

PART II

THE QUESTION PAPER

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

Numerical references are to Question Paper page numbers.

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

23 February 1988

24. Helicopter Charters - Minister for Tourism

Mr SMITH to MINISTER FOR TOURISM

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

16 May 1989

87. BTEC Payments to Mr Dunbar

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

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

What were the -

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

22 August 1989

90. Loans Converted to Grants

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Which organisations have, in the past 12 months, had loans from the Northern Territory government changed to grants.

In each case, what was the amount.

92. Liquor Licences

Mr EDE to MINISTER for TOURISM

1. What were, by type, the number of liquor licences extant as at 31 December 1988 for each year since the Liquor Commission was established in 1979 in -
 - (a) Darwin;
 - (b) Alice Springs;
 - (c) Katherine;
 - (d) Tennant Creek;
 - (e) balance of the Southern region; and
 - (f) balance of the Northern region.
2. Are holders of Special Licences required to provide a return detailing sales under the Special Licence.
3. How many applications for new liquor licences have been -
 - (a) approved; and
 - (b) rejected,by the commission in each year since its establishment.
4. How many applications for renewal of liquor licences have been rejected by the commission in each year since its establishment.
5. In each year since the Liquor Commission was established, how many applications to have liquor licence conditions changed to provide for takeaway sales have been -
 - (a) approved; and
 - (b) rejected.
6. How many applications for -
 - (a) new licences;
 - (b) licence renewal; and
 - (c) changes to licence conditions,were opposed by commercial or community interest. Of the opposed proposals how many were ultimately granted, in each year since the commission was established.

7. What was the volume of beer, wine and spirits respectively sold in -
- (a) Darwin;
 - (b) Alice Springs;
 - (c) Katherine;
 - (d) Tennant Creek;
 - (e) the balance of the Northern region; and
 - (f) the balance of the Southern region,
- for each year since the establishment of the Liquor Commission in 1979.
8. What has been the annual amount collected by the Northern Territory government in liquor licence and related licence fees since the establishment of the Liquor Commission in 1979.
9. What was the wholesale value of beer, wine and spirits respectively purchased by licensees in -
- (a) Darwin;
 - (b) Alice Springs;
 - (c) Katherine;
 - (d) Tennant Creek;
 - (e) balance of the Southern region; and
 - (f) balance of the Northern region,
- for each year since the establishment of the Liquor Commission in 1979.
10. How many liquor licences have been suspended or cancelled for breaches of licence conditions in -
- (a) Darwin;
 - (b) Alice Springs;
 - (c) Katherine;
 - (d) Tennant Creek;
 - (e) balance of the Southern region; and
 - (f) balance of the Northern region,
- for each year since the establishment of the Liquor Commission in 1979 and what were their reasons for the suspension or cancellations.

11. How many prosecutions of licensees were -
- (a) commenced; and
 - (b) successful,
- for the offences of serving alcohol to minors or to intoxicated persons in each year since the establishment of the Liquor Commission in 1979.
12. What was the per capita consumption by Territory residents of beer, wine and spirits respectively in -
- (a) Darwin;
 - (b) Alice Springs;
 - (c) Katherine;
 - (d) Tennant Creek;
 - (e) balance of the Southern region; and
 - (f) balance of the Northern region,
- for each year since the establishment of the Liquor Commission in 1979.

**95. Treasury Employee, Costs of Disciplinary
Action Incurred by Government**

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

An employee of the NT Treasury has been subject to the following Public Service action since September 1988 -

- ° On or about 6 September 1988 - Disciplinary action commenced in accordance with section 53 of Public Service Act. This action was not proceeded with
- ° On or about 5 October 1988 - NCOM Controller recommended the employee be terminated
- ° On or about 13 October 1988 - Under Treasurer recommended to PSC that action be taken under section 49 of the act to retire employee on inefficiency grounds
- Employee suspended from duty on full pay

- ° On or about 14 October 1988 - PSC writes to employee advising section 49 action proposed. Asks for comment
- ° On or about 19-30 October 1988 - Submissions made by union on employee's behalf
- ° On or about 31 October 1988 - Employee's services terminated
- ° On or about 31 October 1988 - Appeal lodged under Public Service Regulation 18
 - Appeal tribunal formed
- ° On or about 1 December 1988 - 1st tribunal hearing
- ° On or about 19 December 1988 - Tribunal advised PSC that -
 - ° Treasury has inappropriately used discipline process and recommended they review their procedures
 - ° employee referred to CMO
- ° On or about 23 December 1988 - 2nd tribunal hearing
- ° On or about 29 December 1988 - 3rd tribunal hearing
- ° On or about 10 January 1989 - PSC sought clarification from tribunal on a number of matters
- ° On or about 12 January 1989 - CMO examination gave employee clean bill of health
- ° On or about 20 January 1989 - Tribunal responds
- ° On or about late January 1989 - Tribunal reports to PSC -
 - ° allegations against employee presented in a biased misleading way
 - ° there were serious defects in procedures followed

- the employee was denied natural justice
 - DOLAS negligent in advice given to Treasury on case
 - recommended officer be redeployed to another department for 3 months
- On or about 27 January 1989 - PSC ignores recommendation and advice and terminates employee
- On or about 30 January 1989 - Union, on behalf of officer, lodges claim on PSC seeking reinstatement and payment of \$250 000 compensation for unfair dismissal
- On or about early February 1989 - Dispute notification lodged
- On or about 16 February 1989 - Dispute before Commissioner Cross in Sydney. PSC engaged QC
- On or about 6 March 1989 - Further Commission hearing with QC
- On or about 26 June 1989 - Commissioner hands down decision awarding ACOA jurisdiction on reinstatement
- On or about 17 July 1989 - At date of this question, the Public Service Commission has appealed to Full Bench of Industrial Relation Commission

How much money has been spent by the Department of Labour and Administrative Services and the Northern Territory Treasury in the following areas since September 1988 in presenting the matter -

- (a) salary and allowances of the employee during suspension;
- (b) salary and administration costs of all NTPS employees involved;

- (c) Appeal Tribunal costs;
- (d) legal costs including Queens Counsel (QC) fees; and
- (e) air fares, travel and accommodation costs for senior staff in his department.

97. Emergency Evacuations from Titjikala (Maryvale) and Atitjere (Harts Range)

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. How many evacuations from each of these communities were there during the years 1986-87 and 1987-88.
2. What means was employed for these evacuations.
3. In how many of these evacuations were private vehicles from the community used.
4. At what rate were the owners of these vehicles reimbursed.

100. Investnorth dealings with Sheraton Company

Mr BELL to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

1. What recurring costs does Investnorth pay in respect of -
 - (a) Sheraton Darwin;
 - (b) Sheraton Alice Springs; and
 - (c) Sheraton Ayers Rock.
2. On what basis is the return to the Sheraton Company from these publicly-owned facilities calculated.
3. What was the initial capital cost of each property.
4. Has Investnorth commenced legal action against White Industries because of construction defects with the Sheraton Ayers Rock Hotel.
5. Will the minister table the agreement between Investnorth and the Sheraton Company. If not, why not.
6. What has been the cost of the repairs to flood damage sustained at Sheraton Ayers Rock Hotel in 1989 and under what headings have these costs been incurred.

101. Brucellosis and Tuberculosis - Tarlton Downs

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

1. On what date this year was a TB reactor found on Tarlton Downs Station.
2. When was the station notified that they had a confirmed case of TB.
3. What was the cause of the delay.
4. When was the station sent documentation to sign authorising the de-stock.
5. What was the cause of the delay.
6. Will the station owners be compensated for losses incurred due to the fall in prices, loss of condition and/or loss of production.

102. Aboriginal Health Workers

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

How many Aboriginal Health Workers were employed in the following communities in -

- (a) 1981;
- (b) 1985; and
- (c) 1989.

Barunga-Wugularr	Borrooloola
Daguragu	Lajamanu
Yugul Mangi	Mataranka
Pine Creek	Angurugu
Milyakburra	Galiwinku
Gapuwiyak	Milingimbi
Numbulwar	Ramingining
Umbakumba	Yirrkala Dhanbul
Kardu Numida	Belyuen
Pularumpi	Milikapiti
Naiyu Nambiyu	Nguiu
Peppimenarti	Gunbalanya
Jabiru	Maningrida
Minjilang	Warruwi
Amoonguna	Aputula
Areyonga	Kaltukatjara
Ikuntji	Imanpa
Iwupataka	Papunya
Pmara Jutunta	Santa Teresa
Wallace Rock Hole	Yuendumu
Urapuntja	Ntarria
Walunguru	Ali Curung
Alpurrurulam	Elliott

103. General Practitioners in the NT

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. Does the Northern Territory government survey the availability of general medical practitioners in the Northern Territory.
2. If so, how many GPs work in the Northern Territory.
3. How many GPs working in the NT are -
 - (a) in private practice;
 - (b) publicly employed; and
 - (c) employed by community-based medical services.
4. In the case of questions 3(b) and 3(c), what are the employing agencies.
5. Of these GPs, how many live in -
 - (a) Darwin;
 - (b) Katherine;
 - (c) Tennant Creek;
 - (d) Alice Springs;
 - (e) Gove;
 - (f) Jabiru;
 - (g) Alyangula; and
 - (h) elsewhere.
6. In the case of question 5(h), where are they resident and by whom are they employed.

14 February 1989

70. Myilly Point Development

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

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

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

ANSWER

The Henry Walker Group has the development rights to Myilly Point.

Whilst there is no formal time constraint on the developer, the government will not allow those rights to extend indefinitely.

No covenants will be placed on the land nor a valuation be made until a firm development proposal has been considered.

I have recently been advised by the Henry Walker Group that a new feasibility plan with respect to Myilly Point is currently being undertaken.

22 August 1989

91. Consultancy - Ms M. Gaither

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Did the former Minister for Community Welfare (Mr B. Coulter) recruit a Canadian consultant Ms Marilyn Gaither to the Northern Territory. If so -

1. On whose advice was Ms Gaither employed by the Northern Territory Government.
2. What were the terms of reference given to Ms Gaither, upon the commencement of her consultancy.
3. What were the conditions of her contract.
4. How much was she paid during the period of the consultancy.

5. What written reports did she provide to the minister/government.
6. What action did the government take upon receipt of the reports.
7. What programs have been established as a result of the consultant's recommendations.

ANSWER

1. Yes, the then Minister for Community Development, the Hon B.F. Coulter, MLA, on advice from Mr Harlan Knudson, Executive Director, Washington State Medical Association - (recommendation attached) facilitated Ms Gaither's engagement consequent to a visit to the United States jointly funded by the NT and the Office of the then Aboriginal Affairs Minister Clyde Holding.

2. The terms of Ms Gaither's contract were:

Services to be provided by the Consultant

- (a) As consultant provide advice and interim report on the development of a Northern Territory Counselling Service.
 - (b) As consultant advise and report on the future policy and optional strategies for community based service programs currently operating within the NT and associated Commonwealth programs, such as Home and Community Care and Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.
 - (c) As consultant advise and report on the special needs of Aboriginal communities in the area of community services with a particular emphasis on youth service problems such as alcoholism, crime and petrol sniffing.
 - (d) As consultant advise and report on policy and option strategies for the devolution of community based service programs to the private and volunteer sector(s).
 - (e) As consultant review and assess recommendations and strategies of the Task Forces on Domestic Violence and Juvenile Crime and the Report of the Advisory Committee on the Uncontrolled Child.
 - (f) By the conclusion of the consultancy a report on (a) to (e) shall be provided in a format for presentation to the Minister for Community Development.
3. It is not the practice of this government to provide these details in relation to employment contracts.
 4. It is not the practice of this government to provide these details in relation to employment contracts.
 5. Reports in accordance with 2(f).

6. The reports were considered in conjunction with ongoing departmentally based programs.
7. Various existing programs were enhanced or had changed emphasis as a result of Ms Gaither's consultancy.

Various of Ms Gaither's papers and comments, on a range of welfare related topics, were similarly valuable to government in its deliberations on policy and procedures.

No specific new programs, directly and discretely attributable to Ms Gaither's activities, have been introduced. Consideration was given to the establishment of a Northern Territory Counselling Service but it was determined instead to modify existing activities rather than introduce a new service.

(See following page for attached recommendation.)

W S M A

WASHINGTON STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

900 United Airlines Building, 2033 Sixth Avenue, Seattle,
Washington 98121
(206) 441-9762 1-800-552-0612 Impaired Physician Hotline
1-800-552-7236

October 31, 1985

Mr Barry Coulter
Minister of Community Development
Northern Territory
AUSTRALIA

Dear Mr. Coulter:

It is my sincere pleasure to recommend on a personal and professional basis Ms. Marilyn Gaither, MSW. As you know, Marilyn is a Counselor for the Cabrini Alcohol Program.

Marilyn Gaither is a leader in alcohol treatment and rehabilitation programs in this community.

She brings to this most challenging field high professional skills and a long and distinguished record of accomplishment. The Cabrini alcoholism program is recognized as an excellent program in the Seattle area and Ms. Gaither is a major factor for that recognition.

Marilyn Gaither is an excellent communicator, well organized and an individual who has the drive and ability to create and implement new programs. Perhaps no field is more complex and difficult than that of alcoholism, but with leadership from individuals such as Marilyn, I think we can make tremendous strides in dealing with the dreadful disease.

Combined with her professional skills, Marilyn brings with her a keen understanding of human nature and 'the real world.' I think she would be both a strong leader and a good team member for your government program.

I recommend her highly.

Sincerely,

Harlan R. Knudson, CAE
Executive Director.

93. Brucellosis and Tuberculosis - Administration

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

1. (a) How much was spent in the Northern Territory on each of the following heads of BTEC expenditure for the 5 years 1983-84 to 1987-88 -
 - (i) Type A - Operational;
 - (ii) Type B - Compensation, De-stocking, Reactors;
 - (iii) Type C - Mustering subsidy;
 - (iv) Type D - Property Improvement Loans;
 - (v) Type E - Re-stocking freight rebate; and
- (b) the percentage of each expenditure head, spent on the following where applicable -
 - (i) Salaries, wages and allowances;
 - (ii) Unmusterables;
 - (iii) Private veterinary services;
 - (iv) Equipment and materials;
 - (v) Travel and subsistence;
 - (vi) Vehicle running costs;
 - (vii) Abattoir Brucellosis sampling and ear tags;
 - (viii) Surveys; and
 - (ix) Helicopter charter.
2. With regard to cattle compulsorily de-stocked from Balbarini Station since 1 January 1989 -
 - (a) what was the average value per beast set by the valuation process;
 - (b) what was the average price per beast obtained at sale;
 - (c) who paid for removal costs etc; and
 - (d) what proportion of these cattle were purchased by Balbarini Station following de-stocks on Seven Emu and Manangoora Stations.
3. Has the Northern Territory government in each or any year since 1985 issued publicly a marketing plan which identified -
 - (a) each property;

- (b) cattle numbers to be de-stocked; and
 - (c) timing of de-stocking operations before the commencement of each meatworks season to ensure that turnoff is scheduled as far as possible with likely market demand.
4. Are those marketing plans reviewed at the end of each season to assess the degree of compliance with the plan, and if so, would the Minister supply copies of both the marketing report and the compliance review.
5. What has been the turnover rate of staff in the following professions or groups since 1982-83 financial year -
- (a) Veterinary Officers;
 - (b) Stock Inspectors; and
 - (c) Animal Industry division overall.
6. What have been the changes in method and rates of compensation paid under BTEC for various classes of de-stock since the end of the 1982-83 financial year.
7. Are pastoral producers entitled to receive further assistance under BTEC where they have knowingly re-stocked with diseased cattle. If so -
- (a) what is the extent of that assistance and its limitations; and
 - (b) if not, when did the practice cease.
8. Does the Northern Territory compile, prior to each operating season, a summary document based upon the Approved Property Program for each participating property and premises, detailing all of the planned operating activities for that year and the number of cattle to be tested for both Brucellosis and Tuberculosis, the number to be destroyed on the property either as untruckable or unmusterable, as well as detailed cost estimates. If so -
- (a) is a quarterly report prepared detailing actual activity undertaken on a property by property basis;
 - (b) is a summary of achieved activity by property detailing physical data and cost prepared at the end of each season comparing actual with planned achievement; and
 - (c) what were the results for each of the past 6 seasons.

ANSWER

The information sought by the honourable member is contained in departmental records. It is not my intention, however, to redirect valuable departmental resources into preparing the detailed responses that the questions call for. Furthermore, in one instance, it is quite inappropriate for the information to be

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

provided since it involves the commercial operations of an individual property owner.

Specifically, however, in respect of question 1(a), the details are as follows -

1983-84

Type A Operational	\$ 4 603 625
Type B Combined with 'Other Assistance'	\$ 8 393 185

1984-85

Type A Operational	\$ 6 107 851
Type B Compensation	\$ 5 980 809
Type C,D,E Grouped as 'Other Assistance'	\$ 3 724 547

1985-86

Type A Operational	\$ 7 601 573
Type B Compensation	\$ 5 639 151
Type C,D,E Grouped as 'Other Assistance'	\$ 4 284 917

1986-87

Type A Operational	\$ 7 740 912
Type B Compensation	\$ 5 852 139
Type C,D,E Grouped as 'Other Assistance'	\$ 2 840 865

1987-88

Type A Operational	\$ 8 228 358
Type B Compensation	\$ 4 435 229
Type C Mustering Subsidy	\$ 2 003 622
Type D Property Loans	\$ 56 001
Type E Restocking Freight Subsidy	\$ 27 054

1988-89

Type A Operational	\$ 9 598 370
Type B Compensation De-stocking, Reactors	\$ 4 302 964
Type C Mustering Subsidy	\$ 2 569 756
Type D Property Loans	\$ 464 959
Type E Re-stocking Freight Subsidy	\$ 318 818

With reference to a marketing plan for BTEC, my department has not been involved in any preparation of a marketing plan. I am, however, prepared to table the Strategic Plan for the remainder of the program. This plan outlines the manner in which cattle will be marketed if acquired by the government.

The turn-over rate of staff has been the subject of previous questions and debate and some information has been provided. I am not prepared to use further departmental time in preparing the briefs to answer these questions.

With respect to the changes in methods and rates of compensation paid under BTEC, I can advise that over the period in question,

there have been changes agreed to by all the participants. These changes of compensation have moved from market value to fixed rates and back to market values. The way in which compensation is now applied, is clearly outlined in the Strategic Plan.

In response to question 6, the answer is no and the practice has not changed.

Finally, the way in which the Territory prepares its baseline information prior to each operating season is also outlined in the Strategic Plan.

96. Tourism Marketing Duty

Mr EDE to TREASURER

1. How much has been collected in Tourism Marketing Duty to date.
2. What percentage of the possible collectable amount does this represent.
3. How much has it cost the government, directly and indirectly, to collect the tax.

ANSWER

1. The amount of duty collected to 19 August 1989 is \$1 963 624.
2. It is not possible to determine the collectable amount precisely. It is estimated that the above represents close to 95% of the collectable amount. The remaining 5% is made up of late returns and a small amount for avoidance.
3. The estimated cost of collecting the above duty is as follows -

◦ direct costs	\$40 700
◦ indirect costs	<u>\$15 400</u>
	<u>\$56 100</u>

**98. Aboriginal Housing Program
Administrative Procedures**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What are the terms of reference of the Review of Administrative Procedures - Aboriginal Housing Program which was alluded to at page 11 of the Northern Territory Government Gazette, No. 19 of 17 May 1989.

ANSWER

The terms of reference of the consultancy to review the administrative procedures for the Aboriginal Rental Housing

Program are to examine and recommend appropriate changes to the department's current procedures aimed at improving the efficiency of administration.

The review will examine procedures associated with -

- (a) the establishment and conditions of grants;
- (b) use of consultants by communities;
- (c) the type of contract documentation to be used; and
- (d) general administrative matters including a greater usage of plain English.

99. Computer Software Contracts

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What are the details of computer software referred to as reference QSA 2894 on page 12 of the Northern Territory Government Gazette, No. G19 dated 17 May 1989.

ANSWER

The software is the personal computer product 'Lotus 123'. The application is a 'spread sheet' and used in PAWA's Financial Service area.

The requirement for two (2) copies of the software was advertised in the NT News and offers were received from four (4) local companies -

- Data Products
- Darwin Data
- Data #3
- Computer Sales and Leasing

An order in the amount of \$1128.80 was awarded to the lowest tenderer, Data Products.

Gaming Machines

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for RACING and GAMING

What difficulties are involved in allowing licensed clubs to instal cash payment gaming machines, as was suggested by the Leader of the Opposition recently?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am pleased that the member for Ludmilla has asked that question. Given the 4 weeks rampage that the Leader of the Opposition spent in misleading clubs as to the potential for gaming machines, I thought he would raise the matter on my return from holiday. I am pleased that he has appointed the member for Nhulunbuy as opposition spokesman on racing and gaming because, unlike the Leader of the Opposition, at least he has a chance of understanding matters pertaining to racing and gaming.

During the last few weeks, the Leader of the Opposition has written a 5- or 6-page letter to all licensed clubs in the Northern Territory. That letter contains no less than 9 clearly recognised errors. I will call them 'errors', although one might question whether they are accidental or deliberate. Given the capacity of the Leader of the Opposition's staff to comprehend agreements and matters pertaining to video machines, I can conclude only that probably the whole saga has been concocted deliberately by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition is suggesting that it is a fairly simple matter for licensed clubs to be able to convert to cash payouts on their video machines. That is totally incorrect, not for legislative reasons as the Leader of the Opposition suggests, but because of the legally-binding agreement with the Darwin casino.

Mr Smith: Where is it in the legally-binding agreement?

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, that legally-binding agreement was tabled in this House some 14 months ago.

Mr Smith: It is not in there.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition suggested that we quietly snuck in the agreement with the casino on budget day last year. In fact, it was tabled and circulated to each of the 6 honourable members then opposite. I thought that they might take at least some interest in matters pertaining to the casino. The administration and audit report was tabled on the same day. Did they take no notice of that either? The Leader of the Opposition seeks to blame this government for his ineptitude and for his lack of interest in matters pertaining to ...

Mr Smith: Tell us about the legal agreement.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, let me talk about some other misleading statements made by the Leader of the Opposition in his correspondence. He was suggesting that the tax pertaining to the casino, written into that agreement, was such a complex formula that it would take a mathematician to understand it.

Mr Smith: It does.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, it does not take a mathematician to understand the formula that he has quoted. It is necessary only to be able to read English. In the same schedule, the description of what each of the factors means is written in pretty clear English. It is necessary to be able to read English because the formula that the Leader of the Opposition has quoted has nothing to do with the tax rates. Clearly, it has to do with the exclusivity period.

Mr Smith: That is right.

Mr FINCH: The Leader of the Opposition now acknowledges that that is the case. That is not what he has written to each of the clubs. He has misled them deliberately in a number of areas, this one included.

The tax rates are very simple and are written in the same agreement. They change according to the performance of the casino. In fact, the formula has been written so that it is easier to interpret. It has greater returns to the Northern Territory, and the actual returns are proof of the pudding. The returns to the government over the last few years are covered in the annual reports. The return from the Darwin casino is increasing as a result of the very good work done by the Darwin casino management who are marketing overseas and interstate as they are required to do. The Leader of the Opposition does not have such a bad memory that he can forget some of the basic reasons for which this government saw fit to change the operators of the casino some years ago. Among other things, it was because of the former operators' lack of performance in attracting overseas and interstate gaming participants.

That success is now very well demonstrated, not only in the gross return to the Northern Territory, but also in the breakdown of the returns from the various gaming options. The Leader of the Opposition, incorrectly of course, says that the majority of income comes from locals because the poker machines and the video machines etc provide the greatest return. It is not true. In fact, what is happening is that the return ...

Mr Smith: Table it.

Mr FINCH: You need only to read the report, Mr Speaker. For goodness sake, the annual report last year would indicate the trends. I am pleased to advise that, currently, the decline in return from poker machines is still apparent. There is a switch from the poker machine income to a greater income from baccarat, an indication of higher fliers, and that is what the whole exercise was about. The casino is performing well. If it were not for that, we would not see Singapore Airlines' planes coming here.

Mr Speaker, let me get back to the reason why that agreement was rewritten. It was rewritten to give the casino an opportunity to perform. It gave the government an opportunity to obtain a clearer and a better arrangement as far as its taxation agreements were concerned. It placed more stringent ownership provisions on the operators. The exclusivity period that the Leader of the Opposition referred to, incorrectly again, is not until the year 2003, but is for a 10-year period. There is a productivity formula, to which he referred incorrectly in his letter to the clubs, that provides the opportunity to the operators, if they perform, to obtain an extension of that exclusivity period up to a period of 15 years. There is good reason for that. The arrangements for taxation were simplified and deductions that could be made previously against gross profit were eliminated. As I have indicated, this resulted in a better return for the Northern Territory taxpayer.

As for the misleading of the clubs, it will be my task to discuss further the concerns of clubs and other participants in the liquor and gaming industry to ensure that we are able to address their needs as best we can. We will do that on the basis of an overall balance, not by picking out just one aspect and trying to ride it as a political winner. There is far more to the poker machine and video game potential than the Leader of the Opposition wishes to demonstrate. That has been clearly shown in New South Wales where, in many instances, poker machines in clubs have led to their decline. It will be my task to ensure that the clubs' management and committees are across all of the facts pertaining to the total industry. It is not simply a matter of picking up one item and claiming that it is the easy solution. It is not that easy. The Leader of the Opposition has done himself no good and, I would suggest, has gone a fair way towards causing damage to the clubs. It will be my role to provide them with a balanced view and a considerate hearing of their concerns.

Gaming Machines

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for RACING and GAMING

I understand that the honourable minister really has not had the time to get on top of his new portfolio because he has been on holiday for 4 weeks. Quite clearly, the casino does not have a monopoly over video gaming machines as the opportunity for clubs to have video gaming machines is contained in the Lotteries and Gaming Act. Where, in the agreement with the casino, does it state specifically that, in relation to video gaming machines, the casino operators are the only people in the Northern Territory who can offer cash prizes?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, once again, the Leader of the Opposition is miles off track. Licences to use video gaming machines are issued to clubs on the strict understanding that play is for a non-cash prize. Secondly, under the agreement with the casino, there is a very specific clause ...

Mr Smith: Where is it? Table it.

Mr FINCH: I will come back to the Leader of the Opposition with the specifics later. Following the Leader of the Opposition's outrageous misleading of the clubs of the Northern Territory, the Racing and Gaming and Liquor Commission sought a legal view as to the position in respect of the agreement. That legal view is that the casinos have an entitlement to cash poker machines throughout the Northern Territory.

Mr Smith: But not video gaming machines.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, for the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition, in a technical sense, there is no difference.

Mr Smith: There is a difference.

Mr FINCH: The only difference that the Leader of the Opposition should be concerned with is whether the machine pays cash or not. They all come under the definition 'gaming machines'.

Mr Smith: They do not.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, it will take much more than 4 weeks for me to demonstrate it to him and to make him understand. Now that he has delegated the responsibility for racing and gaming to the member for Nhulunbuy, I am more than happy to go through it quietly with that honourable member. I am sure the member for Nhulunbuy will grasp it more quickly than the Leader of the Opposition. I would be more than delighted to take time during these sittings to do that.

Cattle at Cape Hotham

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Mr Speaker, I believe the minister has in his possession a letter from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition relating to the conservation of navy blue cattle at Cape Hotham in the Northern Territory. Perhaps the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is confused. Perhaps he is referring to feral cattle at the Shoal Bay naval facility which may be referred to as the 'Navy's moo cows'. Is the minister taking any action to ensure the conservation of these phantom cattle or perhaps these cattle dressed in phantom suits and, if so, what action is he taking?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have a letter from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and I think it is worth reading its contents into Hansard:

Dear Minister,

I have been advised that a herd of the original cattle brought into Darwin in 1864 by Finnis still survives in the Cape Hotham area. These cattle are, I am told, listed for shoot-out in the coming months. I have been advised that these cattle, which range from mottled through to navy blue, have developed some special characteristics. They have had extensive inbreeding in a particular environment for 125 years. I am told that this can cause rapid genetic changes as the species attempts to come to terms with the new environment. Observed changes are the ability to live in mangrove swamps and, during the dry, to drink water that is barely distinguishable from sea water. I do not know what work has been done on these cattle, but I believe that it would be most unfortunate if they were shot out.

Apart from their historic value, these cattle may contain valuable genetic traits that could do an enormous amount of good for the pastoral industry in the Top End. The best thing would be to trap a substantial number and keep them on government research stations for study. A number could be incorporated in a display at the Berry Springs Wildlife Park. I am sure that they would have tourist appeal.

Your advice on this herd, the work done on it and your intentions as to its future would be appreciated.

Mr Speaker, I table the letter. A number of serious questions arise from its contents. The first relates to where the member for Stuart obtained his information. I presume that it came from the same reliable sources which have previously given him information about the cattle industry and which have supplied him with information which he has utilised in this House.

There are questions regarding the protection of the mangrove pastoral areas that are mentioned. Mud crab habitats and things like that could be in danger, and those are matters that the Minister for Conservation could probably handle. Originally, I did not understand why the letter was sent to me as Minister for Lands and Housing but certainly, Mr Speaker ...

Mrs Padgham-Purich: Don't you know? They are shooting them all out.

Mr MANZIE: Yes. If they are being shot out, I advised the member yesterday that the Department of Industries and Fisheries does undertake shoot-outs on behalf of the Department of Lands and Housing.

Obviously, the information was sent to me in all seriousness. It is clearly a query that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition takes very seriously. His sources probably are the same impeccable sources that they usually are, and the information plainly is up to the normal standard that the member presents to this House.

Mr Ede: Are you going to check it out?

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the Minister for Conservation may like to add some further information in relation to this matter, because it probably comes within his portfolio area, and possibly that of the Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries as well.

Mr HATTON (Conservation): Mr Speaker, I must take this opportunity to add briefly to those comments as the matter has been referred to me by the Minister for Lands and Housing.

A copy of this letter was referred to me yesterday, and I sought to source the information. I must say I was somewhat perplexed that cattle were brought into Cape Hotham in 1864 through Darwin which was not settled, I understand, until 1869, and that these cattle have adapted to drinking sea water and living in mangrove swamps and have developed blue colouring. It would help if the member for Stuart could advise who gave him this information and perhaps in which pub. We may then be able to track them down. I approached the honourable member yesterday and received ...

Mr Ede: This is serious business.

Mr HATTON: I am trying to take the matter quite seriously.

Mr Ede: Well, it does not sound like it.

Mr HATTON: I am sorry. I really am trying to take this matter seriously, Mr Speaker. We are trying to obtain information.

Nobody in the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries knows about any blue cattle and nobody in the Conservation Commission, to my knowledge, knows about any blue cattle. The member for Karama, who was born and raised in this country and who has spent his lifetime walking around the Northern Territory ...

Mr Ede: Is he your expert witness?

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I must say ...

A member: You have been set up by the backbench.

Mr HATTON: He speaks for the rural areas, and he knows nothing about these cattle, but that is not to say that the member for Stuart, whom we all know has impeccable sources, may not have received some quite serious information. I am quite sure that, if there were some blue cattle walking around - even though some of them are red and white and blotchy - they would make an interesting exhibit.

I must say that the Territory Wildlife Park does have descendants of the original cattle that came into the Northern Territory. These came in in 1837 to Port Essington at Victoria Settlement. They were banteng cattle from Timor and some of their descendants are exhibited at the Territory Wildlife Park, as are buffalo which were introduced at at the same time.

If the honourable member is prepared, for once, to reveal the source of this serious information, that would enable somebody to carry out some checks. I know of nobody working in the rural areas of the Northern Territory who knows anything about this. It may be serious and, if so, it will be worth investigating. However, I must say that, on the face of it, it sounds very much as if someone has had a lend of the honourable member.

Crimes Compensation

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I refer him once again to his actions in the matter of crimes compensation. Does he recall the case of Mr Greg Bray, the victim of a violent assault in Alice Springs? Is it a fact that the magistrate in the case awarded Mr Bray \$15 000 in compensation? Is it also a fact that the Attorney-General decided to cut that compensation down to \$5000? Is it true that he refused to provide Mr Bray or his solicitors with a reason for this decision, and is it true that, after 18 months, Mr Bray's solicitors issued proceedings in the Supreme Court against the Attorney-General, at a cost of more than \$2000, to recover their client's full compensation? Was it not on the day that proceedings were due to commence in the Supreme Court that the Attorney-General gave in and paid up? How many more such cases are on the minister's file?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot recall details of that matter. However, I have made it clear to all honourable members, including the member for MacDonnell, that I have exercised my responsibilities under section 20 of the Crimes Compensation Act. I certainly do not resile from my responsibilities as Attorney-General and any suggestion that I should not comply with the law is reprehensible.

This issue has been dealt with and the member for MacDonnell's actions in trying to extend it simply indicates the type of attitude that he adopts. He is not worried about the rule of law or the responsibilities ...

Mr Smith: No. He is worried about your ridiculous attitude.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I remind the Leader of the Opposition that question time is being broadcast.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, obviously the Leader of the Opposition is not interested in truth. He believes in shouting down anyone who may have a contrary view. It is a good thing that we live in a democracy where people

understand that the right to speak cannot be trampled on by the likes of the Leader of the Opposition. As I pointed out, I certainly do not shirk my responsibilities under the act. I have no problem in accepting responsibilities which the laws of this parliament place on me and I find reprehensible any suggestion that I should do so.

The circumstances which the honourable member outlined may or may not be true. However, the fact is that I have deliberated on 107 matters in accordance with the law. In 104 matters, I have made a decision which relates to ...

Mr Smith: Plus Mr Bray and how many others?

Mr MANZIE: The Leader of the Opposition is not interested in listening. He likes to make a bit of fuss. As I was saying, of the 107 matters which I looked at, as I was required to do under the law, I made decisions in 104, which does not relate to ...

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Standing order 113 clearly states that an answer shall be relevant to the question. Any interpretation of the minister's response would have to leave one with the conclusion that he has not answered the member for MacDonnell's question and that he has absolutely no intention of answering it. I would suggest that, if he is unable to answer, he should simply say so and sit down. If he is able to answer it, then I suggest that he do so.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the opposition is attempting to prevent information being presented to the community. However, the community is aware of the role which the opposition plays in this House.

As I was saying, I have deliberated on 107 matters and, in 104 of those matters, I made no changes to awards recommended by the court. In 3 matters, I considered that partial payment should be made, and that was in accordance with my responsibility under the act. Yesterday, I explained in this House that an amendment to the act will remove section 20 and with it my responsibility to assess the findings of magistrates in relation to these matters. In future, such findings will be directions and there will be no review role for the Attorney-General. I explained also that people who have been affected by the review process will not be disadvantaged. They will be treated as if no review process had operated. It is only fair and proper that they receive the same treatment as people in similar situations will receive in the future.

I do not intend to make any further revelations in this House of details of court actions or decisions made in relation to them. If the person referred to by the member for MacDonnell wishes to make public the full facts of the matter, that is quite appropriate, but I do not think that it is proper that such details be released by me in this House. Any suggestion that I should contravene the law in some way or other is reprehensible. The community should be aware that the rule of law is very important and any suggestion that members of this House should contravene laws is reprehensible and should not be tolerated.

Mining at Coronation Hill

Mr SETTER to CHIEF MINISTER

There seems to be some confusion in the minds of the Australian public and, certainly in the minds of the masters of misinformation who sit on the opposition benches of this parliament about the location of the Coronation Hill mineral deposit in relation to the world famous attraction of Kakadu National Park. Could the Chief Minister inform the House of the nature of the Goodparla and Gimbat pastoral leases, which surround Coronation Hill, and the geographical and environmental relationships with Kakadu?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not surprised that most Australians are confused about Coronation Hill and its surroundings. As recently as this week, on Northern Territory television, the Coronation Hill debacle was illustrated with camera shots of brimming billabongs, teeming bird life and crocodiles. Further afield, last Friday, the 7 National Network heralded Labor's cop-out on Coronation Hill and the 2500 km² Conservation Zone with the words: 'Good news for Australia's greatest national park. Kakadu has been saved from the miner's spade'.

Coronation Hill is 75 km from Yellow Waters and it is 40 km from Twin Falls, as the crow flies. It is 130 km from Obiri Rock. It is adjacent to the very early headwaters of the South Alligator River in its creek stage. BHP has developed disaster-proof plans to ensure that the working of a Coronation Hill mine would never mingle with the waters of the South Alligator. Apart from that stream, the closest substantial permanent water body is at Koolpin Gorge, some 5 km away. There is not and probably never has been a crocodile within biting distance of Coronation Hill. Crocodiles tend to favour the wetlands and billabongs of the real Kakadu, not the dry stony ridges and sparse vegetation of Coronation Hill's immediate environment. In fact, a crocodile attack has occurred closer to this Legislative Assembly - at the base of Lameroo Cliffs in 1908 - than any crocodile has ever ventured in the vicinity of Coronation Hill.

As honourable members would be aware, any story about mining anywhere in the heavily mineralised Kakadu region is always accompanied by television pictures of the beauty of Kakadu National Park proper - Kakadu Stage 1, as we usually call it. Part of the cause for this is perhaps our fault. Since self-government, the Northern Territory Tourist Commission has issued to television stations Australia-wide video clips depicting the beauty of the real Kakadu in order to market tourism in the Top End. Television stations have since built up their own video inventory of Kakadu, often during trips to the area to cover Prime Ministerial visits, such as Mr Hawke's more frequent visits in recent years which, of course, have coincided with the growth of the anti-mining environment lobby in Labor's political arithmetic.

Probably, many television stations use their own video clips of features such as Twin Falls and Yellow Waters quite innocently when Coronation Hill hits the headlines. Many have never seen Coronation Hill, the South Alligator River valley or the old pastoral leases of Gimbat and Goodparla, which have been elevated to national park status. In fact, there would not be much reason for newsmen or tourists to visit Coronation Hill or the almost 7000 km² of Stage 3 of Kakadu National Park unless they are deeply interested in abandoned mine sites, much-used grazing land and the sparse snappy gum and speargrass vegetation of Coronation Hill itself.

The editorial in this Monday's *The Australian* described Coronation Hill as being as scenically attractive as a full ashtray. This is the very area which the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, the absentee landlord of Kakadu, suggests should join Kakadu Stages 1 and 2 on the World Heritage List because of its intrinsic environmental value. The federal minister responsible for the environment, Senator Richardson, said on television on Sunday that the area will be a nice little earner for tourism if it is saved from mining. The Prime Minister said on television on Monday that the whole area must be preserved as it is a catchment area of the South Alligator River which feeds the major part of the Kakadu system.

Let us look briefly at the history of this area, which the ANPWS wants to preserve as a pristine wilderness. Feral buffalo, introduced early last century, had started to infest the area by the time Dr Ludwig Leichhardt traversed the Alligator region in 1844 on his way to Port Essington. For 80 years or so, Gimbat and Goodparla were used commercially as pastoral leases grazing both buffalo and cattle, but that was not the only commercial use of the so-called pristine wilderness of Kakadu Stage 3. Commercial gold mining started there in the 1930s. In the 1950s, at least 11 small but rich, uranium mines were worked on the Gimbat pastoral lease alone. History shows that a total of 14 producing mines operated on the 2 pastoral leases, 2 of which were Coronation Hill and El Sherana. Some of the mines were underground shafts and some were open-cut. A total of 45 mining outcrops have been heavily worked in the area, either for mining or exploration purposes. All the associated road works, living areas and even 2 treatment plants have existed at times in this pristine wilderness. No wonder Senator Gareth Evans called it 'clapped-out buffalo country' and no wonder that, shortly afterwards, Labor strategists suggested that he take the foreign affairs portfolio. So much for Senator Richardson's tourism drawcard and the ANPWS idea of a wilderness area.

I turn to the Prime Minister's concern to preserve the headwaters of the South Alligator River. Indeed, I am sure all reasonable Australians are concerned to preserve the headwaters of the South Alligator River. The proposed pit at Coronation Hill will be one-fifth the size of the Parliament House complex in Canberra. I have been shown a very interesting picture which shows that pit superimposed on a picture of that impressive building. The closest extremity of the pit to the South Alligator, even when the water course is much expanded in a 1-in-100-year flood, is 200 m. It is still high above the floodwater line. According to the BHP environmental impact statement, the residue pit, which will contain some sedimentary nasties such as cyanide, is designed as a non-release area. It would not overflow if all the rain generated by 5 Cyclone Tracys fell in its immediate catchment area. In total, the mine will disturb 2 km² on the outer extremity of a 20 000 km² national park. I have not gone into details on the prospective mineral wealth of the old Goodparla and Gimbat pastoral leases because that is very well documented.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! There is plenty of opportunity in this House for ministers to make statements. I recently had the privilege of visiting the mother of parliaments, the Westminster parliament, where the Prime Minister of that country could answer, in 2 minutes, questions on national defence, matters concerning the European Common Market and matters pertaining to whether or not Britain should maintain its effort in Northern Ireland ...

Mr SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr LEO: Mr Speaker, my point of order is that the Chief Minister can very simply answer the question in an extremely short time instead of using question time to make a statement. I would contend that my point of order is relevant to standing order 113.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. However, I would ask the Chief Minister to answer the questions as precisely and as quickly as he can.

Mr PERRON: Mr Speaker, I will complete the answer to this important question. Indeed, it is an important question for Territory listeners even if the member for Nhulunbuy is bored by the whole proceedings. I feel sorry about that.

Mr Speaker, last week's decision by Cabinet to abolish overnight the 2500 km² Conservation Zone and its non-decision on Coronation Hill has nothing to do with the environment, conservation, tourism or the economy of this country. It has everything to do with the Labor Party clinging to power on green party preferences, votes cast by people who mistakenly believe that the real Kakadu National Park is at risk from any mining activity anywhere in the Conservation Zone. The ANPWS is debasing the currency in which it trades by preserving 2 over-used cow paddocks and a couple of dozen of mine sites as a national park and then trying to sell it internationally as a World Heritage area, and the Australian Conservation Foundation and the green politicians have betrayed the genuine concerns of the environmentally conscious to gain mastery of Labor's agenda.

The Labor Party has traded on a general lack of knowledge of the topography of Kakadu, and that is a matter which should be of concern to all members of this House. I hope it will get some additional attention in the media, particularly the southern media, when the distortions are put forward to the Australian people about what the Conservation Zone looks like compared to Stage 1 Kakadu, which is the Kakadu that we all know so well.

Year 10 Examination Results

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Would the minister make freely available the results of the Year 10 examinations on a school-by-school basis or does he believe, as was said by Sir Humphrey in 'Yes Prime Minister' on Monday night in that educational program, that 'parents are the very worst people in the world to make decisions about what schools their children should attend', and therefore intends to keep the results quiet? I hope that he will give a positive response.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I was not able to witness the 'Yes Prime Minister' program the other night to which the member for Sadadeen refers. I believe that I have made very clear what is to happen with the results of the examinations. Those results, which are the 30% component, will go back to the schools for each school to make the decision as to whether or not the students or the parents are to receive those results. However, I make it very clear that, if a school decides that those results are not to go to the students, then the students or the parents are able to obtain those results from the Board of Studies.

Mrs Padgham-Purich: That is ridiculous.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, it is not ridiculous. The results will be given to the schools. The average across the Territory will be given to the schools so that they can compare their own position with that average. This has been a very sensitive process and I am sure honourable members of this Assembly would be aware of the concern and the feeling among some teachers and some parents about our move towards the introduction of external assessment as part of the overall Year 10 assessment package. I believe we have acted responsibly. We will be monitoring the process very carefully, and the results of those examinations will be out before the end of the year so that they can be used for the conversion to A to E scale for inclusion on a Junior Secondary Studies Certificate. As time goes by, we will be looking at those results and I will be able to inform the House further if there are to be any changes, but that is the situation as it exists today.

Crocodile Products Export Trade

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Have there been any recent developments in the Northern Territory's crocodile products export trade prospects?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to advise the honourable member that there have been some exciting developments over the weekend. Honourable members will be aware that the Northern Territory has been leading Australia and, in many respects the world, in the protection of the salt-water crocodile both for the development of those products and in order to repopulate Northern Territory waters with salt-water crocodiles. Although some people have had some concerns about that, I am certain the tourist industry has been a major beneficiary of the expansion in the number of crocodiles within the Northern Territory.

The management program developed by the Conservation Commission and successfully promoted to the world through the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and again through the organisation that supports the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, CITES, to have the crocodile moved from appendix 1 to appendix 2 by the CITES, allowed us successfully to introduce the crocodile industry. The CITES has been meeting over this last week in Switzerland and 2 of the Australian delegates are the Director of the Northern Territory Conservation Commission and Dr Goff Letts on behalf of the Northern Territory Conservation Commission. They have been discussing, among other things, the protection of the salt-water crocodile. More than 100 countries are signatories to this convention but, unfortunately, there have been some countries that have not been signatories nor have they been participating in the agreements and treaties for the protection of endangered species and the trade in them. One of those countries is Japan which is an enormous potential market for crocodile products. But, because Japan refused to accept the limitations imposed by the CITES agreement, exports from countries such as Australia to Japan were banned as part of that process. But now, with the development of a successful industry in Darwin, Japan announced it will now become a signatory to the CITES agreement. The effect is that it opens up the entire Japanese market to the supply of crocodile products from the Northern Territory, and that in itself is a major potential boost to our crocodile industry.

That is combined with work that is currently being undertaken by the Conservation Commission to expand the opportunities for development of the

crocodile industry. As a consequence of the successful repopulation of crocodiles in the Northern Territory, we believe that it is now appropriate that more of the eggs be taken from the wild. There is a potential to expand the crocodile farming industry in the Northern Territory and obtain amendments to the Crocodile Management Plan for that purpose. If that can be achieved, we can expand employment and export development in this exciting industry. We hope that we will be able to convince the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service and the federal authorities, and through them the IUCN and CITES, of the need for amendment to the Crocodile Management Plan so that we can provide for expansion of the industry. It is a practical way of ensuring the protection and survival of this native fauna. Secondly, it would provide industry opportunities by utilising natural resources in a responsible and sensible way. The combined goals of the Conservation Commission's work and the work that is being undertaken on research for equivalent management arrangements for the magpie goose and some other wildlife species have real potential for primary industry development. I do not anticipate, however, undertaking breeding programs with blue cows.

Crimes Compensation

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I refer to my previous question in relation to his extraordinary determination in the case of Mr Greg Bray. I remind the Attorney-General that it is about time we nailed down this figure of 103 cases or 104 cases in which he alleges that he did not interfere. I remind him that, in this House on Tuesday, he said there were 104 cases, yet there were 103 cases according to his statement yesterday. Is the Bray case one of those cases that he claims that he did not change?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, first of all, I say categorically that I have not interfered with 107 matters because there is no interference involved at all. The inference that is being made that, somehow or other, I interfered with the court process is totally and utterly wrong and it should be refuted very strongly. If the member for MacDonnell cannot understand that, that is his problem. But, it is important that the community realise that there is no interference in the court process. The court had a role under the act and that role was to recommend ...

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Evidently the Attorney-General has misunderstood my question. The word I used was 'changed' in relation to the court's ruling. I will repeat the question for the benefit of the Attorney-General.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, the honourable member has raised a point of order. He cannot ask the question again without being recognised by the Chair.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, it was quite clear to all people listening to the radio and to all people in this House that the member for MacDonnell twice said that I had interfered. I am pointing out very clearly, before I commence answering his question, that the inference is totally incorrect.

Under the act, the court makes a recommendation to me. I have a role under section 20 then to decide whether it is to be paid in full, whether it is to be paid in part or whether it is not to be paid at all. Any suggestion that there is any interference in the processes is totally incorrect. I remind the honourable member that this parliament set in train the act under which these processes work. The total number of matters that I have dealt with is 107. The number of matters on which I have exercised my role under section 20 and determined that part of the amount recommended be paid is 3. Therefore, the number of matters which I have considered and then authorised payment as recommended in the certificate is 104. In relation to the matter that is raised, I believe that it has been settled and paid and therefore it is among the 104.

I think there is only 1 of the 3 matters which has yet to be raised. I am sure that, for the benefit of everyone, the member for MacDonnell will raise that last matter. I certainly will not be mentioning the person's name but it will come out. It will be one of 3 in which, in exercising my legal discretion and role under the act that was passed by this parliament, I made a decision. Again, I deny blatant suggestions that I have interfered with the legal processes, and the community should be aware of those facts.

Motor Vehicle Encumbrance Register

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer him to recent newspaper articles in respect of a motor vehicle encumbrances register. What is the current situation with respect to the implementation of this scheme?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, recently, there was a 7.30 Report item which reflected on the level of consumer protection in regard to motor vehicle encumbrances. Some comments were made by a local motor vehicle dealer regarding that as well. In fact, he reflected on the government 'having been sitting on legislation', I think was his expression, for some 3 years. That is totally incorrect. This government has acted very properly and as promptly as possible in implementing a satisfactory system of motor vehicle encumbrance registration for the Northern Territory. The system will be linked to the existing New South Wales system. That will give coverage of 40% of all motor vehicles in Australia ensuring that there are no encumbrances at the time of transfer of ownership transfer. I emphasise the figure of 40%. That means that any of the remaining 60% of vehicles in Australia could enter the Northern Territory without our having direct access to a means of ensuring that there are no encumbrances.

At a Transport Ministers Conference last year, I put forward the concept of a nationally-linked system. That concept has been adopted by all state ministers but it will take some years to put into place. In the meantime, we have to wait for New South Wales to upgrade its system by expanding computer capacity. Also it had to legislate to allow the Northern Territory access to its system. Legislation has been introduced into this House but it will not be possible to finalise all the details until such time as New South Wales finalises amendments to its act.

We are hopeful of having in place early next year a comprehensive system that will be operable for the benefit of all Territorians. In the meantime, as we have said time and time again, it is a matter of buyer beware whether it

be a member of the public or a motor vehicle dealer. Motor vehicle dealers ought to know the game pretty well by now but, if they have any doubts, it is worth their while to search each of the interstate systems to ensure that a vehicle is not encumbered. Action is well under way. This government has taken prompt action of which it should be proud and which should not be condemned by the opposition.

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PART II

THE QUESTION PAPER

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The written questions are included in Parliamentary Record No 15 for 10 - 12 October 1989.

Sheraton Hotels and Yulara

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Last year, the Territory taxpayer lost \$27.5m through supporting the hotel deals of the minister's government at Yulara, Alice Springs and Darwin. That is, last year the taxpayer's funds were draining into those deals at the rate of \$500 000 a week, \$75 000 a day - and wait for it, Mr Deputy Speaker - \$50 a minute! My questions are as follows. Was the all-up annual figure of \$27.5m \$8.3m over budget? Was this massive 30% flow-out recorded before the pilots' strike commenced, and will the minister now give Territory taxpayers a clear and open statement of how much more they stand to lose in the year ahead?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, answers to the questions which the Leader of the Opposition has asked need to be very carefully thought out and given to him in great detail. Had he bothered to phone me and give me notice that he intended to ask this, although these are questions without notice ...

Mr Smith: That is correct. This is where we test how good ministers are.

Mr COULTER: But he has to expect that the answers that have to be given, need to be given in a very precise manner. I will take the questions on notice, and I will endeavour to provide him with the answer by the end of these sittings.

Sheraton Hotels and Yulara

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

I draw the honourable minister's attention to the government's decision to make a half-yearly payment in advance to the Yulara participants. My questions are these. Was that advance of taxpayers' funds about \$5m? Was the advance paid to the following groups, who are participants: the Commonwealth Trading Bank, the National Commercial Banking Corporation, the National Westminster Finance Company, Capel Court Corporation Ltd, Beneficial Finance Corporation and James Hardie Finance? My final question is this: when the government had already paid out far more than its estimates in the budget in support of Yulara and the 2 Sheratons, why did it add on this extra pre-payment of \$5m?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, likewise, I will take that question on notice and endeavour to provide the Leader of the Opposition with the information during the course of these sittings.

Crimes Compensation Act

Mr TUXWORTH to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Deputy Speaker, my question relates to matters which were debated in this House last week which were resolved by some welcome moves by the Attorney-General. Is the Attorney-General prepared to intervene in the litigation that is about to commence between the Northern Territory government and Mr Peter Bunney and his solicitors for the recovery of \$2600 of legal expenses incurred by Mr Bunney in attempting to gain his full compensation

payment from the government? Given the magnanimous gesture which the minister made last week, would he also consider settling the litigation out of court? Otherwise, the amount will come out of the extra \$7000 which Mr Bunney is due to receive as compensation.

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am unaware of any litigation that is about to commence but, in terms of the principle of paying crimes compensation, the costs are generally picked up on top of the compensation payment. I presume that that is what would occur this time. However, I will certainly look into the matter and will report back to the Assembly before the end of the sittings.

Hong Kong Expo

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

I understand that the final briefing for participants in the Hong Kong Expo was conducted at the Trade Development Zone last Monday. What is the composition and size of the Territory delegation attending expo?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, in all, 106 people will be travelling to Hong Kong, including 41 public servants, 5 members of ministerial staff, 3 ministers, 2 representatives of Territory local government, 51 people from the private sector and 4 media representatives.

Obviously, the member for Karama's question stemmed from the Leader of the Opposition's performance on the ABC Radio Morning Program yesterday. Of course, he was ably assisted by the member for Barkly, who was quoted in the Sunday Territorian as having great concerns about the number of people travelling to Hong Kong. It was interesting to note that, when the compere of the Morning Show asked how many people were to travel to Hong Kong, the Leader of the Opposition virtually replied that he did not know. He did not know what he was talking about and he did not understand the logistics, but he was prepared to be on the front page of the Sunday Territorian. The member for Barkly did not contribute too much about how many people he would send and perhaps he could give some figures to the media himself. Would he send 10 people, 40 people or 100 people?

The clear inference of the criticisms is that the Northern Territory government is spending too many dollars on the expo and associated events in Hong Kong and Shenzhen. Let me make this point immediately: the cost can be measured only against the returns to the Territory. The cost will be in the vicinity of \$1.1m or \$1.2m and the returns will be many times that even in the short term. In fact, I suggest that the returns may well be hundreds of times that in the medium to longer term. If opposition members expect me to take a defensive position on this matter, then they are sadly mistaken. If they want to talk about the Big Bang Barry syndrome, that is okay by me too because, at the end of the day, they will be the ones who will have egg on their faces.

Mr Ede: Nothing for Territorians.

Mr COULTER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition says that there is 'nothing for Territorians'. What we are providing the public of the Northern Territory with is a clear distinction between the 2 parties. We know what the

Leader of the Opposition thinks about development: knock, knock, knock. The people will know where we stand about providing development and an extension to our manufacturing base: jobs, jobs, jobs. That is the choice that the people of the Northern Territory will have at the next election. I am pleased to hear people like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say that there is nothing in it for Territorians. It gives the people in the community a better chance to make the choice between the 2 parties.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will not be defensive about this at all. I ask members to remember that the expo events have been one full year in planning. As part of this massive planning exercise, much advance work has already been done in Hong Kong and we know the sort of reception the Territory contribution to the expo will receive. I can say with total confidence that it will be resoundingly successful. More than that, I suggest to honourable members that it will be viewed in later years as a watershed event in the Territory growth story. For more than 10 years, we have been talking about the need to integrate the Territory's economic development with Asia. We have done hard work in establishing a Territory presence in leading Asian commercial centres, particularly Hong Kong. Now it is time to reap the rewards.

In this sort of scenario, the opposition wants to score a cheap political point suggesting junkets and shopping trips for Territory public servants or, in the words of the member for Barkly, 'mates of the CLP'. It is curious logic from the honourable member. For that sort of throwaway line to have any credence, the Territory presentation at the expo would have to be organised by the CLP or at least the government but it is - and I stress this point - a project jointly organised by the government and the private sector. In fact, the private sector has dominant numbers on the organising committee.

In effect, the member for Barkly is accusing the Territory business sector of organising junket trips for friends of the CLP. 33 private Territory companies are participating in the expo in Hong Kong. Are they all friends and mates of the CLP? Are they on shopping trips? Let us run through some of the people the honourable member so casually describes as 'freeloaders and mates of the CLP'. Mr Chris Lai of Peat Marwick Hungerfords, Mr Neil Philip of Philip and Mitaros, Mr Colin Fitzgerald of The Professionals, Mr Ron Warner of Warner and Feros, Ms Karen Brown-Dell of Shades of Ochre, Mr Bruce Embery of the Master Builders group and Mr Jim McGregor of Westpac. I am sure that, if the honourable member wanted to name these people in the public arena as 'freeloaders and the CLP cronies', he would be sued for all he is worth.

The member for Barkly is talking rubbish. Unfortunately, for the sake of a cheap and nasty throwaway line on the front page of the newspaper, he has swept up hardworking government employees doing no more than their jobs and a host of Territory business people into a net of alleged freeloaders and junketeers. If he thinks he is the champion of small business and the Business Council, I would refer him to the council's media release yesterday headed: 'When Will We Learn'. It says:

'Sending our trade delegation to Hong Kong Business and Lifestyle Expo with the political knives in their backs will not help business investment opportunities', the Chairman of the Northern Territory Business Council said today.

'The government's initiative in promoting the Territory requires support from all sections of our community and those businesses actively taking part in the expo were not impressed with the comments of Mr Smith and Tuxworth. Attracting investments under current

federal government constraints, particularly taxation and interest costs, made the marketing of the Territory that much harder', he said.

'The knockers would do well to look at the incentives the country can offer rather than attempt to score a few minor political points. The business groups who are represented at the expo should expect both an experienced and well-briefed government delegation'.

There was an argument about whether government representatives should be E4s, E3s or E2s. How cheap, Mr Deputy Speaker! How cheap and juvenile the argument was. The Chairman of the Business Council went on:

'The delegation needs to be a high ranking delegation. To support the reduced delegation numbers illustrates a lack of understanding of the need for a credible and determined level'.

The Chairman of the Business Council is quite right, Mr Deputy Speaker. How many people would we send? How many people will be going through the expo? The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Barkly did not know what they were talking about yet they were prepared to jump in on the front page of the Sunday Territorian and then to have another bash on the radio yesterday. It was a cheap political stunt. I make no apologies for the delegation that we are sending. I know that they are all hard-working people who will be working many hours face to face with up to 30 000 or 40 000 people a day coming through the expo. What members opposite have done is nothing but shameful.

However, the Leader of the Opposition has been more cautious by adopting his classic 'yes but' approach. He says: 'Yes, I like the expo, but it is costing too much'. The reality is that he knows almost nothing about what is involved in holding the expo and the associated investment seminars and all the promotional events surrounding them. He has no idea about the cost involved. He does not know how much is too much and how little is too little. The organising committee has been dealing with those matters. I repeat that it is a joint operation with the Territory private sector and the organising committee is dominated by the private sector.

It is difficult to be precise about the numbers of Territorians going to Hong Kong and Shenzhen for the expo events because those numbers are changing all the time. Only last Friday, the Minister for Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government rang me indicating that he had 700 applications for jobs and that there were likely to be at least 250 people on the short list. These people had to be interviewed and he needed more people to conduct the interviews. That number will fluctuate, and I make no apologies for that. I will repeat the numbers in the expo delegation and I will stand by them. There are 41 public servants, 5 ministerial staff members, 3 ministers, 2 representatives from local government, 51 people from the private sector and 4 Territory media people, a total of 106 people. I am proud of every single one of them.

Sheraton Hotels and Yulara

Mr EDE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Last week, the Minister for Tourism stated that the cost of the pilots' strike to the Territory tourism industry now stood at \$45m. How much of that \$45m bill will be picked up by the Northern Territory taxpayer through the minister's deals with the Sheratons and Yulara?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister was given a briefing on that very subject when he met with members of the Northern Territory Tourist Promotion Association here in Darwin. It is interesting to note that our request to the Prime Minister to share equally the cost of these salvage efforts has produced no response at all. We have not even had a letter back from the Prime Minister on this particular issue.

Mr Deputy Speaker, let me go a little further. The Prime Minister was reminded yesterday about the promises we have heard on television that there would be big marketing exercises and that the Commonwealth would do a great deal for the tourism industry. We have heard how Kakadu Stage 3 will be the greatest thing since sliced bread, and we cannot go ahead with mining at Coronation Hill ...

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! I recall the question. It was very simple. It concerned the contribution that the Northern Territory government was making towards meeting the costs incurred as a result of the pilots' strike through its repayments to the Sheratons and Yulara. The minister has not addressed that question and it seems obvious that he will not do so. He has addressed almost every other subject connected with the pilots' strike but he certainly has not addressed the cost to the Northern Territory government through the deals that have been made. I think his answer is quite out of order. That is my point of order. The minister is not relating his answer to the question at all.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order, but I would suggest that the minister relate his remarks more closely to the question.

Mr COULTER: Mr Deputy Speaker, this is a matter that is on the Notice Paper for discussion. Debate was adjourned on the motion of the Leader of the Opposition, and I intended to bring it on again as a matter for debate today so that members could contribute their comments on the effects and the financial implications of the pilots' strike in the Northern Territory. I believe that the matter would be more fully dealt with in the context of debate on that particular statement.

Mr Smith interjecting.

Mr COULTER: It is a statement. The Leader of the Opposition does not want me to talk about it. He wants some quick throwaway answer. Let us go into the matter in great detail. The opportunity is there. It is on the Notice Paper. Debate was adjourned. Let us bring it back on later today.

Hong Kong Expo

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The Leader of the Opposition and his coalition colleague, the member for Barkly, have been complaining about the number of people participating in the Hong Kong Expo. Among those attending are 8 from the Territory Department of Education and the Northern Territory University. Can the minister advise the House of the role of those 8 people at the expo in Hong Kong?

Mr Ede: That is a repeat of a former question surely, Mr Deputy Speaker.

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is not a repeat of the former question, and could I say that it is about time that the opposition and, indeed, a certain journalist, realised that there are benefits which will flow back from the expo in Hong Kong. That needs to be pointed out to the community, because what is being put across at the moment is that the people who are going to the expo will be taking part in a junket. That is a nonsense, Mr Deputy Speaker, and that needs to be made very clear.

The overall purpose of our role in this expo is to promote the Northern Territory as a place to invest in and migrate to. We want to demonstrate that our education sector can provide vital support in meeting the education needs of new citizens and that it can support new industry with training and research. Another very important purpose is to promote the Northern Territory as a place to study in and a place with saleable education services. Obviously, the opposition is not aware of the fact that huge financial benefits can flow to the Northern Territory. During the course of an answer to a previous question, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition interjected that there was nothing in this for Territorians.

Mr Ede: Let us concentrate on fixing up the Territory.

Mr HARRIS: Let us see what will flow into the Northern Territory as a result of 8 people from the Department of Education and the Northern Territory University attending the Hong Kong Expo to show what the Northern Territory has to offer. The Leader of the Opposition gets up and tells us: 'Everyone is tightening their belts in the Northern Territory. The government is telling people to tighten their belts but then it sends others away on a junket'. These people are not going on a junket. They are going to Hong Kong to bring dollars into our economy so that Territorians can loosen their belts.

Fee-paying overseas students are of great economic value to the Territory and the opposition knows it. The Northern Territory University now has over 200 overseas students and we aim to recruit an additional 50 students in this exercise, with an estimated additional economic return of \$1m. The Northern Territory TAFE is seeking an additional 50 students, worth \$800 000. The Alice Springs College of TAFE already has some 30 overseas students and is aiming to double this figure in the next 4 years. We are seeking an additional 25 secondary students, which will be worth some \$350 000. These student recruitment targets represent an additional value to the Northern Territory economy of \$2.15m per year. Successive students from Hong Kong will create a snowball effect and we can look forward to continued growth in this area. By 1995, we are aiming for a total of 1100 overseas students with a combined economic value to the Northern Territory of some \$22m per year. Involvement in exercises like the Hong Kong Expo ...

Mr Ede: You cannot get the teachers to teach them.

Mr HARRIS: The opposition is talking a load of nonsense.

Mr Ede: You cannot provide an education system for Territorians.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HARRIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, both the department and the Northern Territory University are looking to export educational expertise by providing consultancy and other services to overseas educational institutions,

governments and industry. The Northern Territory University is also looking to promote its availability as a base for research activities by organisations dealing with Australia and South-east Asia. The good name of the Menzies School of Health Research is also attracting people to Darwin for research purposes.

Other initiatives which I cannot announce at this particular point in time are being negotiated. They will definitely benefit the economy of the Northern Territory by many millions of dollars and I hope to be making announcements on them later during the course of the year.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we also have an urgent need to recruit teachers. The member for Stuart continually interjects about the need for teachers and there is no doubt that a need exists. We need to fill vacancies in the subject areas of maths, science and business studies. The member for Stuart knows that there is a national shortage in many specialist areas of teaching and he knows that most of the other states are making efforts to recruit overseas teachers. We also have to work at attracting teachers to the Territory.

Mr Ede: What about training Territorians?

Mr HARRIS: We can talk about that at another stage. I am happy to talk about training young people to take up the teaching profession.

In the past, we have tried using various methods of selling education overseas but there is no substitute for direct marketing, particularly in attracting overseas students. The area is highly competitive and the competition includes not only the other Australian states but a number of other nations including the UK, the USA, Canada, France and West Germany. A whole range of nations are actively marketing their education services. At a recent expo in Singapore, the Western Australian contingent included 50 people from the education sector attending 10 stands, and that expo was smaller than the Hong Kong Expo will be.

On the occasion of the Singapore Expo, in order to save dollars, we placed our information on the stand of the International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges, an avenue which we often use. When a person from the Northern Territory, who was attending the expo, saw nothing obvious relating to the Northern Territory, he asked those manning the stand for information about the Territory. He was referred to a stack of brochures in a corner of the display and, Mr Deputy Speaker, you can guess where our brochures were. They were right at the bottom of the stack. That is why it is important that we have representatives from the various institutions in attendance to put forward their cases and to sell their institutions.

I will take this opportunity to outline the marketing methods used and some other reasons why people from our institutions must attend these expos and conferences. The Northern Territory University is involved in overseas education seminars with organisations such as Austrade and the International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges, which I have already mentioned, as well as country trade fairs, expositions, seminars conducted by overseas marketing agents, and direct contact with students following written applications. By far the greatest number of students are enrolled through seminars, trade fairs and expositions conducted overseas.

In general, the recruitment of 2 overseas students in each promotion would cover the cost of an overseas marketing exercise. The average full student fee is \$8500 per year and most students stay for 3 years. Therefore, the

income produced by 2 students is approximately \$51 000 over a 3-year period. This easily covers the average cost of about \$12 000 for a seminar, leaving a considerable residue of funds even after federal capital grant payments and other costs are extracted.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the TAFE sector uses a combination of direct visits to overseas countries and on-site agents. It is difficult to ascertain the proportion of students attracted through on-site agents and those attracted from direct visits because, until now, the ASCOT agents have all been private agents. Whilst advertisements have been placed, the actual selection of students requires someone from the college to go overseas and talk to the students and their parents. This is necessary to ensure that prospective students have the appropriate level of English to enable them to understand tertiary studies in Australia, and that students' motives are in accord with what is being offered. It has also been essential for a college representative to go overseas because the majority of students' parents wish to meet with and talk to a representative of the institution before they are prepared to commit money to have their children live in Australia for 2 years. It should also be noted that recruiting agents are paid a commission for each student actually recruited and, therefore, are driven by commercial motives.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! The minister has ample time in this House to make a statement. He is giving an extremely protracted answer to what was a very simple question. He has been speaking for more than 10 minutes and, given that Territory taxpayers are paying \$50 a minute to the Sheratons and Yulara, we have spent \$500 while he has been on his feet. If he wants to make a statement about education, he has the right to do so at any time. This is a ridiculous waste of question time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order but I suggest that the honourable minister relate his remarks to the question.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, my remarks are directed to the question and it is disappointing that the opposition does not want to know the facts. This opposition is promoting the idea that 40 officers of the Northern Territory Public Service are going to the Hong Kong Expo on a junket. That is how it has been reported and that is a nonsense which has to be corrected. I am correcting it on the record now, Mr Deputy Speaker. Attendance at expos creates major financial spin-offs for the Northern Territory.

The longer the Northern Territory CLP government stays in power, the more criticism we will receive from the opposition in relation to matters such as this. However, the government will continue to be positive in promoting the Northern Territory. We will continue to do that despite the opposition's attacks. We will attend expos and conferences so that we can compete with the states and other nations in marketing our services. It is important that people listening to question time get the message. The opposition says that the government sends people on junkets whilst asking the rest of the community to tighten its belt. However, the belt can only be loosened if more dollars flow into our economy. One way of achieving that is by selling our wares overseas. We have a very good education system here and it can make a great deal of money for us.

One final point is very important. It relates to the university. We have gone out on a limb with the Northern Territory University. We have supported its establishment but we need student numbers. If we do not get those numbers, the taxpayer feels the impact. Attendance at the Hong Kong Expo will increase the number of Hong Kong students enrolled at the Northern Territory

University and will help to relieve a very important burden on the Northern Territory taxpayer.

CLP Property Transaction

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

My question relates to this government's propensity for playing down the parlous state of the Darwin property market. I would ask the minister to explain why a Darwin city property purchased 8 years ago in October 1981 for the sum of \$240 000 was sold last month for \$215 000, given that the vendor was the CLP's Carpentaria Pty Ltd and the purchaser was CLP Gifts and Legacies Pty Ltd. Does this mean that the value of the property has genuinely crashed through the floor or that the CLP party machine's estimate of Darwin property values is in direct conflict with that of this CLP government?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I heard a statement but the question eludes me.

Mr Leo: Do you want me to repeat it?

Mr MANZIE: The fact that there has been a downward trend in property values can be attributed to only one thing. All members of the Territory community are well aware of why we have plummeting property values in the Territory. The fact is that, since 1984, when the Memorandum of Understanding was broken, the Territory has received \$1100m less from the federal government than it would have received if the memorandum had not been broken. The actions of the Labor Party have created tremendous problems in the Territory. However, as was evidenced by the comments of the Minister for Industries and Development this morning, this government is undertaking many innovative steps to bring economic prosperity to the Territory, only to be continuously attacked for doing so. We will, however, continue to do so.

I do not know what the honourable member is getting at in terms of property values in the city. Perhaps he should contact a valuer. If he wants to ask me a specific question, I will try and give him a specific answer.

Mr Leo: I did ask you a specific question. Do you want me to repeat it?

Aboriginal Social Club in Alice Springs

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

For some months now, I have had numerous meetings with the minister and his department in Alice Springs in an effort to resolve the long-standing problems of the Tangentyere Council and various Aboriginal community groups in their efforts to find a suitable site for an Aboriginal Social Club in Alice Springs. What progress has been made by his department in Alice Springs to resolve this problem?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to inform honourable members that a suitable site for an Aboriginal social club has finally been found. This matter dates back some years and it has certainly proved to be a most difficult question to resolve. In February 1987, the then Minister for Lands offered the Tangentyere Council a Crown term lease over part of a lot in

the town of Alice Springs on the southern side of the Blatherskite Ranges. However, the presence of sacred sites in the area meant that legal access to the site was not possible unless it could be negotiated with Australian National Railways. Unfortunately, those negotiations failed to resolve that problem. Following the purchase by the government of the Stuart Auto Museum, I instructed my department vigorously to pursue a resolution of this matter.

The president of the Tyeweretye clubs, Mr Eli Rubuntja, wrote to me about the matter in June. His letter identified 2 preferred sites. I advised Tyeweretye in July that, of the 2 sites, lot 1736, Town of Alice Springs, was the most acceptable to the government. Lot 1736 is a 13.7 ha block off Ilpapa Road just over the railway line. It does not front on to the Stuart Highway. The block was originally the subject of an application from the South Alice Springs Sporting Club for development as a sporting club and football oval complex. At first, we thought it might be possible to cater for both organisations. However, following negotiations with Tyeweretye clubs, including a meeting between their representatives and the member for Araluen, the government accepted that the 2 clubs would not be compatible on that block. I then wrote to the president of Souths, Mr Peter Ross, to ask if his club's project was likely to proceed. We received verbal advice that it would not and that was followed up with an application to withdraw its application for the block.

When I received notice last week that the application had been officially withdrawn, my department commenced negotiations with the Tyeweretye clubs to establish the size and location for a social club. Officers of my department - and the member for Braitling was involved in these discussions as well - met with the members of the Tangentyere Council. The final solution was the ratification of a 5 ha site for development at the northern end of Lot 1736. The provision of adequate buffer zones on the northern and eastern boundaries of the development has been an important factor in deciding that an area of 5 ha may be required. It has been the subject of discussions between the Tangentyere Council and the Minister Assisting the Chief Minister on Central Australian Affairs.

It is my intention to offer Tangentyere Council, at nil cost, a development lease which will be convertible to perpetual leasehold when the development conditions have been met. It is also important to point out that the government will provide the headworks necessary to service the social club. It has certainly been a difficult matter to resolve but, hopefully, we are well on the way and I certainly wish all the people involved every success with the venture.

CLP Property Transaction

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

Would he agree that, on the face of it, it is strange that, where the unimproved capital value of a property in 1981 was about \$85 000 and by 1989 had increased to \$175 000 and there had been no substantial change in the buildings, the value of the property fell from \$240 000 in 1981 to \$215 000 in 1989?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I have some information that has just been provided to me on the basis that there was interest shown both by the ABC and the opposition parties - and, of course, those 2 groups being in concert would not

be unusual - in the CLP's property in Woods Street that changed ownership recently from a company called Carpentaria Pty Ltd to a company called CLP Gifts and Legacies Pty Ltd. As the Leader of the Opposition has indicated, the property transferred for a value below the amount for which it was purchased some years ago. That is true.

Honourable members and others will no doubt be aware that property values in the Territory have not been what we would have liked them to have been over the past few years, particularly as a result of the difficult financial circumstances the Territory has found itself in since the ALP came to power in Canberra and clipped our wings somewhat in terms of our financial allocations. There are other factors as well. It may well be that the original purchase price - and I make no judgment on this because I have not compared it with like buildings at the time - may have been a bit more than it should have been.

However, I would like to make this matter clear. The property which was transferred recently had an assessment made of its value for the purposes of the Tax Commissioner assessing stamp duty. The Tax Commissioner wanted a valuation rather than an assessment of valuation. He advised that he was prepared to bring the Valuer-General in to value the property. The Tax Commissioner does this at any time that he feels that he wants confirmation or his own advice on this matter. However, he gave the purchaser - in this case, CLP Gifts and Legacies - the option to submit a sworn valuation. A sworn valuation was prepared by T.C. Waters Pepper and Co of Darwin. It valued the property at \$220 000. That valuation was supplied to the Tax Commissioner and, on that basis, the stamp duty was levied.

Mr Smith: \$220 000 or \$215 000?

Mr PERRON: In fact, the sale price was \$215 000. It is not unusual that the Tax Commissioner or a valuer might assess the value of the property at a slightly higher or indeed slightly lower level than that. The value of the property for stamp duty purposes was assessed at \$220 000, and that is the figure on which the stamp duty was paid. The Valuer-General inspected the property afterwards, no doubt on the instructions of the Tax Commissioner, and the matter was finally concluded to the Tax Commissioner's satisfaction. On 21 September, he advised CLP Gifts and Legacies that he would be accepting the sworn valuation by T.C. Waters Pepper and Co, a division of L.J. Hooker. That may clarify the situation in respect of any innuendo which the Leader of the Opposition might be attempting to make in relation to this matter.

Tunnels Under Darwin

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Mr Deputy Speaker, in the construction of the Supreme Court building and also in the future construction of a Legislative Assembly, what care and regard has been paid to the historic tunnels under Darwin, one of which runs adjacent and pretty well parallel to the front fence of Government House and another of which runs under these grounds to Mitchell Street? These were used as late as 1960 for storing fuel which, indeed, was the purpose for which they were first built.

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, there certainly has been a renewed interest in those tunnels in recent times and I understand that some of the historical groups

occasionally take guided tours through them. I am able to confirm that they will have no effect on the State Square project. There are 2 sets of tunnels, and the the project does not impinge upon either.

Mrs Padgham-Purich: The building will not effect their safety?

Mr FINCH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I confirm that the matter has been looked at and the advice I received earlier was that there is no adverse impact or effect. In regard to historic matters, however, I might take the opportunity of very briefly advising the honourable member, who takes an interest in these matters, that other historic monuments etc around the precinct will be taken into account in the course of the development. I am sure that all Territorians will be pleased with the end result which will take into account our roots and our heritage, and I am sure that she will be pleased when she sees the final effect.

Hong Kong Expo

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

I note from comments that were made in the weekend press that the Public Service Commissioner and the department's Director of Human Resources are travelling to Hong Kong later in the month to attend the Northern Territory expo. Why is it necessary to send these departmental officers to Hong Kong?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is the same matter that has been raised a couple of times this morning. I read with interest the article in the weekend press which showed, at the head, a photograph of the Northern Territory's Public Service Commissioner, and went on to talk about a jaunt of the government's mates to the Hong Kong Expo. If being competent public servants makes public servants mates of government, then so be it. The 3 people who are attending the Hong Kong Expo on behalf of the Department of Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government are very competent public servants, and would be highly upset about any comment that they are going as mates of the government. These people are in the jobs that they are doing because they have the capacity to do those jobs.

In early September, the Department of Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government placed an advertisement in the South China Morning Post for specific categories of employees that are required in the Northern Territory, in fact, employees that are required not only in the Northern Territory but throughout Australia. We have been having difficulty for some time in employing specific categories of professional people and every state government reports that it is having the same difficulty in recruiting such people. I am talking about engineers, town planners, medical practitioners - mainly specialist medical practitioners - computing specialists, accountants and economists, teachers, nurses and lawyers. Those categories are difficult to recruit in a number of areas throughout the country.

As a result of that single advertisement on 2 September, the Department of Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government has received 1100 applications. A figure of 700 was referred to this morning by the Minister for Industries and Development but, since receiving that report, the number has grown to 1100 applicants. As a result of that advertisement, the number of applications is increasing by an average of 50 to 100 per week.

Obviously, not all of those people will be interviewed, but a very large number of them will. During the period following the placing of the advertisement, departments interested in particular applications and the Department of Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government have shortened the list. A very large number of interviews will be taking place in the period from late October until about 7 November. As a result of those interviews, we would expect to be able to fill a number of jobs in the Northern Territory which we have not been able to fill for some considerable time. Those, of course, are the specialist professional positions to which I referred.

As the Minister for Education indicated, the Department of Education will be conducting its own interviews with regard to categories of specialists required in the Northern Territory, and there are a number of applicants from Hong Kong. The other area was in the nursing profession. Those interviews will not be carried out by my department, but will be dealt with through the Nursing Assessment Council process.

A substantial number of the people who responded to the advertisement have the specific skills that we require in the Northern Territory. We have discussed this issue with the relevant unions in the Northern Territory and they have accepted the need for us to look further afield for these types of employees. I sought, as the Minister for Industries and Development indicated last Friday, the ability to take 1 extra person because we just could not cope with the work. We have received an enormous response. There is interest in Hong Kong from people with these specialist skills to come to the Territory. We need them, and this government will go out and get them.

CLP Property Transaction

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Treasurer will recall that a property transaction involving the CLP Woods Street headquarters was raised yesterday. He was uncertain why a property, bought 8 years ago for \$240 000, was worth only \$210 000 when it was sold to another CLP company last month. He will know by now that that is a fall of over 50% in real values. Can the Treasurer now tell the House whether this catastrophic fall in property values is general and widespread throughout the Darwin CBD or restricted to this particular building?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I cannot tell the House if it is general. Obviously, I have not looked at the matter in any further detail since yesterday. I would doubt that it is a general fall across the board otherwise the matter would have been brought to my attention. Honourable members may care to look at the report of the Valuer-General for the Northern Territory, who is, of course, also the Valuer-General for the Commonwealth. He files an annual report in this Assembly each year. Each year, he comments on the general trend in property values in at least the major centres of the Northern Territory.

The honourable member raised this matter further this morning, as did the ABC last night on its 7.30 Report. I express considerable disappointment concerning the appalling presentation on the 7.30 Report last night and I am advised that complaints will be laid. I am advised that the presenter was in this Assembly during question time yesterday when information was given by myself on the 3 valuations which were obtained for this property. I understand that reference to those explanations was largely absent from the 7.30 Report last night. It is disappointing that that is the sort of thing we have come to expect from the ABC as a result of its extremely biased reporting, not only on this subject but on a number of other subjects in recent times.

Tortilla Flats Research Farm

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

When was the decision made to decommission the Tortilla Flats Research Farm? Why was it made? What will happen to the buildings, fixtures, fittings and machinery on that property? What will be the future of the land comprising the Tortilla Flats Research Farm?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the decision to close the Tortilla Flats Research Farm was made earlier this year in the context of budgetary considerations in relation to the overall operations of the department and, of course, not without considerable consideration of the future of the department's research effort.

Honourable members would be aware that the operations at Tortilla Flats have concentrated on rice production. Over 800 varieties of rice have been trialed at the farm and a number of those varieties have been found to be suitable for Northern Territory conditions. The whole thrust of research is to provide industry with sufficient information to be able to pursue

endeavours on private holdings and, in this case, to enable people to grow rice to meet the needs of the Territory. The current demand for rice in the Northern Territory is something in the order of 1000 t annually. Last year, local production was in the order of 100 t, of which 60 t was grown at the Tortilla Flats Research Farm. That indicates to me that there are more than enough opportunities for producers to grow rice and to meet the demand of the established market in the Northern Territory, should they wish to do so. The problem is not the lack of research undertaken by the department but the fact that there are no growers who are taking the matter seriously and directing their activities towards meeting the needs of the market.

The fact is that the necessary research has been done to prove that rice is a viable crop for the Northern Territory. A market has been established and does in fact exist. All we need now is for growers to take up those market opportunities and move into the industry in a serious way. It is clear from those facts that there is no longer a need for continued direct research into rice at this time. There is more than sufficient information available for producers who wish to become involved in the rice growing industry. That information is already available to prospective growers and will remain so. My department remains committed to providing information to growers. The work at the research farm has put it in a very good position to do that in relation to rice.

Some of the buildings at Tortilla Flats are being transferred if they are suitable for the purposes of other research establishments. The land itself will be sold. Some of the fixtures will be sold with the property. I expect that operations at Tortilla will cease at the end of this year as existing programs wind down. Some effort will be transferred from Tortilla to other experimental farms. At some some time early in the new year, the land at Tortilla will be made available for sale. From memory, its area is in the order of 640 ha.

Tourist Commission Advertising Campaign

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for TOURISM

The Northern Territory Tourist Commission started its latest advertising campaign on Monday 9 October to increase its efforts to woo visitors to the Territory. What effect has this campaign had? I understand that the program was launched in South Australia. Have sales increased at the NT Government Tourist Bureau in Adelaide and what rate of inquiries has resulted from this latest marketing campaign by the commission?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am delighted to answer the question. For the first time in many weeks, there is some good news for the tourism industry following the commencement of the advertising program on 9 October. I will read out some comparative figures. Following the start of the advertising campaign, sales started to pick up around 12 October. I will give last year's figures compared to this year's figures, where I have them. On 12 October, last year, we wrote \$5500 worth of business and the figure for this year is \$13 000. On 13 October last year, the figure was \$8785 and this year it is \$16 000. As yet we do not have the figures for 16 and 17 October last year. However, for 16 October this month, the figure is \$10 000. Yesterday, and this figure is obviously well above last year's, the figure was \$20 500.

Obviously, the advertising program has had a dramatic impact which is way beyond our original expectations. The member for Stuart asked yesterday why we were advertising in South Australia. The reasoning is that South Australia is the nearest approachable market that is readily accessible to the Territory. However, that does not preclude residents from any other state booking through the South Australian operations, including our own tourist bureau, and obtaining the discount.

I might add that, whilst that is extremely good news for the tourist industry, we are still a long way from the end of a very dark tunnel. Until such time as full airline services are restored, the problem will not be solved completely. Hopefully, this increased rate of bookings through the Tourist Bureau will continue and will provide a certain amount of relief for our tourist operators from the Alice Springs region right through to Darwin.

Involvement of Ministers in Government Contracts

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

What guidelines exist to cover the direct or indirect involvement of Cabinet ministers in government contracts? Is a Cabinet minister required to reveal to Cabinet any possible direct or indirect involvement in a government contract? More specifically, does a minister require Cabinet approval before participating directly or indirectly in a government contract?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, perhaps the honourable minister could be rather more specific about what he is referring to. Yes, Cabinet members are required to advise their colleagues if they feel there is a matter of vested interest arising in Cabinet which may affect their affairs. That is about all I can say on the matter.

Credit Card Transactions

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer the Chief Minister to recent publicity surrounding the credit card transactions of the Country Liberal Party candidate for the next House of Representatives election. Secondly, the Chief Minister will no doubt recall his defence of his former Cabinet colleague, the member for Araluen, when he was being questioned in regard to his credit card transactions. No doubt he will further recall basing that defence on the principle that pressure of work and accursed amnesia were adequate reasons for his colleague's failure to acquit the sum of \$50 000. My question is this: did not the Chief Minister repeatedly state that his former colleague's failure was not sufficient grounds for resignation? Does the Chief Minister therefore stand by this principle today?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I consider the honourable member's question to be facetious and not in keeping with the usual rules.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! I think in respect of a reasonable, sensibly put question without notice, the use of the demeaning adjective facetious is highly uncalled for and should be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr PERRON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not responsible to this House for answering questions in relation to the personal affairs of private parties and I repeat that I consider the honourable member's question to be facetious.

RSPCA

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

Honourable members will be aware of the plight which the RSPCA has found itself in and of the recent closure of its shelter. What is the current situation in relation to that shelter and the future of the RSPCA?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a very good question and a topical one. Of course, the RSPCA is a very worthwhile and highly commendable organisation which does a great deal of very good work in the community, not only here in the Northern Territory, but right throughout the country and, under other names, further afield.

There has been an ongoing problem with the administration of the RSPCA facility in Darwin, and I am not necessarily being critical of the organisation as such when I say that. Whilst in Alice Springs on 28 September, I received a telegram from Darwin indicating that the RSPCA shelter would be closed forthwith and animals destroyed unless money could be found to overcome its problems. I was concerned at the very precipitate advice which I was given. Basically, it was: 'Pay up or else we will destroy animals'. However, I promptly provided some support for the RSPCA in the form of \$2500 to allow it to keep its doors open for a couple of weeks to give us time to talk. Geoff Miers, the newly elected President of the RSPCA in the Territory, came to see me in Alice Springs on that very same day. We discussed the matter and I indicated to him that I would provide the money and that the animals should not be destroyed.

Mr Deputy Speaker, also on the same day, I called together the Director of the Office of Local Government and Garry Storch, the Darwin Town Clerk, who were both in Alice Springs for a local government conference. We commenced discussions on ways of overcoming the difficulties that the RSPCA in Darwin was facing. Of course, the problems are confined to Darwin. They are not significant in Alice Springs. In fact, the Alice Springs branch of the RSPCA has been continually financial, and the new chairman is an Alice Springs person.

We are all aware that, at this stage, the Berrimah shelter has been closed temporarily. A new executive has been appointed to the Darwin RSPCA and I believe it to be a very high-calibre group of people. As I mentioned earlier, it is recognised that there has been an ongoing problem and the support of the Darwin community has been tremendous. I must commend the efforts of the member for Karama in this regard. A few weeks ago, the honourable member put out a request for support for the RSPCA, and as a consequence collected a very large amount of dog and cat food which was delivered to the shelter. I would like to place on record my thanks to the people who came forward with dog and cat food at that time and, of course, to the member for Karama for his efforts.

Mr Deputy Speaker, it does not rest there. The owner of The Joint entertainment complex in Cavenagh Street came forward a few days ago with a proposal that a Melbourne Cup luncheon be held at The Pasta Joint, and that a number of fashion houses would be approached to hold a fashion parade on that occasion. Fashion garments would be auctioned to raise money, with associated support from the government. That support has been forthcoming. I have guaranteed to the RSPCA and The Pasta Joint that I will match funding raised on that day to the maximum value of \$2500. I have also presented a challenge to the Darwin City Council and the Litchfield Shire and Palmerston Town Councils to match that funding. I am hopeful that they will do that because, if we can all come together on this, we can largely overcome the problems facing the RSPCA. It is a good way of raising money. This is a community responsibility, not a responsibility which rests solely with government or with councils. The community has been very forthcoming in that regard but we need to get together to organise functions such as this one. I commend The Pasta Joint for its initiative and I commend the occasion - Melbourne Cup Day at The Pasta Joint. The government will be assisting with financial support and advertising.

I encourage people listening to the question time broadcast to come along to the function and support the RSPCA. The RSPCA will benefit not only from the cost of the lunches, which I understand will be quite reasonable, but also from the sale of garments. Matching funding will be provided by the Northern Territory government and, hopefully, the 3 councils. I commend the people of Darwin for getting behind the RSPCA, which is a very worthy cause. Hopefully, the shelter can be opened in the very near future to provide that very important facility for the people of Darwin.

Granite Cutting and Polishing Industry

Mr TUXWORTH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Recently, the minister proposed publicly the establishment in the Northern Territory of a cutting and polishing industry for Northern Territory granite. Does he envisage that the granite being produced currently in Tennant Creek will be the product for a cutting and polishing plant? If that is the case, has he or any of his officers in the department had any discussions at all with the owner and operator of the lease and the producer of the granite?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, information that has been brought to my attention as late as yesterday afternoon indicates that the successful applicant to establish the dimension stone production facility in the Northern Territory had discussions with the operator of that particular lease. I am not sure exactly when the discussions with Ray Stevens took place but I believe it was some time last week. From memory, the name of the company, which comes from New South Wales, is Cluther.

The honourable member may or may not be aware that the Tennant Creek Council has made representations to the government asking that such a facility be established in the Tennant Creek region to provide employment opportunities. Of course, the decision will be made on a commercial basis by the participants in the development of the dimension stone industry. We are talking about exporting dimension stone and we need a single production centre for the 3 major areas of availability of stone, which are in the region of the Western Australian border, the Tennant Creek region, and also near the old Mount Bunday Quarry in the northern region. It is considered to be uneconomic

to establish 3 production centres. Rock would be carried to a single centre in large pieces rather than processing it on site and transporting large amounts of slate.

The dimension stone industry is a very exciting one. The Northern Territory not only has the best granites in the world but a range of other types of stone which, I believe, will form the basis of a pioneering industry here. Huge amounts of capital are involved in the establishment phase, which involves purchase of cutting and polishing machinery worth millions of dollars. Much of it is computer operated and runs 24 hours a day. These will all be commercial decisions and, no doubt, the people who have put in the expressions of interest to operate such a facility in the Northern Territory will be approaching many operators in an attempt to source raw material. I think we should congratulate those officers and also the prospectors who have become involved in this particular industry because it will give us value-added downstream processing of our raw materials, which is very much needed in the Northern Territory, and will provide employment opportunities.

Economic Action Plan of Liberal National Coalition

Mr SETTER to CHIEF MINISTER

What can Territorians expect from the economic action plan announced by the Liberal National Coalition Parties last week?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the coalition tax policy or economic plan is certainly a breath of fresh air for Australia and the Territory in particular. As listeners will be interested to know even if honourable members opposite are not, the family will be the big winner.

The family is the key economic and social unit, and the Liberal National Coalition has clearly recognised that. Mr Peacock's policies will ensure that families which are struggling to make ends meet to raise and educate their children will gain major relief. Families will get a new program of child tax rebates, increases in dependent spouse rebates and tax rebates for child care in instances of either sole parenting or both spouses being members of the work force. The new child tax rebates will be paid at the following rates. For the first child under 13 years, \$250; second and subsequent children under 13 years, \$200; first children from 13 to 15 years old, \$350; and second and subsequent children from 13 to 15 years of age, \$300.

For the Northern Territory, with a relatively high portion of its population aged under 15 years, these measures alone imply an additional \$11.5m each year into the pockets of Territory families. In addition, the child care rebate amounts to \$20 per week for the first child under 5 years of age and \$10 per week for other children under 5, and all children in care aged between 5 and 12. It is estimated that the Territory will gain around \$7m from this measure alone. Benefits to the Territory are likely to be nearly \$60m, once the total multiplier effects from these new policy initiatives have worked their way through our economy.

Eligibility rules for the dependent spouse rebate will also be eased by increasing the income which a dependent spouse can earn from \$282 to \$1000, whilst still being able to claim the full \$1000 rebate. Eligibility for the rebate will fall by \$1 for every \$6 the dependent spouse earns above \$1000. As a result of these changes, a 2-income family with a combined pay packet of

\$39 000 - that is, say, an income of \$26 000 plus an income of \$13 000 - and 2 children, one aged less than 5 and the other aged between 5 and 12, would get an extra \$36.35 a week after tax. Another 2-income family earning \$39 000 - that is, an income of \$24 000 plus another of \$15 000 with 3 children aged 4, 9 and 11 - would be better off by \$49.42 after tax. In any language, this is a substantial benefit for every Territory family.

Of course, the coalition policy is not without some short-term costs, although we would expect the Northern Territory government to get some support from a coalition government in view of its special circumstances. These costs include a cut of \$300m in general purpose funding to the states. This would indeed impact on the Northern Territory, but we have always said that the Northern Territory is prepared to take its fair share of national belt tightening. We do object when we are expected to carry a disproportionate share of the burden, as we have been required to do by the current federal government in the past several budgets.

There will also be cuts to Aboriginal funding of some \$100m. No doubt this will also have an impact on the Northern Territory, as we do have a high level of expenditure on Aboriginal affairs. However, no one could deny that the enormous sums of money that are spent in Aboriginal bureaucracies across this country could bear some pruning. I do not think that the ATSIC organisation which, sadly, will be set up under legislation which is now being processed in both Houses of the federal parliament, will be any improvement on the system. That is because, as has been predicted, it will be the commencement of a second government within this country. This matter will dawn upon many Australians as the months and years go by. At this stage, however, we do not have details of where the \$100m will be cut from the federal government's spending in Aboriginal affairs generally. An enormous amount is spent currently in the area and we believe that there is certainly plenty of room for cuts in the plethora of organisations which take that money from the Australian taxpayer and deliver so little of it, on the ground, to Aborigines themselves.

In summary, there are likely to be significant benefits to the Territory from the policy enunciated by Andrew Peacock. We believe that the down-sides are capable of resolution between the Territory and an understanding government in Canberra.

Year 10 Examinations

Mr BAILEY to MINISTER for EDUCATION

There are 2 parts to my question. First, has the minister been briefed yet by his department as to what procedures have been carried out or are planned to be carried out to enable the results from the Year 10 external maths exam to produce valid and reliable results, taking into account the problems associated with students being able to do only 75% of the questions? Secondly, when would I expect to be interviewed by the police regarding the information given on Thursday night and the threatened police inquiry, or was that purely a tactic to cover up the problems with the Year 10 exam, divert attention away from the real issues and put pressure on public servants who are concerned about the process in an attempt to frighten them into silence?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, quite frankly, the member for Wanguri has not learned his lesson. I know he has not been in this Assembly all that long but ...

Mr Leo interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I refer the member for Nhulunbuy to standing order 65.

Mr LEO: I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, the other evening, during the committee's consideration of the Appropriation Bill, the member for Wanguri displayed a great lack of ethics in relation to this matter of the examination process. It was a disgraceful performance from the member for Wanguri and he should have known better, and the Leader of the Opposition, who supported the member for Wanguri, should be ashamed of himself too. To selectively leak part of the results, thereby creating a fear in the community that something is wrong, is disgraceful. The honourable member should be ashamed of himself. He should have waited until the results had been completed.

The information given the other night in relation to the top marks has indeed changed. The examinations have gone extremely well. The honourable member implied that the examinations were a mess, and that is a load of nonsense. I congratulate all of those teachers and others who have been involved in the exercise. I will not be commenting on the results of the examinations until I have a complete report from the Board of Studies and I will be receiving that report later on this year. The member gave details of results which appeared to have been accurate at that time and I have indicated that that has already changed.

He also said that, because of the difficulties apparently experienced in the mathematics examinations at level 1, we intended to lop 20 marks from the scores. That matter was discussed by a number of teachers who had been involved. I can assure the honourable member that no decision had been taken in relation to that. The weighting of examination results will be carried out by professional people. It will not be interfered with by myself or anyone else. Professional people will make those decisions. The other thing to remember is that it will not impact on the end result because all the students sat for the same exam at the same time.

Obviously, there has been a breach of confidentiality and that is of concern to me. The matter was referred to the Board of Studies but, again, I indicate that it will not impact on the validity of the exam. However, it is of major concern. The teachers involved in the examination process each signed declarations relating to conflict of interests and to confidentiality. It would appear that someone has indeed broken that trust and that person should stand condemned. However, I understand that, given that it was the first examination, some of those teachers may have been discussing the results in a professional manner. If that is the situation and if the honourable member has broken that trust with those teachers in making this information public at this time, again he stands condemned.

Whilst the case was very serious and came very close to being one in which action could have been taken, I have been advised at this ...

Members interjecting.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, members opposite are trying to make out that the government does not know what it is doing and that the examinations have been a disaster. They have been successful and we know exactly what we are doing.

I have decided that no further action will be taken at this particular point in time. It is sad that some teachers and some members of this Assembly have decided to selectively leak confidential information which can have a major impact on people who are actively involved in the assessment. I can assure honourable members that I will be making further inquiries into the matter and I will be recommending that, if it is found in future that someone is guilty of a breach of confidentiality, that person will be able to be prosecuted.

I have made it very clear all along the line that professional people are handling the examinations. Members of the opposition have the opportunity, as do other members of this Assembly and members of the public, to contact the Board of Studies in relation to any concerns which they may have. The opposition throws out these little remarks every so often in an attempt to introduce fear into the community about certain issues. The member for Stuart has taken that approach in the past and I had a police investigation carried out in relation to one exercise in which he was involved. If he would like to ask me a question about that, I will be happy to provide him with an answer.

Mr Ede: Make a ministerial statement.

Mr HARRIS: Are you frightened to ask me the question?

Mr Ede: No. I am hoping you will make a ministerial statement about the impact of the Year 10 exams.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HARRIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, the reality is that the examinations have proceeded well. The results are being assessed. They are before the Board of Studies. A full report on the whole exercise will come to me, as the Minister for Education, later this year.

Mr Leo: Will you make it available to this House?

Mr HARRIS: I will not be making any comment until I have received the full report from the Board of Studies.

Establishment of National Parks in Arnhem Land

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

During debate in this House in May in relation to the ministerial statement on the establishment of a West MacDonnell's National Park, the member for Arnhem made what can only be described as an excellent suggestion in relation to the establishment of parks in Arnhem Land. Has the minister or the Conservation Commission acted upon that suggestion and, if so, what stage have such actions reached?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is true that, in the debate referred to by the member for Karama, the member for Arnhem put forward an excellent suggestion concerning the possibility of developing national parks in Arnhem Land. Page 6164 of the Parliamentary Record reports him as saying:

I would like to encourage the minister to look at the possibility for additional parks in Arnhem Land. I believe that area offers a unique

opportunity to the people of the Northern Territory. I agree with the Minister for Tourism when he says that we should develop not only the central part of Australia and the Top End, but the Northern Territory as a whole. I therefore ask the honourable minister to accept those words of advice and consider talking to people in the NLC about the possible use of areas in Arnhem Land. I certainly would be willing to consult further with the people in my area to ensure that their interests are looked after in the process of opening new parks and creating employment in them. I am sure that people in Arnhem Land would welcome the idea of setting up a park somewhere.

The honourable member continued in that vein.

My predecessor as Minister for Conservation wrote to the member for Arnhem in June taking up that offer and seeking the involvement of the member for Arnhem. It is a very good idea. There are some very beautiful areas in Arnhem Land and national parks in that region could form part of the entire matrix of parks in the various environments that we have throughout the Northern Territory. Unfortunately, we are still awaiting a reply from the member for Arnhem to that letter. Since becoming Minister for Conservation, I have written to him again to remind him of his undertaking and to encourage him to take action in relation to his undertaking to become involved with us in the process of identifying areas in Arnhem Land in which national parks could be established.

The member for Arnhem is quite right. The development of parks in that area would provide an additional opportunity for people living in Arnhem Land to become involved in the tourism industry and park management. Parks would provide alternative opportunities to people in that area, particularly as mining ventures closed down. They would provide some ongoing employment and industry opportunities in the area. We must all aim to work towards that and park development can provide the necessary resource base. I hope that the honourable member is prepared to back up his words with some action. It is very easy to stand up in this House and ask the government to do something and offer assistance. It is a bit harder when you are actually asked to get involved in doing something. I urge the honourable member to take up our offer and become involved as a matter of urgency. And, please, could he also answer some letters?

School Transport in Remote Areas

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The minister would be aware of problems on Groote Eylandt, where children living in homeland centres have no transport to and from school. Can he advise whether the department will be providing a bus or another means of transport so that these children can attend school? Can he also advise whether he is aware of similar difficulties which exist at Barunga and several other Aboriginal communities in the central region?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, as honourable members would be aware, this matter involves 2 departments, the Department of Transport and Works and the Department of Education. My understanding is that officers of both departments are looking at the details of transportation of students to and from schools and homeland centres in the East Arnhem region. Whilst I am not

sure what stage that review has reached, I know that officers of both departments are talking with a view to satisfying the concerns of people in that particular region.

New Road in Kakadu National Park

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer him to a recent ABC News item which stated that the new bitumen road in Kakadu National Park is in conflict with the park's plan of management. Could he please clarify this matter?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, it is sad that, despite a comprehensive briefing on the matter, the journalist got the facts wrong. Hopefully, there will be an opportunity to correct the misconception that the very valuable upgrading works currently under way on the Oenpelli Road are somehow in conflict with the park plan. The road in question is referred to by a number of names such as the Oenpelli Road or the East Alligator Crossing Road. It goes from the Arnhem Highway to the East Alligator crossing.

The first stage is now bituminised and was opened recently. In fact, in itself, that became something of a political football for a while. Senator Collins was spreading rumours in Canberra that his colleague, the federal minister, Bob Brown, and myself travelled by helicopter to the opening and did not travel by road as did everyone else. In fact, that was not the case at all. Bob Brown and myself drove most of the route from Pine Creek. There was a good reason for that. I wanted to ensure that the federal minister understood the problems encountered by Territorians and to gain his sympathy. I think that was done quite successfully. In fact, all of the federal minister's party travelled back on what turned out to be a fairly bumpy bus ride. It was a pretty rugged trip. The bus broke down a short distance from the Arnhem Highway. Actually, Senator Collins and Warren Snowdon cruised ahead in their comfortable hire-car in great comfort, relatively speaking. The shoe was somewhat on the other foot in that circumstance.

The allegation made on ABC Radio that the dirt road could not be upgraded for environmental reasons under the plan was nonsense. The road can be sealed and should be sealed. I do not know where people get this idea that bitumen roads detract from the environment. It is quite the opposite. Apart from that, they reduce the rate of accidents. Many tourists travel in that area in 4-wheel-drives or coaches that are not particularly stable. There is a great concern that the roads in that area should be sealed.

In conclusion, the second stage will be completed shortly. We have 2 alignments. The preferred one is through the Ranger lease. Whilst it will not give all-weather access, it will give a greater degree of reliability to residents and tourists. If that is not possible through agreement with Ranger, we will be reverting to the existing road alignment which is under the control of the ANPWS. Let me indicate that all stages of development of that road have been undertaken in consultation with the ANPWS which part-funded the first stage. It is ridiculous to suggest that the ANPWS would part-fund a road which did not fit within its park plan. We are liaising not only with the ANPWS, but also with the Aboriginal people. If it does not go through the Ranger lease, the final proposal will be a matter for discussion with the traditional owners and the NLC before we proceed.

Year 10 Examinations

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer to his answer last Thursday to a question I asked in relation to whether he was going to release the examination results on a school-by-school basis. After reading the Hansard report of his reply, I ask if this is a fair interpretation. Firstly, that you have just had an exhaustive fight with the teachers over the actual holding of the exams. Secondly, that you are not prepared to stand up to teachers who oppose the release of exam results. Thirdly, that you are tacitly supporting the teachers against parents and students by refusing parents the right to know about the performances of schools so that they can make an informed judgment about a choice of school for their children, and by that, I mean the parents not just of those students who sat the exam, but the parents of other children. I will add this comment. The community has paid \$48 000 for the creation of that information and is now being denied access to it.

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am afraid that the member for Sadadeen is not with us at the moment.

Members interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HARRIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, parents are able to obtain information on the results of their children, and I have made that very clear to the members of this Assembly. The issue has been a difficult one and, as I said, I believe that it has been blown out of proportion in relation to a 30% assessment component in English and mathematics.

The answer I gave the other day made the process very clear. We are not withholding information from parents or students. In fact, we are providing the results to the schools. They will be doing the calculation to convert the percentage score into a grade and that grade will appear on the JSSC certificates. Individual schools can make their own decisions in respect of whether or not they give examination results to the children or the parents. If the schools decide that that is not to be the case, the parents of the children can apply to the Board of Studies to have the results made available.

I think it is a reasonable compromise. The issue has been debated at length and I believe that, as time goes by, we will look back and say that it was a move in the right direction. We will be reviewing the situation from time to time.

Economic Action Plan of Liberal National Coalition

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer him to his answer earlier about the so-called wonderful Peacock tax package. He seems to be the only person in the country who does not have the details of the proposed cuts in Aboriginal expenditure, which amount to one-tenth of the total amount of money allocated at present. My question is this ...

Mr Perron: One-tenth was it?

Mr SMITH: One-tenth.

Is the Chief Minister aware that the proposed cut of \$100m on areas of Aboriginal expenditure will be made partly in the following areas: \$10.6m under the heading of land and economic development, which covers the subheadings of land ownership and administration; CDEP programs, and I might say that there will be no new CDEP programs; and the Aboriginal Development Corporation? Is he aware that \$22m will be cut in the area of social advancement, under the subheadings community development support and community infrastructure? Is he aware that \$23m will be cut in the areas of Aboriginal employment, education and training, subheadings Aboriginal employment, Aboriginal education and Abstudy, and is he aware that \$11m will be cut in the areas of community services and health, including the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement. Does he agree with me that, if those cuts are put in place, the effect on the Aboriginal population of the Northern Territory will be disastrous?

Members interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Chief Minister will be heard in silence.

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I think it is really comforting for this Assembly to see a demonstration of the fact that, on occasion, the Leader of the Opposition can become concerned about federal funding for the Northern Territory. There has been precious little demonstration of such concern from him about the treatment that we have received from the Hawke Labor government in 5 years of successive, disproportionate cuts to the Northern Territory's general revenue funding. Those cuts have consisted not of \$100m in the national allocation spent on Aboriginal affairs but of \$100m in the Northern Territory's allocation. The real meaning of the disproportion between those figures may not even dawn upon the Leader of the Opposition. If he does not believe that there is enormous waste in this country in the bureaucracies that have ...

Members interjecting.

Mr PERRON: He has a great deal to learn.

However, I am very pleased to see this renewed interest in Territory funding. I would expect to see many more words in Hansard in this Assembly over the next few months about the Commonwealth government's treatment of Territorians financially. Members of the opposition have been constant apologists for the federal government's attitude towards the Territory as, I guess we might have expected.

Ministerial Advisory Council on Work Health

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

When the safety and health of people employed on a mining lease is determined by the Mines Safety Control Act, why was there a mining representative on the previous Ministerial Advisory Council on Work Health and on the present council, as is demonstrated in the report?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, while there was no direct representative of the Australian Mining Industry Council on the Ministerial Advisory Council, there were and still are, and I do not have the names or the numbers in front of me at this very moment ...

Mr Leo: There is one.

Mr McCARTHY: No, there are at least 2 people with a background in mining on the current Ministerial Advisory Council.

Of course, as has been pointed out, Mrs Lorelei Bradshaw is employed by Nabalco, and her interests are in the mining area. We do not have anybody representing the Australian Mining Industry Council at the present time, but it should be remembered that there is a very broad interest in the Ministerial Advisory Council of Work Health and a number of organisations wish to be represented. We have had applications from the Australian Mining Industry Council but it has been unsuccessful in gaining representation.

I have no doubt at all about the ability of Mrs Bradshaw to represent the interests of miners on the Ministerial Advisory Council. I note, from previous experience, that she is a very competent person and quite capable of putting that across. I do not think that there is any reason at all to say that we have to broaden the Ministerial Advisory Council to represent every group in the Northern Territory. If there is an ability to represent a group by combining the employer representatives and a mining representative, that would be appropriate.

Diamond and Watts Brunei Market

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Does the honourable minister join with all members from this side of the House in congratulating Diamond and Watts on establishing a major market in Brunei; does he agree that that is a tribute to the enterprise and tenacity of the company which fought to open that market for 3 years; and does he also agree that the company's commitment to rely on local suppliers will spread benefits throughout the Northern Territory enterprise community?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, without being political about this in any way shape or form, or taking any credit for having done anything to assist and promote those types of activities, I do indeed support the efforts of Diamond and Watts. I have said in this House many times that what the Trade Development Zone needed was faith and commitment and that is what a lot of things need in the Northern Territory. But I do sound a note of caution in relation to the people who will be travelling to Hong Kong in a few days time and suggest that they should use Diamond and Watts as an example of the type of effort, faith and commitment that is required to do business in Asia. People in the Northern Territory should not trapeze into Hong Kong thinking that it is a third world country and that Australians are going there to help the locals. That attitude would not go over very well in a booming economy such as that of Hong Kong. And, of course, the richest man in the world lives in Brunei.

I would like to pay tribute to a previous Minister for Industries and Development. I can well remember him bringing into Cabinet a proposal to build a house in Brunei. We nearly threw him out. We said: 'What about building a house in Darwin for a change? That might help some of the local people'. He argued very well that this type of support was required for Brunei, and for Diamond and Watts so that they could enter the market. We were saying only yesterday, after the announcement of the Diamond and Watts contract, that perhaps we should have stuck with a few other people in terms of their efforts in Brunei. One of those, of course, was Haig Arthur, who attempted to establish a hardware franchise there. He had a great deal of difficulty when he went there. For example, he tried to sell the wrong paint brushes. The brushes were made of hog bristle and he wondered why he could not sell them in that Muslim country. We learnt a range of other things and perhaps we did not stick with him as much as we should have, in the light of the success of Diamond and Watts.

I hope that honourable members realise that it is not easy to trapeze onto the Asian market. I congratulate the proprietors of Diamond and Watts. It is a very successful effort and 3 long hard years of work has paid off. I pay credit also to the Chief Minister, who was the Minister for Industries and Development when the project commenced and who supported the building of that initial house in Brunei. I sincerely thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question and support and for the support of other members opposite.

Sale of Tobacco Products to Children

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Earlier this year, I expressed concerns that tobacco products, in particular cigarettes, were being sold to children by retail outlets in contravention of the Children's Protection Amendment Act. I subsequently

wrote to the minister pointing out that the act was not being enforced and requesting that he take such action as was necessary to correct this. The minister responded at the time advising that the matter had been referred to a committee which would investigate the situation and recommend appropriate action. Could the minister now advise the current status of the committee's review and confirm what action is being taken to address this problem?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, this has been an ongoing problem. Members know that there is a very old South Australian law in the Territory which provides some limitation on the right of people to sell tobacco products to minors. However, the law is ineffective in terms of properly controlling the consumption of tobacco products by young people, which has been a growing problem in the Northern Territory. The member for Jingili raised this matter earlier this year and last year. It has been raised also by other members. Correspondence has also been received from the Attorney-General and other members.

Further, the Statutory Law Review Committee, a group formed from the government backbench in 1986, recommended the repeal of that 1904 act and the substitution of a new act. Draft legislation relating to the sale and supply of tobacco to children was prepared but, to date, we have not introduced such legislation. We are working on the proposal to introduce legislation which is enforceable. Discussions have been undertaken through the department, as far back as 1987, looking at different legislative programs. The initial approach was to try to get the industry to engage in some process of self-regulation. The evidence in my electorate, as I am sure is the case in the electorates of other honourable members, is that the self-regulation approach is not working.

The problem is not with the tobacco manufacturing area, although many members would argue quite strongly that the nature of advertisements used by cigarette producers has an influence. I know that Dick Smith has written a book which graphically demonstrates the appeal of cigarette smoking to young people, particularly young women. He has been lobbying for programs to change the nature of advertising, where it is allowed, for cigarettes.

The issue needs to be addressed on a national basis rather than a state-by-state basis, and that is occurring. The problem is the proportion of young people smoking, particularly of young girls. Whilst there has been a drop-off in smoking amongst adult women and men, an increasing number of young people, particularly young girls, is taking up smoking. That trend is of concern to people involved in the campaign to reduce the level of tobacco consumption in the Northern Territory, with the obvious objective of trying to remove some of the very serious health problems that flow from that.

Whilst the marketing of tobacco industry products is a problem, the real onus should rest with retailers of tobacco products. The manufacturers will supply them to the shops for sale, but it is actually the retailer who is selling the cigarettes.

The process of enforcement is complicated. At the moment, enforcement has been attempted through the police force but, probably, health inspectors are the more appropriate option. We are closely examining the possibility of some appropriate legislative controls backed up by public awareness campaigns through the Drug and Alcohol Bureau and the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse. The anti-smoking advertisements that we see regularly on television try to impress on young people that smoking is not a vehicle to appear mature,

cool or whatever, but that it is an activity for 'dags' - 'only dags smoke fags'. Programs of this kind are being used in an endeavour to emphasise the fact that, if you do not smoke, you can be cool and express your individuality in the process. That campaign will continue.

It is not simply a matter of passing a law, because there is no point in passing a law unless you can make that law enforceable and police it effectively. That has always been the difficulty with laws of this kind. We have an interdepartmental committee on NT tobacco products, and we are currently preparing a Cabinet submission for a Territory policy statement, as well as looking at a tobacco control program which must and will address the issue of sale of cigarettes to minors as well as the advertising of tobacco products, although I think that must be dealt with on a national basis.

There is no simple or clear answer to the question raised by the honourable member. We must all work to try to discourage young people from becoming hooked on cigarettes. A number of members in this Chamber can speak with some feeling about the consequences of taking up smoking and the difficulties of giving it up from time to time or even permanently. It is not an easy program, and anybody who is a smoker would certainly want to encourage people not to get hooked on the weed to start with.

Mrs Padgham-Purich: It depends on your will power.

Mr HATTON: It depends more on your won't power than your will power. It is really a question of having the strength of character to say no. Having been a smoker for many years, I can say to the young people in the gallery that I have been going through the process of not smoking for a year and a half now. I can assure all of them that it is ...

Mr Bell: How can you go through a process of not smoking? Does that mean you just stop?

Mr HATTON: That is right. The problem of getting off the nicotine goes on for a long time. I can only urge the young people in the gallery and those who might be listening on the radio not to make the mistake I made as a youngster. It is not worth taking up smoking. Giving it up is quite a painful process.

Mr Bell: Have you been suffering withdrawal symptoms?

Mr HATTON: The member for MacDonnell has smoked and I think he is probably still a smoker. He would not appreciate just how difficult giving it up can be.

I know that the member for Jingili has a real concern in this area. Through the interdepartmental committee, we are addressing the issues of getting together some effective laws and continuing to discourage people from taking up smoking. We need a community attitude which opposes smoking individually and reverses the trend which existed when I was young, when it was the norm to take up smoking. If we can achieve that, we will make significant gains in the area of community health.

Gaming Machines in Clubs

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for RACING and GAMING

Last Thursday, the honourable minister made the extraordinary claim in question time that approval for clubs to operate gaming machines for cash prizes could lead to the decline of clubs and, in fact, had led to the decline of clubs in New South Wales. Has the minister's attention been drawn to an article in the Brisbane Courier Mail of Monday last which quoted ABS statistics which showed that, in New South Wales, the clubs with machines enjoyed an average turnover of \$1.3m whilst those without machines had an average turnover of only \$300 000 and, further, that clubs with machines employed nearly double the staff of those without? In the light of those statistics, how does the minister justify his extraordinary statement? Secondly, will he request Crown law officers to review the legal opinion which he claims to have, which is the sole impediment to Territory clubs being free to operate video gaming machines and offer cash prizes and hence to claim the benefits?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition again displays his lack of knowledge of and, I would suggest, his interest in this subject. Once again, he jumps to conclusions, this time on the basis of an article in an interstate newspaper. That is just typical of the Leader of the Opposition.

What the article said, in fact, was that there was an increase in the average turnover of machines in clubs. What the Leader of the Opposition has failed to address - and of course it would not be discussed in the article - is the across-the-board effect on clubs. In fact, the experience in New South Wales was that the big clubs got bigger and the small clubs got smaller.

Mr Smith interjecting.

Mr Ede: You want all the clubs to get smaller.

Mr FINCH: Mr Deputy Speaker, members of the opposition are all experts on this subject but I would suggest they take a little time ...

Mr Smith: We certainly know more about it than you do.

Mr FINCH: Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a matter that the clubs and associations of the Northern Territory will need to take into account. We are having some constructive discussions on the issues at the moment rather than running off half-cocked without the full facts. The problem that occurred in New South Wales with the growth in numbers of poker machines was that the big clubs got bigger while the smaller bowling clubs, RSL clubs and so on, ended up in strife. The substantial number of machines which the larger clubs had, enabled them to offer larger prizes and jackpots. They were able to offer cheaper meals and free entertainment. Meanwhile, the small suburban clubs, the bowling clubs and so forth, which had a small number of machines, found that their members were going to the larger clubs to take advantage of the better facilities there. As a result, the problems of the smaller clubs were compounded.

It is just not good enough to pick an arbitrary figure out of a newspaper and say that, just because the average goes up, everyone is better off. That

is a nonsense. The Leader of the Opposition and his deputy have demonstrated in this House on numerous occasions that, in matters of finance, they have no credibility or understanding whatsoever. That is quite understandable to me. Their lack of involvement in the real world of business means that they have no experience of such matters. They should seek some constructive and deliberate advice on these matters, and not take as gospel some ...

Mr Smith: We have.

Mr FINCH: ... 10-line article out of the Brisbane Courier Mail.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I stand by the statement that I made in this House the other day. It will not necessarily be to every club's advantage and the clubs acknowledge that.

Mr Bailey: So you are protecting them from their own difficulties.

Mr FINCH: Mr Deputy Speaker, the new member for Wanguri is again flapping his jaw about matters which he does not understand. I would suggest that he get around to some of the local clubs in the northern suburbs to get some of the broader views.

Mr Smith interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FINCH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not going to quiver at the wet threats of the Leader of the Opposition about where I might stand in the northern suburbs. It is a matter which I should be taking far more seriously than the Leader of the Opposition obviously wishes to. He is a political opportunist and one cannot blame him for that. He has nothing else to go on.

In reality, the situation is that these matters will need to be thought through. All possible effects of changes in the arrangements over poker machines and video machines will need to be considered carefully and understood by all parties concerned.

In regard to the view that has been put to me by the Department of Law, I do not intend at this time to call for a review. There is no cause for a review at this stage. The Leader of the Opposition has had 6 weeks but, because of his lack of understanding of the act and the procedures, he has been unable to come up with anything which would indicate that the view put forward by the commission and the Department of Law is not valid. Until such time as somebody with some sort of experience in these matters can raise a matter of substance in regard to the interpretation of the act and the procedures, I have no cause to call for review.

BTEC

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

In last night's adjournment debate, the member for Stuart made certain allegations regarding the use of the departmental yards at Katherine. Can the minister advise the House on the veracity of those allegations and of other allegations the member for Stuart has made in relation to the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Program?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the member for Karama for his question. The member for Stuart raised a number of issues last night, one of which related to a number of bulls - and I think that he said the number was 200 - that were being moved through the Territory. He stated that they had been rested in the yards at Katherine and that that was done in such a way that there was a possibility of contact with dirty bush cattle, that they were drinking from the same water troughs ...

Mr Ede: No, I did not say that.

Mr REED: ... which meant that they were exposed to the possibility of being infected with TB by coming into contact with the dirty bush cattle.

I am advised that, whilst 190 cattle were shipped to Western Australia in a single shipment, they were not spelled in the Katherine yards. The position as regards other animals that passed through the Katherine region recently is that 25 bulls on their way to Jindare Station, near Pine Creek, were spelled in the yards over 1 weekend. Another 35, on their way to Mullabulla in Western Australia, in the southern Kimberleys, were spelled on another occasion. However, I must point out to the member for Stuart that the operators acted responsibly in both cases, resting the cattle in the right-hand enclosures with separation from any other cattle by a pen and a laneway. That is to say that there was a pen and a laneway between any one group of cattle and another in the yards at that time. Drinking troughs for each area were separate.

On a number of previous occasions, I have remarked on the biased and unsubstantiated nature of the matters which the member for Stuart raises in this House in respect of BTEC. I would defend to the end the right of the honourable member to raise questions but I think that he should do so in a responsible manner. The way in which he raised this issue last night was a case of clear inference about the way that the yards were managed by officers of the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries, and if I were an officer of the department I would be getting more than a little tired of the aspersions and the inferences of the member for Stuart. I have defended the officers of my department a number of times in this House and I do so again on this occasion. They have acted as one would have expected them to act. I reject totally the inferences made by the member for Stuart and the suggestion that they operated in a lax and unprofessional way.

This has not been an isolated case. On a number of occasions, the member for Stuart has raised issues of this nature. On 11 September, he wrote to me in relation to the de-stocking of a particular station. I will not delve into the depths that he delves into by naming people. I will retain the confidentiality of the people concerned. The honourable member raised a number of issues. He was a bit late. I had discussed the matter personally with the pastoralist concerned a week or two prior to that and put in place the necessary arrangements. Following a discussion with the pastoralist, the honourable member wrote to me about a number of issues. That is fair enough, but I must say that the matters were well in hand.

Officers of my department have been in contact with this pastoralist over a period of time. They are quite satisfied with the processes that have been put in place and have no concerns in relation to the matter. In fact, only this week those people indicated that they did not want a letter from the minister to explain what was going on, let alone a letter from the minister to

the member for Stuart, because they were fully aware of what was happening. The point that I want to make is that, whilst 4 of the matters related to the property concerned and were raised by the pastoralist, the member for Stuart used his letter as a vehicle to raise another issue which that pastoralist did not express a concern about. That is the sort of thing which the member for Stuart does. He uses a letter on a pastoralist's behalf, asking questions about the operations of the pastoralist, as a vehicle for other issues, clearly giving the inference that the pastoralist himself is concerned about such issues, when that is not the case.

It really does disturb me that the member for Stuart takes this very irresponsible approach when pursuing issues on behalf of pastoralists, and it is little wonder that the pastoral industry in the Northern Territory is becoming increasingly wary of him. Just hearing his name is enough to make many of them shaky. 'What has he doxed me in for this time?' is the question that someone asked. 'What has he spoken out about on my behalf without my approval or authority?' After last week's stories about polka-dot and navy-blue cows, one can hardly wonder that they are getting a little touchy about him.

I certainly defend the actions of the officers of my department. I totally reject the inference that was made in relation to the cattle yards in Katherine, and I reinforce the message to the member for Stuart that he should be more responsible when addressing issues. He should check his facts prior to placing allegations before this Assembly, and make sure that what he is saying is in fact right. He should not base his allegations on rumour and innuendo because it is not doing the industry any good. It certainly is not doing the officers in my department any good. They are out there trying to assist industry and I believe that they are doing a good job, despite the difficulties they experience because of the efforts of the member for Stuart.

Fire Levy

Mr FLOREANI to TREASURER

Can he confirm whether the government is contemplating the introduction of a fire levy on every household and business property in all Territory centres? Would the Treasurer confirm or deny this and, if a fire levy is being contemplated, could he advise the Assembly when it may be introduced?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I can confirm that the government is not contemplating the introduction of a fire insurance levy, which I think is what the honourable member is referring to. There has been no discussion or suggestion whatsoever that this should be introduced. I am not sure where his suggestion came from. I point out to honourable members, however, that a fire insurance levy amounts to something like 5% or 6% of insurance premiums on assets such as a house, a car and commercial buildings. State governments levy this charge which, as one can imagine, raises very substantial sums of money with which to help offset the costs of their fire services. Since self-government, we have consistently rejected the introduction of a fire insurance levy in the Northern Territory. We believe that the burden of other taxation and government charges paid by Territorians is quite sufficient and that they should not be burdened further with a fire insurance levy.

Legislative Assembly Seats

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer to speculation regarding the number of Legislative Assembly seats that will be used as a basis for the coming redistribution of electorates and, in particular, to the possibility that the number of seats will be increased from 25 to 27. Is he now in a position to quash those rumours and assure Territorians that he has no intention of increasing the number of Territory politicians?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I cannot give the honourable member the assurances that he is seeking. I would have thought that he might have been fairly keen on seeing an increase in numbers. One of the only chances members opposite will have of increasing their numbers will be by subdividing their existing electorates because they will be lucky to hold on to their present seats at the next Territory election.

Fight Crime Committees

Mr POOLE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Can he advise on progress made in the establishment of fight crime committees in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, when I announced the review of the Territory's criminal system in February, I indicated that the government had decided to establish community-based committees to fight crime throughout the Territory. The proposal came about because the government recognised that no single agency, including the police force, has the capacity to deal fully with crime and public disorder. I believe strongly that governments in this country cannot be expected to deal with criminal justice issues in isolation. It is time for the community to become more involved in developing solutions to issues of public concern. The proposal for regional fight crime committees is a good starting point in this process. It is clear that, if effective crime prevention strategies are to be developed, there is certainly a need for a system to be established which involves the wider community and which is able to tap into the various areas of expertise to address issues of public concern.

Within this broad framework, it is proposed that the committees will provide mechanisms to increase the information flow to and from the police about actual and perceived problems in law enforcement and community safety and to ensure that these problems receive detailed consideration with the aim of developing effective strategies to address them. It is expected that the fight crime committees will have a practical and genuine role in addressing criminal justice issues in their respective regions.

The original proposal was that there be a central committee with a number of regional branches. However, as the matter has been further explored by officers of both my department and the police, the proposal has been revised. It is now suggested that each region has its own committee which would be chaired by the local mayor. While it is proposed that each regional committee would be autonomous, that would not prevent the various committees from

consulting with each other and sharing information. To this end, I have sent letters to the Mayors of Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Palmerston to invite them to establish regional fight crime committees.

Mrs Padgham-Purich: Are we okay as regards crime?

Mr MANZIE: We can certainly send the same letter to the Litchfield Shire Council. Obviously, the more community-based organisations we can involve in this, the more effective it will be. I am also offering the mayors a comprehensive briefing by officers from my department and the police, although the President of the Litchfield Shire is probably quite aware of all the problems involved.

Mr Bell: What is the difference between this and Neighbourhood Watch?

Mr MANZIE: There is a big difference. If the honourable member would just like to wait patiently, he will possibly pick up the differences as I go on.

I can report that a number of councils have already shown interest in the proposal, and the next step will be to organise those comprehensive briefings. The question of fight crime committees for Aboriginal communities is also under consideration at present. I should mention that I would welcome any suggestion from honourable members as to how this could be made most effective.

There may be some confusion about the proposed committees and their relationship to Neighbourhood Watch programs. Honourable members are aware that Neighbourhood Watch is a proven community-based crime prevention program aimed at the protection of property and personal safety. However, the objectives of Neighbourhood Watch do not address such issues as truancy, vandalism, drunken abusive people in public places, theft of bicycles from schools and shopping centres, street kids and numerous other issues. I certainly hope that fight crime committees will address such issues, which are far broader than those covered by Neighbourhood Watch. I would also hope that those committees would become involved in the Neighbourhood Watch programs, where they can be of assistance. Obviously, it would be beneficial to everyone concerned if there were ongoing consultation between groups who are operating with the same ultimate aim of reducing crime in our community.

As I mentioned earlier, work to establish regional fight crime committees is well under way and I will certainly keep honourable members advised about further developments. In this day and age, it is important that people realise that the solution to crime does not lie in providing more police officers. The solution, in terms of preventing criminal activities in our community, is for everyone in the community to become involved by taking a stance and by saying, 'We will not tolerate this situation', and by their becoming involved in reporting matters of a criminal nature to allow the police to carry out their job effectively. I believe quite sincerely that, if the community is involved actively in ensuring that criminals cannot succeed, they will not succeed.

Cane Toads

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

The nation's most renowned authority on frogs, Associate Professor Michael Taylor, has issued a public warning in a Sydney Morning Herald article that,

when the cane toad reaches Kakadu, it will undergo a population explosion quite unrivalled by that which has occurred anywhere else in Australia. Is the minister aware of the rate at which the cane toad is advancing on Kakadu, when it will get there moving at that rate, and of any positive measures, apart from research, which are being undertaken to slow its advance?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, initially I refer the honourable member to detailed responses which I gave to questions during the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill, dealing with the work which has been occurring here in respect of research on the cane toad problem over a number of years. I refer particularly to the work of Dr Bill Freeland of the Northern Territory Conservation Commission, who is regarded as one of the world's foremost experts on the cane toad.

We are well aware of the problem referred to by the honourable member. I am personally aware of statements and responses to questions going back to 1985, dealing with exactly the same issues. The cane toad invasion is proceeding in the Northern Territory, around the Gulf of Carpentaria and in the Barkly electorate. I know that the member for Barkly will be well aware of the continuing advance of the cane toad which, I believe, is in the order of 10 or 20 kms per year. I will obtain exact information on that.

Of course, the cane toad invasion is a continuing problem. At present, it is moving through relatively dry country. However, if it reaches the tropical wetlands on the north coast of the Northern Territory and in Arnhem Land, it can reasonably be expected that there will be a major population explosion throughout the area and that it would be virtually impossible to stop. We are researching population control measures in a range of areas. Research is being carried out by the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales and federal governments into various protection mechanisms and biological controls. In particular, there is what is called the Townsville virus. This seems to be providing a natural control mechanism and there is considerable research being done on that. We believe that we may well have found an appropriate viral, biological control for the cane toad.

Mrs Padgham-Purich: Why don't you catch the males and sterilise them?

Mr HATTON: There are too many males for us to catch them all.

Controlling the cane toad population through the products of that research will still cost tens of millions of dollars. In the world's greatest statement on the environment, the Prime Minister has indicated that the federal government is prepared to finance any major research into control of the cane toad scourge. I am sure that he will be only too willing to spend those tens of millions of dollars to initiate the necessary biological controls to honour his promise to the Australian community. I look forward to his involvement in putting the financial resources behind the excellent research that we have done.

In respect of the Top End, there is another problem which honourable members should be concerned about. Members will be aware of the posters relating to hitch-hiking cane toads. These are still important because the difficulty is not only the gradual spread but also the potential for leap-frogging by hitch-hiking on the backs of trucks or inside pot plants. There is a need for strict quarantine controls over the movement of horticultural products. In the Top End in recent years, we have had scares

about cane toads and extensive searches have been undertaken because of the potential risks. There is always a risk from people who do not adopt proper quarantine controls on the movement of goods from Queensland.

There are some who believe that a cane toad invasion is inevitable. We would like to think that it can be controlled. We hope that, through the introduction of effective biological control agents, we will be able at least to control the populations and minimise the potential devastation to native fauna and flora. Cane toads will eat anything and will pollute waterways. Later research indicates that they probably will not destroy fauna but will seriously damage it. We must direct our efforts at biological control and maintenance of continual vigilance against 'leap-toading', to coin a phrase, into the Top End wetlands. If they begin breeding there, we will be in for some horrible consequences.

Regulatory Review Committee

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

A couple of years ago, as the result of community complaints regarding what was perceived as unnecessary restriction through government regulation, the Chief Minister of the day established a review of all government regulations. Since then, little has been heard of the progress of this review. Could he advise whether the review is still in progress or, indeed, has been completed and inform the House concerning the outcome to date?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, in January 1987, Cabinet established the Regulatory Review Committee to initiate action for a comprehensive review of Northern Territory regulatory activities and administrative procedures. All departments have regulatory responsibilities. They were required to undertake a systematic review of regulations and administrative procedures and to report regularly to the Regulatory Review Committee. The scheduled timetable for this systematic review required regulations introduced prior to 31 December 1982 to have been reviewed by 30 June 1988. This review was completed and a report made to Cabinet which identified numerous regulations to be amended or repealed.

Phase 2 of the systematic review required all regulations introduced after 1 January 1983 and prior to 31 December 1987, together with relevant administrative procedures, to have been reviewed by 30 June 1989. This phase of the review has now been completed with a submission ready to be presented to Cabinet. The review was launched under the government's policy of eliminating red tape, reducing unnecessary and ineffective regulatory practices and reducing the burden of Northern Territory government regulations and administrative procedures on business in particular and the community in general.

New regulations and amendments are subject to an arrangement of regulatory review which involves monitoring by the Coordinating Committee with secretarial services provided by the Department of Industries and Development. There has been much comment bandied around about bureaucratic red tape and much criticism of government regulation and interference. The Territory government has demonstrated that it stands ready to respond with the completion of this review.

The second phase of that review will be presented to Cabinet very shortly. I know full well the problems with removing red tape. Honourable members will remember that I was the chairman of a committee established to review regulations, and I think that the member for Sadadeen might have been a member of that committee with me. It was easy to get rid of the old South Australian statutes that applied in the Northern Territory. We got rid of the Gawler Tram Trust. Legislation of that sort is easy to remove from the statute books. We removed something like 100 pieces of legislation in one fell swoop.

The problem is that, once you have a piece of legislation which offers some protection to an industry or an individual, it is very difficult to remove that piece of legislation. Ronald Reagan, of course, did the same thing with his regulatory review. In fact, Mr Peter Grace, who would be well known to some Territorians as the owner of Mount Bunday Station and a shareholder in the Goodall Mine now situated on Mount Bunday Station, was in fact Ronald Reagan's Regulatory Review Committee Chairman. Speeches which he made indicate that he faced similar difficulties. There are no problems with the old statute regulations but, as soon as you face a situation in which a business is based on the very piece of red tape you are trying to eliminate, it becomes extremely difficult to remove it from the statute books. That was the problem faced by old Peter Grace - and I say that respectfully - in getting rid of such legislation. It is the very same problem which we have run into in the course of this regulatory review.

However, the second phase of the review is to go before Cabinet, and I hope to be able to give an update to the Legislative Assembly during the November sittings of the Assembly.

Parletoria Scale on Date Palms

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

My question relates to parletoria scale, a problem which threatens date palms in central Australia. I know that the minister is aware of the problem but is he aware that, in California, growers have found a way of removing this pest, which could ruin a fledgling industry in the Territory. They used a process of torching, which basically involved burning the outside of all infected palms and doing that everywhere. Will he undertake to have the situation studied, bearing in mind that the fledgling date industry in central Australia needs to get rid of parletoria scale, which has the potential to kill the industry before it has a chance to become established?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, the member for Sadadeen rightly raises this issue. It is important and, as he indicates, could have a rather dramatic effect on our developing date industry. I note too in passing that the department and, I think, 2 private growers are at this time importing new date offshoots from California. That is how the scale was introduced into Australia. Of course, care is now taken to ensure that offshoots are acquired from scale-free areas and are free from other diseases that might affect our industry, as well as to ensure that the quarantine measures in the Northern Territory, for which my department is responsible, are effective and will ensure that no other diseases are introduced.

Parletoria blanchardi is the name of the scale. It is a hard scale thought to be indigenous to Iraq but it is now widely distributed throughout most date growing countries. The injury to date palm occurs due to feeding by

the adult and nymphal scales on the succulent tissues at the base of the leaf stalk. With heavy infestations, feeding can occur on the foliage and fruit of the palm. The damage causes leaves to wither and die, loss of vigour of the plant and reduction in the marketability of the fruit. As the honourable member has indicated, it is quite damaging to the plants.

Overseas control is usually achieved to such a level that injury is negligible. That control relies primarily on insecticides. The literature indicates that dimetho-8 and malathion appear to be the least harmful effective insecticides. Diazanin and parathion are also used. In the United States, as the honourable member has indicated, it appears that quite successful results have been achieved with a system of inspection, quarantine and control by stripping and burning and, as he said, torching of some plants.

There is a great deal of cooperation between industry and officers of my department in investigating this issue and seeking to come up with an effective control measure. I am sure that that cooperation will continue. Certainly, the department will pursue the matter.

I mention in passing that the member for Sadadeen was recently nominated by central Australian horticulturists, via the Growers Association, to represent them on the Horticultural Advisory Commission which reports to me on matters relevant to the horticulture industry. It was my pleasure to accept that nomination, and I am sure that the member for Sadadeen will prove to be a very good representative for central Australian growers and will pass on important information to me in my role as minister. This is a good indication of the sort of role which he is able to play.

NT Portion 1097

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I remind the minister of the Federal Court decision in respect of NT portion 1097, created by his government as Kings Creek Station 8 years ago. The court's decision was that, in fact, the granting of that lease was ultra vires. Secondly, I remind the minister of the need to provide a land base and occupations for the families of people like Bruce Breden, Nahassan Ngwanaka, Helmut Pararoultja, Ben Clyne and others. Thirdly, I remind the honourable minister of the need for Ian Conway and his family and Tim Lander and his family to be able to get on in a certain fashion with their tourism project, which involves camel catching and other activities. My first question is this. Will the minister pursue this matter in the manner of the former Minister for Lands, the member for Nightcliff, in seeking to negotiate the competing land needs? Secondly, will he give an undertaking to this House that he will not be pursuing a case in the High Court in appeal against the Federal Court decision in respect of that parcel of land?

ANSWER

Mr Deputy Speaker, I certainly thank the member for MacDonnell for reminding me of so many things. I can assure the honourable member that I am fully aware of all the matters he mentioned. I can also assure him that I believe that negotiation is the best way to try to settle this problem. As he is probably aware, I have been involved in this matter in the past. I have had a number of meetings with both Mr Lander and Mr Conway, and with the traditional owners of the land in that area. I believe that, with goodwill on all sides, a satisfactory arrangement can be made. I would also like to let honourable members know that, on several occasions, we came very close to

negotiating a settlement. Unfortunately, things seemed to collapse at the last minute. I certainly hope that those negotiations can continue.

In terms of responding to the honourable member's question in relation to legal proceedings, I am, of course, unable to give any undertakings. It is incumbent upon me to make sure that there are no grounds for such action to be taken and, if there are grounds, to weigh up the question of whether there may be any benefit to the Territory community in initiating any action. I certainly can give no undertaking at this stage.

However, I reiterate my belief that negotiation is the only satisfactory means of resolving this matter. I am certainly quite disappointed that, on several occasions when a negotiated settlement seemed very close, it did not eventuate. I will be using my best endeavours to try to ensure that that is what occurs.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Ministerial Advisory Council on Work Health

Mr McCARTHY (Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to provide more up to date information on a question asked by the member for Nhulunbuy yesterday in relation to current representation on the Ministerial Advisory Council on Work Health. Mr Deputy Speaker, I indicated yesterday that Lorelei Bradshaw was the person representing the mining industry on the Ministerial Advisory Council. I now have more up-to-date information and can advise that John Farthing replaced Lorelei Bradshaw during the year and is the current representative. He also represents the interest of the mining industry.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Crimes Compensation Act

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): On Tuesday 17 October, the member for Barkly asked if I was prepared to intervene in litigation that is about to commence between the Northern Territory government and Mr Peter Bunney and his solicitors for the recovery of \$2600 of legal expenses incurred by Mr Bunney in attempting to gain compensation payments from the government. He asked, given the gesture which I made last week, whether I would consider settling the litigation out of court.

I would like to advise honourable members that, on 10 July 1989, I approved payment of Mr Bunney's legal costs to be taxed as agreed. On 30 August, Mr Bunney's solicitors wrote to the Solicitor for the Northern Territory enclosing a bill in taxable form and advised that they would arrange a date for the taxation of legal costs. This has not yet been done. However, I have approved and will happily pay Mr Bunney's legal costs, taxed as agreed in accordance with the usual practice. I certainly was unaware of any proceedings. If they have commenced, as the member for Barkly suggested, I would ask Mr Bunney to check with his solicitors to ensure that they are aware of the correspondence which has been sent to them and also of the advice which they have given my office that they would indeed arrange a date for taxation of legal costs. I repeat that I agreed in July this year to make full payment of legal costs.

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