, due to the provisions of the Commonwealth Insurance Act, the complications involved will mean that the cost of the distribution itself will amount to some \$60,000. The receiver is seeking to find some way around the impasse. It appears that this situation has been dragging on for some time.

I have instructed officers of the Department of Law to make contact with the Department of Home Affairs to see what progress can be made in an effort to expedite the distribution to creditors. This will take at least 12 months. I am proposing to have a paper submitted to Cabinet canvassing the options available. They are to assist directly at this stage or await the outcome of the winding up. The problem of assisting directly at this stage is that, once the winding-up has been finalised, there may be difficulty in recovering the funds that we have paid out in the meantime. We are somewhat on the horns of a dilemma. It is a very complex situation. If we can help without actually giving away money that we should rightfully get back, we will certainly attempt to do something.

703 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are various open storm drains throughout the township of Alice Springs. Whose responsibility is it to maintain those drains?

ANSWER

Negotiations are taking place at this moment with the Alice Springs corporation to reach an agreement as to who is responsible for the maintenance of these drains. The Department of Community Development currently maintains the drains. However, it may be that the corporation will take over this control with funding through the normal local government subsidy arrangements. I will be in a better position to advise the honourable member in the next 2 weeks.

704 Mr COLLINS to the CHIEF MINISTER

Has the Northern Territory government employed a firm of professional lobbyists, McIntosh Parkes and Associates of the National Press Club Canberra, to act on its behalf in the dispute between the government and the national parks authority? Has this organisation produced a document on behalf of the government entitled "Information and Background Material on the Dispute between the Northern Territory Government and the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Service"? If so, how much is this exercise costing the Northern Territory taxpayer?

ANSWER

The honourable member has asked an interesting question. The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service budget this year was some \$3.5m and all state ministers for conservation agree that the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service is an unnecessary luxury. One would have thought that the \$3.5m could have been better spent in the health or housing areas because there are long-established national parks and wildlife services in the states and in this Territory. Indeed, the largest park that the ACT have declared covers one third of the surface area of the ACT and that is being run by the ACT's own parks and wildlife service and not by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. That is an extraordinary contradiction in policies.

Turning to McIntosh, Parkes and Associates, it is a fact that the Northern Territory government has retained this firm of consultants not only in relation to the matter referred to by the honourable member for Arnhem but also on a general basis to represent the interests of the Northern Territory in Canberra and to be on the spot to keep the Northern Territory government informed of actions that may be about to happen within the federal government that may affect the financial and other interests of the Northern Territory. It is a much cheaper arrangement than establishing a permanent office in the national capital. These people, through their experience in government, have the entree to many areas which it is impossible for politicians to enter. I believe that the early warnings that they are able to give us and the inside information that we obtain on other matters is of great help to us in our negotiations in certain areas with the federal government. I believe that other firms of professional consultants are retained on a general basis by other state governments to represent their interests in Canberra and elsewhere.

I am not aware of the particular document that the honourable member for Arnhem referred to. It is quite likely that a background paper on the particular subject mentioned by him has been prepared. If it has been and if it has been circulated, then I am very pleased that MacIntosh, Parkes and Associates are on the ball and presumably acting at the request of the Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission in this matter. I am not aware of the annual cost to the Northern Territory government of the retainer. I have heard it, but that was quite some months ago. I certainly can obtain the information for the honourable member in due course.

705 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What projects or plans does the government have in mind to dissuade under-age drinkers who are associated with organised sports to not drink alcohol and so improve their formative sporting ability?

ANSWER

I ask the member to place the question on notice.

706 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for HEALTH

As he would know, health sisters would normally be required to do a 5 or 6 weeks' survey of health needs in rural areas. It is now almost June and no health sisters at all have visited some areas in my electorate. Normally they do not do so before about July anyway. Could the honourable minister advise the reasons for lack of visits by health sisters to remote areas?

ANSWER

I cannot advise at such short notice why some areas in his electorate have not been visited for some time. I make the point that members are remiss in their duty if they wait for these things to go on for 5 or 6 months and then raise the issue as a question without notice in the House. I believe that any member who comes across a deficiency in the health services should raise the matter the moment it is recognised. That way something can be done about it.

707 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I noted on last night's Territory television news that the Housing Commission has now completed its restoration of cyclone-damaged houses. Could the minister please inform the House of the commission's building program in Darwin for the forthcoming financial year?

ANSWER

The Housing Commission's program for 1979/80 is subject to budgetary considerations and, at the present time, it has a program for the building of 450 houses for the general public, 210 staff houses for the Northern Territory government and staff flats of approximately 50 accommodation units. That is a preliminary figure and it is the accommodation units which are proposed to be added to existing contracts. The commission has an on-going building program that does not stop on 30 June and start again on 1 July. It has many contracts underway throughout the Northern Territory that will be producing houses and units well into the next year that are not included in the figures that I just mentioned.

708 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for HEALTH

Are the telephone numbers - Darwin 80 2610 and 89 2211 - which are given in the Commonwealth Government Handbook of Child Safety as the numbers at which emergency advice on poisons and accidents is available manned 24 hours a day?

ANSWER

I think it is unreasonable of the honourable member to expect an off-the-cuff answer to that and I would ask her to place the question on notice.

709 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Given that Darwin's private neuro-surgeon is away on leave, as can be expected from time to time, what steps has the Department of Health taken to ensure that a neuro-surgeon is available when no other private person in Darwin is operating in that capacity?

ANSWER

The department has an agreement with most of the states, and some of the major hospitals in the states, to obtain staff from all of the specialities within the medical profession to come to the Northern Territory on a relief basis. This particular arrangement is very formal so far as orthodontic and eye specialists are concerned and I would be very surprised to learn that there is no similar arrangement for a relief neuro-surgeon. I will endeavour to find out for the honourable member and let her know during the course of the sittings.

710 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for YOUTH, SPORT and RECREATION

Recently, the minister announced a scheme to assist Northern Territory sporting bodies who were competing interstate. Will the criteria apply from the date of that announcement or from 1 July this year?

ANSWER

The criteria will apply from 1 July but, in the meantime, I have issued approval for funding to be made available to some of the sporting organisations. Since then, the teams that have been sent away include a junior motor-cycle team, junior bowlers, a junior hockey team and a junior football team. In the main, the scheme will apply from 1 July for all sporting teams although that will exclude anybody under the age of 12.

711 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Have officers of his department recommended the closure of the Meneling meatworks? If so, on what grounds has the meatworks been closed?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to put the question on notice.

712 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can I receive an assurance from him that buffaloes will not be officially shot out on properties in the Darwin, Noonamah, Batchelor and Adelaide River areas?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, I cannot give that assurance because I do not own all the properties in the Darwin, Batchelor, Noonamah and Adelaide River areas. I would think that it is an option available to the individual property holder as to whether he shoots all the buffalo on his land or not. I certainly would not be prepared to give any such undertaking.

713 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

When is it expected that the Tenancy Act, which passed through all stages last sittings, will come into operation.

ANSWER

I am unable to provide that information. However, I will provide it later in the sittings.

732 Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise this House whom the government has nominated to replace those people who recently resigned from the Territory Development Corporation?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, we have had 2 resignations from the Territory Development Corporation, Mr John Hickman and Mr Ralph Hayes. Both those people will be missed. Their abilities are widely known and we have replaced them with Mr John Grice of Darwin and Mr Ted Hayes of Alice Springs.

733 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Will he advise when oil samples will be taken from the Mereenie fields in view of the continuing delays and uncertainties over this matter?

ANSWER

This particular question came up last week. I assume he is referring to the 6 or 7 barrels of oil they are trying to get out at the moment. I believe the area is flood bound and it is not possible to move the machinery in to extract the oil from the casing so that the reservoir samples can be taken. The tests will proceed as soon as the roads can support the heavy trucks needed to remove this surface oil.

734 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In view of reports in the media that owners of backyard caravan parks are criticising the minister's crack down on the use of residential land for caravan accommodation, can he give assurance that there will be adequate caravan parking accommodation to support the needs of residents and tourists alike?

ANSWER

It has been of some concern to me that a number of complaints have been received about our actions to encourage people in the residential areas of Darwin to stop using their backyards as caravan parks. Recently, I had a telephone survey undertaken of the 10 existing parks around Darwin. It seems that there are over 100 vacant sites on those parks at present. There will probably be a demand for most of those sites as the tourist season opens up and more people come north by road. However, the government believes that, since it is now 4½ years since Cyclone Tracy, there is very little need to tolerate a situation where any number of caravans can be put on a residential site. The caravan park owners have had to meet some very stringent requirements over the last few years and have had very big covenants to meet. It is only fair that caravan dwellers be encouraged to use those parks and that the registered parks should not have to compete with backyard caravan parks that are not meeting any of the criteria laid down by the Department of Health and other departments.

735 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is the Electricity Commission carrying out solar energy investigations independently of the Department of Mines and Energy's own activities in this regard? If so, what steps has the minister taken to ensure co-ordination of these various activities?

ANSWER

I made a statement in the House recently outlining the activities that were currently underway between our government and the government of Western Australia which is well advanced in the solar energy field. Last week, I took steps to rationalise within the Northern Territory government the activities of this joint program. I have now placed the carriage of this particular exercise with the Department of Mines and Energy to avoid any duplication by NTEC and Mines and Energy in what were really identical programs.

736 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the current position regarding the proposed establishment of a fire station at the 19-mile?

ANSWER

There were proposals to put a fire station at the 19-mile because of the expected growth in that area and the fact that certain government facilities would be established out there. At this stage, there is no further progress as the government is looking at the Darwin East proposal. I do not believe that we have confirmed any particular site or indeed even selected a year in which the fire station might be constructed. However, there is a need for fire service facilities in that region and we maintain that position.

737 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware that employees of his department are presently engaged in the dumping of huge quantities of building rubble on land adjacent to Richardson Park Oval over which an occupation licence is held by the Northern Territory Rugby League Club and for which that club is currently seeking a lease and a change in zoning from open public space to develop a car park? Will he stop the present work from continuing until such time as it is legally sanctioned?

ANSWER

I was aware of some activity in the area. I am not too sure of the legal position but I will have the matter examined.

738 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has he any further information on the maintenance program at Nhulunbuy Area School?

ANSWER

I do have some further information. I think the saga of the maintenance of the Nhulunbuy Area School would be a salutary lesson to any government concerning the difficulties in handling maintenance and servicing of facilities in remote areas. On 21 July last year, the Department of Education issued the required documentation to the Department of Construction for the letting of a \$140,000 contract for repairs, maintenance and painting of the Nhulunbuy Area School. On 30 November, a contract was let to a local contractor in Nhulunbuy. Subsequent to the letting of the contract, it was found by the contractor that he could no longer complete the work. It was necessary then to carry out urgent repairs to the Nhulunbuy Area School which varied from the original specifications and this again delayed any re-letting of a tender. A tender has again

been let in a modified form. That tender was let on 24 May and it is hoped that work will commence on what is left of the \$140,000 project some time in June or July.

739 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

He has indicated his intention to introduce legislation regarding the registration of firearms. Is it his intention to introduce legislation which will register the person rather than the firearm?

ANSWER

I do not think it is quite as simple as the honourable member for Night-cliff would make it appear. The question is not one which can be answered by a yes or a no. Cabinet endorsed certain principles for the preparation of the legislation only last Friday and these will be made available very shortly for discussion with the organisations that are interested in the use of firearms in the Northern Territory. No doubt we will receive comment on our ideas from these organisations. That time would be soon enough for a firm decision to be taken one way or another as to whether it will be the person or the gun that will be registered.

740 Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware that rail and road services into Alice Springs that have been disrupted over the past few weeks are causing a shortage of certain food-stuffs and building materials? I ask what steps the government proposes to take to ensure that residents and industry in central Australia do not suffer hardship.

ANSWER

I was aware that Alice Springs had been receiving more rain in the last couple of weeks. Ayers Rock has received 9 inches in the middle of the tourist season, which is hardly a help to the people struggling out there against many other problems. The situation in Alice Springs is that the police hope that the road from Port August will be open to traffic today. This is provided that there was no more rain last night. I do not recall hearing any reports to that effect. It will be at least a couple of weeks before the railway line is able to reopen. This has caused problems; for instance, Drings, one of the larger forwarding agents in Adelaide, is no longer accepting goods on consignment to the Northern Territory because their yards are cluttered with freight that they have not been able to despatch. The fact that there have been no trains bringing building supplies and materials of that nature for a few weeks now has caused considerable disruption to the building industry. However, it is hoped that there will not be any shortage of perishables. If it appears that this will happen through further falls of rain and it is necessary bring supplies of perishables in by air, then this will be considered by the government in consultation with the Alice Springs council with whom we make contact on a regular basis in relation to this matter. I hope that the road will be opened to heavy trucks so that these can bring supplies to the building industry.

741 Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

For some years, there has been talk of a town plan for Top Springs. The local residents believe it is a matter of great urgency that a police station be established there. Could he indicate the current position as regards the Top Springs town plan?

ANSWER

I cannot answer the honourable member's question. I have been fairly closely associated with planning in the Northern Territory for a few years now and I have never heard of a town plan being prepared for Top Springs or even a draft or departmental plan. I will undertake to make inquiries and advise the honourable member. He made reference to the desirability of having a police station at Top Springs. I should point out to him that a town plan has very little to do with the police station going there. If a police station is deemed necessary, it could be programmed irrespective of whether the town has a plan or not.

742 Mr OLIVER to MINISTER for HEALTH

When will the government provide regular orthodontic services in Darwin and Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The department is currently in the interview stage of recruiting 2 applicants for orthodontic positions in Alice Springs and Darwin. They are hopeful that the positions will be filled before July or August. Primarily, the function of these orthodontists will be to carry out work normally provided by private practitioners. One of the great difficulties in the Northern Territory has been to persuade orthodontists to set up in private practice. There is no way that these 2 gentlemen will be able to cope with the amount of work that will be on their plate. Consequently, there will still be a backlog. I believe that the move by the department is one in the right direction. It is to be hoped that these gentlemen will take up the positions, cope with the workload and be prepared to stay.

743 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is he aware that 8 months ago the Darwin Community College applied to the Australian Territories Accreditation Committee for Advanced Education for accreditation of a course for an associate diploma in ceramics and the course has not yet been approved? Will he take steps to ensure that the decision on the course is taken as soon as possible to ensure its early introduction by the college?

ANSWER

I am unaware of the application; I take it that it was an associate diploma in ceramics. I do not know what the difficulty would be in obtaining an accreditation of that nature. Usually, the skill of the staff is the first guideline. I cannot see why such a course would not be accredited in the normal course of events assuming that the college has the facilities. I will certainly undertake to have the matter investigated.

744 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. In view of the minister's grave concern about the fuel prices threat to the Northern Territory, as expressed in the Northern Territory News on 28 May 1979, will he urgently consider the suggestion to dam the Katherine Gorge to give hydro-electric power to the town of Katherine as well as for other purposes such as flood mitigation, water for domestic use and irrigation and to allow increased use of Katherine Gorge for tourism throughout the wet?

ANSWER

That is what you call a mixed bag of requirements. We did make some preliminary investigations on the possibility of the town of Katherine being fed by a dam placed above the gorge although we did not go deeply into the matter. It seemed that it would cost many millions of dollars. The avenue open to us at the time was to draw water from Donkey Camp and we are proceeding to let contracts for that. The matter of a dam is one that Cabinet would have to consider. It is not a matter for one minister to consider in isolation. It might take some time to assemble all the details for that consideration.

745 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer to the proposed legislation on firearms. Having regard to his previous answer, will he distribute to members of the Assembly the same information that he is distributing to interested persons such as gun clubs? I do advise the minister that it is a matter of some public concern.

ANSWER

I will give it to anyone who asks me for it.

746 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is the minister aware that Alice Springs Hospital has only one physiotherapist instead of 3 and that outpatients are not being treated? Can he advise what steps the department proposes to take to alleviate this problem?

ANSWER

The recruitment of physiotherapists in Alice Springs has been a continuing problem for many years. The biggest part of the problem is that we go from a feast to a famine. I had a meeting with physiotherapists in Alice Springs during February. Eleven turned up and 7 said they worked for the Department of Health. Within a matter of months the number has dwindled so that we now have only one physiotherapist. It anticipates that it will get the staff. It is very difficult to get well-qualified people to come on short notice. I anticipate that I will have replacements within a couple of months. While we do anticipate filling the vacancies, I expect we will go through this feast and famine situation for quite some time.

747 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is he aware that a notice published in the NT News in April on behalf of an employee of the Department of Lands and Housing notifying his intention to apply for re-zoning of an allotment of land in Ludmilla Terrace from 01 to 02 was contrary to section 38A of the Town Planning Act in that it did not specify the street where the allotment was situated?

ANSWER

I did not notice that it did not comply with the act. However, I will undertake to make inquiries as to whether the Town Planning Board ruled that the advertisement was invalid. If so, I will find out if a re-advertisement program was ordered and, generally, I will try to establish what the situation is.

748 Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he advise whether the department proposes to open a geriatric ward in the Alice Springs Hospital for retired politicians similar to that in the Harry Chan Ward in Darwin?

ANSWER

I am sure the answer is no. In Alice Springs there is the Old Timers Home and several other similar premises. One is run by an Aboriginal organisation and all perform a good deal of good work in this area. The department is determined to support the organisations that already exist rather than set up a similar unit to the Harry Chan Ward in the Darwin Hospital.

749 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Last Monday morning, on the well-known program "After 8", Her Worship the Mayor, Dr Ella Stack, said that the fencing of swimming pools was in some measure held up because of requests she had made to government departments regarding the purity of the water supply. What kind of request has been received by his department from the corporation regarding the purity of the water supply and what was the advice given?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place her question on notice.

750 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Would he confirm that, despite protracted negotiations for the allocation of an area of Knuckey's Lagoon, the lease to that area has not yet been handed over to the Aboriginal group making the needs claim?

ANSWER

I can confirm that there have been some recent difficulties in bringing together the parties to sign a lease document to hand over the portion of land at Knuckey's Lagoon to a group of Aboriginal people. However, I was advised this morning that the meeting has been arranged amongst the owners concerned so that they can sign the lease which we will have ready for presentation to them formally. I trust that this matter will be concluded within a couple of weeks.

751 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

My question is supplementary to the question I asked earlier. Development work which was subject to a proposed rezoning of land in Ludmilla Terrace was commenced approximately 3 weeks ago and the Town Planning Board, ignorant of this fact, considered the application last Friday. In view of this, will the minister stop the present work from continuing until the Town Planning Board has had an opportunity to reconsider the application?

ANSWER

The best I could do at this stage, not being familiar with the problem that the honourable member for Fannie Bay outlines, is to have immediate inquiries made to establish exactly who is doing the work and what jurisdiction the government has in the matter. I will also have the question of the alleged illegal advertisement examined. I cannot give any assurances at this stage that I will take action to stop any work.

752 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer to an article in the NT News yesterday. Did the minister tell the honourable member for MacDonnell that arsenic and acids from a Darwin-based galvanising process are being dumped at Leanyer dump? If so, when did the conversation take place and how serious is the problem?

ANSWER

It would certainly seem from the article that the honourable member was implying that I supported his claims that such by-products as acid and arsenic were being dumped at Leanyer as a result of a galvanising process in Darwin. I would suggest that, if that is the case, the honourable member is once again suffering from galloping imagination. In any event, the allegation is quite untrue on the best information that I have. I have the authority of the principals of Pap's Galvanising Pty Ltd who phoned me about the article this morning to deny emphatically that that firm dumps any such product in the Leanyer dump. That firm is the only such firm that operates a galvanising process between here and Townsville. If he is suggesting that people in Townsville are shipping their acids and arsenic over here for dumping, then that may be a different allegation. As far as I can determine, the honourable member's allegation is typical of his frequent fabrications.

There is a recognised difficulty by the Department of Community Development and by municipal councils in controlling the dumping of any noxious or dangerous substances. The matter was the result of a question on notice answered by my colleague, the Acting Minister for Community Development. I have not spoken to the man about this at all. In an answer to a question signed by my colleague, an indication was given that the government and the local government organisations recognised a difficulty in controlling noxious substances in dumps. Very expensive methods of controlling it are currently being examined by both organisations. To level that sort of allegation at the only business that can be identified in this field is a totally discreditable thing to do.

753 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I direct a question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is the Alice Springs abattoir obliged to offer a service kill facility for local consumption, as stated in the paper under the heading "The Need for a Service Kill Works in the NT" by Mr A. Heath, Chief Economist of the Division of Primary Industry.

ANSWER

There are several questions on notice concerning service abattoirs. I understand that they have all now been answered. That should provide the member for Elsey with the information he requires.

754 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Brown's Mart organisation has asked for the former museum site in Smith Street to be made available for use for community arts activities. Has the Museums and Art Galleries Board handed that building back and, if so, when will it be made available for community arts activities?

ANSWER

The site is subject to an investigation being made by officers within the department. I believe that the Museums and Art Galleries Board have

handed that land back. The future use of the old Palmerston Town Hall, as it was in the early days, is still subject to investigation.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

- 755 Mr TUXWORTH: The honourable member for MacDonnell asked me when the sample would be taken from Mereenie. At 10.10 this morning a message came off the telex to say that, subject to fine weather, the barrel sample will be taken from Mereenie this weekend.
- 756 Mr TUXWORTH: The honourable member for Victoria River asked why there have been no health sisters visiting the Victoria River area. The answer from the department is that there are 2 resident subsidised sisters on Victoria River Downs Station. Staff shortages have made it difficult to fill the mobile team for the area. The situation is improving and it is anticipated that the mobile team will set out during the month of June.
- 757 Mr TUXWORTH: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a question relating to the Department of Health providing relief whilst the neurosurgeon is on leave. The Health Department does not employ a neurosurgeon and is indeed fortunate to be able to engage on a part-time basis the services of a private neurosurgeon in Darwin. The neurosurgeon concerned, as a part of the arrangement with the department, has undertaken to recruit a locum should he be absent from Darwin for more than 3 weeks at a time. It is not feasible to engage a locum for less than this period and general surgical staff at Darwin Hospital will see to any problems and arrange the evacuation of any patients interstate where it is necessary.
- 758 Mr TUXWORTH: The Leader of the Opposition asked a question relating to the closure of meatworks by the Health Department. The Health Department has no information about the closure, if it has been done, and can only think that the closure has been done by some other agency.
- 759 Mr DONDAS: The honourable member for Sanderson asked me a question yesterday relating to the Tenancy Act. The act was assented to by the Administrator on 27 April and action is currently in hand for the Administrator to gazette the commencement date of the act.

763 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Does the Electricity Commission have any plans to extend the supply of underground power in Darwin's northern suburbs?

ANSWER

There are plans and there is considerable work being conducted at the moment by the commission in the northern suburbs, particularly in relation to undergrounding. I do not have the details of the respective suburbs and the number of allotments involved. I will obtain information for the honourable member.

764 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

The minister will recall telling the Assembly in March that there had been a good response to advertisements for occupational therapists to staff the rehabilitation unit at Darwin Hospital. Can he explain why the positions were recently re-advertised in southern newspapers?

ANSWER

I cannot advise the honourable member. If the honourable member had given me half an hour's notice on a question like that, I could have given her the answer.

765 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Did the Northern Territory government send a representative to the recent conference on deers held in Melbourne? Can he give any details?

ANSWER

There was a conference concerning deer which an officer from the Department of Industrial Development attended. It is departmental policy to send young professional officers to conferences and meetings throughout Australia so that they may gain experience in fields like deer farming. Deer farming may have some significance for the Northern Territory. We have a couple of herds of deer and this is specifically mentioned in the feral animals report. The symposium was most valuable for the Northern Territory.

766 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has he seen an article in today's Darwin Star stating that the Northern Territory government is opening a new office in Canberra? Is the statement correct? If it is correct, will it mean that the lobbyists engaged by the Northern Territory government will have their contract terminated?

ANSWER

I have had a look at the front page of today's Darwin Star but I have not read it in detail. Usually, there is very little in the Star worth reading because it seems to be mainly a trade journal carrying advertisements. I understand that the Northern Territory government will be able to avail itself of the use of the premises which are occupied by MacIntosh Parkes and Associates in Canberra. Should Northern Territory government ministers or officials require secretarial assistance whilst in Canberra, we will be able to avail ourselves of assistance at the office of these people. I am certainly not aware that we are taking up an office on behalf of the Northern Territory government in Canberra.

767 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Moves have been made by the Commonwealth government to start a program of coastal surveillance by plane. Should something of an alien nature be spotted, what action will be taken?

ANSWER

Each sighting of vessels or planes requires a different response. The general pattern is that the surveillance crew will immediately issue an in-flight report to the Australian Coastal Surveillance Command Centre in Canberra. Local police forces in the area in question are then contacted, as are relevant Commonwealth, state and territory departmental officials. The departments that will normally be contacted are health, immigration, customs and primary industry. In respect to the role that local police forces play, the approach taken is identical to the normal search and rescue operation techniques that have been in existence for some time. The Australian Coastal Surveillance Command Centre therefore provides a response service and a high degree of cooperation exists between the Territory government officials and the command centre.

768 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is the Northern Territory government holding discussions today with the South Australian and Commonwealth governments with a view to having the Northern Territory government take over the maintenance and servicing of Aboriginal settlements in north and south Australia? If so, have financial arrangements been agreed upon?

ANSWER

Discussions have transpired for quite some time now, but only on an intermittent basis. There has been difficulty in getting various parties to the conference table. The purpose of the meeting, which was originally convened a year or 2 ago by the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Ian Viner, was to try to establish a central servicing centre for the Pitjandjara people who are scattered through the Northern Territory, the south-west of the Northern Territory, the north-west of South Australia and across into Western Australia. I am not absolutely certain that there are talks proceeding today, but we did receive a request recently for talks to resume and I can assure you that it was not the Northern Territory government that has been unwilling to attend these talks. We attend them whenever they are convened. I am quite certain that it has not got to the stage where the Northern Territory government will be taking over the provision of all services to the Pitjandjara people because of the feelings of South Australia and Western Australia about the role that they have to play. I believe that there is considerable antipathy between certain departments in South Australia and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs which has centralised its administration of the Pitjandjara region in Alice Springs. We will certainly attempt to co-operate in whatever plans are finally devised.

I made an informal suggestion to a fairly senior South Australian official at the Aboriginal Affairs Ministers Conference a couple of weeks ago in Adelaide. I suggested that perhaps one state or territory should look after health and another should look after community welfare services to try to cut out the bickerings that go on between bureaucracies and to see that all the Pitjandjara people receive a single standard of services. That official seemed to think that that was not such a bad idea. It may be that the idea will be floated before all the officials when the meeting reconvenes.

769 Mrs LAWRIE to TREASURER

This morning there was an item on "Morning Extra" which dealt with a controversy that arose in Alice Springs over the provision of specialist housing for Aboriginal people and the Treasurer's name was used. Can he advise the House of the nature of the controversy and his role in it and if the people are not to be given the precise type of housing they require?

ANSWER

The question would be answered better in a ministerial statement rather than an ad hoc answer. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs proposed some time ago to fund the construction of some special Aboriginal housing in urban centres throughout the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory government readily agreed to the Housing Commission having the agency of the construction of these houses and their administration. In this way the Northern Territory government would have some control over the operation rather than reject the suggestion and let the Commonwealth have the Department of Construction build the houses. A program was drawn up whereby houses were to be built in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek as a first stage. A figure of \$1m has been set aside by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs for this program generally. In Alice Springs, a contract has been let to build 15 houses and, in Tennant Creek, a contract is nearly let for a further 5 houses.

Some controversy has emerged as a result of people becoming disturbed at the siting of these houses. They are sited in normal urban areas. Some of them in Alice Springs are to replace former welfare houses that are due for demolition. Some are sited on vacant lots and others in the new Head Street subdivision which is yet to be settled. There is some community concern and this is appreciated. However, the project will be proceeding on the basis that there will be a Homemakers Service established which will be run by the Department of Community Development in the Northern Territory. There has been much discussion on the establishment of the Homemakers Service and its role in assisting people to fit in with the urban community. In addition, the selection of persons to go into these houses will be undertaken by a committee. I have written to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on the question of the composition of the selection committee and proposed that the Northern Territory government should have more involvement than was initially intended.

770 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I have often voiced my concern about the neglected state of some properties not only in my electorate but in other electorates. Is the government enforcing the lease conditions laid out under section 35 of the Darwin Town Area Leases Act and are funds still available for the clearing of over-grown, government-owned blocks?

ANSWER

The subject of unkempt lots, both government and private, is of great concern. I think the town still looks pretty shabby. The department is conducting routine lease investigations and is issuing notices where appropriate to private lessees pointing out to them that under section 35 of the Darwin Town Area Leases Act, persons are required to keep their land free from debris, weeds and rubbish. After a 28-day period of having had a notice served on them, a following notice is served. I understand that the response has been quite good from private land owners in this regard and I would like to record my appreciation of those persons

who are accepting their responsibilities. At this stage, the department has not taken the following step of going onto private land to clean it up itself.

As far as the government land is concerned, there are still funds available for the clearing of government-owned vacant lots. The practice of burning off these lots has been discontinued following an unfortunate incident where a fire got out of hand and damaged a neighbouring property. If honourable members would like to provide a list of government lots that they believe should be cleaned up, the department will undertake to have them cleaned up. If they are private lots, we will check the files to ensure that notices have been served on the relevant lessees.

771 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

When will the study of the Darwin central business district, which was commenced last year, be completed?

ANSWER

I am not sure which study the honourable member refers to. The central business district is covered by the 1978 Darwin Town Plan. There have been on-going studies in the central business district as far as traffic patterns are concerned. We are looking at the possible re-direction of traffic and the adoption of certain bus routes in the city. There have also been studies into the car-parking requirements of central Darwin, particularly as a result of the mall. However, I am not aware of any other particular studies into the central business district of Darwin.

772 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Because the Katherine meatworks are licensed meat exporters under the AMLC Act, are they subject to the following obligation: "If the owners of the livestock so request, the licensee shall slaughter and treat livestock, or cause the livestock to be slaughtered and treated on account of the owner, on a weight and grade basis for submission for export at the rate and on conditions specified from time to time by the corporation in writing for that person"?

ANSWER

The quote from the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation Act is from section 11(1)(b). The administration of that act is the responsibility of the Commonwealth government. I refer to my answer to question without notice 612 on 22 May in which I said: "Under the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation Act, section 11(1)(b), the AMLC can compel an export establishment to kill on consignment. However, there are doubts as to the effectiveness of that section which I understand the Commonwealth government has under review. I made representations in October last year to Mr Sinclair, the Commonwealth minister, urging him to make any necessary amendments so that all export meatworks can be compelled by the AMLC to kill on consignment. As I understand the situation, the Katherine meatworks could only be compelled to kill cattle, not to process them. Because of these problems, the AMLC has not sought to enforce section 11(1)(b). Thus, at present, Katherine abattoirs are not required to kill and process cattle for outsiders".

773 Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Was the minister reported correctly on "Morning Extra" this morning when it was indicated that he had stated it would set a very dangerous precedent to ask neighbours their opinion before moving families into Housing Commission homes and he would not be a party to such an exercise?

ANSWER

The answer is yes. The Housing Commission does not ask approval of neighbours of any house where it proposes to house any ethnic group - Timorese, Greek, Chinese or whatever. I do not think we should adopt such a practice in relation to Aborigines. I further understand that it was reported on the ABC that I was acting under a federal government directive in regard to Aboriginal housing. I would like to set the record straight that the federal government does not have such powers of direction nor has it sought to influence my decisions in this regard in any way.

774 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is he aware of reports in the Australian of 30 May that the EEC concessions of imports of Australian produce, particularly buffalo beef, is to the extent of 2,000 tonnes and is worth \$5m per annum? In light of the improved markets, will the government pursue the policy recommended in the Feral Animals Report of encouraging domestication and controlled buffalo meat production in industry?

ANSWER

We welcome the article in the newspaper and we trust that it is accurate. We have been making representations to people like Vic Garland and Doug Anthony on buffalo meat for some 10 months now. In fact, when the levy of \$2,000 a tonne was imposed upon buffalo exports out of the Northern Territory, we were most anxious to see this decision reversed. It has been reversed and I understand that, through the Special Trades Division of the Department of Primary Industry, buffalo meat can now flow into the EEC and obtain good prices for Territory producers. In respect of the Feral Animals Report, we are concerned that some domestication of buffalo again takes place. This is not a guarantee that the market will always be there and, of course, it will be at the risk of those persons who wish to pursue that particular activity.

775 Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the Northern Territory government prepared submissions to the National Parks and Wildlife Service regarding the plan of management for Kakadu National Park, particularly as that plan affects Jabiru?

ANSWER

Not only has the Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission prepared submissions to the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service in relation to the plan of management for the Kakadu National Park, it has done better than that. The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service is a fledgling service, lacking in expertise and certainly lacking ground management experience because it has never controlled any national parks other than the Uluru National Park and even then not to any great extent. Kakadu has only recently been purported to be declared by the Commonwealth government. The Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission is sending 2 of

its experienced officers to Canberra to assist in the formulation of a detailed plan of management. They will be there for at least 2 weeks. I am sure that the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service will greatly benefit from the experience and the wise counsel that they will receive.

776 Mr BALLANTYNE to CHIEF MINISTER

Will the Northern Territory government provide practical assistance to the unit that is interested in making a film of Mrs Aeneas Gunn's classic "We of the Never Never" for the Victorian government?

ANSWER

The Territory government will consider making assistance available. By way of elucidation on film-making generally, the Territory government, through officials of the Chief Minister's Department, is holding conversations with the South Australian Film Corporation and Film Australia in respect of film-making potential in the Northern Territory. Both of these statutory corporations are interested in assisting the Northern Territory and we are interested in achieving what we can with either of them. I do not know where the film unit comes from that is the subject of this question, but I would think that a film titled "We of the Never Never", spiced up a little to have some box-office draw, should help promote the Territory down south and overseas - preferably overseas than down south because it would certainly be a rough old film and we do not want to promote that image too much down south.

777 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

He will be aware of the dissatisfaction with the accommodation and amenities available for staff at Nhulunbuy Hospital. What action does his department plan to undertake to upgrade this accommodation to the 2 levels now available in other towns in the Northern Territory so that staff can be retained at that hospital?

ANSWER

I am aware that the department has embarked on an upgrading program in all centres. This is mainly to keep up with the increase in standards of facilities that are expected by staff that work in remote areas. I would venture to say that the Northern Territory has some of the most luxurious remote area accommodation offered anywhere in Australia. The Health Department will endeavour to increase its cover so that every facility that it services in the Northern Territory has the most modern accommodation available.

In particular reference to Nhulunbuy, we have a problem in upgrading the facilities there because of the structural design of the existing buildings. The buildings are constructed of pre-cast concrete. It is not a simple case of knocking a wall out and extending a room. There are very considerable costs involved in any remodelling. The department is looking at the most economic way of upgrading the accommodation.

778 Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

The other day the member for Alice Springs asked a question about open drains. My question relates to stormwater drains around Darwin and the suburbs. Some of these drains do not have safety grids over them. Is it a requirement that all stormwater drains have safety grids placed over their entrances?

ANSWER

The short answer is no. There is no legal requirement for the grids. However, the department itself is concerned that some of these manholes and openings should have grids placed over them and, in some cases, we have done that. It is up to the city council to ensure that grids are placed over the places over which it has control.

779 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he consider allowing cyclists to use footpaths in urban areas, as is done in Canberra, until bicycle tracks are available to the suburbs?

ANSWER

This would only apply on 307 roads. In respect of the other roads, it would be up to the city council. The only 307 roads that concern us are Bagot Road and possibly Stuart Highway in Alice Springs. We are incorporating a cycle track for the connector road from Nightcliff to Fannie Bay. We looked at the Bagot Road proposal to incorporate bicycle tracks inside the RAAF fence and we decided that, because of the difficulty in getting across the main Stuart Highway junction, it would be impracticable to proceed with that particular idea. If necessary, I suppose we could consider the matter again.

780 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is it a fact that the operators of the Aboriginal Hostel in Katherine are recruiting children who formerly travelled to Kormilda College for secondary education for enrolment in the Katherine High School?

ANSWER

The new manager of the Aboriginal Hostel in Katherine has made approaches to a number of Aboriginal parents and students. At the beginning of this week, 7 children arrived at the Katherine Aboriginal Hostel for the purpose of enrolling at the Katherine High School. I also understand that the aircraft that went out to pick up a number of students for Kormilda College from the homes of Aboriginal families found they were not coming back to Kormilda. One assumes, on that limited information, that there may well be a connection between the two. The difficulty in transferring children from Kormilda College to the Katherine High School is the lack of appropriate courses available at the Katherine High School. Kormilda initially caters for post-primary education rather than formal secondary education and does so until the basic literacy and numeracy is brought up to normal high school course level.

The payment to Aboriginal families under the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme is conditional upon the Department of Education indicating to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs that the courses provided are appropriate to the students. The department would find itself in the very awkward position of either having to lie, which it would not do, or deprive those families of grants. If this new manager of the Katherine hostel thinks that he is doing the Aboriginal people a service by persuading them, in "pied piper" fashion, from Kormilda to Katherine High School, then he is wrong and is actually doing them a disservice. I hope that officers of the department and people from Kormilda can talk to those students and their parents and persuade them that their best interest is not being served by being coaxed away in this manner. If the problem continues, we will have to transfer the staff from Kormilda to Katherine High

School so as to provide the lost service and Kormilda - a multi-million dollar building - will end up like another Dhupuma and we would find ourselves paying \$28,000 per head per student.

781 Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Did he see in the public media last week remarks attributed to the Mayor of Darwin that she had called for the transfer of building and town planning functions to local government councils? Does the government have a time-scale within which such transfers will take place and, if so, how does it operate?

ANSWER

The subject of the transfer of further functions to local government, and I will refer only to those regarding town planning and building control, has been one of discussion for at least the last couple of years. At present, there is no proposal to transfer the function of town planning to local government in the Northern Territory and there are very good reasons for this. The local government, in virtually all centres in the Territory - perhaps Darwin does not quite fit into this category - is not of the size to have the resources to engage town planners or to operate a town planning section as this would obviously be very expensive. So far as Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs are concerned, there is no way that they could possibly justify the employment of full-time town planners with the grades necessary to prepare and administer plans for their respective communities.

The new Town Planning Act that was passed by this House some short time ago and has not yet commenced will involve local government on a newly-structured Town Planning Board to the degree that they will have a majority on that board. Therefore, local government input to planning decisions will be at the very highest level. Those municipalities will still be able to use the department's resources to assist them with their own special projects or general representations concerning town planning.

In regard to building approvals, the government has been concerned at the number of agencies that developers have to approach to obtain building approvals in the Territory and this applies to the rest of Australia as well.

The Northern Territory government has an interdepartmental committee that is preparing documentation for Cabinet which hopefully will recommend a one-stop building approval system. This will involve local governments to a degree because they currently have certain controls over building, particularly in the field of drainage. The system is quite complex and has been approached by the states without a great deal of success over a period of years. We hope that we will have some success but it will not involve transferring the function to local government. This government does not have any particular plans for any time-scale at this stage.

782 Mr BALLANTYNE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. What action has been taken to upgrade the road to Edith Falls? Are there plans to seal this and other roads leading to major tourist attractions in the Katherine area?

ANSWER

If my memory serves me correctly, I have had some communication from residents in the Elsey electorate concerning Edith Falls road. I have asked the department to report on the matter. I hope that some work can be carried out in the next program.

783 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he undertake to have further engineering studies made of the Ludmilla sewage treatment plant and its outfall in view of evidence that the system is not working properly - if indeed it ever has - and in view of the need to extend the pipeline beyond the low water mark?

ANSWER

I will certainly have the matter examined to see if something can be done if there is a smell.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

784 Mr PERRON: The member for Fannie Bay queried the procedure involved in the re-zoning of a lot in Ludmilla Terrace. I am advised that the lot in question has been held under an occupational licence by the Darwin Football Club and it adjoins the lot held by the same club under a special purpose lease. To enable the development of the whole area as a football ground and ancillaries, the lot covered by the occupation licence was advertised for re-zoning to permit both lots to be amalgamated into one special purpose lease. The advertisement of the proposed re-zoning mentioned the lot by its formal identification as lot 3724 Town of Darwin so that it could not be confused with any other lot and therefore the advertisement was legal and could be considered by the Town Planning Board. It is true that some construction work commenced some weeks ago on the site but these works had nothing to do with the re-zoning application and had not been in conflict with the then status of the lot as an occupational licence. Persons holding occupational licences can quite often make improvements to the land at their own risk and an occupational licence is renewable yearly. If they are not renewed, the improvements are forfeited. If a person seeks to go ahead on that basis, he can.

785 Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Victoria River asked whether the government was proposing to draw up a town plan for Top Springs. I am advised that Rabbit Flat would probably rate about the same status as far as a town plan is concerned. If the honourable member is concerned primarily about the placing of a police station at Top Springs, then he should perhaps make representations to the Chief Minister.

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