

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**

**20. Staffing of Giles House**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

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

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

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

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

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

Mr SMITH to MINISTER FOR TOURISM

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

**17 May 1988**

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

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many applications under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act have been lodged by the departments and statutory authorities for which you are responsible.

2. For what purpose was each request made.

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

Mr BELL to TREASURER

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

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

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

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

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

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

**53. Kormilda College - Expenditure**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TOURISM

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

**61. Trade Development Zone**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

1. How many letters of intent have been signed by firms indicating an intention to establish in the Trade Development Zone.
2. How many letters of intent have been translated into binding agreements to establish in the Trade Development Zone.
3. Of those binding agreements, how many have been implemented - i.e. how many firms have actually established in the zone.
4. Will the minister table the legal advice, which his predecessor indicated to the Legislative Assembly on 25 November 1986 had been sought on the question, as to whether letters of intent are legally binding documents.
5. What is the total amount of money paid to Mr K.K. Yeung as -
  - (a) retainer;
  - (b) contact fee at the letter of intent stage;
  - (c) start-up fee at establishment in zone; and
  - (d) reimbursement for expenses in promoting the zone since his engagement as the prime consultant.
6. When does Mr K.K. Yeung's current contract expire.
7. Will the contract be renewed.
8. What are the terms and conditions for its renewal.
9. How many days has the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority spent on TDZA business in 1986, 1987 and 1988 -
  - (a) interstate; and
  - (b) overseas.
10. For each of the overseas trips taken by Mr McHenry, what has been -
  - (a) the cost of accommodation;

- (b) the cost of travel; and
- (c) the cost of entertainment and other expenses.

**62. Hungerford Refrigeration Pty Ltd**

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

1. Did the Territory Insurance Office pay outstanding tax bills incurred by Hungerford Refrigeration or Rupert Hungerford; if so -
  - (a) were the payments for company tax;
  - (b) group tax; or
  - (c) an individual's income tax.
2. Is the TIO's investment in Hungerford Refrigeration secured; if so -
  - (a) in what ways is it secured; and
  - (b) what assets is it secured against.
3. Who first identified Hungerford Refrigeration as a prospect for investment in the Northern Territory.
4. Who made the first approach to Hungerford Refrigeration for it to transfer operations to the Trade Development Zone.
5. Why did the directors of Hungerford refuse to provide directors' guarantees to meet any debts incurred by the company.
6. What were the full terms agreed for the transfer of Hungerford Refrigeration to the Trade Development Zone.
7. What departmental evaluations were made of the Hungerford Refrigeration company; its prospects, its projects and its products.
8. What departmental evaluations were made of the reports prepared for the TIO and the TDZ on the prospects of Hungerford Refrigeration.
9. What is the full extent of public funding (including TIO involvement) in Hungerford Refrigeration.
10. Was a directive issued by the Hungerford Refrigeration Board for the company to pursue local orders rather than export orders; if so, why was this done.

16 August 1988

64. **Tenth Anniversary of Self-Government**

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

Can the Chief Minister provide an itemised account of the expenditure on the celebrations for the tenth anniversary of self-government.

65. **Darwin Private Hospital**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. How many private ward bed nights have been leased back to Royal Darwin Hospital during the last 6 months.
2. What have been the monthly occupancy rates for both the public wards and private wards during the last 6 months.
3. How much rent will Health and Life Care be paying the NT government for the land on which the new private hospital is being built.
4. How much money has the NT government contributed towards the establishment of the new private hospital.
5. If Health and Life Care sell their private hospital, will there be a breach of contract. If so, what conditions of the contract would have been contravened.
6. To what extent has the initial projected cost of the new private hospital been exceeded and supplemented by NT government expenditure.
7. What level of federal subsidy has been received during the last 6 months for the private wards.
8. What is the expected level of federal subsidy to be provided over a 12-month period for the new private hospital.
9. Will the private hospital be providing a rehabilitation service. If so -
  - (a) at what cost will it be provided to the NT government;
  - (b) how will it be made available to clients, who do not have private hospital cover; and
  - (b) how does the government intend to apply the Work Health Act provisions.
10. What arrangements have been made with doctors for -
  - (a) the provision of specialist services at the private hospital; and



- (b) remuneration of specialist doctors for their services.
11. What cost sharing arrangements have been entered into enabling economies of scale to occur between the Royal Darwin Hospital and the private hospital for -
- (a) ambulance services;
  - (b) pharmaceutical products;
  - (c) x-ray films and equipment; and
  - (d) laundry and catering.
12. What arrangements have been made to contract out pathology, radiology, catering and any other services to the private sector.

**23 February 1988**

**15. School Cleaning and Maintenance**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

(a) ground maintenance; and

(b) cleaning

for each primary and secondary school in the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

The amounts paid out in 1987 for grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts for each Territory primary and secondary school is set out in the following tables.

NORTHERN REGION

	<u>CLEANING</u>	<u>GROUND MAINTENANCE</u>
	\$	\$
Alawa Primary	24 640 *	15 509
Alyangula Area School	49 358	26 938
Angurugu Primary	49 590	14 679
Anula Primary	29 280	10 940
Barunga Primary (Council Inc)	- **	12 350 *
Batchelor Area School	59 823 *	33 721 *
Berry Springs Primary	12 638	22 189
Casuarina Secondary College	79 301	30 337 *
Clyde Fenton Primary	38 252	31 864 *
Darwin High	85 298	18 365
Dripstone High	68 634 *	30 355 *
Driver High	67 779 *	7 222 *
Driver Primary	30 057	5 654 *
Gray Primary	33 859 *	10 297 *
Henbury Avenue Special	8 258	9 000
Howard Springs Primary	17 208	13 464
Humpty Doo Primary	31 370	27 926 *
Jabiru Area School	50 807	26 909
Jingili Primary	35 708 *	17 297 *
Karama Primary	33 175	13 783
Katherine High	49 461	9 480
Katherine South Primary	35 694 *	20 951 *
Kormilda College	27 224	17 800
Larrakeyah Primary	17 307	9 104
Leanyer Primary	32 865	11 330
Ludmilla Primary	43 855	20 050 *
Ludmilla Special	10 642	5 215
MacFarlane Primary	37 527 *	4 251 *
Malak Primary	33 660	15 541
Middle Point Primary	- **	7 267
Millner Primary	25 764	12 122
Moil Primary	22 630	10 306
Moulden Park Primary	34 245	9 000
Nakara Primary	25 791	3 193
Nightcliff High (Council Inc)	68 809	22 900
Nightcliff Primary	32 257 *	9 288
Nhulunbuy High	62 088	26 170 *
Nhulunbuy Primary	48 701 *	42 182 *
Oenpelli Community	12 583	- **
Parap Primary	28 051 *	11 490
Rapid Creek Primary (Council Inc)	29 140	8 825
Sanderson High	44 839	33 196 *
Sanderson Primary (Berrimah Pre included)	20 675	20 835
Stuart Park Primary	44 775	18 187
Taminmin High	53 141	34 250 *
Wagaman Primary	26 200	18 627
Wanguri Primary	18 172	14 693
Wulagi Primary	31 677	11 964 *
Yirrkala Primary	61 120	22 322
	<u>1 783 928</u>	<u>829 338</u>

\* Contracts run by School Councils.

SOUTHERN REGION

	<u>CLEANING</u>	<u>GROUND MAINTENANCE</u>
	\$	\$
Yulara	14 407	- **
Kargaru	28 800	33 000
Elliott	19 100	- **
Rona Glynn	2 450	2 960
Ida Stanley	6 659	3 895
Teppa Hill	3 588	1 331
Tennant Creek Pre	2 900	- included with primary school
Traeger Park	33 994	8 617
Warrego	9 000	- **
Tennant Creek Primary	34 000	32 200
Tennant Creek High	33 749	31 000
Ross Park	30 804	9 461
Sadadeen	30 822	14 792
Ti Tree	42 000	- **
Sadadeen High	43 702	19 327
Alice Springs High	105 248	21 628
Bradshaw	50 391	13 010
Braitling	26 045	14 476
Anzac Hill	25 410	9 326
Borrooloola	41 100	25 000
Kempe Street	4 183	- **
Ali Curung	27 730	20 230
Gillen	17 124	20 200
	<u>633 206</u>	<u>280 453</u>
TOTAL:	\$913 659.00	

TOTAL COST OF CLEANING AND GROUND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS  
(NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN REGIONS) = \$3 514 476.00

NOTE: The above schools have contracts for either or both cleaning and ground maintenance. Schools not listed or those marked (\*\*) have designated employees or staff to carry out the work.

**19. Northern Territory Land Management**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many grants of land have been made to the Northern Territory Land Corporation (NTLC) since its inception in 1986.
2. How was each grant valued and what was the valuation in each case.
3. For what purpose was each grant of land.
4. Which parcels of land were so granted.
5. When was each grant made.
6. Was each decision to grant land discussed at Cabinet level. If not, which grants were not discussed.
7. How many grants of land were made to its predecessors, the Northern Territory Development Land Corporation (NTDLC) and the Northern Territory Conservation Land Corporation (NTCLC).
8. How was each grant valued and what was the valuation in each case.
9. For what purpose was each grant of land.
10. Which parcels of land were so granted.
11. When was each grant made.
12. Was each decision to grant land discussed at Cabinet level. If not, which grants were not discussed.
13. Which parcels of land have been purchased by the NTLC, the NTDLC and NTCLC.
14. What was the purchase price of each such parcel.
15. For what purpose was each such parcel purchased.
16. When was each such purchase effected.
17. Was each decision to purchase land discussed at Cabinet level. If not, which purchases were not so discussed.
18. Of which parcels of land has the NTLC, the NTDLC or the NTCLC divested itself by way of sale, grant, gift, or any other process.
19. For what reasons were the transactions referred to in question 18 above carried out.
20. When was each transaction referred to in question 18 above carried out.

21. How was the value of each grant, sale gift or other divestment of land valued and what was the valuation in each case.
22. Was each transaction referred to in question 18 above discussed at Cabinet level. If not, which such transaction were not so discussed.

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

ANSWER

Details of all grants of land by the Northern Territory to the NT Land Corporation are available on the public record through the publication of relevant notices under section 15(5) of the Crown Lands Act.

The NTLC, NTDLC and CLC are/were independent bodies corporate, not subject to ministerial control. Any questions regarding the disposal of their land holdings are not within the government's province to answer.

Details of any current land holdings of these organisations are available to the public through the Land Titles Office. The honourable member is free to conduct title searches if he so wishes.

Responses to questions regarding what may, or may not, have been discussed by Cabinet are bound by the convention of Cabinet confidentiality.

**22. Macassan Prau Project**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

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

ANSWER

Expenditure to April 1988:

1. \$163 780.
2. \$30 000.
3. Option 1: \$15 000 - Freight as deck cargo.  
Option 2: \$8 000 - Sail prau by contractor.

17 May 1988

## 27. Primary and Secondary Education

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

During the period 1980 to 1987:

1. What was the rate of teacher turnover by -
  - (a) year of service;
  - (b) gender;
  - (c) location (whether it be rural, urban, secondary, primary); and
  - (d) size of school.
2. What was the average recruitment cost per teacher.
3. What was the turnover rate of teachers in secondary schools in the following subjects -
  - (a) Maths;
  - (b) Science; and
  - (c) English.

ANSWER

## TEACHER TURNOVER RATES DURING 1980-87

No reliable data is available for 1980 or 1981 as the Northern Territory Teaching Service was only established in July 1981.

## 1.(a) MEAN YEARS OF SERVICE OF TEACHERS WHO RESIGNED.

1982*	1983*	1984*	1985	1986	1987
3.56	3.51	3.30	3.93	5.0	4.0

## 1.(b) GENDER OF TEACHERS RESIGNING.

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Males	41%	37%	35%	N.A.	37%	38%
Females	59%	63%	65%	N.A.	63%	62%

## 1.(c) RESIGNATION RATE BY LOCATION/SCHOOL TYPE.

	1982*	1983*	1984*	1985+	1986+	1987+
Secondary	11.7%	17.1%	19.4%	25%	25%	17.8%
Area	19.8%	14.5%	10.3%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Urban Primary	10.0%	9.9%	8.3%	13.8%	21.9%	14.0%
Aboriginal	18.0%	14.2%	15.4%	27.0%	28.8%	17.3%
Other	6.7%	4.7%	8.5%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

1.(d) The only data available is that shown in 1(c) above.

NOTES

\* Extracted from a post graduate thesis presented by a former Department of Education employee.

+ 1985-87 figures obtained from the Department of Education's Computerised Records.

N.A. Not Available.

2. During the last financial year (1986-87) the estimated average recruitment cost per teacher was \$5000. The individual costs vary considerably depending on where the teacher was recruited from and whether or not he/she was single or married with a family.

3. Turnover rates of Secondary Teachers who taught Maths, Science and English.

The only figures available are those for 1986 and 1987.

	1986	1987
Maths	32	18
Science	25	14
English	40	17

**32. Land Degradation on Cattle Stations**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Who are the CSIRO officers who claimed land degradation was 'rife' on Territory cattle stations.

2. Where are these officers based.

3. Were these same officers the ones who wrote to you (as reported in the Legislative Assembly) saying that no base data is available on which to judge degradation and sought Territory money to establish this base data.



4. Has a decision been made by government in regard to the CSIRO request for funding to establish a land data base and, if so, what was that decision and, if no, when will the decision be made.

ANSWER

1. As far as I am aware, CSIRO officers have not claimed that land degradation was 'rife' on Territory cattle stations. This statement appears to be a misquote or misinterpretation from the recent CSIRO submission to the Rural Land Use Advisory Committee on Pastoral Freehold. The CSIRO stated, in part, that:

profound changes have occurred in the pastoral lands over the past 110 years, including:

- ° a progression from more palatable to less palatable forage plants.
- ° an increase in the density of trees and shrubs.
- ° accelerated soil erosion.

Although land 'condition' fluctuates with climate, there is nevertheless an overall downward trend in many areas.

Debate on such changes has tended to become polarised between the environmental lobby and the pastoral lobby with the facts as a casualty.

It appears likely that it is the above part of the CSIRO submission which has been misinterpreted and the question is based on a wrong premise.

2. The CSIRO Centre for Arid Zone Research located in Alice Springs.
3. A letter to me from the CSIRO stated that, 'it has not been technically possible to distinguish between natural and grazing-induced erosion'. This implies that until now arguments have been based on an inadequate factual base.

The letter further states that:

CSIRO has recently developed techniques using satellite data to measure the extent of erosion over large areas and to distinguish between that which results directly from grazing and that which is natural. There is also potential on a regional basis for separating recent erosion from that which occurred in the early stages of the grazing industry.

The proposal regarding Territory money was to employ this technology to provide objective information. The proposal was framed as follows:

If the Northern Territory government is willing to cover our costs, we shall be happy to put our technology, database and experience at your disposal so as to provide objective information on the land degradation issue. This might involve a satellite-based survey of the grazing lands of the arid zone. The form of this survey would, of course, be developed in collaboration with your own technical people.

4. The CSIRO proposal was unsolicited and the government at this stage has not determined the future of the proposal. However, the CSIRO has been asked to provide further details for review by officers of interested Northern Territory departments and authorities in the first instance. In addition, CSIRO have been asked to clarify the issue of funding since CSIRO have previously provided such services free of charge.

**35. School Film Library Service**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

ANSWER

1. The freight subsidy paid by the Department of Education on film and other library resources borrowed by NT schools was abolished on 12 February 1988 as a result of severe budgetary restraints imposed on the Library Services Branch. The savings resulting from the decision were estimated to be in the order of \$5000 per month.
2. Due to the hardship suffered by smaller remote schools which rely heavily on these resources, a decision was taken in late February 1988 to reinstate the subsidy. This has been done progressively, based on an individual school's needs. By the beginning of Term 2, all schools were once again eligible for the subsidy.

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

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many students are doing full-time courses at the University College.

2. How many students at the University College have come from interstate.
3. How many students have come because their examination scores have precluded them from entry into interstate universities.
4. What advantage does the Territory government expect from paying the education costs of interstate students with Territory taxpayers' money.
5. What is the annual cost to the Territory taxpayer of the 'connection' between the University College and the University of Queensland.
6. What services are provided by the University of Queensland for the money provided by the Territory.

ANSWER

1. There are 194 full-time students and 261 part-time students.
2. Thirty (30) students have come from interstate.
3. The college does not have this information. It is not a requirement for enrolment.
4. (a) Some students will remain in the Territory after graduation thus adding to the Territory's more highly qualified work force.  
(b) Those moving from Darwin will contribute to the number of people elsewhere who have an understanding of the nature of the Territory and will be conversant with Territory problems.  
(c) They will demonstrate elsewhere the standards achieved at the University College.
5. The Territory pays a \$250 000 annual consultancy fee (1986 levels) to the University of Queensland.
6. (a) Management advice.  
(b) Assistance in the selection of academic staff and senior administration staff.  
(c) Monitoring the standards of teaching.  
(d) Monitoring examination of students.  
(e) Assisting UCNT proposals for new subjects.

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

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

ANSWER

1. Yes. The Education Advisory Council has considered a revised edition of the document 'Towards the 90s'. This document is now with the Minister and will be released for further public comment in the near future.
2. (a) As above.
  - (b) Yes.
  - (c) Yes.

**39. School Council Regulations**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

ANSWER

1. Three (3) full page advertisements were lodged.
2. Newspapers used were:-

NT News  
Sunday Territorian  
Australian Advocate  
Barkly Regional  
Tennant & District Times

Katherine Times  
Katherine Advertiser  
Gove Gazette  
Litchfield Times

3. Total cost of advertising was \$18 443.
4. Freight for film, video and curriculum support resources borrowed from Library Services Branch in Darwin was estimated to cost \$30 000 for the period 12 February to 30 June 1988. Of this \$9000 was spent on a twice weekly urban courier service to Darwin schools. The cut to centrally funded freight of films and library resources to Territory schools and colleges was a result of severe budgetary restraints imposed on the Department of Education Library Services Branch. With all Branch operational funds reduced, many services were cut for the remainder of the financial year.

Recent negotiations within the various Branches of the Department have allowed the reinstatement of a fully subsidised freight service for all Territory schools.

**40. Truancy Officers**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

ANSWER

No provision has been made in the 1988-89 budget estimates to re-establish Truancy Officer positions.

However, the identification of other agencies and procedures to undertake the functions formerly performed by Truancy Officers is being considered by the government.

**41. Preschool Vacancies in Alice Springs**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

ANSWER

1. There are approximately 97 children who will attain the age of 4 years by 31 July 1988 and who are unlikely to be able to enrol until after the August primary intake.

There are no staff shortages as each preschool is staffed according to its entitlement. There is some pressure on facilities at the preschool and early childhood levels at the present time, but demographic projections indicate that this is a temporary phenomenon. A survey is currently being carried out to assess early childhood requirements likely to result from the residential development in the Larapinta area.

2. After a child attains the age of 4 years the average waiting time is approximately 3 months before being enrolled in a preschool.

**51. Northern Territory Land Corporation  
Receipts**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS

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

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

ANSWER

The receipts and expenditure statement published in the NT Government Gazette on 7 August 1987 relates to the 1986-87 financial year. As the NT Land Corporation was established on 24 December 1986, the statements in respect of the corporation relate to the period 24 December 1986 - 30 June 1987.

I have been advised that receipts for this period include payment for mustering, various lease rentals, deposits and revenue from several land sales in various locations, and operational advances from the Territory. Expenditure items included legal fees, salaries for support staff, administrative costs, and expenses associated with management of the corporation's landholdings.

**52. Child Welfare - Custody**

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. Currently how many children in the Northern Territory are living away from their natural parent/s as a result of actions taken by Community Welfare and Northern Territory courts.
2. How many of these children came from the northern region of the Territory.
3. How many of these children came from the southern region of the Territory.

4. How many of these children live in -
  - (a) foster homes (private families);
  - (b) government-run homes or institutions;
  - (c) private institutions; and
  - (d) other types of accommodation.
  
5. How many children were taken away from their parent/s on the grounds of -
  - (a) neglect;
  - (b) physical abuse;
  - (c) sexual abuse;
  - (d) parents incapable of looking after their children due to -
    - (i) alcoholism;
    - (ii) drug abuse;
    - (iii) mental state; and
    - (iv) immaturity;
  - (e) poverty; and
  - (f) other.
  
6. What is the average cost to the taxpayer for the weekly keep of children housed as under question 4.
  
7. How many hours of court time were taken up by these cases in 1987 in the Territory whether the children were taken away from their parent/s or not.
  
8. How many of the children currently taken away from their parent/s were interviewed by the Magistrate -
  - (a) alone;
  - (b) with the parent/s in attendance and Community Welfare Officers absent;
  - (c) with Community Welfare Officers and parent/s present; and
  - (d) with Community Welfare Officers present but parent/s absent.
  
9. How many children have attempted to return to their natural parent/s in 1987.

ANSWER

1. As of the end of April 1988 a total of 199 children were under the sole or joint guardianship of the Minister for Health and Community Services. Of these 52 were in the care of adopting parents and awaiting finalisation of adoption orders. This figure does not include children detained in Correctional Services institutions as a result of justice proceedings.
2. There were 65 children in substitute care in the Northern region i.e. Darwin, Katherine and East Arnhem regions, of whom 7 were placed with relatives.
3. There were 82 children in substitute care in the Southern region i.e. Alice Springs and Tennant Creek regions of whom 26 were placed with relatives
4. The care arrangements for these children were as follows:
  - (a) 73 children were in foster placements;
  - (b) 3 children were in government run institutions;
  - (c) 12 children were in private institutions;
  - (d) 59 children were placed in other forms of care. Of these 33 were placed within their families, 6 were living independently, 6 were in hospital.
- 5a. Welfare statistics do not correlate the numbers of children
- b. in substitute care with child abuse investigations. Such
- c. detail of a client's history is held in the casework files of the individual welfare workers handling the cases.

The reasons for children being found in need of care are usually a complex of factors which include the reason (or generally the group of reasons) for the breakdown in family care and also an account of the inapplicability or failure of the various preventive and supplementary measures applied by welfare workers to endeavour to keep the child within the home.

An incident of child abuse may not require a child's removal from his family, but conversely the child's removal may be necessary for reasons other than abuse.

The reasons for which a child may be taken into care by a welfare worker or a Holding Order granted by a Justice are recorded as follows:

- o Abandoned;
- o Unable or unwilling to maintain child;
- o Maltreatment;
- o No effective control;
- o Harmful to community.



Orders made by the Family Matters Court however, indicate only the section of the Community Welfare Act under which action is taken.

Child Protection figures are correlated with numbers of reports and of confirmed investigations.

In 1986-87 reports of child abuse were investigated in respect of 392 children. Of these cases 205 were confirmed as actual abuse. The distribution of predominant type of abuse in these confirmed cases was as follows:

° Physical abuse	85
° Sexual abuse	49
° Neglect	65
° Emotional abuse	6

- 5d. The reasons for parents being incapable of caring for children are not recorded other than on individual files. These factors listed in the question would be expected to lead to neglect.
- 5e. Poverty, as such, is never a reason for a child to be taken into care. Welfare Branch administers Family Support and Emergency Financial Assistance programs to alleviate poverty.
- 5f. A further category of children removed from their parents' care is that group subject to juvenile justice action. At the end of April 1988 there were 33 children in detention centres and 9 children on remand.
6. Families fostering children who are in the care of the Minister receive a payment of \$58 per week per child plus a sum of up to \$10 per week pocket money depending on the age of the child.

Children in non-government institutions are also subject to the same rates of support.

It must be noted that depending upon individual need, discretionary payments may be made to, or on behalf of children in care. These payments may be budgeted against any of a number of program areas depending on the reason for the payment.

Complete details of cost of all aspects of substitute care programs would require extensive detailed scrutiny of all client files.

Many non-government institutions, as well as receiving individual fostering payments for service, also receive grant funds through the departments Grants and Subsidies scheme.

The costing of government run institutions is difficult to break down to individual costs per client as the maintenance of the institutions draws on various budgeting categories and the age, length of stay and individual needs of children continually vary.

- 7&8. Application has been made to the Department of Law for information relevant to these questions but the compilation of the information would be most difficult as welfare client records and court costs would need to be correlated for each court sitting in the Northern Territory. It is moreover unlikely that the duration of individual court activities has been recorded.
9. No record apart from individual client files is kept of this matter. If a child should abscond from care it cannot always be clearly determined if he intended to return to his parents or was motivated by more complex desires.

**54. School Councils Regulations Advertising**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What was the total cost of advertising -

- (a) explaining the changes to Schools Councils Regulations; and  
 (b) encouraging parents to be involved in School Councils,  
 from February 1988 to the present time.

ANSWER

There were 3 types of advertisements on this issue:-

(a) Minister's statement on School Councils	\$ 6 851
(b) Questions and answers about the regulations	\$ 5 091
(c) Things which School Councils are doing	<u>\$ 6 501</u>
Total	<u>\$18 443</u>

**55. Territory Super Plastics**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

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

ANSWER

1. No. The Territory Superplastic factory is currently not operating because of a dispute between the 2 partners concerned. Partners have been notified that unless the dispute was resolved quickly and production commenced the licence would be revoked. Discussions between the partners

have failed to resolve the dispute and revocation of the licence will proceed as a matter of course.

2. In the agreement, incentives were offered to reimburse the company for freight costs incurred in relocating machinery, additional electrical wiring to accommodate the Territory Superplastic machinery in the factory on the zone, costs for training locally engaged staff, and export freight costs. No export freight costs were incurred. The cost of other incentives are confidential.
3. The Trade Development Zone is fully secured for recovery of all money paid to Territory Superplastic. A Receiver-Manager was appointed by the Trade Development Zone Authority on 3 March 1988 to take control of the company and its assets while the dispute between the 2 partners was resolved. The Receiver is charged with protecting the interests of the Trade Development Zone and other creditors of the company.

Should the company be wound up the Authority will recover its incentives outlays under its security.

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

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

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

ANSWER

1. \$27 725.41.
2. (i) \$21 718.64.
  - (ii) Nil
  - (iii) \$ 6 006.77.

3. \$ 8 520.94.
4. \$ 1 880.17 Sunday Territorian  
 \$ 2 501.60 Centralian Advocate  
\$ 1 375.00 NT News
- \$ 5 756.77 Total Northern Territory  
\$ 250.00 Bulletin (Interstate)
- \$ 6 000.77 Total overall Newspaper Advertising

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

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

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

ANSWER

1. The department has been aware since March that some members of the viticulture industry in New South Wales and Victoria may have illegally imported grape varieties.

Commonwealth Quarantine authorities in cooperation with state Departments of Agriculture and CSIRO have conducted investigations into allegations from various sources that illegally imported table grape varieties are being grown in Australia. Following the detection of table grapes with false trade descriptions in Sydney, several properties in the Sunraysia area were searched over the periods 1-4 and 14-18 March.

As a result, 27 properties belonging to 6 growers or companies in the Mildura and Menindee areas were placed under quarantine. No vines or vegetative material may be removed from these properties.

However, movement of fruit is not being restricted as the disease risk is considered to be minimal.

Though exotic plant diseases were not obvious on inspection of the vineyards, grape cuttings from each property were taken and are being grown in quarantine in Victoria. This is for the purpose of virus indexing and for positive

identification of varieties. This process may take up to 2 years.

It appears from initial investigations that at least 6 varieties new to Australia are involved.

Where appropriate, prosecutions are being pursued under the Quarantine Act 1908 and under the Export Control Act 1982. However, these actions may not be finalised until the grape varieties are positively identified.

2. Commonwealth Quarantine authorities have advised that it is not possible to determine if these illegally imported varieties have been planted in the Northern Territory at this stage. This cannot be done until the vines are fruiting towards the end of this year.
3. An anomaly exists regarding the maturity times of the grape variety Perlette in the southern areas of the NT. Under normal circumstances Perlette matures earlier than the variety Flame Seedless. However, the reverse has occurred, that is Flame Seedless matured before Perlette. These maturity times will be confirmed during the 1988 growing season. Maturity time, though indicative of variety, is not a conclusive parameter. If doubt to the identity of the variety exists, Commonwealth Quarantine authorities will take cuttings and grow these in quarantine in Victoria. Confirmation of the identity of the variety may take 2 years.

**59. Open Space Development Strategy**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

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

ANSWER

The strategy will be implemented by its utilisation as a planning guideline by open space managers as part of their normal operations following environmental assessment in accordance with procedures under the Environment Assessment Act.

**60. Freeholding of Special Purpose Leases**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. How many Special Purpose Leases were there in the vicinity of -
  - (a) Darwin;
  - (b) Katherine;
  - (c) Tennant Creek;

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

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

ANSWER

There have been 543 Special Purposes Leases issued for a wide variety of purposes since 1950. A large number of these have been either surrendered, forfeited or converted to an alternative form of tenure.

The detail sought by the honourable member is not readily available and would require a lengthy and expensive exercise to compile.

The government's current policies regarding Special Purposes Leases have been the subject of recent debate in the Assembly and are available by reference to Hansard.

Specific questions relating to any individual Special Purpose Lease the honourable member is concerned about will be addressed if requested.

**16 August 1988**

**63. Home Loan Mortgage Transfers**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer the Minister to his press release of Monday, 6 June 1988 in which he said that there had been 457 transfers under the Home Purchase Assistance Scheme regulations promulgated on 31 August 1984.

1. How many of these transfers were within -
  - (a) Darwin;
  - (b) Katherine;
  - (c) Tennant Creek;
  - (d) Alice Springs; and
  - (e) elsewhere.
2. How many people made application for the transfer of their mortgage either verbally or in writing in each of the above centres.
3. What reasons were given for the rejection of applications.
4. How many of those applicants (in Question 2) were told, either verbally or in writing, that the regulations prevented the transfer of a mortgage within the town in which they lived.



## ANSWER

1. (a) 402; (b) 7; (c) 2; (d) 46; (e) Nil.

2. Verbal applications are not accepted.

Applications in writing:	Darwin	489
	Alice Springs	53
	Katherine	12
	Tennant Creek	2

3. Most common reasons for rejections:

- Poor conduct of previous account;
- insufficient security offered; lack of equity;
- current ownership of houses other than those specified in transfer application.

4. None that I am aware of as the regulations do not prevent the transfer of mortgage within the same town.

Job Creation

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, to illustrate the importance of my question, I have a graph that shows the Country Liberal Party's promised job growth against the monthly average employment figures for the last 12 months. Mr Speaker, as you can see, but unfortunately our radio listeners cannot, the gap last month was 7000 jobs and it is widening. In the lead up to the 1987 election, the government stated that it had plans to create over 1000 jobs per annum. Where are those plans? Where are those jobs?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has resorted to some interesting theatricals which we are not used to in the House.

Mr Ede: You do not understand the words.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! In the past, I have advised honourable members about interjections during question time, particularly as question time is being broadcast. I ask the member for Stuart to listen in silence.

Mr PERRON: Mr Speaker, the honourable member has resorted to using graphs in the Assembly. Perhaps he should table it but, because it is as big as his desk ...

Mr Smith: I am happy to table a copy.

Mr PERRON: ... perhaps he can set it up outside where members may check its accuracy. Having regard to the accuracy of other statements made by the opposition, particularly in recent times, the public would have good reason to suspect its accuracy.

The government is developing the Northern Territory and I will be speaking more about this in the statement that I foreshadowed this morning. In that statement, the honourable member will be given an indication of the directions this government is taking. It is true that the population of the Northern Territory has been declining of late and this is unfortunate. However, honourable members should bear in mind that, in the period following self-government, the Territory experienced phenomenal growth rates - something like 4 or 5 times those for the rest of Australia - and it was inevitable that, sooner or later, the growth rate would flatten out. Unfortunately, it has done more than flatten out; it has declined.

We cannot ensure that the job-creation rate in the Northern Territory is steady throughout a term of the government's activities because, of course, there are many things which are beyond our control, particularly some of the treatment we receive from time to time at the hands of the federal government. It would not have been unreasonable for the Territory government ...

Mr Bell: It is always somebody else.

Mr PERRON: Not at all, Mr Speaker. Would it have been unreasonable for the Territory government to assume that the federal government might have fulfilled some of its promises over the past few years which would have helped Territory development? I cite the Darwin Airport as an example. No lesser man than the Prime Minister of this country turned the first sod on this

project and a vast sum of taxpayers' money was spent on it following that occasion which was, of course, very well publicised just prior to a federal election. Some \$18m or \$20m was spent on the site, after which the project was set aside. Territorians are supposed to wait for the airport the Prime Minister promised them. The Leader of the Opposition apparently does not think that the state of the Darwin and Alice Springs Airports is detrimental to the progress and development of the Northern Territory.

Mr Smith: When are you going to answer the question?

Mr PERRON: I suggest that he go out into the community and talk with some business people, some investors and some people in the tourist industry and learn the facts of life. I will not pursue this matter further now. The Leader of the Opposition will hear in my statement this morning of the directions of this government for growth and development in the Northern Territory.

#### Demolition of Marron's Newsagency in Alice Springs

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Recent media attention has focused on the demolition of Marron's newsagency in the Todd Street Mall in Alice Springs. Originally it was advertised that the redevelopment of the site would utilise the facade of the original building and I ask him 2 questions. Firstly, why did this not happen? Secondly, what is being done to ensure that Alice Springs retains some of its older, important buildings?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I must admit that I was taken by surprise when I heard that the building had been totally demolished, and I believe that you experienced a similar feeling. This was because it had been publicly advertised that an application to the Planning Authority to redevelop the site included provision for the retention of the verandah and the facade of the original building.

Most people, myself included, fondly remember buying a newspaper or magazine at this rather distinctive newsagency. I believe that most of us also sensibly realised that the building, as it was, could not be expected to be retained forever. I think everyone was reasonably satisfied with the compromise that was proposed by the developer - that is, to retain the historic facade of the building for use in the proposed development. Even the Alice Springs Branch of the National Trust commented publicly that it was able to accept the proposed compromise as a sensible solution. I might add that I have been approached by a number of long-time Alice Springs residents since this unfortunate happening who have told me that the Marron's verandah that most of us knew was not the original. Apparently, the one that was there was a replacement after the original was destroyed by a somewhat careless motorist in the 1950s. It seems that, like the original axe with 2 new handles and a new blade, everyone accepted it as being one and the same.

The proposal was advertised publicly and the Planning Authority - and, as all members are aware, it has a majority of Alice Springs members on it - gave the go-ahead and everyone appeared to be happy. But, after that, problems arose. The architects and the engineers involved in the reconstruction found that the facade of the old newsagency was unable to cope structurally with its inclusion in the new building. The developer made an approach to the Planning Authority for its consent to make a change to the original approval. The

Planning Authority considered the matter and the change was granted. The original facade lacked structural integrity. Again, I believe the decision was justified under the circumstances. However, at the time, the general public - including myself and, I understand, yourself, Mr Speaker - were unable to understand what was occurring. This was because the original proposal was advertised to the public but the change consented to by the Planning Authority was not. Understandably, some people were totally disillusioned by what they perceived to be a deliberate act of bad faith.

In reality, what occurred highlighted an aspect of the planning process that needs attention. It is clear that any changes the authority proposes to make to a previously advertised course of action should themselves be advertised. Had such a course of action been followed in the case of Marron's newsagency, I believe that the end result would have been unchanged. However, I am sure that people in the community would have been far happier if the reasons for the changes to the development had been public information prior to those changes taking place.

I have commenced a process which is intended to look at the shortcomings in this area of the planning process and I intend to discuss the matter with the Chairman of the Planning Authority.

Mr Bell interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I find it very difficult to continue whilst the member for MacDonnell persists with his inane interjections. They are, however, typical of him. He has a tendency to form fixed ideas which bear no relation to the facts and then to continue to open his mouth to regurgitate these crazy ideas. They bear no relation to fact. I am sure that a number of people in the community are concerned to find out what actually occurred. Obviously, the member for MacDonnell wishes to prevent people finding out the truth. That is not unusual for him. It fits in with his modus operandi.

Mr Speaker, I can assure you and I can assure members of the Territory community that I will continue to pursue this matter until I am sure that people understand the situation, regardless of the attempts by the member for MacDonnell to muzzle me. I have commenced a process of examination of the shortcomings in this area of the planning process and I intend to discuss the matter further with the Chairman of the Planning Authority. I would certainly like to reassure the House and the Territory community of this government's commitment to preserving our past. I believe that a balance must be struck between the legitimate aspirations and rights of owners and developers of private property and the needs of Territorians as a whole in terms of the preservation of their structural heritage.

Mr Speaker, our commitment in the Alice Springs area is very easily seen at the old jail and the old Telegraph Station. I ask you, Mr Speaker, where else in Australia would the original village of any city still remain intact? Alice Springs has its old courthouse, the Residency, the Hartley Street School, the old Alice Inn and the Ghan project, a project that I am sure you are fully aware of, Mr Speaker, and which represents a magnificent effort by the community of Alice Springs, assisted by the government, to preserve part of our heritage. Adelaide House and Les Hansen House are other examples. I personally handed the lease of Les Hansen House to the National Trust last Wednesday. That did not receive much attention in the local newspaper although I saw a headline relating to a claim that some other building was saved through a last minute flurry of action. I was not aware of that. However, I was certainly aware that the government handed over the lease of

Les Hansen House to the National Trust last Wednesday in line with its commitment to ensure that our heritage is preserved.

I have met with the Alice Springs Branch of the National Trust. It has undertaken to supply me with details and background information in relation to properties it is concerned about in Alice Springs. I have also asked the Conservation Commission to review and to report to me regarding heritage matters. However, I will certainly not be taking action spurred merely by political rhetoric. The government's record stands firm and I am sure that the utterances of the opposition regarding these matters will be taken in the context in which they are delivered, as an attempt to gain some cheap publicity for the purposes of the by-election.

#### Demolition of Marron's Newsagency in Alice Springs

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Mr Speaker, together with yourself as member for Braitling, I was seriously concerned about the destruction of Marron's newsagency. On the basis of the minister's answer to the previous question, I have one short question. Can he confirm that the Chairman of the Planning Authority knew of the impending destruction of Marron's newsagency before the event?

ANSWER.

Mr Speaker, obviously the honourable member has a problem with his ears because I explained what occurred. I will, however, repeat it. Originally, an application was made to the Planning Authority for the demolition of Marron's newsagency but the development plans provided for the facade of Marron's - the verandah and the front wall - to be retained and incorporated into the new development. It is rather a simple procedure to understand and I hope the member for MacDonnell understands what that means. Secondly, I pointed out that that was advertised publicly. The community was aware of what was planned and agreed to it.

Mr Bell: The member for Braitling was not.

Mr MANZIE: The member for MacDonnell scoffs, Mr Speaker. I wish he would listen carefully and possibly talk to people in the National Trust who commented on the fact that the facade was to be retained. They thought that was a reasonable compromise in respect of the redevelopment of the Todd Street Mall.

The developer came back to the Planning Authority because of problems relating to the structural integrity of the facade. He applied to the Planning Authority for consent to replace the original facade with something which was similar in design, that retained the old feel of the building, but which was new and had structural integrity. Unfortunately, that application for a change was not publicly advertised. If it had been, I believe many of the problems relating to the destruction would not have occurred because people would have understood what was happening. Consent was given for the changes to be made and, as a result, the entire building was removed with the intention of replacing it with something of similar design.

I have expressed my concern and I have also commented on what I consider a deficiency in planning procedures which allow changes to be made to approved developments without those changes being advertised. I will be examining that matter to ensure that those sort of circumstances do not occur again. I hope

that the member for MacDonnell now understands the situation. This is the third time that I have explained it publicly and possibly he needs it explained 3 times before he understands. I am quite happy to give him a private briefing if he still has problems understanding the processes involved.

Northern Territory University

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

During the last sittings of the Assembly, I referred him to press reports relating to the amalgamation of the Darwin Institute of Technology and the University College of the Northern Territory. Last weekend's Sunday Territorian informed us that the amalgamation would involve not only the Darwin Institute of Technology and the University College of the Northern Territory, but also TAFE. What are the latest developments relating to that proposed amalgamation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. The report in the Sunday Territorian was accurate to the extent that a decision has been taken to establish a Northern Territory university by bringing together the campuses of the University College of the Northern Territory and the Darwin Institute of Technology, including the TAFE sector. Legislation to implement this merger will be introduced at these sittings of the Legislative Assembly with a view to having it concluded in October. I need not remind honourable members that the bill to establish a Northern Territory university will be a milestone for higher education in the Territory. I will have more to say on that most important matter when I introduce the bill to the Assembly.

I might say that, throughout this whole exercise, there has been a tremendous amount of goodwill on the part of the people involved, particularly the staff and students at the University College and the Darwin Institute of Technology. I thank them for the way in which they have approached this matter. The report in the Sunday Territorian mentioned Queensland University accreditation. That comment related to the University of Queensland's courses; it did not relate to the other courses provided at the Darwin Institute of Technology.

I might take the opportunity to comment on the interim arrangements and the appointment of the vice-chancellor of the new Northern Territory university. The position of the permanent vice-chancellor will be advertised throughout Australia and overseas in a format that is common to advertising for such positions. The final decision on the permanent vice-chancellor will be taken by the university council when it is established.

As far as the appointment of an interim vice-chancellor or an interim chief executive officer is concerned, during the past few months there has been a great deal of speculation about this position. I must say that I have been very disappointed at some of the nasty remarks that have been made about the Warden of the University College and the Director of the Darwin Institute of Technology. Both these men have played a very important role in developing educational opportunities for Territorians, and I apologise to those 2 gentlemen for the treatment that they have received during this period.

Mr Speaker, I am sure that you would be aware that Professor Thomson has all the qualifications that a position as an interim vice-chancellor or an

interim chief executive officer would require. Before announcing who has been appointed to this position, I indicate to honourable members that, included on the selection panel were the vice-chancellor of the University of New England as well as the vice-chancellor of the Wollongong University, together with the acting vice-chancellor of the Curtin University of Technology and the Director of the Queensland Institute of Technology.

Mr Speaker, Emeritus Professor David Caro of Melbourne has been appointed the interim -chief executive officer of what will be our own NT university. Professor Caro is an eminent scholar and university administrator. He was formally the vice-chancellor of the University of Tasmania and, until his recent retirement, he was the vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne. Professor Caro has a distinguished employment history: he served in Darwin in 1942 with the RAAF; in 1952, he was a lecturer, University of Melbourne; in 1954, a senior lecturer at the University of Melbourne; in 1958, a reader at the University of Melbourne; in 1961-72, he was Professor of Experimental Physics, University of Melbourne; in 1972-77, he was the Deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne; in 1978-82, he was the vice-chancellor of the University of Tasmania; and, in 1982 until his recent retirement, he was the vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne. He was also a member of the Tertiary Education Commission of Tasmania, Chairman of the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee and Chairman of the Antarctic Research Policy Advisory Committee.

Apart from being one of Australia's most distinguished academics and university administrators, Professor Caro has had recent experience in managing a merger during his service in Tasmania and we are indeed most fortunate, I believe, that a person of Professor Caro's standing has accepted the position of interim chief executive officer for the Northern Territory university. I am sure that his involvement during this interim period will assist us greatly during the development stage of our university.

The present University College Warden, Professor Jim Thomson, and the present Director of the Darwin Institute of Technology, Mr Kevin Davis, will continue the day-to-day administration of their respective institutions until the institutions merge to form the new Northern Territory university.

Mr Speaker, I am extremely pleased that a person of such national and international standing as Professor Caro has been found to serve as the interim chief executive officer and I hope that honourable members share my views. I believe that we have the opportunity to put together a university that will provide top class undergraduate and postgraduate courses to people in the Northern Territory and I look forward to honourable members taking part in the debate when I table the bill for the introduction of a Northern Territory university.

#### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT Supplementary Questions

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have been giving the matter of supplementary questions consideration since the last sittings. Some members have asked a number of such questions which, in my view, were not truly supplementary. As members are aware, I make every effort to allocate questions equally between both sides of the Chamber. In the past, I have not counted supplementary questions as part of that process and thus some members, who consistently ask supplementary questions, receive an advantage. The House of Representative's practice is spelt out in Pettifer at page 497. In that Chamber, prior to 1950, questions based on answers to earlier questions at

question time, including an answer to the immediately preceding question, were not permitted. The introduction of supplementary questions by an amendment to standing orders permitted members to ask questions based on previous answers at question time. It did not, and still does not, permit immediate supplementary questions. The principle of alternating the call between the right and the left is strictly adhered to.

The practice has developed in the Legislative Assembly of permitting immediate supplementary questions requesting elucidation of an answer or part of an answer just given. I might add that this does not accord with the House of Representatives practice. I believe that, provided this system is not overworked, it has its advantages, especially in a small Chamber. The problem is for the Chair to ensure that this system is not used to the detriment of the rights of other members. I am therefore of the opinion that the matter is one which should be considered, firstly, by the Standing Orders Committee and then by this Chamber so that the wishes of honourable members may be taken fully into account when determining the future practice to be followed.

#### Demolition of Marron's Newsagency in Alice Springs

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can he confirm that he was not advised by the Chairman of the Planning Authority of the change in the Planning Authority attitude to the preservation of the facade of Marron's newsagency? Secondly, can he state why, if that is the case, he was not advised of that change in status, particularly in relation to section 32 of the Planning Act which quite clearly lays down the responsibility of the authority to submit to the minister proposals on development of land or planning matters? Thirdly, can he indicate whether he has a policy whereby the Planning Authority should advise him of any proposed changes to any classified building in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is pretty obvious that the answer to the first question is no. The answer to the second is that there is no need to advise the minister of extremely minor changes.

Mr Smith: Extremely minor!

Mr Ede: What!

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, this is ridiculous. The interjections indicate that there is absolutely no attempt by members opposite to try to understand what occurred. They are concerned merely with trying to gain cheap political advantage.

The original application by the developer related to a development on the Todd Street Mall which was to retain a facade, and the development was approved in accordance with the provision of the act. There was no change in the development and there was no change in what was occurring on the site. There was a slight change in a detail relating to the Planning Authority's approval which, when the development is completed, will make no difference to the visual aspect or the siting of the building. Let it sink into the minds of members opposite that the provision that the Leader of the Opposition spoke about was not necessary for that change to be made. I have started a process which will ensure certain things occur in the future. I am sure that it would not have changed the development but public advertising of that change would have made the community aware of what was occurring.



I will put it very simply: the building remains the same, the design remains the same and the appearance remains the same. A small aspect of the consent was changed and I will ensure that that does not happen again. That is very simple. I think that the Territory community should be made aware that the people opposite do not care about truth or answers. They continually interject. As is plain for anyone to hear, their manners in this House are abominable. I do not know what their parents taught them but it is not what my parents taught me and it is not how I taught my children to behave. They could do with some lessons in etiquette.

#### Draft Bills on Domestic Violence

Mr HATTON to CHIEF MINISTER

I remind the Chief Minister that, during the last sittings of this Assembly, draft bills in respect of domestic violence were tabled. Is it still the intention of the government to proceed with the introduction of domestic violence legislation and, if so, when?

Mr Ede interjecting.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it may be news for the member for Stuart to learn that there are people in the Northern Territory who are interested in the subject of domestic violence even if he is not. It is the government's intention to enact legislation on this very complex subject of domestic violence in our society today. The former Chief Minister tabled a legislative package on domestic violence during the last sittings in order to allow for public comment and debate over a reasonable period. The tabled legislation was circulated to 97 groups throughout the Northern Territory, including the legal profession, women's groups, other bodies and interested individuals.

Many of these groups have provided valuable comment and the feedback has been overwhelmingly supportive of the proposed course of action. However, a number of matters have been raised which warrant serious consideration and these aspects will require further input from magistrates, police etc to allow the government to finetune the legislation. The government is still awaiting comments from a number of organisations, including the Judges of the Supreme Court, the Family Law Court, the Northern Territory Women's Advisory Council, the Human Rights Commission, the Northern Territory Women Lawyers Association, the Northern Territory Law Society and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. These groups have requested more time to prepare their submissions. Accordingly, it is my intention to introduce the bills in the October sittings of the Legislative Assembly which will fulfil the government's commitment to have legislation in place by the end of this year. The new timetable will allow the proposed public awareness campaign to commence at the same time as the legislation. I anticipate that the scheme itself will commence operating on approximately 1 March 1989.

#### Flood Mitigation in Alice Springs

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What progress has occurred towards flood mitigation in Alice Springs since the minister's report to the Assembly in June, particularly in relation to sand mining and the possible building of a dam wall?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the opportunity to indicate the correct position in relation to the Alice Springs flood mitigation proposals. Naturally, the government is taking very seriously its responsibilities for the Alice Springs community and the potential flood risk to that town. Casual observers in other parts of Australia find it hard to relate to the fact that Alice Springs is a major flood prone area but residents know full well the havoc that can occur. The flood in March this year presented serious problems.

The 400 km<sup>2</sup> catchment area up stream from Alice Springs has, by virtue of its steep and rocky nature, the potential to deliver floods of major proportions to the town. Heavy rain can result in large flash floods occurring with little warning, often at night. A recently-completed study has found that a 1-in-100-year flood in Alice Springs could cause damage costing \$60m. For the benefit of honourable members, I should explain that a 1-in-100-year flood means a 1% chance of such a flood occurring in any year. In such a flood, it is estimated that more than 2000 houses and units would be affected and more than 500 commercial premises. Admittedly, the risk is not large, but the potential remains and the government is implementing the necessary plans to minimise flood damage.

Many flood mitigation measures have already been put in place. These include the flood-proofing of buildings, zoning arrangements, building and development controls, flood insurance, public information and education, flood forecasting, warning and evacuation plans, levees such as those around the water-pumping station, retarding basins in the new urban areas and channel improvements in the Todd River. Surveys and maps which chart the extent and depth of previous floods have also been completed. Sand extraction from the Todd River, which the member for Sadadeen mentioned, is expected to start very shortly. Some 3 months ago, the Department of Mines and Energy called for expressions of interest in such a program and guidelines have been prepared in consultation with the Alice Springs Town Council. We are awaiting a response from the council, which we expect to receive within days, before we give the signal for sand extraction to start. The honourable member would be aware that a considerable amount of sand has already been removed from near the causeway and the process will continue as soon as we have the council go-ahead. Sand will be taken from areas in the river which regularly cause problems during high water flows and the program will be repeated annually for the next 5 years.

However, the removal of sand from the Todd is by no means a complete flood mitigation scheme. The construction of a flood mitigation dam is critical to the success of proper flood mitigation measures. A drilling rig is currently active at the Emily Creek site completing tests for a geotechnical and hydrological report being prepared for the government by Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey.

Mr Ede: It is not.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I hear an interjection from the member for Stuart which illustrates that he does not know what is going on in his own patch. In fact, the drilling rig has come from interstate. I can assure him that it is in the area and that it is about to proceed with drilling.

Mr Ede: It is certainly not drilling now.

Mr COULTER: You said it is not there. You do not even know what is going on in your own area.

Mr Ede: I said it is not drilling.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, when those tests are finished in the near future, the rig will move to the Telegraph Station site to complete a similar study at that location. To gather the necessary technical information, 4 holes will be drilled. Reports on the viability of the 2 sites will be with the government by the end of the year and a decision can then be quickly made about the site where construction of a flood mitigation dam can proceed.

I do not want to pre-empt the findings of those reports, Mr Speaker, but I have to say that previous studies have shown that the Emily Creek site would have limited value in terms of flood mitigation. It is somewhat ironic that the opposition and its hangers-on have sought to make mischief about the Telegraph Station site for their own political reasons. They have alleged that a recreation lake is the government's priority at the site. In fact, in all probability the studies will show that the Emily Creek site would be a far better option for a recreation dam whilst the Telegraph Station offers a superior alternative for flood mitigation purposes. I stress once again that the government is not progressing with any thought of constructing a recreational facility in Alice Springs. The motivation is to build a dam which will protect Alice Springs from flood disaster.

Less than 2 weeks ago, I had an opportunity to brief a group of Alice Springs residents about the flood mitigation dam proposal, including the CLP candidate for the Flynn by-election June Tuzewski. She is fully across the subject and is seeking to be kept fully informed as the results of the studies become available. I urge any Alice Springs resident who wants to discuss flood mitigation plans to consult her. I guarantee that she knows more about the subject than the 2 Alice Springs-based members sitting directly opposite.

#### Health Services at Ngukurr

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

What is the current situation with respect to the health services at Ngukurr?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I asked him to wait until halfway through question time so that the shadow spokesman for health would have the opportunity to ask the question. Given that there has been a great deal of comment recently over a TB outbreak in the Katherine region and about health services being supplied at Ngukurr, the deafening silence on these issues from the shadow spokesman for health clearly indicates how little attention the opposition pays to areas such as Katherine. About the only parallel I can draw to the opposition's interest in the subject is the amount of attention the Leader of the Opposition pays ...

Mr Bell interjecting.

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

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, I unreservedly withdraw the allegation that the Minister for Health and Community Services is a dill.

Mr DALE: Mr Speaker, the amount of attention that the shadow spokesman on health and community services pays to the Katherine region and the top end of Australia is matched only by the attention that the Leader of the Opposition gives to Alice Springs. I believe he has been there only once or twice in the last 12 months. I am sure that he will increase his strike rate over the next couple of weeks. The first thing he will have to do is introduce himself to the people of Alice Springs, but I am sure that that can only help our cause.

There has been a great deal of comment over the last few days about the health services in Ngukurr particularly in relation to a number of reports of TB in the Katherine region. The fact is that our policies for the delivery of health services to Aboriginal communities have the flexibility to encompass a number of options. These options have been discussed with the community council and other people in the Ngukurr area. First of all, there is the availability of DAA funding and some communities, particularly in central Australia, have availed themselves of that particular source. That support is provided by DAA from Canberra. The second option is for grant-in-aid funding from the Northern Territory government and this issue provides the council with the funds to operate health services at an agreed level. This support comes through the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services.

As I said, these options have been discussed with the community at Ngukurr and we are quite happy to negotiate with it for whatever standard of health service it might wish to establish there. We have had some problems in providing health services there. One of the major issues has been housing for the health workers at Ngukurr and, because there was a lack of suitable accommodation and, I stress, after a great deal of communication with the people at Ngukurr, the 2 sisters were removed from that area in April. They were replaced by a male sister, and I like the note that I have here. It says that he was accommodated in the police station. I do not think that means in the cells; I am sure that it means in the living quarters at the police station. He was there only until mid-July, and has now been replaced by another health sister who has been living in the clinic itself. Construction of the house will be completed shortly and will coincide with the arrival of 2 sisters who have been recruited to work at Ngukurr. Those negotiations are ongoing and I am sure that the people of Ngukurr will have an appropriate health service.

It is appropriate at this time that I give some details on the report of TB in the Katherine and Roper Valley regions over recent times. Up until 12 August 1988, 15 new cases and 2 reactivated cases of TB were diagnosed and notified over the past 12 months throughout the Katherine region. Of these, 14 came from the Barunga Roper Valley area, commonly known as the Roper mobile area. Notifications of TB occurred after a process of contact tracing, investigations and confirmation are therefore the end result of considerable time and effort.

The process of detecting TB in an individual involves firstly a Mantoux test. The skin will react to this injection if the individual is infected. Secondly, an x-ray is taken to confirm the results of the Mantoux test. The individual is then hospitalised for more specific tests - that is, sputum analysis - and is treated and notified on the basis of the overall results. Mantoux surveys of the Roper mobile area have been under way for some months and are still continuing throughout the Katherine region. It is important

that these surveys are conducted throughout the region because of the mobility of the Aboriginal population in that area.

Given the known movement patterns of these communities, it was decided by the professional people to screen people from Mataranka, Duck Creek, Hodgson Downs, Hodgson River, Nutwood Downs and Urapunga. These communities were advised of this early in July. The mobile x-ray survey of the Roper mobile area, involving 6 full-time members, commenced on 2 August 1988 and was expected to take 2 weeks to complete. Approximately 500 people will have been x-rayed.

At this point, it is necessary to understand the difference between screening and contact tracing. Screening requires x-raying the total community whereas contact tracing involves investigating those people identified as close associates of a patient. The process at Ngukurr was one of contact tracing. Approximately 70 close contacts of TB-infected patients were investigated by means of the skin test. Of these, only 5 to 10 required a follow up chest x-ray. These contacts were made outside of Ngukurr. Of the 17 TB cases positively diagnosed, 2 are now living at Ngukurr and current indications are that they acquired their illness outside of Ngukurr.

The final results of this TB screening exercise will not be known for at least another 2 weeks. I will give members a brief update in a moment. In the meantime, contingency plans are being developed should the survey produce an unexpectedly large number of individuals requiring further investigation or treatment.

Finally, I am advised that fit, healthy people who come in contact with an open case of TB are unlikely to catch the disease. Several weeks or months of close contact are required. There is an insignificant risk to visitors entering these communities for short periods of time. I am advised that one tourist from Mt Isa, who went through the Katherine region, bought herself a didgeridoo whilst she was there. She went back to Mt Isa, saw the national news coverage of the story from Ngukurr and rang our people to ask what she should do because she felt sure she must have contracted TB. That just shows what the media can do.

Results of the survey to date, and I am talking about advice I have received this very morning, show that 402 people have been x-rayed, 373 have had the Mantoux test and positive results to the Mantoux test were found in 38 people. I am advised that these figures are approximate only. A specialist chest physician from the Communicable Diseases Unit is in Katherine now to read all of the survey films. The specialist is expected to complete his task by the end of this week and I will be happy to report further to this Assembly when the findings of those surveys are known.

I cannot let go by this opportunity to compliment the work of people from the Communicable Diseases Unit in the Department of Health and Community Services and also the excellent contribution of our Aboriginal health workers in the region. Most honourable members will probably be aware that I have put a proposal for a new career structure for Aboriginal Health Workers which, at the moment, is being further negotiated with the unions. I am very hopeful that those negotiations can be brought to a very rapid conclusion so that those people have a professional career path which they can pursue.

I will give an illustration of the magnificent work being done by the Aboriginal health workers. An English woman tourist was injured in a serious road accident near Mandorah a year or so ago. The first person with any

qualifications whatsoever on the scene was an Aboriginal health worker called Harry Sing from Belyuen. This woman had a badly crushed arm. Mr Sing attended to her in the first instance and an operation on the woman's arm was carried out later by Dr John Hargreaves who is regarded as one of the leading people in the field of leprosy and microsurgery in Australia and, for that matter, throughout the world. After the initial treatment, the woman went back to England. She flew back to Darwin only last week to thank the people who had treated her, including Mr Sing. The woman's arm had been saved to just above the wrist. The specialists who undertook the follow-up treatment said that, if appropriate treatment had not been given to her at the scene of the accident, she would have lost the arm to the shoulder.

Mr Speaker, I think this speaks volumes about and is a classic illustration of the tremendous work that is being done by our Aboriginal health workers. They ought to be supported. I would certainly like the opposition spokesman on health to get himself across the subject.

#### Heritage Legislation

Mr EDE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer him to the destruction of Turner House on 25 May 1986. I have the newspaper reports of that incident with me and he may like to peruse them as he was not in charge of that portfolio at the time. I might remind him that, following that destruction, the opposition introduced legislation to safeguard places registered with the National Trust. In light of that destruction and further destruction ...

Mr COULTER: A point of order, Mr Speaker! This is not the adjournment debate. Standing Order 109 is quite specific in relation to questions to a minister. I will quote it for the benefit of the member for Stuart:

Questions may be put to a minister relating to public affairs, to proceedings pending in the Assembly or to any other matter of administration for which he is responsible.

Mr Speaker, the member for Stuart has been on his feet now for 5 minutes and has not asked a question.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member is allowed a reasonable preamble but I request that he ask his question. I advise all honourable members that, once I have made up my mind with or without debate on points of order, I will make a ruling. In some cases, I will allow comments and, in others, I do not require them.

Mr EDE: Mr Speaker, returning to Marron's newsagency which, as reported on the front page of the Centralian Advocate Newspaper, you yourself referred to as 'a bloody disgrace' ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Whilst I may have used those words outside the Chamber, I will not allow them inside. I ask the honourable member to withdraw that remark.

Mr EDE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw your remark.

Mr Speaker, the matter itself is far too serious for that sort of levity. In view of both those instances and the postmaster's residence ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will ask his question.

Mr EDE: Will the honourable minister indicate a date by which he will introduce decent heritage legislation which will stop this wholesale vandalism of the heritage of the Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, following that beautiful lecture on the history of some of the events at Alice Springs in the past few years, I think that a simple yes or no answer might be too short. I will try to explain to members and to the general community what our attitude is towards heritage matters and, in doing so, contradict some of the assertions that have been made quite incorrectly by the member for Stuart.

I do remember Turner House, Mr Speaker. I found it to be an excellent venue and an excellent restaurant. In fact, in the very week of its unfortunate demise, I had an excellent meal there with a number of acquaintances. I must admit that there was a tug at my heart strings when I discovered the building had been demolished. However, we cannot stand still in time. There will always be occasions when progress and development overtake the past. We must ensure that we look after some of our history but this government cannot and will not preserve things simply for preservation's sake. We must ensure that we create a climate which allows sensible development to occur and which allows us to retain some of our history ...

Mr Smith: That's what we are after.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, we just had another interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. Brilliant stuff!

I will repeat what I said earlier. Our commitment to heritage matters in the Alice Springs area is very clear and it is very easily seen. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will visit Alice Springs during the next few weeks. If he had taken his duty seriously, he would have been to Alice Springs already and he would have seen the old jail - a great example of the heritage of Alice Springs. The old Telegraph Station is another example. It is the only place I can think of in Australia where the original village is still there. The old courthouse, the Residency, Les Hansen House, Hartley Street School, the old Alice Inn, the Ghan project - I insist that he take time out from his busy schedule to visit Alice Springs in the next few weeks and see what actions have been taken.

To come back to the Marron's newsagency example, no matter what sort of legislation was in place, we would not have been able to stop what occurred there nor what occurred with Turner House. Legislation is not the answer. I pointed out where a small change in the mechanism of the process of approvals would have prevented what occurred in respect of Marron's newsagency occurring without public notice. That is quite different from its not occurring at all. I will repeat it very slowly for the member of Stuart. It was intended to keep the facade of the building but the engineers pointed out that the structure was such that that was impossible. The architects came up with something sympathetic to the historical concept. The Leader of the Opposition says that I was not told. How ridiculous! Does he think that the Planning Authority has to come to me every time that it gives approval, for example, to change clay bricks for cement bricks or change approved plumbing fixtures to another wall? Of course that does not have to be referred to the minister. How ridiculous! What an assertion!

As I pointed out earlier, when the Planning Authority makes significant changes to a development proposal, I believe that those changes need to be advertised.

Mr Ede: And that is all. That is all.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There have been far too many interjections during the answer. There will be no more.

Mr MANZIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have pointed out quite clearly that I am going to change the mechanisms so that such incidents do not recur. Everyone can rest assured that the Planning Authority in Alice Springs includes 4 former members of the Alice Springs Town Council. I believe that we have to set up a situation which allows the community input through appropriate channels and, if there is a need to change mechanisms, as there appears to be in this case, that will be done. However, to propose that heritage legislation is the absolute answer and then to demand a commitment is simply naive. It is, however, typical of the opposition which would like to see history stand still. It does not want to see jobs provided. It does not want to see any development. It wants to see the Territory go backwards. We on this side of the House will not let that happen.



Northern Territory Loan Debt

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

Yesterday, he confirmed that the Northern Territory loan debt was \$1300m which is over \$7000 per head of population in the Northern Territory. Would he confirm that this figure does not include statutory authority loan debts of approximately \$150m?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would have to check that for the honourable member before being able to confirm it. I am sure that I can do that during the course of today without any problem.

Flood Mitigation in Alice Springs

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

The Hansard of yesterday contained comments and interjections from the member for Stuart which indicated his belief that drilling work for flood mitigation tests at Emily Creek had not started because of objections by Aboriginal traditional owners. Can the minister give details of the situation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, yesterday, the member for Stuart indicated, by way of interjection as usual, that drilling work at Emily Creek had not started because agreement had not been obtained from the Aboriginal traditional owners. In fact, it was rotten bad luck for him because, not only had it not started, as he had suggested, but it had finished. The member for Stuart is wrong again. His casual throwaway lines usually are wrong judging from my experience in this House. As I said, the drilling tests were completed 2 days ago.

In answer to the question on this matter yesterday, I mentioned that the CLP candidate for Flynn, June Tuzewski, had been fully briefed on the fundamentals of flood mitigation plans and that Alice Springs residents would be better served by consulting with her on any matter concerning this subject than with the members opposite. Within one day, that has proved to be sound advice. The member really does not know what is going on in his own patch, as I said yesterday. I am not referring to the honourable member for Sadadeen when I say 'members opposite', as he does happen to have some information about flood mitigation in the Northern Territory and certainly a lot more than the member for Stuart.

The drilling rig at Emily Creek is now in the process of moving to the Telegraph Station site to continue the geotechnical and hydrological studies on flood mitigation in that area. Four holes will be drilled to determine the scientific information needed and a report will be supplied to the government before the end of the year. A decision can then be made about construction of the flood mitigation dam.

Since the Alice Springs flood of March this year, there has been a constant campaign of misinformation about the government's flood mitigation plans. The member for Stuart does himself no credit at all as an active participant in that campaign. His statements on the issue should be treated with extreme caution by Alice Springs residents.

Flood Mitigation in Alice Springs

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

I refer to an answer he gave yesterday on the question of flood mitigation in Alice Springs: 'A drilling rig is currently active at the Emily Creek site completing tests for geotechnical and hydrological reports'. He continued: 'Mr Speaker, when those tests are finished in the near future, the rig will move to the Telegraph Station site'. In light of the information just given by the minister, will he apologise to the House for misleading it yesterday?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, they just cannot help themselves. They have to feel the heat each time, don't they? They try to defend the inane interjections of the member for Stuart. Here is a man who has been to Alice Springs 2 or 3 times in the last year, and once within the last few days to do a few advertisements for the Flynn by-election. It is nice to have him trapeze in when you need him. Don't forget what happened to poor Maggie Hickey when she received support in Tennant Creek, when the member for Stuart tried to ...

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I asked a specific question. I asked the honourable minister to confirm that yesterday he gave an answer different to the one that he gave today and to apologise to the House for doing so.

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

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I feel sorry for poor Di Shanahan if the Leader of the Opposition intends to assist her in any way.

Mr Speaker, may I just check my answer from yesterday regarding flood mitigation to ensure that I am not being quoted incorrectly by the Leader of the Opposition. In fact, I said:

However, removal of sand from the Todd is by no means a complete flood mitigation scheme. The construction of a flood mitigation dam is critical to the success of proper flood mitigation measures. A drilling rig is currently active at the Emily Creek site ...

Mr Smith: No, it is not.

Mr COULTER: I said: '... currently active at the Emily Creek site'.

Mr Smith: It left 3 days ago.

Mr COULTER: Now, Mr Speaker, there we go again. I told the honourable Leader of the Opposition yesterday not to become involved in this because he would get his fingers burnt. By way of interjection, he tried to support the member for Stuart yesterday, and I warned him privately: 'Don't touch this with a barge pole; you will get hurt'.

Mr Speaker, I said that it was 'currently active'. The member for Stuart denied that and he went on to interject - and this is not recorded in Hansard - that we had not reached agreement with the traditional owners.

Mr Smith: He said that it was not drilling. That is right.

Mr COULTER: I said:

Mr Speaker, I hear an interjection from the member for Stuart which illustrates that he does not know what is going on in his own patch. In fact, the drilling rig has come from interstate. I can assure him that it is in the area and it is about to proceed with drilling.

And it is, Mr Speaker. It is certainly not drilling now. Yes, he is correct. However, the interjection that was not recorded in Hansard was that in fact we had not reached agreement with the traditional owners. All members would have heard that interjection, Mr Speaker.

Mr Smith: I don't see that Hansard heard it.

Mr COULTER: I said it is not in there. He does not even know what is going on in his own area. It is a fact that I said it was currently active in the Emily Creek area.

Mr Smith: It is not. It finished 2 days ago.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, today is Wednesday. The crew flew back to Brisbane yesterday and finished testing on Monday. If the Leader of the Opposition wants me to be pedantically correct, it completed its drilling on Monday evening. That is a far more accurate statement than that made by the member for Stuart who lives in the region and does not know that it has happened.

#### DNA Fingerprinting System

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

When will the police introduce a DNA fingerprinting system in the Northern Territory in view of the 100% accuracy of this system of identification which would be of inestimable value in criminal investigation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have specific information before me to answer the honourable member's question but I will obtain it. However, I can inform her that we are now connected to the national computerised fingerprint network. Honourable members may have noted an item for this in the last budget. The Commissioner of Police informs me that that in itself has proved of enormous benefit in the Northern Territory because the Northern Territory has many transient people. If they get in trouble with the law, their fingerprints can be fed into a computerised system and it can be determined quickly if they are required by any interstate police force. This is a quite revolutionary advance in terms of police methods and police cooperation. In the past, this would have been impossible and, over the years, no doubt people wanted interstate remained undetected by the Territory police because of the huge effort necessary to check manually information supplied from interstate. I will seek the specific information that the honourable member requires.

#### Home Detention Scheme

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

In February 1988, this Assembly passed amendments to the Criminal Law (Conditional Release of Offenders) Act which provided courts with an

alternative sentencing option under the Home Detention Scheme. Recent media reports have questioned the suitability of this scheme for people who are before the court on drink-driving charges. Would he advise this Assembly whether or not the Home Detention Scheme is suitable for people who have been convicted of DUI offences?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, amendments to the Criminal Law (Conditional Release of Offenders) Act enabling a Home Detention Scheme to operate in the Northern Territory came into effect on 3 February this year. Section 19A provides the court with an expanded range of specific conditions available to it. It provides that, where an offender is convicted of an offence and sentenced to a form of imprisonment, the court may direct that the sentence be suspended or that the offender enter into a home detention order. It introduces residential conditions because this was previously not available.

Some magistrates indicated a reluctance to impose such conditions. The defined purpose of the Home Detention Scheme is to provide selected, suitable offenders, who would otherwise be imprisoned, with the opportunity to remain at restricted liberty in a stable environment, conditional upon them accepting and complying with random surveillance provisions. It involves residential restrictions and, where appropriate, participation in educative or rehabilitative programs suited to remedial treatment of causative factors in the offence. This means that an offender under a home detention order, in addition to residential restriction, may be required to participate in existing programs such as an alcohol course or other available educational or training schemes which may be of benefit in overcoming those factors which caused or contributed to the offending behaviour. This is an integral part of supervising home detention orders.

I have advice from the Department of Law that no conflict or anomaly exists in current Territory legislation which precludes the use of home detention as a viable sentencing option for offenders selected as suitable for the Home Detention Scheme and that selection is subject to many terms and conditions which are clearly defined. Territory courts can now suspend prison sentences. They impose and make home detention orders instead, thus avoiding the harmful effects of imprisonment, particularly first time imprisonment.

Home detention is gaining momentum in the Northern Territory since it was implemented just 5 months ago on 3 February. There have been 21 court requests for home detention assessment reports by the Director of Correctional Services. There are 12 offenders, 1 a woman, successfully undergoing home detention. Electronic techniques for keeping home detainees under surveillance are being investigated. The Territory is leading the way in Australia with a true home detention program. Home detention schemes elsewhere are really only early release schemes.

In 12 months in 1987-88, 20% of all sentenced prisoners had been convicted of DUI or drink-related offences. In a 1987-88 survey, 65% of all sentenced prisoners admitted being under the influence of alcohol at the time of the offence. This program is not retrospective. A conservative estimate for the next 12 months is that 200 people may be diverted from imprisonment in an institution. This program is not for diversion from incarceration but is diversion from incarceration in an institution. Offenders must consent, the family's view must be taken into account and, in fact, the family must consent. The program is designed to punish the offender - not to punish the family by loss of income etc - and to protect the community. The needs of the

community must be taken into account. The offender may be required to avail himself or herself of treatment to overcome problems which brought him or her into conflict with the law.

One of the main aspects is that it is extremely cost effective. I hope that all magistrates in the Northern Territory take into account what this Legislative Assembly believes is a need in the community. I hope that they take home detention into account when they are bringing down sentences for DUI.

#### Shared Equity Housing Scheme

Mr BELL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer him to his government's election promise to introduce a shared equity housing scheme which I point out was a pale imitation of the previously announced Labor policy on capital indexed loans. Why has this election commitment not been honoured?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as I explained at the last sittings, the processes involved in introducing such a scheme are undergoing very close scrutiny. Some problems were found in the process. Obviously, we want to ensure that, when such a scheme is introduced, it meets the aims and the aspirations of ...

Mr Bell interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: The member for MacDonnell asked me the question and, obviously, he wants to give me the answer.

Mr Bell: I was giving you the history, Daryl.

Mr MANZIE: I am quite happy to answer the question, Mr Speaker, but surely he is wasting the time of the House if he wants to both ask and answer the question himself.

We want to ensure that the intent of our shared equity scheme meets the aspirations of Territorians who, for various reasons, are unable to afford the cost of purchasing their first home. When the scheme is eventually introduced, hopefully it will enable those who are less unfortunate than others in terms of finance to be able to purchase a house. I would like to point out to the honourable member that schemes such as the shared equity scheme that was proposed have been tried in other parts of Australia and they have met with limited success. Obviously, we want it to work successfully.

Mr Smith: Why promise it then?

Mr Bell: It was your promise, not ours.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I hear honourable members asking why we promised it. I let members opposite know in no uncertain terms that we have not stepped back from introducing the shared equity scheme but we will ensure that such a scheme is workable.

Mr Bell: You have not stepped anywhere on it.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the manners of the member for MacDonnell are appalling but we have become used to them.

As I said, in other areas of Australia, there have been problems. For example, I think the scheme in South Australia had only 6 people avail themselves of it. We certainly want to ensure that ours encompasses more than that.

Mr Bell: It was a dud. Come on Daryl, just tell us it was a dud.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, again, the honourable member will be forced to eat his words, as he has had to on every occasion. I cannot think of an occasion when any accusation made by the member for MacDonnell has proven to be correct. This is another occasion on which he will be found to be wrong.

#### Public Bus Service for Alice Springs

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer him to the considerable debate over a long period of time in respect of requests for public bus services in Alice Springs. What steps are being taken in relation to this?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this has been a vexed question. Over the years, a number of trial services have been introduced to the cost of the Northern Territory government. Mr Speaker, as you would know, those trials revealed that a service did not appear to be viable at the time. The last trial was about 3 years ago and there certainly was insufficient patronage or potential use to warrant the introduction of a regular bus transport system.

However, special contract arrangements exist for schoolchildren. A number of suggestions have been put forward in recent times, including integration of the school system with the public transport system and the use of private contractors. There is potential for the utilisation of some of the smaller, Toyota-type buses which are already operated in the Alice Springs community by various interest groups and which quite often are not fully utilised.

The member for Araluen initiated a committee, including government and town council representatives, to investigate the feasibility of a bus service in Alice Springs. The committee considered that the best way to approach the task would be to conduct a comprehensive survey of the Alice Springs community, assessing its needs and assessing the viable components that might be included in a bus service. The government has committed a sum of \$30 000 and, of course, it is seeking input from the Alice Springs community and the Alice Springs Town Council, through its professional officers, to quickly come to a decision as to whether Alice Springs has reached the stage at which a bus service would be viable. We hope that the \$30 000 will enable a consultant's study to be completed within a couple of months and we will know then ...

Mr Smith: A consultant investigating a bus service for Alice Springs?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FINCH: The member for Millner continues to display his arrogance towards the Alice Springs community. He has no interest in it. His once-a-year visits are nowhere near enough for him to understand the aspirations of the Alice Springs community.

Mr Smith: I know they need a bus service, not an investigation into a bus service.

Mr Bell: How long since you left the wilds of Leanyer?

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, for the benefit of the chirpy member for MacDonnell, I probably spend more time in Alice Springs these days than himself. He need only look at the local newspaper to see how often I am in Alice Springs.

Mr Bell: What do your constituents in Leanyer say about that?

Mr FINCH: I have received direct feedback from people in the Alice Springs community. They are conscious of their need but there is no point in the government introducing a bus service which does not meet the needs of the people. That would be an entire waste of funds. Earlier surveys showed that it would actually be more economic to provide taxis to meet the needs of those people who wanted to use public transport. Mr Speaker, if this economic genius, the Leader of the Opposition, wishes to suggest that the government should spend money on a bus service without proper investigation, then so be it. The people of Alice Springs need to know what sort of hands the Territory would be in if - heaven forbid - there was ever a change of government.

Mr Speaker, we are taking a responsible approach, thanks to the member for Araluen, the members of the Alice Springs Town Council and the various people from the Alice Springs community who sat on the steering committee which resolved to go ahead with a fully detailed, up-to-date study. I expect the results within a couple of months, after which time we will know what service is appropriate.

#### Ministerial Discretion Under Liquor Act

Mr LEO to MINISTER for TOURISM

My question relates to the minister's responsibility for the Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission. I ask him to confirm a response he gave to an interviewer's question on ABC radio this morning. I will quote the response as I recorded it: 'Where cases of hardship have been brought to my attention, we are and have been addressing those particular cases. There is a ministerial discretion through an instruction to the Chairman of the Liquor Commission'. I took that to mean that, in the case of vehicles seized under sections 95 and 96 of the Liquor Act, the minister can exercise some ministerial discretion over whether or not those vehicles may be returned to their owners. Could he confirm that and could he also inform the House how a citizen should pursue the use of that ministerial discretion?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the member for Nhulunbuy is well aware of the current status of the review of the Liquor Act with regard to the forfeiture of motor vehicles following discussions I have had with him during the last couple of days. The government hopes to introduce amendments to the Liquor Act in the October sittings but, of course, we are very conscious of the need to discuss

the proposed amendments with the Aboriginal communities. Whilst some discussions have taken place, those discussions will be completed after the current Legislative Assembly sittings, and I am very confident of giving the draftsman time to put those amendments into legislation for introduction at the October sittings.

With regard to my response on ABC radio this morning, I will certainly look at problem areas ...

Mr Leo: Can you exercise ministerial discretion?

Mr POOLE: No, I cannot exercise ministerial discretion. The act ties that responsibility to the Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission and existing legislation. We will certainly look at areas of hardship that have been created over the past couple of months since we have been talking about the proposed amendments and, hopefully, those will be rectified by the new legislation.

#### Darwin and Alice Springs Airports

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In relation to the Darwin and Alice Springs Airports, is he able to advise the House what we can expect in the federal budget to supplement the resources that he has had available to him from discussions with the federal Minister for Transport and Communications?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, I am not privy to the federal government's budget. It has been fairly obvious from comments made to the media by Senator Collins and the member for the Northern Territory that they have been advised that the long-awaited transfer of airports at Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin is about to be announced. Of course, the people of the Northern Territory have been waiting for quite some time to hear what moves will be made, particularly in relation to the Alice Springs and Darwin Airports. The prerogative lies entirely with the federal government which owns both of those airport facilities. I am confident that the 3½ years of suspended animation on construction at Darwin Airport will be resolved shortly. From the noises being made by the media, there is no doubt that the decision will be a positive one.

Regardless of guessing games, I have every confidence that we have waited long enough. I am quite sure that there is no logical or reasonable reason why the federal government should delay its decision any longer. In December last year, the then Minister for Transport, Peter Duncan, gave commitments that a decision would be forthcoming. He thought that would occur in January 1988 and believed the decision would be favourable to proceed on the north side, and to proceed as a matter of urgency. The saga of the Darwin Airport has continued over some 10 years since a commitment was made by the Fraser government in 1983 to proceed with what was then to be a \$95m development. That development included a number of additional items which created a strain on the federal Labor government which, quite correctly, sought to review the level of expenditure. That review was to take 6 months commencing in April 1985. The saga has taken a number of turns along the way, including suggestions of construction on the south side. Some \$41m was committed in about August 1986 towards such a scheme. Fortunately, that did not proceed.



The Territory government has constructively and continually promoted the project, not only as being of paramount importance to Territorians and paramount importance to the tourist industry, but also as one of the most symbolic projects to be constructed in the Northern Territory during the next decade. That might sound a little far-fetched to some but the business community and the investment community are all looking at a commencement of the Darwin Airport as a symbol that the Territory is progressing. We have had that dead albatross around our necks for far too long. The packages that were put forward by the Territory government included in the early days a suggestion of a minimum development project of some \$40m to bring the project back into a reasonable perspective. We then suggested that perhaps the Territory government would spend up to \$20m to help the project get going, provided that we could have some equity through private investment in the terminal building. That received some favour from the federal government, and quite rightly so.

In the meantime, the federal government introduced a Federal Airports Corporation late last year. The Federal Airports Corporation was not in the least interested in the Darwin terminal although, when it saw the growth figures for Alice Springs, it certainly was interested in owning Alice Springs Airport for sound commercial reasons. However, the Territory government had an overall interest in all airports in the Northern Territory - Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin - in relation to our overall tourism development plan and economic development of each of the regions.

The federal government committed itself to divesting itself of all airports throughout Australia over a 3-year period. The Federal Airports Corporation was asked to bid against the Territory government in relation to both the Alice Springs and the Darwin Airports. The package that was put forward by the Territory government included immediate commencement. We have already done considerable forward planning and work on conceptual design. We have called for registrations of interest from project managers and have gone quite a way down the track towards getting the project started.

Our package also included a level of development at Darwin of some \$65m of infrastructure. It included provision for commuter services as well as international and domestic services. It included provision in our planning for the appropriate level of freight handling. It required a rapid completion of construction because time is the most significant component of concern to Territorians. Our arrangements included provision for transfer of the general aviation area from the south side to the north side, enabling the RAAF to have total occupation of the southern portion of the airport. Included in that transfer were some relocation costs and some subsidies towards having the general aviation area transferred across to the north side expeditiously. It included provision for all of the current employees at the airport. It included a balanced approach to what the cost would be to airlines and to airport users. It is very important that head taxes do not become excessively high and detract from our tourism development. Naturally enough, our package included retention of funds in the Northern Territory to allow for future development.

In Alice Springs, we were looking at an immediate expansion of the terminal to double the floor space. We were looking at a 6-month study, including consideration of international capacity and taking into account the Alice Springs community's desires, parallel taxiways and other things that would take some time to put into perspective. We would then have entered a detailed design phase and would have committed something like \$25m towards a major terminal facility to commence as soon as that design phase was finished, with a construction period of 2 years.

I mention all of that because it has been put to me that Territorians might be disadvantaged if the FAC were to become the owner of each of those 4 facilities. I do not believe it would because I have heard clearly from the federal government that, naturally enough, the best bid will win. The details that I have given to members of the House represent the very minimum service, timing and level of expenditure that Territorians can expect regardless of who is to own those Territory airports - and I include all 4 - after Tuesday of next week. We wait with a great deal of anticipation and, I am sure, confidence that, after next Tuesday, we will see a rejuvenation of airport facilities and the general economy associated with them in the Northern Territory.

#### Gas-stripping Plant at Palmerston

Mr LEO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Last year, in the budget speech, the minister indicated that contracts would be signed within weeks for the establishment of a joint venture gas-stripping plant at Palmerston. I see no sign and have heard of no announcements by the minister that would indicate that that particular venture is being undertaken. I ask that he indicate what has happened.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Nhulunbuy for the question because, in all sincerity, it is probably one of the most potentially successful ventures that the Northern Territory has ever embarked on. Following the budget last year, we asked for written expressions of interest. Some of the projects that people wrote back to us about are at the high end of the scale - projects costing in the vicinity of \$476m. I see the Leader of the Opposition shaking his head. It will be a pleasure to see him at the opening of this plant and I will remind him of the day that he sat in the Legislative Assembly and shook his head because he did not believe that it existed.

The member for Barkly laughs also, and I will remind him of that because I am confident that this project will proceed. The reason why I am so confident is very detailed, but I will try to keep it simple.

Mr Smith: Yes. Tell us.

Mr COULTER: You are about as much use to the Northern Territory as a wheel on a walking stick!

Mr Speaker, the facts are simple. The feed stocks that are required from the gas in some of the petrochemical industries is very complicated indeed, and it is very difficult to put projects of this magnitude together. We are talking of a project that is equal to the total value of the gas pipeline and the powerhouse combined. The member for Barkly would know just how difficult it was to put that deal together. If he has any doubt about the feasibility of this project, I will be happy to provide him with a briefing when we enter into detailed negotiations and heads of agreement on this project. I would like to see the look on his face at that time. I do not think I will see the smirk that he has on his face at the moment ...

Mr Tuxworth: I have never had any doubts about the project.

Mr COULTER: Very good. It is a smile of happiness now, Mr Speaker. I am happy that he has been able to clarify that.

Getting back to the head-shaking Leader of the Opposition, I would love to see him at the opening of this project. Detailed discussions took place in Alice Springs some 2 weeks ago with the operators and the joint venturers of the Palm Valley and the Amadeus Basin gasfields. The gas must be of a certain quality. Just 2 days ago, we spoke with the people from Aluswiss about the feasibility studies that they have embarked on in relation to the conversion of the Gove project to gas. They are back at the negotiating table. They have entered into a feasibility consultancy with a well-known English engineer ...

Mr Leo: They do not like their business being made public.

Mr COULTER: I am quite open about this. It is no secret that they have entered into this agreement to examine the feasibility of converting the power station at Nhulunbuy and the plant itself. Conversion of the plant itself would be a very complicated process.

At this stage, it would appear that, if only 2 of the 7 projects that we are currently analysing were to be successful, we would require \$250m of alterations to the gas pipeline because, apparently, it is not big enough to cater for these projects. That includes some \$60m for pumping stations and another line that would have to be built from Mataranka to Darwin. It would be necessary to loop the pipeline from Mataranka to Darwin. EEC, the proponents of that proposal, spoke to the previous Chief Minister on a number of occasions to push this particular project and to urge us to sign the agreement that I mentioned in the budget.

I do not want to pre-empt the Treasurer's budget speech, but I think there will be some mention of additional power stations. We have identified some 100 MW of electricity that could be produced from additional power stations to service the mining industry. It is a fact that the pipeline is proving to be too small and therefore we need to examine what will give the best advantage to the Northern Territory. We would like to undertake at least 2 of the big projects and, of course, this is the secret to bringing down electricity prices in the Northern Territory. For example, if we were to have the Gove project, we could reduce electricity from 12¢ a kilowatt hour, the dearest in Australia, to some 7¢ a kilowatt hour but, if we were to go ahead with some of the smaller projects, we would not have enough gas to undertake the bigger projects.

It is a matter of sitting down and seeing which will give the most benefit and the greatest commercial advantage to the Northern Territory. I therefore ask honourable members to be patient for the time being. The range of options that has been presented to us is being analysed in detail. There will be another meeting in Alice Springs in about 6 weeks time. In fact, the TMOG representative is in town for a meeting this evening. Things are really happening in the gas business which has the potential to be the greatest success story that the Northern Territory has ever witnessed. We will get there with a little bit of patience.

#### Housing Commission Accommodation at Palmerston

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In view of a statement made in the press last night that 500 houses in Palmerston are currently vacant, can he give a clear indication of what the situation is with Housing Commission accommodation at Palmerston?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, the member for Barkly made allegations on last night's 7.30 Report. He said: 'I think it was mentioned today that there are 500 empty houses at Palmerston. How much revenue do they bring the government? If that becomes 1000, it just gets worse and worse'. I was flabbergasted at the suggestion that there were 500 empty houses in Palmerston. I thought there might be some poetic licence involved and I immediately checked to find out what the facts were. The fact is that, of the 1508 Housing Commission dwellings in Palmerston, 61 dwellings were vacant as of last Friday. Those houses are not vacant because the Housing Commission does not have any tenants for them. They are vacant because their tenants have moved out, either because the house is undergoing maintenance work or because someone is about to move into it.

I would like all members to realise that there are waiting times for all classes of Housing Commission dwellings in Palmerston - that is, as soon as a dwelling becomes vacant, we have somebody ready to move in. People who have no knowledge of the actual situation perpetuate the myth that there are huge numbers of empty Housing Commission houses while people have to queue up to occupy them. The community needs to know that the member for Barkly's allegations on last night's 7.30 Report were totally incorrect. I do not think there would be 500 private residences in Palmerston, let alone 500 empty private residences.

Mr Coulter interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: The member for Palmerston could probably tell me how many private residences there are. I can certainly guarantee that there are not 500 empty private residences and there are certainly not 500 empty Housing Commission dwellings. We have waiting lists for every type of accommodation the commission operates in Palmerston. It is an example of the member for Barkly being so inaccurate that his statement bears no resemblance whatsoever to the facts.

#### Gas-stripping Plant

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Further to the the minister's answer regarding the gas pipeline and the gas-stripping plant, has he considered the possibility of locating the gas-stripping plant in Alice Springs, particularly in relation to the gas pipeline being now too small to cover all the projects which he has in mind?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that has certainly been an option. Another option is to locate it at Mataranka with a connection to Gove. Those options are being examined in conjunction with the Darwin proposal. As I said, it is a very technical matter. We are engaged in negotiations with pipeline operator CMPS Williams Brothers, Santos Magellan, TMOC, and AGL. All the players involved are working very hard to determine the best site. I might say, Mr Speaker, that the cost of \$250m for pipeline alterations is about the same as the cost of installing the pipeline in the first place. We are certainly doing all we can to minimise the cost of the modifications to the pipeline.

There are some strategic advantages in locating the gas-stripping plant in Darwin, in terms of the products which will be developed. For example, we are

looking at the production of ammonia for the Ranger Uranium Mine which uses about 13 000 t of ammonia per year.

Mr Collins: It could be transported to Darwin by tanker.

Mr COULTER: We could transport it on the train. That would be the answer. Perhaps some of these projects would make the railway more feasible. However, to answer the member for Sadadeen's question, all sites, including the Mataranka site, are being thoroughly investigated at the moment.

'Towards the 90s Volume 2'

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The Department of Education has recently released the discussion document 'Towards the 90s Volume 2'. What process of consultation led to the release of this document and will the community have an opportunity to comment on the suggestions it contains?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question in relation to a most important document for people in the Territory. There has been a lengthy process of consultation leading up to the presentation of this document to the community. I released it at the beginning of the second semester so that people would have plenty of opportunity to comment and we would not be accused of introducing the document into the school system just before the holiday period.

It is important to note that there has been a great deal of discussion in relation to the original document. The comments made by members of this Assembly and by members of the community have been taken into account in formulating Volume 2 of Towards the 90s. As a result, changes have been made, such as moving away from disincentives in relation to devolution, the suggestion that schools should pay for curriculum advisory services and the incentive funding by results. Those issues were raised by members of the Assembly and by members of the public as matters of concern. The government has taken account of those comments and has presented the 'Towards the 90s Volume 2' document that we have before us now. I will be tabling the document in the Assembly during the course of these sittings, together with the information papers that accompany it. I look forward to input from members. It is most important that they have input and any concerns that they raise in respect of any issue in that document will be welcomed. There are major issues which the public needs to be aware of and I would urge any member of the community who wishes to become involved in that discussion to obtain copies of the document 'Towards the 90s Volume 2'.

I understand that there is some concern by the Teachers Federation in relation to the matter of master teachers and also the concept of excellence in relation to external assessment. There is need for external validity and reliability of the results coming from our school system. I believe those issues can be debated and argued reasonably.

I hope that the Teachers Federation will take on board the way in which the Council of Government School Organisations is approaching this issue. It has set in place a plan which will enable parents from all of the schools which have councils to comment. There will be a timetable so that the full 8-week discussion and consultation period will be fully utilised. It is

important that plans are made to obtain the views of the membership of those particular groups, not simply a few in COGSO or a few in the Teachers Federation. We must have as much comment from the broad membership as possible.

Mr Speaker, I will be tabling the document. I look forward to comment. If members of the public wish to obtain copies, they should contact the Department of Education and copies will be made available. It is most important that people read the document and discuss it so that we know what people's views are when we come to determining government policy.

#### Project on Darwin Esplanade

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In his budget speech last year, he indicated that a \$25m twin-tower luxury accommodation and office block project on the Esplanade had been commenced and would be completed within 12 months. Can he confirm that one of the reasons why this project has not proceeded according to schedule is uncertainty over the impact of the Anderson proposal on the future of commercial development in Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will investigate that matter and provide the Leader of the Opposition with an answer during the course of these sittings.

#### Detoxification Unit at Royal Darwin Hospital

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Will he give an undertaking not to relocate the detoxification unit at the Royal Darwin Hospital slap-bang in the middle of the staff accommodation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Royal Darwin Hospital costs the people of the Northern Territory and Australia \$1m per week to run. I have given undertakings to this Legislative Assembly that, over a period, I will conduct a total review of all aspects of the management and provision of services at the Royal Darwin Hospital so that we are clear about our aims, provide the best possible service to the people of the Northern Territory and ensure that appropriate resources and staff are in place. It is also necessary that, at the same time, we find efficiencies in that service so that \$1m of Northern Territory funds can be utilised in the best possible way.

I gave an undertaking also that the ADT Unit would not be moved if it would cause grave discomfort or concern to people who live on campus at the Royal Darwin Hospital. During one of his infrequent visits to Darwin and in relation to one of the very few areas of the health portfolio in which he takes an interest because he thinks he can cause some sort of industrial action, the honourable member opposite went to a public meeting. That was after I had attended a previous public meeting held by the same people. He suggested to them that they take up a petition and deliver it to the local member, which of course is myself, and that they demand that I bring that petition to this Assembly. That is the way that he goes about his business.

I have certainly made available to him many briefings on various aspects of what is occurring in the Department of Health and Community Services but, of course, he has been busy running around doing other things and looking after his portfolio responsibilities. In fact, I have offered him a briefing on the AIDS situation in a few days time and I am led to believe that he intends to avail himself of that offer.

There has been a great deal of consultation on the various evaluations that I have been talking about and the possible movement of the ADT Unit, not 'slap-bang in the middle of the staff accommodation' at the Royal Darwin Hospital, but in fact on the entrance road to where the people reside on campus at the Royal Darwin Hospital. I have consulted all the people affected. It must be remembered also that we have to take some action regarding ward 5, the psychiatric ward in the Royal Darwin Hospital, and that is part of it. Every person who lives in the units near the psychiatric unit has been consulted and we will be taking further action in due course. At this stage, there is a high probability that the ADT Unit will be moving to the area recommended to me. The interests of the people who live in the residential area will be taken into account. Their privacy will be retained and, given that the Leader of the Opposition does not continue to stir them up, I am sure all those people will be happy with the situation.

Tourism Infrastructure Support

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Unlike previous budgets, there was nothing in the budget papers this year which indicated the ongoing government commitment in this financial year to support for Yulara and the Alice Springs and Darwin Sheratons. What amount of money has been set aside by the government this year for support of those projects?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I did not realise that the new format would cause the trouble for the opposition that it has. I noted that the Leader of the Opposition made great play in the media about the Northern Territory government supposedly hiding millions of dollars which were indicated in last year's budget papers but do not appear in this year's budget papers in relation to infrastructure support for Yulara and the 2 Sheratons. Rather than checking with Treasury and finding out the facts before going to the press, he shot his mouth off and caused a great deal of concern because, unfortunately, a few people do listen to him.

I refer him to detailed budget estimates. At page 79 of Budget Paper No 4 there is a figure of \$19.2m for tourism infrastructure support. At page 82, the description indicates that the sum is for tourism infrastructure developments at Yulara, Alice Springs and Darwin.

Mr Smith: I am asking for the breakdown.

Mr PERRON: Oh, the honourable member is now talking about a breakdown whereas, in last night's newspaper article, he alleged that the figures were hidden somewhere in the budget or presumably rubbed out so no one could ever find them. The figure for the total tourism infrastructure is there quite clearly. If the honourable member wants further details, he can ask for them. He does not have to ask for them through the front page of the newspaper, even though that is his option of course.

Trade Development Zone

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Following his assumption of responsibility for the Trade Development Zone, can he indicate whether he has examined the operations of the zone and the activities of its consultants with particular reference to Mr K.K. Yeung?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I can advise the House that I have examined the wealth of documentation relating to the activities of the Trade Development Zone and its consultants. I have examined extensive and detailed accounts of the time and expenditure incurred by consultants in the zone, in particular those of Mr K.K. Yeung. I am totally satisfied that the amounts paid in that regard are quite modest, and that the Territory has received excellent value from the performance of its consultants and of Mr K.K. Yeung in particular. In fact, from the accounts that I have examined, it is quite evident that Mr Yeung's commitment to his duties is such that he has incurred substantial time-and-cost losses through his activities on our behalf which have not been charged to the Territory government.



Mr Speaker, others in Australia and overseas obviously do not share the cynicism of the Leader of Opposition about the abilities and the value of Mr Yeung. Honourable members will be interested to learn that the governments of Queensland and Western Australia have sought the services and advice of Mr Yeung in their quest for Asian investment. I have with me a pamphlet which has been issued by the Technology, Industries and Development Authority of Western Australia. That government has asked Mr Yeung to circulate that document and to develop the Western Australian attitude towards business in the Asian region. That is a far cry from the approach of the Leader of the Opposition who has sought to downgrade and denigrate the status of Mr Yeung in Asia. That is a letter from the Western Australian government asking for Mr Yeung's support in the development of Western Australia's interests in Asia. That document is available to all honourable members if they wish to read it.

Mr Ede interjecting.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, it is like the drilling rig at Emily Creek. This fellow cannot help himself. He keeps on saying: 'Hit me in the face. Hit me in the face'.

Mr Ede: You got the wrong creek.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I will answer the honourable member for Stuart. His statement that the Aboriginal custodians had not given permission to drill Emily Creek was not recorded in Hansard because I chose to ignore him. I will acknowledge every interjection that he makes in order to ensure that it appears in Hansard so that historians can realise the stupidity of his interjections.

As recently as July this year, the Technology and Industry Development Authority of Western Australia wrote to Mr Yeung seeking his assistance in distributing and promoting a portfolio investment opportunity in Western Australian industry. It is obvious that the Leader of the Opposition does not share this understanding of Mr Yeung's worth. Only yesterday, I responded to yet another barrage of questions from him relating to the operation of the Trade Development Zone and Mr Yeung.

It was necessary for me also to write to the Leader of the Opposition on that matter. No doubt, he will not be pleased with the contents of the letter. In effect, I told him that I could not trust him with the information about the Trade Development Zone which was a commercially sensitive matter. I also told him that I was prepared to respond only to that part of his series of questions which I considered to be of a factual and non-subjective nature. I think it is necessary that I read the contents of that letter into Hansard:.

Dear Terry,

I refer to your written question No 61 and to the necessarily brief response on my part to several comments thereof. I must say that, if I had more faith in your ability to handle sensitive information, I may have been more cooperative and helpful in my response to the above-mentioned. It is quite evident, however, that the purpose of your questions goes beyond any constructive or genuine interest in the operation of the Trade Development Zone. On your track record to date, I am confident that you would be willing to prejudice sensitive commercial arrangements for short-term political gain and point-scoring.

The Trade Development Zone continues to have significant potential for the development of the Territory. An essential component of realising this potential is entering into commercial arrangements with participant companies. I will not jeopardise these arrangements by allowing each of our negotiating points to be turned into political footballs whose sole purpose is the political point-scoring of the opposition. The Territory simply cannot afford the luxury of indulging you in such matters.

Mr EDE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Minister for Mines and Energy is impugning the good name of the Leader of the Opposition. As he well knows, answers to question on notice are published and, therefore, there can be no question about the confidentiality or otherwise of any answers to any questions on notice.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I will continue:

When and if it becomes evident that the opposition is seeking to offer constructive criticism on the actions of the government, and able to understand the difference between sensitive and confidential information and public information, my position may be reviewed.

Unfortunately, this course of action is necessary given the dreadful track record of the Leader of the Opposition in matters relating to the Trade Development Zone. He has sought at every opportunity to sabotage the activities of the zone and to disrupt its orderly development. Honourable members will recall his disgraceful attacks on a fledgling Territory company and the role he played in creating difficult financial circumstances for that company. I regret that it has been necessary to treat with extreme distrust this approach from him for information on TDZ activities. However, he has nobody to blame but himself. I take this opportunity to inform honourable members that I have commissioned an independent study to review the marketing and promotional activities of the ...

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Unless I have read the minister's response incorrectly, he has informed the House that he will abuse question time in that he does not intend to answer pertinent questions asked by the opposition. I am prepared to be corrected. If the minister cares to respond to my point of order, that is fine. I hope he does. However, my understanding of his answer so far is that, as he has said to this House, he intends to abuse question time in the future when he considers that matters relating to financial arrangements in the Territory have been raised inappropriately and therefore should not be answered. I hope that he will respond to my point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. In fact, the minister is not required to supply an answer. However, I would ask the minister to relate his reply directly to the question.

Mr COULTER: Certainly, Mr Speaker. I was asked what arrangements I had entered into to review the incentives available from the Trade Development Zone. The purpose of this review is to ensure and reaffirm that the strategies and directions of the zone's marketing activities continue to provide maximum benefit for the Territory. This study will draw on our own experiences to date and those of similar authorities in states elsewhere.

The competition for Asian investment in Australia is fierce and it is growing with the establishment of new zones in Australia and overseas. The Territory started first and this study will ensure that we stay in front of the pack. I stress that the government will maintain a strong commitment to the Trade Development Zone. We are in it for the long haul and we will continue to support its progress as it moves towards its long-term goals. There have been some setbacks thus far and no doubt there will be more during the zone's development phase, but that will not deter us from our course.

Mr Speaker, can I draw honourable members attention to the Max Gillies style economist who appeared on the ABC 7.30 Report last night, Dr Nadarajah, a former economic adviser to Jon Isaacs, who canned ...

Mr Smith interjecting.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I hear an interjection and I will have this on the public record. The Leader of the Opposition said that my statement that Dr Nadarajah was an adviser to a former Leader of the Opposition, Jon Isaacs, is rubbish. Let him stand up and deny that in this House.

Mr Bell: Why don't you talk about it instead of screaming?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I have examined extensive and detailed accounts of time and expenditure from K.K. Yeung. Last night, we had a barrage of Max Gillies economics from a lecturer at the Darwin Institute of Technology. It is unfortunate that he chooses to put himself in that position because he does himself no good and, of course, he reflects on the institute that he represents.

Mr Ede: This is typical. You denigrate anybody who disagrees with you.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, a former adviser to Jon Isaacs has to be held in some esteem even by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. He was an economic adviser to your party. I had grave fears when the Treasurer brought down the budget yesterday. I thought the headlines would be: 'Water up 2¢ per kilolitre'. My fears were realised in the Max Gillies interpretation ...

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The minister was asked a question about the Trade Development Zone. He has ranged very broadly across the issue of the Trade Development Zone but he is now talking about and disparaging an academic at the Darwin Institute of Technology.

Mr Coulter: A former adviser to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SMITH: Sit down and shut up for a while.

Mr Coulter: I am sitting down.

Mr SMITH: Mr Speaker, he is also talking about water charges. Neither of those subjects have a direct relationship to the matter at hand.

Mr SPEAKER: There is a point of order. I ask the minister again to relate his reply directly to the question.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, yesterday the Leader of the Opposition shook his head about the petrochemical industry in the Northern Territory and the development that will occur there. He shook his head and said it would not happen. Mr Speaker, I will take him out to the Trade Development Zone in March next year and he can tell his story. He has only been there once and I think he was in the boot of a car at the time. I will take him out there in March next year and introduce him to the employees of the Trade Development Zone. He will have the opportunity to tell those 200 or 300 people why he thinks they should not be there.

#### Rebate for Off-Peak Electricity Use

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In view of the minister's expressed wish for an increase in the consumption of electricity throughout the community so that the general rates can be decreased in the future as promised repeatedly, would he consider increasing the rebate of 10% for off-peak use of electricity?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will consider it but I believe, as I stated in the House yesterday, that the real answer to the problem of electricity charges in the Northern Territory is gas flowing through the pipelines. That is the course that we have entered into and that we will embark on to reduce electricity charges in the Northern Territory. We need major utilisation of gas at the end of the pipeline.

Last evening, I met with representatives of AGL and TMOC, the operators of the Amadeus Basin field, and we discussed in detail the ways and means of doing that. We should not be penny-pinching in our approach; we really need the big projects. It is those projects that this government has embarked on, and we will put all our efforts into reducing electricity costs. I will be speaking more about that in my address to the Appropriation Bill today. The real answer is to attract the big utilisers in order to reduce electricity costs, and that is what this government is about.

#### Employment Statistics

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

On Tuesday, the Leader of the Opposition displayed a big sign relating to labor statistics on employment. Can the minister provide information confirming or denying the position outlined by the Leader of the Opposition?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to answer some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition. There it is over there and it is taken from the ABS statistics. There has been a great deal of talk about supposedly dwindling employment and population in the Northern Territory. The justification for all of the doom and gloom that has been spread about, mainly by the Leader of the Opposition and others on the opposition benches, is the figures that have come from the ABS. I am sick to death of the selective use of ABS figures, figures that indicate that there is something wrong, without reference to the very positive figures that are there as well. It is very selective and very misleading, and one of the major causes why those few people who are leaving the Territory are leaving, Mr Speaker.

The ABS is a very hard working group of people who produce some very handy statistics but the very small sampling makes it very difficult to arrive at reasonable population figures. Statistics for motor vehicle registrations and power connections etc are very clear but, when it comes to population and work force figures, it is very hard from a small sampling base to arrive at reasonable figures. From March 1987 to March 1988, the number of employed fell by 9600 according to the figures. Unemployment rose by 3200, leaving 6400 people in limbo or having departed. The ABS figures show that the population rose by 3200 in the same period, Mr Speaker. The population figure actually rose in that period yet other figures would tend to deny that. Assuming half of the additional 3200 people were over the age of 15, the rise in unemployment should have been those who lost their jobs - 9600 plus 1600 or 11 200 in total. In the same period, the number in receipt of social security benefits dropped by 1015.

The reverse applied in May and June 1988 where employment figures made a staggering recovery with an extra 4800 jobs since April according to the bureau's figures. We saw a similar rise last year between August and September from something like 7% to 13%. It stayed around 12% or 13% for a period and then dropped back down to 7.4%. It is around that figure now. That is a clear indication that that is a sampling problem. 3000 people have come from the unemployed numbers, leaving 1700 workers coming from out of limbo or from interstate. However, the figures show a decrease in the population over the age of 15 from 106 900 to 105 800. The ABS says the wage and salary earners figure differs from the number employed because they exclude self-employed and a number of other categories in the break down to individual industries. Again, the more the figures are analysed, the harder it is to believe them.

As we know, the construction industry has had its troubles but, according to the figures, it has supposedly gained 1400 people in 12 months. Between December 1987 and January 1988, the wettest and slowest months, the industry went from 3100 to 4600 workers. Manufacturing has picked up 600 jobs and that is probably believable. Finance and property, which members opposite tell us are in a trough, picked up 100 people in the 12 months to March 1988 according to the ABS figures. The big losers are shown as community services which affects both the private and public sectors. These services are down by 4500 jobs and the wholesale and retail trade is down 2500. A closer look at the bureau's breakdown shows that all jobs lost in the community services were in the welfare and miscellaneous services area. 6100 of the 10 500 positions filled in March 1987 have gone in 12 months. The 4500 figure comes after gains in other areas. Quite clearly, that is unrealistic. Because this sort of drop would have a traumatic impact in any community, let alone one as small as the Territory, the ABS admits there must be some doubt about them.

Similarly, the ABS figures show that the wholesale and retail trade lost 2100 positions in a single month, from December 1987 to January 1988. While there is a bit of a fall-off in trade after Christmas, 2100 workers represents 20% of the industry. What is clear is that, as the huge government input in the early years of self-government winds back, we are getting more realistic levels. Population growth has slowed down accordingly. Some people are leaving, as they have always done. At various times of the year, we have lost people from the Territory. Despite the ABS figures, the MBA claims there have been more departures in the construction industry than is usual. But the ABS figures say we are up. This is more than balanced by new arrivals.

There are a number of vacant, established houses in Darwin, and we are all aware of them. We know that the RAAF, for instance, has 400 houses in Darwin.

Most of its people have gone and not necessarily to Katherine. They have gone interstate, and new people have come into Katherine. Those personnel have been replaced in Katherine. The honourable member should look at the new houses occupied on the airforce base and around Katherine East. Those houses have been vacated in Darwin, and I am a victim of that, and they have been taken up in Katherine.

I can prove this because, looking at the ABS figures, the number of domestic power connections has increased by 8% in 12 months. Where a house is unoccupied and power is disconnected, that counts as minus one. However, after taking into account the disconnections, connections have increased by 8%. Private telephone connections increased by 198, minus 0.69% between June and December. These have increased by 535 between December 1987 and June 1988. Business telephones increased by 1120 and 784 in the same periods. Unless people are obtaining 2 or more power connections to their homes, how should we account for that? Unless they are getting multiple telephone connections, how do we account for that? If the figures are wrong, so are the theories.

It is quite clear that, by selectively taking figures out of the ABS reports, we end up with the doom and gloom that the members opposite try to spread around the Territory in an endeavour to cause trouble for this government. That is all they are doing. I cannot fix the difficulties that the ABS has with its figures. It uses a very small sampling base in a very small population. The government does have positive plans for improving employment opportunities which I will be indicating today in my response to the Treasurer's second-reading speech on the budget.

Doctor in Groote Eylandt Region

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Is he aware that the Groote Eylandt region has only 1 doctor to service a population of some 3000 people and that a patient may have to wait for up to 2 weeks before being seen by a doctor? What is he doing to eliminate this problem?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. To put it into perspective, there are 60 000 people in New South Wales and 40 000 people in Victoria who have to wait up to 3 years for services in the health area. It is a fact that there is only 1 departmental doctor at Alyangula. I believe there is room for another doctor in the area to service Alyangula, Angurugu, Umbakumba and Numbulwar as well. As I have said before, the best option is to get general practitioners interested in taking up these services throughout the Territory because the Northern Territory government cannot possibly continue to provide doctors on wages to provide health services throughout the Northern Territory. If that is the case, of course, the magical Medicare provisions are not available to us and the Northern Territory taxpayer has to pay directly for what should be paid for through the national Medicare system.

Some 2700 people live at Groote Eylandt, according to the 1986 census. Emergencies are dealt with immediately. There is no doubt about that, and I have had no criticism in relation to that. These are handled by the doctor or the patient is immediately flown to Nhulunbuy. The waiting time on non-urgent matters is about 1 week to 10 days. A proposal has been made to the Angurugu Community Government Council for joint funding of a doctor. In fact, I

offered some \$30 000 to share the burden of providing a doctor at Angurugu. To date, its response has not arrived at my desk.

I also expect that Gemco should pay something towards the provision of an extra doctor there. Those negotiations are proceeding. However, I must say sadly that it does not seem to be showing a great deal of enthusiasm. We will continue to provide the existing service and we will be doing everything possible to encourage a general practitioner to go to that community.

#### Tourist Numbers

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for TOURISM

I remind him of allegations in the media over some 2 or 3 months about a significant downturn in respect of tourist numbers in the Northern Territory and I refer him to pages 19-22 of Budget Paper No 6 which seem to contradict this. Would he advise on the current state of the tourism industry in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Nightcliff for his question. It is gratifying to have the opportunity to talk about the current state of the tourist industry, particularly in light of the Leader of the Opposition's claim on the radio the other day about doom and gloom and a press release issued last July by the member for Stuart relating to problems in the Northern Territory tourist industry. If my memory is correct, when an unusually inquisitive journalist asked the member for Stuart where he got his facts, he said something to the effect that he had been walking around the streets of Alice Springs and there did not seem to be as many tourists around. It was almost embarrassing.

Mr Ede: I got 20 phone calls afterwards from businessmen telling me that I was exactly right.

Mr POOLE: Oh, yes. Unlike the Deputy Leader for the Opposition, who seems to take great joy in scaring people in industry, we took the trouble of recording many comments from almost everybody in major segments of the tourist industry in the Northern Territory. Almost every operator reported that his figures are as good as last year, if not slightly better. All people in the tourist industry acknowledged that there was a slow start to the season. However, they are quite confident that we will finish with the 10% to 15% increase that we have had for a number of years. It is a fact that the morale of staff in the government tourist bureaus interstate is affected when leading figures in the opposition claim that things are not going well.

I will remember the days in the government tourist bureaus in 1982 and 1983. When a bureau achieved \$1m worth of sales, the staff wanted to go out and have a party. Those sorts of figures are now the norm. This financial year, the bureaus wrote 23% more business than they wrote last year. The Adelaide bureau, for example, wrote \$2.67m in sales. In the early 1980s, the Alice Springs bureau and the Darwin bureau were lucky if they wrote over \$200 000-worth of sales a year. This year, the Alice Springs bureau wrote \$1.8m worth of business and Darwin wrote \$2.3m. The Brisbane bureau, one of the smallest bureaus in our network, wrote \$1.3m worth of business. The Perth bureau, one of our newer bureaus, nearly achieved its first \$1m - \$980 000-worth of business. The Sydney bureau wrote just under \$2m worth of business. Those people should be congratulated, not denigrated for their performance.

There have been accusations for months about directionless, leaderless government. That is quite interesting because private enterprise certainly does not think that if you look at the number of tour operators who have commenced operation: 57 new companies and tours have commenced operation since 1987. Look at the additional accommodation stock that exists in the Northern Territory. Since January 1987, there are 16% more hotels, motels, guest houses and holiday apartment rooms in Darwin alone and a 15% increase in the Darwin area in caravan park sites. In Katherine, in hotels and motels and holiday apartment rooms, there is an 11% increase and a 26% increase in caravan sites. In Tennant Creek, in hotels, motels and guest houses and holiday apartment rooms, there is an increase of 15% and an increase of 29% in caravan park sites. In Alice Springs, for hotels, motels, guest houses and holiday apartment rooms, there is an increase of 7% and 10% increase in caravan sites. In Yulara, for hotel, motel, guest house and holiday apartment rooms, there is an increase of 18%. In Kakadu, for hotel, motel, guest house and holiday apartment rooms, there is an increase of 45% and 118% for caravan park sites. That is not bad for an industry that is suffering a downturn, according to the opposition.

Even when looking at the ABS figures, which opposition members take great delight in flinging about, they miss the key to the whole matter. When talking about the March quarter for 1988, which is probably the worst quarter of any year for the tourist industry in the Northern Territory ...

Mr Smith: I was comparing March against March, Eric.

Mr POOLE: That is right, and the number of available rooms had increased by 11.8%. Guest arrivals were down by 2.3%. What a huge problem, Mr Speaker! The takings from accommodation, which did not receive a mention, were up by 14.3% and, more importantly, room nights, the key to the industry, were up by 4.5%. Thus, the 2.3% decrease over the March quarter was negligible.

We all acknowledge the difficulties that Expo has caused, but it certainly is not having a long-term effect for the industry in the Territory. Caravan park site occupancy for the March quarter was 17.4% compared with 23.2% in the 1987 quarter. They represent the very people whom the tourist industry believes would immediately be attracted to Expo. But the total caravan park capacity increased by 12.1% during this period, and I think that, when the figures are released at the end of the year for the 1988 tourist season, we will have some very good news indeed.

In a casual, throwaway fashion, the opposition has talked about airline capacity and flights to and from the Northern Territory. Domestic capacity has increased by 5% into Darwin since January 1987. It has increased by 15% into Alice Springs and by 30% into Yulara. It is a real worry for the airline industry. Airlines are trying to find enough planes to offer the seats, and believe you me, Mr Speaker, despite what the gentlemen opposite think, airlines do not put aircraft on and fly them around with empty seats. International capacity into the Northern Territory has increased by 24% since January 1987, and it is expected - these are not my figures, but the industry's figures - to increase by a further 17% between November and April.

Mr Ede: What was the 23rd fact? I have just forgotten it.

Mr POOLE: It is quite unbelievable, Mr Speaker. Basically, all I am saying is that opposition members do not know what they are talking about when they talk about the tourist industry. If opposition members, apart from the Leader of the Opposition, had attended the Brojga Awards the other night, they



would have seen the confidence of the industry. They do themselves a great disservice because, in effect, they basically downplay the industry and, by preaching doom and gloom, they destroy the morale of the people involved in that industry. Of course, morale is one of the key ingredients to successful selling. I am very confident that the industry will continue, as always, to ignore the members opposite.

#### Berry Springs Zoo

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING and CONSERVATION

In the budget speech last year, and again yesterday, the Treasurer, to be consistent, indicated that the Berry Springs zoo would be open in December this year. Would the honourable minister confirm that the Berry Springs zoo will open for only 2 weeks in December this year, to ensure that it qualifies for a bicentennial grant, but that it will not open permanently until May 1989 and that a major reason for this delay has been the appointment of additional staff to the zoo?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, hopefully the zoo can open in December and stay open but that depends on the ability of the development to be concluded in time. Obviously, we will not open the zoo prematurely because we want to ensure that it is opened in the best way possible. I think we should be looking at what a marvellous piece of work it is. Over the last few years, a dedicated team of people has developed one of the best zoos in the world. It has been done by people who have had their heads down and their tails up and they have worked non-stop. They have been innovative and have spent a very small amount of money to create something that is worth 4 or 5 times that expenditure. That has been done with sweat and with honest toil. Hopefully, we can have the place open by December but, if it is not finished then, we will have to wait a little longer, perhaps until March or April.

Most certainly, as we did on one occasion previously, we would like to open the premises and let the community see the sort of work that is occurring there. I am extremely disappointed that the Leader of the Opposition is attempting to attack the government in some way with regard to the magnificent work that has been carried out on a development which will be recognised throughout the country as being one of the greatest zoos, not only in this country, but in this region and possibly in the world. I cannot speak too highly of what is occurring at Berry Springs. I am sure that, when the community has the opportunity to see what is being created there, they will realise that the nitpicking, ridiculous accusations the Leader of the Opposition is trying to make today flow from a figment of his imagination.

Again, he is trying to undermine the confidence, not only of the people involved in building the zoo - and again I cannot speak too highly of their efforts - but he is trying to undermine confidence in our community as to what is occurring at Berry Springs which is designed to attract visitors to this area of the Territory. Those visitors will need accommodation. They will need to spend money for food and for entertainment and that will create jobs for our children and for other people who want to come to the Territory because it is a great place to live. It is typical of the negative attitude of members opposite. The sooner the community realises that everything that opposition members say about any sort of development in the Territory is negative and unproductive and, most of the time, totally untrue, the better off we will be.

Mr Smith: If you had provided proper funds for it, you would not have a problem now.

Mr MANZIE: Yes, Mr Speaker. We hope to open the zoo in December. If that is not possible because of construction problems that arise from time to time, we will open it for a short time to allow people to see what is occurring. We will have the official opening when the project is fully completed. An abominable attitude is shown by the members opposite to development in the Territory.

#### Air-conditioning of Preschools

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Mr Speaker, I noticed in reading the budget papers tabled yesterday, under the heading of 'Education Funding, New Capital Works', that an amount of \$1.295m was allocated for the installation of air-conditioning in primary schools. In view of the numerous requests received from preschool parent associations for the air-conditioning of their preschools, can the minister advise if these funds will be used to satisfy their well-founded requests?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I know how the member for Jingili feels in relation to the preschool air-conditioning situation. The government has not changed its stand in relation to its air-conditioning policy. The amount included in the budget specifically refers to the need to air-condition primary schools. It is a matter of determining the priorities. We are committed to air-conditioning primary schools. I have also made it very clear, in responding to a question from the member for Jingili that, where there is an identified need to look at the conditions in the general learning area of preschools, the government will do so. If it is determined that air-conditioning is required, provision has been made in the budget for that to occur.

I make it very clear to honourable members, however, that government policy is not changing. We have made it clear that, in new preschools, we will air-condition withdrawal areas. That is very important. I have also made it clear that there are queries about the health aspect of air-conditioning preschools, mainly because of the age of the children and their movement to and from classroom and outside areas which could create health problems.

It will be necessary to set guidelines for the assessment of preschool air-conditioning requirements. I would also like to make it very clear to the honourable member that, as he mentioned in yesterday's radio program, some parents do not see air-conditioning as a requirement in preschools. Those parents and their concerns have to be recognised. When guidelines are set, we will definitely be ensuring that consideration is given to the views of parents who do not feel that preschools should be air-conditioned. I have asked the department, in line with the standing policy, to investigate all Northern Territory schools with non-airconditioned classroom areas. The department will identify those with design difficulties which aggravate problems of heat build-up. These will be ranked according to the degree of the problems involved and their case for air-conditioning will be assessed by myself according to the policy and available funds. There is money in the budget to address the matter if the need is demonstrated, and I guess we will hear more from the member for Jingili as time goes by.

Sentences in Alice Springs Court

Mr COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

When can I expect an answer to a question I have had on notice since March relating to the sentencing by the Alice Springs Supreme Court of people convicted in slaying cases since the introduction of the Criminal Code? For the Attorney-General's information, the matters on which I requested information concerned the nature of the convictions, length of sentences and the actual time served in jail by persons convicted.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, if the question is on notice, obviously a reply is being prepared and will be forwarded. However, I would like to make one comment. The member for Sadadeen has made some rather strong and stupid accusations and allegations about the operation of the courts. I find it disappointing that attacks on judges and members of our judiciary and court systems are being made by uninformed members.

Mr Collins: I tried to get information but you will not give it to me.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, he does not understand the court system. He does not understand that the courts are not an arm of government. The judiciary is totally independent of government and any suggestion that the government should have any influence on the judiciary or the decisions that it makes is abhorrent. If they have a problem with the way the courts operate, I would urge honourable members not to attack the judiciary as the judiciary are not in a position to defend themselves, nor should they be.

I will certainly find out why it has taken so long to provide the information to the honourable member. I will ensure that the information is provided to him in writing. If he wants to ask me some specific questions, I could probably provide certain figures in relation to sentencing for murders or the numbers of people who have gone to trial in both Alice Springs and Darwin.

Funding for Private Schools

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Yesterday, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition inferred that the government was unwilling to offer assistance to St Phillip's College whilst at the same time being generous in its assistance to the proposed Darwin International Grammar School. Can the minister clarify the position in relation to government funding of both schools and can he further clarify the future of the proposed DIGS?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I was expecting a question from the member for Stuart as opposition spokesman on education because he indicated yesterday that he had some questions that he wanted to ask in relation to the Darwin International Grammar School and he made some outlandish remarks about our lack of assistance to St Phillip's College.

The government is very disappointed that the Darwin International Grammar School is facing difficulties. There is no question about that and there are many Territorians who are disappointed that the project is in difficulty. Tremendous benefits would flow from it, not only for people in the immediate area of the school, but right throughout the Territory. In addition, it is a \$30m construction project. It will offer a choice in educational opportunities. One of the first concerns of people who are considering moving to a place is the education that will be offered to their children. DIGS is a very important part of that and it is about time the opposition started to acknowledge that the non-government sector has a very important role to play in education. About 18% of our education facilities in the Territory are non-government as compared to 25% in the other states.

The member for Stuart knocked the Kormilda proposal - a proposal which will provide opportunities for Aboriginal children, overseas children and local children, and give people in the bush an opportunity to obtain their education in the Northern Territory. All we have from members of the opposition is a completely negative attitude and they should be condemned for it. We are looking ...

Mr Ede: Overseas students at Kormilda?

Mr Dondas: Wankers.

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

Mr DONDAS: I withdraw it unreservedly, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I would suggest that the member for MacDonnell, if he wishes to pay attention to the answer being given by the minister, should dispose of his newspaper and cease his interjections.

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, the government is interested in providing educational opportunities for all Northern Territory students and they should be able to receive their education in the Northern Territory. It was interesting last night that the member for Stuart complained about our jumping in and helping DIGS whilst, on the other hand, he complained that we had been tardy in our response in respect of St Phillip's College. What a load of nonsense that is! We have been helping the non-government schools for years - St Phillip's College, the Marrara Christian School, the Catholic education system.

St Phillip's College received the normal support that we give to others in respect of interest subsidy, capital repayments and per capita funding. In fact, I wrote to Jan Heaslip, the Chairman of St Phillip's College, on 12 May saying that we would be giving them 10% on the college's loan of \$1.25m over 10 years as well as a 50% capital repayment for the \$853 400 costs of the boarding facilities that they were building. We will continue to support St Phillip's College. We have also given a special boarding subsidy. The opposition spokesman on education should know these things. I query whether he has done his research on this matter. We have also given a number of one-off special grants in relation to outstanding repairs and maintenance. We are looking at other ways in which we can help St Phillip's College play a very important role in our education system. To say that we are not supporting it is absolute nonsense. We will continue to support the Isolated Children and Parents Association.

There are so many benefits that can result from DIGS going ahead. It is disappointing that, at this stage, difficulties are being experienced. The government does not, however, in any way step back from its commitment to assist the Darwin International Grammar School. I recall the nonsense and the lies which were aired in relation to the government's decision to assist the school. We were supposed to be taking money out of the education budget and disadvantaging public education. What a load of nonsense! We were taking steps to advantage the education system, to save money in the long term and to give people opportunities. The opposition education spokesman divided the total cost of the project by the number of students to be enrolled and came up with a ridiculous figure of a government subsidy of \$22 000 a head. What a load of nonsense!

I hope that the people who are endeavouring to bring the project together are successful. A number of options are being looked at. There is a meeting tonight of which honourable members would be aware, in relation to a particular proposal which is being put forward. I reiterate the government's line. We will continue to support the Darwin International Grammar School. I make it very clear that no government money has gone into the Darwin International Grammar School. Despite the efforts of the opposition to infer otherwise, we have maintained all along that, until the Darwin International Grammar School opens its doors, the government is not guaranteeing it in any way. It is not offering letters of comfort and no government money will be spent on it until the school is up and running. The offer, however, is still there.

We cannot afford to knock projects such as this. Such projects are very important to the whole education system in the Territory and it is about time the opposition spokesman on education looked at the positive aspects of such projects in providing opportunities for children in the Northern Territory. He should not simply knock it and say it will not work before it even gets off the ground. Let us try to get it off the ground! I wish the people involved in the project well. It will offer tremendous benefits to the people of the Northern Territory.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the Notice Paper. In doing so, Mr Speaker, can I remind honourable members of the sessional order adopted by the House that questions asked during question time or during the adjournment debate can be answered by the responsible minister during the period immediately following question time.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
Government Debt

Mr PERRON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I wish to respond to a couple of questions asked of me by the Leader of the Opposition. My response may help him in his contribution to debate this morning.

Yesterday, he asked me if the figure of \$1300m that I had used as total government loan debt included an amount of \$150m in statutory authority loan debts. The figure I used does not include that amount and neither it should. The Leader of the Opposition has made a mistake in his calculation of the Northern Territory debt. The figure he eventually reached was about \$2400m which included a figure of \$251m as semi-government loans on-lent to authorities. The fact is you cannot count those loans twice. The only debt is to the source from which the money was borrowed. The Northern Territory government borrows money and on-lends it to authorities like the Power and Water Authority and the Port Authority. They repay Treasury from their

revenue and Treasury then repays the bank which lent the funds or the group who invested in government bonds. It therefore cannot be counted twice as a Northern Territory debt. The Leader of the Opposition should be careful about such double-counting.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
Capital Works Expenditure

Mr PERRON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, another question raised by the Leader of the Opposition, probably with Treasury officers, related to the fact that capital works expenditure appeared to have been reduced from \$202m to \$177m. Those figures appear on table 5 at page 12 of Budget Paper No 3. The way to look at the global capital works program ...

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The information is obviously important and quite significant, but it is not being given in response to a question that I have asked, either in question time or the adjournment debate. Unfortunately, I think the Chief Minister will have to find some other way of delivering his information.

Mr PERRON: That is not a problem, Mr Speaker. I could have provided him with the information but, if he wants to pull a technicality on me, I will cease to answer his query.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
DNA Fingerprinting System

Mr PERRON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, the member for Koolpinyah asked yesterday whether the Northern Territory Police Force proposed to introduce a DNA fingerprinting system in the Northern Territory. I am advised by the police that DNA-profiling technology, which I guess is what the member is referring to, is presently unavailable in Australia. Forensic DNA-profiling is used for identification or elimination of suspects by examination of genetic material from blood or semen. The technology has been used on one occasion by the Northern Territory Police Force, via a laboratory in the United States. Three Australian states are preparing for the training of personnel and the establishment of specialised laboratory facilities. The technology is considered to be a major breakthrough in crime investigation and its introduction to the Northern Territory is presently being considered.

Moneys Owed for Services to Beaufort Hotel

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

On a number of occasions, the previous Treasurer stated that it would be a condition of sale of the Beaufort Hotel that moneys outstanding to the Northern Territory government would be paid. In fact, on 2 June last year, the previous Treasurer stated that the government would not reconnect services to the new owner until the debt to the Northern Territory was paid in full. The debt at that stage was over \$1m for electricity, \$76 000 for water and sewerage charges and \$250 000 in payroll tax. Now that the sale has been completed, has the Northern Territory government recovered the moneys owed to it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have the specific information before me. However, I understand that the settlement in relation to the sale of the Beaufort Hotel has not yet been finalised and that the amounts are still outstanding.

Capital Works Expenditure in Alice Springs

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer to a report in the Centralian Advocate last Friday. It quoted budget figures supplied by the opposition claiming that capital works spending in Alice Springs had been slashed by \$11.5m to \$20.7m this year. As the minister's department is responsible for overseeing the expenditure of a large proportion of the capital works budget, could he please advise the House on the level of capital works to be carried out in the Alice Springs area this financial year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would certainly be delighted to provide for members of this House, for the public generally and for those people who take a particular interest in question time, information concerning the realities of the capital works program in Alice Springs. Once again, it is unfortunate that there are not only people who deliberately misrepresent or misinterpret the facts but people who either are not able to add up themselves or misinterpret people who misinterpret people who misinterpret. Obviously, the Labor candidate for the electorate of Flynn in Alice Springs thought she could make some gains out of using the ALP's distortionate figures in regard to capital works ...

Mr Bell: There is no such word as 'distortionate', Fred.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the member for MacDonnell may like to take note of the details of the program for Alice Springs, which may be of benefit to some of his constituents.

As the member for Ludmilla stated, the capital works program is largely the responsibility of the Department of Transport and Works. In terms of the department's capital works program, it will inject a cash value of \$17.3m into the Alice Springs economy this year, a considerable increase on last year's figure of \$14.3m. That is what counts for businesses in Alice Springs - the cash flow into the local economy through construction projects and supplies for them.

Last year, despite cuts in the roads program across the board, roads expenditure in Alice Springs was maintained. In fact, Alice Springs has received favoured treatment from the CLP government, in contrast to the outrageous claims of the Labor candidate for Flynn that it has suffered because of what she calls the 'Berrimah-line syndrome'. Mr Speaker, this government has no concept of a Berrimah line. It has the interests of all Territorians at heart and is extremely fair and reasonable in the allocation of funds to all areas of the Northern Territory.

The Alice Springs region benefits from expenditure in a number of areas. \$4.3m has been allocated to power programs, including Aboriginal essential services, \$3m to the water program, \$6.8m to housing and at least \$0.6m to works being carried out by the Conservation Commission. The total of all the allocations that I have mentioned is \$32m.

Mr Ede: Not in Alice Springs.

Mr FINCH: Mr Speaker, the insanity of the members opposite! Who will build those projects out in the bush in the Alice Springs region? Predominantly, it will be Alice Springs people who are used to the conditions down there.

Next Monday night, when I am in Alice Springs and I have the opportunity to talk to people who are capable of rational and analytical assessment of what this program is all about, they will have the opportunity to hear what this government is doing for their region. They will appreciate that, in effect, our program has increased, not decreased. The Labor candidate for Flynn is claiming - and I use quotations attributed to her and I guess they have originated from the Leader of the Opposition who has difficulty with simple arithmetic - 2 years ago, \$56.7m was the total allocation for capital works in the Alice Springs area. In fact, it was less than that, Mr Speaker, but that is a deliberate misuse or total lack of understanding of what the figures mean. It is claimed that, in 1987-88, the figure was \$32.3m. That at least is in the right ball park but it is claimed that the figure this year will be \$20.7m. As I have just outlined, Transport and Works alone accounts for \$17m. The total of the few items that I mentioned - and that is not a comprehensive list - is \$30m. Proportionately, that represents a fairer share, if you like, of the capital works program for Alice Springs.

Mr Speaker, because you are from the region, I am sure that you appreciate that this government's commitment to road programs in that area, to facilities in Aboriginal communities and to the construction of public buildings, has been more than reasonable over the years, and I think that is appropriate. The region down there is developing. I mentioned some of those figures to highlight the total incompetence of the members opposite in simple arithmetic. I despair. I did suggest, perhaps a little tongue in cheek, that the Minister for Education ought to introduce additional adult education classes on simple arithmetic and I would be pleased to help sponsor some students from the opposite side of the House.

In addition to that capital works program, it is important to look at effectiveness. The program last year was in the order of what it is this year, in total terms. Certainly, there has not been a dramatic chop from \$30m-odd to \$20m as has been alleged.

Mr Smith: Why are you hiding these things?



Mr FINCH: I am not hiding anything. What it did include was \$9m for equipment for the power station at Alice Springs - a fine project. But, whilst it did illustrate a commitment to Alice Springs, its effect on the local community is obviously minimal. The effect of this year's budget is far superior to what the figures show.

In addition, the repairs and maintenance program for Alice Springs through the Department of Transport and Works is worth some \$8.1m. I am not sure what the repair and maintenance programs of other authorities are worth. I mention that specifically because it is what those small businesses - the electricians, the 2 or 3-man-band people - survive on. That is their bread and butter, and I have mentioned it particularly because Alice Springs' share of the repairs and maintenance program is \$8.1m out of \$32.6m which is not at all an unfair proportion. I will leave it for the next half hour for the member for Stuart to work out what percentage that is, but undoubtedly he will come up with a figure ...

Mr Ede: Percentage run down.

Mr FINCH: Just to demonstrate his ignorance there, he would be well aware that the total repairs and maintenance program has increased by some \$2m-odd to \$32.6m total. Alice Spring's share went from \$7.2m to \$8.1m, \$0.9m out of \$2.3m or whatever the exact figure was. Certainly, a greater increase, by proportion, than for the rest of the Territory.

That is a clear demonstration of the commitment of the Northern Territory government, the CLP government, and one would hope that we will continue with CLP representation rather than have people in this House who cannot add up. That way, we will be able to get on with the development of this Territory in a fair and equitable way. We have no concept of a Berrimah line, and I despise people who are counterproductive and negative in their input to this debate.

#### Moneys Owed for Services to Beaufort Hotel

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

Is it still the intention of the Northern Territory government, as announced by the Treasurer last year, to reclaim the moneys owing to it by the people, who I think are the previous operators of the Beaufort Hotel, in respect of electricity, water and sewerage charges and payroll tax, and is it the intention to reclaim that money before the final approval is put in place for the new owners to take over?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can confirm to the Leader of the Opposition that it is still the government's firm intention to recover moneys outstanding for charges and taxes owing to the Northern Territory government as a result of the past financial difficulties of the Beaufort Hotel. The understanding is a very clear one between ourselves and the current owners of the hotel. I can inform the Leader of the Opposition that the electricity accounts are being paid now from time to time. There is an outstanding amount up to a certain period. I do not know what the figure is, but the payments have been resumed ...

Mr Smith: But \$1m is still owing.

Mr PERRON: Are you asking me or telling me?

Mr Smith: Both.

Mr PERRON: Mr Speaker, it seems that the honourable member has the information he requires on this matter. I do not know why he has asked me the question. However, at no stage has the Territory government moved from its position that debts outstanding to the Territory will be recovered on change of ownership of the hotel.

#### Review of Regulations for School Councils

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

He has been engaged in a review of the amended regulations governing the operation of school councils in the Northern Territory. Can he indicate what progress has been made, whether changes are likely and, if so, when those changes will be implemented?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. When I initiated the review of school council regulations, I did not realise the extent of the task that I had taken on board. To date, I have spoken with the majority of school councils' representatives. I have spoken with 50 school council representatives and principals. There remain 5 councils that I have to speak with and it is my intention to ensure that I speak with those people prior to making any final decision in relation to the school council regulations.

Before deciding to take that course of action, I checked to make sure that no schools were experiencing hardship at present. No Annual General Meetings were due to take place and no penalties or disadvantages have been imposed on schools at this time. I wanted to make sure that I spoke with all the council representatives face to face. It has been an interesting exercise and some changes will be made. I want to ensure that the regulations will be made and put in place in a responsible manner and, as soon as I have spoken with those remaining councils, I will be making a decision on this issue.

I reiterate that the government was not seeking to deprive parents of the opportunity to attend school council meetings. Indeed, the previous Minister for Education made the following statement: 'I want parents, and the broader community, to be representatives on school councils, and that needs to happen if school councils are going to enter into the process of full devolution'. It appears that the issue of the devolution of powers created the problems that we have today. That matter is being addressed and I will be speaking to the remaining 5 councils in the very near future during the course of my trips throughout the Territory because some of those areas are away from the main centres. The Borroloola School Council, for example, is one that I have not yet spoken with. Following discussion with those 5 councils, I will be making a decision.

#### Psychiatric Services in Central Australia

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

This is a further question in respect of the litany of the government's broken election promises from last year. In its lead up to the 1987 Northern Territory elections, the honourable minister will recall his government's promise, inter alia, that it would 'set up an assessment team in Alice Springs

to assess the psychiatrically-ill and intellectually-disabled persons who were behaviourally disturbed'. The team was to comprise 'a psychiatrist, a psychologist, social workers and support staff and it would help set up community-based psychiatric services in central Australia'. Can he explain to this House why his government has failed to deliver?

ANSWER

Dear oh dear, it looks as though I have stirred him into a bit of action.

Mr BELL: It is of concern to the people of Alice Springs and the voters in Flynn.

Mr DALE: Last week, Mr Speaker, I clearly indicated the lack of attention of the honourable member to his shadow portfolio responsibilities and urged the Leader of the Opposition to do something about it by giving the very important shadow responsibility for health and community services to the member for Arnhem who was doing a fantastic job in that particular area previously. There is no doubt that the shadow spokesman could be termed only as lazy in relation to his responsibilities. He spends most of his time ...

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Minister for Health and Community Services has ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BELL: ... become fairly broad in his answer to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Order! When I call the honourable member to order, I expect him to resume his seat. There is a point of order. Honourable members must not cast aspersions on other members and I ask the minister to withdraw that comment.

Mr DALE: I withdraw unreservedly, Mr Speaker.

I certainly did call on the honourable member to put a little more endeavour into his portfolio responsibilities in that I had to ask some backbenchers to put questions to me in relation to my portfolio. I am still waiting for him to ask me one on the problem with meningococcal meningitis in central Australia. I have an answer here that I am really keen to give but, unfortunately, the honourable member has not got across the situation yet. He has been busy trying to stir up industrial disputation at the Royal Darwin Hospital.

All of the promises made in respect of my area of responsibility at this time last year have been fulfilled. Indeed, they have been fulfilled on budget. I am very proud of the efforts of the people within my department. I will be making my statement in relation to the Appropriation Bill today. I am sure that the honourable member opposite, all the people of Alice Springs and, for that matter, all the people throughout the Northern Territory will understand that this Northern Territory government cares for each and every person in the Northern Territory.

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Standing orders demand that an answer be relevant to the question. Not once in that answer did we get from the honourable minister any reference to his election promise in relation to assessment teams or facilities or psychiatric services. It was outrageous.

Mr DALE: In speaking to the point of order, it is fairly obvious that the honourable member does not even recall what he asked. He was referring specifically to the breaking of promises by, in particular myself, during the past 12 months. My answer was absolutely relevant.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Date Industry in Central Australia

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

What plans, if any, does the government have to help further develop the fledgling date industry in central Australia?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, for some time now my department has been undertaking a good deal of work in relation to the fledgling date industry. Indeed, when I was in Alice Springs a few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of visiting some date growers to see the work that is being undertaken and to meet with various people who have an interest in the industry. Some varieties of dates have been shown to have potential for commercial development in central Australia and the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries has identified an area at Deep Well, south of Alice Springs, which is believed to be suitable for commercial date production. Soil and water investigations in the area indicate that commercial date production might well be viable there. Some tissue-culture plantlets have been imported into the Northern Territory and the department's input into the industry is assisting it to develop.

It is worth noting that an officer of the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries has recently won a Churchill scholarship - I believe it is the only such scholarship awarded in the Northern Territory this year - to enable him to travel overseas to undertake research in relation to the propagation of dates in the Northern Territory. I am sure that the efforts of that officer will provide a great deal of background information which will be of great interest and value to this fledgling industry.

The department recently imported 10 Zahadi, 10 Khadrany and 30 other tissue-cultured palms from France. These are in quarantine in Darwin. Arrangements are also being made through Dr Carpenter to import 40 offshoots of known commercial date varieties from California during 1988 and a further 60 offshoots during 1989-90 as they become available. These offshoots are for the establishment of a germ-plasm collection/multiplication block at the Arid Zone Research Institute in Alice Springs. Negotiations are being conducted with the Australian Quarantine Service to use a site, possibly near Katherine, as an open quarantine area for the importation of approximately 1000 date offshoots. The reason for choosing Katherine as a possible site for such a quarantine service is to ensure that any diseases that may be introduced in the plants are not transmitted and that other date species are not in close proximity. This would minimise the spread of any disease.

I can assure the member for Sadadeen that the department has a great interest in the possibilities of the date industry. I certainly share that interest, having seen the work undertaken so far in Alice Springs. I will be pleased to keep him informed as further developments occur.

Traffic Problems in Nightcliff

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer him to the Nightcliff traffic planning study conducted in 1984 and 1985 and subsequent extensive community consultation over a period of some 2 years, particularly in relation to Progress Drive and the Nightcliff shopping centre area, and the method now supported by the community, the government and the Darwin City Council to solve traffic problems in the area. What action is now being taken to implement solutions to overcome the long-standing, unsatisfactory and unsafe traffic situation in that area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, clearly the member for Nightcliff's interest in this subject dates back to his early days in this House. Obviously, he has participated in the appropriate planning studies undertaken over the last 4 years. The traffic congestion that prevails in the Nightcliff shopping centre area, particularly along Progress Drive and at the intersection of Dick Ward Drive, is quite obvious, both during working hours and on weekends.

In addition to the traffic study undertaken by the Department of Transport and Works in 1984, a number of inputs have come from the community generally and from the Darwin City Council. In fact, the member for Nightcliff called a series of public meetings earlier this year to ensure that the public were satisfied with the proposals that were being put forward. These include a roundabout at the intersection of Dick Ward Drive and Progress Drive, and a number of other appropriate measures in the vicinity of the shopping centre itself.

The Northern Territory government is contributing \$150 000 to these works. I understand that it was transferred to the Darwin City Council in late July and I have been advised that the council's target date for tenders is September this year. I would assume, therefore, that works will be completed by the end of the year and, one would hope, by the time school holidays commence.

Another important part of the study related to what is referred to as the Nightcliff bypass road, now included in the budget. The purpose of that road is to eliminate through-traffic from the area of the Nightcliff shopping centre. The intention is to reroute commuter traffic and not to detract in any way from the commercial viability of the shopping centre. That \$1.2m project is planned for this current year. There are a number of difficulties in relation to the finalisation of the route, but it will be somewhere behind the site of the old Nightcliff drive-in. A number of sacred sites have been identified in the area and we are working with the Kulaluk people to ensure that the route that is selected finally is appropriate and will be acceptable to them.

We would expect that, having resolved all of those matters, survey and design will commence with a target for tenders being let in December, construction to commence in February and completion, we would assume, in about June or July next year. An allocation of some \$0.6m has been provided in this budget and, all going well, the project ought to be completed early in the next financial year. The member for Nightcliff's contribution in bringing the community and the technocrats together to find the most appropriate resolution is to be applauded.

Sacred Sites at Mount Samuel

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Has he received representations from the mining industry in relation to purported Aboriginal sacred sites at Mount Samuel near Tennant Creek and, if so, what is the nature of the concerns expressed by the industry?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Karama for his question. Indeed, some newspaper stories have been published regarding Mount Samuel and some industry response has been forthcoming in recent times. I can inform honourable members that, in recent weeks, my office has been deluged - as has the office of the Minister for Lands and Housing - with verbal and written comments about a proposal by the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority to register a 16 km<sup>2</sup> site in the Mount Samuel region.

A considerable body of documentation has already built up about this issue, and I must say that valid reasons for concern apparently do exist. The Mount Samuel issue is looking remarkably similar to an earlier controversy about claims of a sacred site at Coronation Hill. Indeed, the Coronation Hill issue has just been brought up to date by the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority itself, with the production of a video called, 'Bulajang Sickness Country'. I watched that video last week and, apart from the professional quality of the narration supplied by the ABC's Tony Walker, I noted its strong anti-mining and anti-development message. I presume the production of the film was requested by members of the Jawoyn community and I would certainly not presume that it was put together as some sort of good idea by the authority itself.

In effect, the video is a sequel to another produced by the authority a couple of years ago which purported to show that the Aboriginal people did not want mining at Coronation Hill, and that Coronation Hill itself was a sacred site of immense importance, even though all the available evidence placed the site somewhat distant from Coronation Hill. I have asked the Minister for Lands, Housing and Conservation, as the minister responsible for the authority, to seek necessary information about the video, and he has put this request to the authority. The information sought concerns the number of copies produced, the distribution list and the cost involved. It is also important to learn from the authority whether or not its board gave approval for the production of the video and whether the responsible minister was consulted before it was decided to proceed with the production.

The Mount Samuel issue raises concerns of similar magnitude to those which troubled this government at Coronation Hill. Without apparent warning, and despite every earlier indication that mining operations and potential projects did not contravene any sites of significance, the authority has announced that it intends registering a site known as the Marla Marla Kanitaji Site Complex, covering the Mount Samuel-Skipper Hill line of outcrop for a distance of approximately 8 km by 2 km. This area is highly prospective for gold, and at least 1 company working within the boundaries of the claimed site has been told by the authority to stop work immediately. Another company has had a granted mining tenement inside the claimed site since 1965.

The Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority has indicated its willingness to work with the companies on what it calls 'site clearance exercises'. It will do that for a fee, and quite a fat fee at that. In

correspondence to mining companies, the authority quotes the following schedule: anthropologist's fees at \$256 a day and Aboriginal custodian fees of \$75 a day, plus travel expenses at 55¢ per kilometre, plus incidentals including food. In all, the quote for the particular site clearance job has a bottom line of just under \$3500. That might give a clue to my curiosity about how the production of anti-mining videos is funded.

Perhaps, Mr Speaker, you are wondering why this site claim has emerged only now in one of the Territory's oldest mining regions. It seems that, in this case, there may be a demarcation dispute. Questions about possible sacred sites were first raised, not by the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority, but by a Tennant Creek-based project officer for the Central Land Council. In March this year, the officer wrote a none-too-subtle letter to a mining company active in the region warning that sacred sites might be standing in the way of the company's development plans. He went on to say that the company would be well advised to deal directly with the Central Land Council or else face considerable costs and delays. The officer pointed out that the Central Land Council was empowered to enter into a sacred sites protection agreement.

The company sent the letter to the Director of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority in May and he replied on the same day strongly cautioning against entering into any agreement with the Central Land Council. The director said that the power to identify sacred sites resided only with the authority and that Central Land Council staff would be technically committing an offence if they entered a sacred site. In short, the director noted any such agreement would be in conflict with the provisions of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act. The authority made it clear to the mining company that it objected strenuously to the Central Land Council muscling in on its territory. The authority has announced its intention to register some 16 km<sup>2</sup> of the region as a sacred site. Meanwhile, orderly mining development has been disrupted and development plans thrown into confusion.

I have also received some preliminary advice on sites of Aboriginal significance in the Mount Samuel region which appears to be somewhat in conflict with the advice from the authority. All in all, it is a disturbing situation and I believe the mining industry has just about run out of its store of patience in relation to matters concerning Aboriginal sacred sites in the Northern Territory. It may well be that the Territory government's tolerance is likewise being strained and it is my firm view that legislation governing the activities of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority deserves examination.

#### Development at Manton Dam

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Having read conflicting reports in the newspapers about the nature and extent of the government's proposed development at Manton Dam, whilst I would not dream of suggesting there was any argument between the Minister for Mines and Energy and the Minister for Tourism on this matter, could he indicate exactly what is planned for the development of the Manton Dam area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am speaking in my role as the minister responsible for the Power and Water Authority. As the honourable member would know, Manton Dam has been drained. The contractors are removing trees within the dam and the

dam is being cleared to provide a venue for power boating. A road will be made into Manton Dam, a car park will be provided and an area will be cleared of trees.

May I say there have been some tremendous stories about Manton Dam and what is in it. The number of bullets that have been collected in Manton Dam - I will not say, 'would fill a 44-gallon drum' because that got me into trouble once before in this Assembly - is considerable. We have been told that there are Spitfires in there. We were also told that, before the establishment of the crocodile farm, all problem crocodiles were put into Manton Dam. The people clearing the trees are in waders up to their waists and a person is standing by with a shotgun. In fact, one of the operators of a chain saw was concerned for his personal safety the other day because the man supposedly standing guard was more concerned about picking up bullets. He threatened the man's person with the chain saw if he did not keep his eye on potential crocodiles that might come in between the gumboots which he was wearing.

Our intention is quite simple: to provide a venue for power boating in the Northern Territory. However, in doing this, a number of other options have been put to the government. Some people have approached myself and the Minister for Tourism with proposals to open up the area as a tourist resort. These proposals are at a very preliminary stage but some people have realised the potential opportunities that could exist in that region. That is all I would like to say on that. There are no firm proposals before the government to build 5-star motels on the escarpment or indeed 3-star motels on the foreshore of the dam but people certainly have an interest in the area. There is another proposal to lift the wall of the dam by 1.5 m to try to provide a much bigger expanse of water in that region and then to interconnect Manton Dam to Darwin River Dam by way of a pipeline. That is also at a very preliminary stage.

Thus, we have 3 options. The first is to provide a venue for power boating. That is being carried out. The road is being built, trees are being removed, car parks are being built and a beached area will be created at the Batchelor end of the dam. Several people have approached the government indicating that they would like to build in that region. That is all that has happened at this stage. The other proposal is to lift the dam wall by 1.5 m and put a interconnecting pipeline across to Darwin River Dam. The only thing that I am praying for is an early and good wet season to ensure that Manton Dam fills. If you fly over it, you realise how much water has been drained out of Manton Dam. I am hoping for good rains to fill it and allow the people to enjoy speed boating which has been denied to them since the closure of Lake Bennett to such activities.

#### Water and Sewerage Services in Nightcliff

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In his capacity as minister responsible for the Power and Water Authority, I refer him to extensive representations that I have been making over some considerable time on behalf of the constituents of Nightcliff and Millner in respect of the need for upgrading of the water and sewerage services in that area as a consequence of substantial increases in population density over the last decade or more. Could he advise what progress has been made to provide a modern standard of water and sewerage services to those areas?



ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Nightcliff for his question. He is only matched by the member for Ludmilla in terms of his enthusiasm to have such issues resolved. I have outlined in the Assembly, on several occasions, the works that are currently proceeding in the Rapid Creek, Nightcliff and Fannie Bay areas at a cost of some \$1.65m: the reveal-and-seal technique employed to stop water ingress into sewerage lines. Indeed, there are many problems in those areas and work is proceeding.

There has been an ongoing program to upgrade the sewerage reticulation throughout Darwin. Contracts are currently progressing for stages 4, 5 and 6 in the Rapid Creek, Nightcliff and Fannie Bay areas. As I said, the cost is \$1.65m. Excellent results are being obtained from the reveal-and-seal method which uses a closed circuit television camera to reveal faults. Specially developed inflatable packers, in combination with a special liquid grout, then repair the sewer with minimum disturbance to customers. This method also reveals that a high proportion of house drains are faulty and replacement or repairs are carried out as work proceeds. The authority is now confident in this method of sewer main rehabilitation due to the success rate and it will continue to be used for the remainder of the program.

If I could be more specific in terms of contracts and their current status, the Darwin Rapid Creek sewer rehabilitation, stage 4A, is being carried out. It had an extended completion date at the time of this briefing to 7 July 1988. The work being carried out in that area was at a cost of \$210 797. The contract was awarded on 10 March 1988 and was running behind program because of the unexpected necessity to replace a larger number of sewer sections than was anticipated. The sewer rehabilitation, stage 6, in the Nightcliff area is at a cost of some \$502 000. The work on that is nearing completion. The contractor is currently running over time but he has claimed an extension of time which is being assessed. The new technology is picking up many faults of which we were not aware. I understand that many of the pipes had to be dug up because they were unable to be repaired by the new method.

Stage 5 of the rehabilitation work is at a cost of \$742 000. The major work is completed and it is awaiting arrival of special fittings in order to complete minor work outstanding. That has either been completed or will be very shortly. As the Chief Minister mentioned in his speech to the Appropriation Bill, a considerable amount of work is being carried out in that area. Indeed, I understand that the problems will be rectified before this wet season. I anticipate that the people of Rapid Creek, Nightcliff and Fannie Bay will be much happier with the results from the particular method that we are using.

Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I remind him that, during the last sittings, he advised the House that a review was to be conducted of the operation of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority but that it was delayed because the government departments were to be given an opportunity to comment. Has he received those comments from the departments and when will the report be tabled in this parliament?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I advised the House at the last sittings that I would table the report at these sittings. I have no reason to change my advice to the House.

#### Warumungu Land Claim

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the current position in relation to the Warumungu Land Claim and does he intend to discuss the issues with the Tennant Creek Town Council?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Northern Territory government has a duty and a responsibility to ensure that the legitimate interests of all its citizens are taken into account in inquiries by the Aboriginal Land Commissioner into Aboriginal land claims. The commissioner's recommendations in regard to the Warumungu Land Claim are now before the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Territory government has a further duty to ensure that issues of detriment arising from the commissioner's recommendations are properly addressed.

The impact of the recommendations on the economic and social development of Tennant Creek, together with the aspirations of the Warumungu people, are recognised in the Northern Territory government's attitude towards these matters. The Warumungu Land Claim was first lodged in November 1978. The inquiry involved 6450 pages of transcript, 313 exhibits and 142 witnesses, and culminated in a 430-page report. Officials of various departments of the Territory government are examining the commissioner's report to determine the appropriate course of action to resolve the matters of detriment. Northern Territory officials have met with the Tennant Creek Town Council and will meet with the town council together with the Central Land Council on about 20 September.

Mr Speaker, the list of matters to be resolved is a lengthy one. However, the principal items are these: to ensure that there is an adequate supply of water to Tennant Creek, both for the present and the future; to protect individual landholders from detriment that would flow from a grant of land; to ensure that there will be ongoing opportunities for employment in mining; to protect the pastoral industry by maintaining fencing in disease control areas; and to ensure that land around Tennant Creek will be available for future urban growth and for the recreation of the community.

The Department of Lands and Housing is well advanced with a structure plan for Tennant Creek, a planning document to which the Julalikari Council has made a major contribution. There is much unreasonable and ill-informed criticism of the Territory government's role in putting its submissions to the Aboriginal Land Commissioner. This criticism comes from those who would have us sit back and do nothing about the matters of detriment which I have outlined. The government has a duty to ensure that these essential public services are maintained and that all Territorians are treated fairly. At the end of the day, these matters will be decided on by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. It is to be hoped that the federal government will play a more constructive role in the resolution of issues arising out of the inquiry than it played in the inquiry itself.

Honourable members would no doubt have been quite alarmed at the recent news of a letter which was inadvertently delivered to my office. It was under the official letterhead of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and was signed by a private secretary to that minister. It was addressed to a senior private secretary of the federal Minister for Local Government in Parliament House. In that letter, one private secretary suggested to the other that it 'would be desirable to keep the Northern Territory government out of these negotiations ...'. The letter refers to the Warumungu Land Claim and to impending negotiations between the CLC and the Tennant Creek Town Council. The relevant paragraph reads:

It would be desirable to keep the Northern Territory government out of these negotiations as its intention appears to be to prolong any resolution and to seek to gain electoral benefits from racial division. The provision of assistance by the federal government to the town council would prevent the town council from having to look to the Northern Territory government for that assistance.

The letter indicates an appalling attitude on the part of some officers in federal ministerial offices towards the Northern Territory government which is totally unfounded and very wrong. For that reason, I wrote to the Prime Minister as soon as I received advice of this letter, seeking his assurance that its contents did not reflect the federal government's attitude towards the Northern Territory government in these matters and that the letter was prepared without his or his minister's knowledge or concurrence. I further sought his rejection of its contents because it is a fact that the Northern Territory government has a role and a responsibility to place before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner all matters of fact on which he might seek detail in order to test the claimants' case. Nobody else will go before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner to test the strength of claimants' cases and commissioners have on many occasions accepted the views put by counsel for the Northern Territory government in relation to alternative courses of action available to them in respect of land claims.

After the Aboriginal Land Commissioner makes a recommendation to the federal minister, we have a role in pointing out the ramifications of matters of detriment which might arise as a result of his granting land as recommended by the commissioner. As honourable members should be aware, the commissioner merely reports on matters of detriment. He makes no recommendations to the federal minister suggesting that portions of the claim not be granted because of matters of detriment. That is entirely a matter for the federal minister who rightly seeks the views of the Northern Territory government on these matters before determining them.

It should be of great concern to all honourable members that there are those in the federal government who would have the Northern Territory locked out of such negotiations on the basis that we are somehow interfering in these affairs - the affairs of the citizens of the Northern Territory, black and white. In trying to plan for the future of the Northern Territory in towns such as Tennant Creek and trying to ensure that there will be sufficient water supplies, land and opportunities for employment in that region, we are simply fulfilling our responsibilities to those citizens.

### Airport Funding

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

Is he aware that his statement this morning on Darwin Airport funding has made him a laughing-stock in Canberra as possibly Australia's only Treasurer who cannot read a budget and who expects to find a statutory authority's financial allocation contained in the Treasurer's budget statement? Secondly, is he also aware that, on the Darwin Airport redevelopment, he has been dubbed a sore winner?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is interesting that the honourable member has raised this question because perhaps he can enlighten the House a little further on it. This morning, in commenting on the federal budget, I expressed some concern about an item of great interest to Territorians - the future of airport terminals in Darwin and Alice Springs. Last night, during a budget briefing, I eagerly sought information on how much would be spent on the Darwin Airport this financial year and when it might be commenced. A week or so ago, we were advised that the federal government had decided to transfer both terminals to the Federal Airports Commission in preference to handing both across to the Northern Territory government, which we sought. Honourable members will be aware from statements previously made by the Minister for Transport and Works in the Territory that we were prepared to get on with the construction of the facilities almost immediately upon arrangements with the federal government being completed. We felt that we had the funding capacity in terms of loans to start immediately.

The information that I was able to gather last night was a confirmation that the FAC did see an airport terminal progressing in Darwin at a cost of \$65m. However, it did not say very much more than that about allocations as far as this financial year was concerned. My concern has been heightened in reading the answer to a question that was asked yesterday in the Senate by Senator Collins of Senator Evans about the airport project and when it might proceed. I will read a part of the answer that Senator Evans gave to Senator Collins. This is information given as late as yesterday:

The government has taken a decision, in principle, that the facilities should transfer to the FAC. Detailed arrangements for the transfer are currently being negotiated. It is expected that the transfer will take place by the end of October this year. The FAC has indicated that, upon the finalisation of mutually satisfactory financial arrangements which clearly are not in place for that transfer, it will immediately commence the planning of the redevelopment of civil aviation facilities in Darwin, including a new terminal.

Mr Speaker, I think that should be of grave concern to Territorians because we have been led to believe, because of the information given out over the last week or 2, that much-needed work on Northern Territory terminals would begin almost immediately. When an airport terminal has been designed and has had \$15m or \$18m spent on it, why is there any necessity to undertake some sort of re-evaluation of the proposal?

Mr Smith: Because the original proposal cost \$100m.

Mr Bell: How many budget proposals do you knock back, Marshall?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PERRON: Why is it unreasonable for Territorians to ask, in relation to such an important matter, when construction will be commenced and how much has been allocated in this financial year? All we are being told is that the matter is being put off and put off and that, in October or thereabouts, the FAC will begin planning for these facilities. We are talking about a very large facility and therefore, if funds are to be spent on it in this financial year, one would imagine that things will have to move pretty fast because half the financial year will be over in another couple of months while it is still undertaking planning.

This is a matter of great concern and interest to Territorians. We welcomed the news that the terminal was to be built. We did not say that the FAC would not receive our full cooperation in building the terminal facilities although it was obviously our preference that the Territory should build and run the facilities. All we are requesting is that reasonable information be given to Territorians and the construction industry in the Northern Territory so that we can prepare for this major project. The opposition tells us regularly that detailed budgetary information is very important to the community. People have a right to know what the government intends to do. It appears that we are being denied information about the Darwin and Alice Springs Airports because the information just is not there. The issue is the intention to commence construction during this financial year. If the Leader of the Opposition can point to a place in the budget where the figure is highlighted, I would be delighted to acknowledge it.

Mr Smith: It is not supposed to be in the budget.

#### Funding for Northern Territory University

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The Chief Minister expressed some concern on ABC radio this morning in relation to funding for the Northern Territory university. Is the Minister for Education able to advise the House whether he has any information regarding the funding levels that can be expected for the Northern Territory university next financial year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the situation of our university differs from that of other universities because ours is new. We are certainly looking very closely at the funding aspects of the Northern Territory university. Most members would be aware that, at this stage, no university in Australia actually knows exactly what it will receive. The budget figures are broad figures which relate to moneys which will be provided for higher education generally. The detail on what we will receive will be included in a schedule to the States Grants Act which will go before the federal parliament in October. Debate will be concluded on that in November. We will be looking very carefully at that and I hope all members take a great deal of interest in that schedule.

The situation at present is that we have established a formula with the federal minister in relation to the establishment of our university. We calculate that the bottom line - and I emphasise that it is a bottom line - is \$4m on the basis of students enrolled at present. However, there are many more aspects that need to be considered. It is a new university. There are establishment costs and those matters still have to be negotiated with the

federal minister. We will continue to push for full funding. We believe it is our right and I believe that members of the opposition will assist us in that regard. At some stage, we will receive full funding which is our right.

As far as the honourable member's question is concerned, the detail will be known in October when the schedule to the States Grants Act comes before parliament, and we will be commenting further at that time. We emphasise that the formula has been struck. We expect to receive \$4m on the basis of that formula but we also expect additional funding in relation to establishment costs and some other matters.

#### Warumungu Land Claim

Mr TUXWORTH to CHIEF MINISTER

He would probably be aware that, in handing down his report on the Warumungu Land Claim, Justice Maurice noted that he regarded the Central Land Council as a 'hidebound bureaucracy whose lack of sensitivity in matters dealing with land in the Tennant Creek area was of great concern'. The commissioner recommended that a separate land council be formed for the administration of the Warumungu land. Does the Chief Minister support the establishment of a separate land council for the administration of the Warumungu land now that it has been granted?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, to correct the last statement of the honourable member, the land has not actually been granted yet. However, it has been recommended by the commissioner to the federal minister that a land grant be made and I am sure that will occur in due course.

To answer the substance of his question, in this case the Northern Territory government believes that, in accordance with the commissioner's recommendations, an additional land council could be established to administer affairs on behalf of Aboriginals in the Tennant Creek region. Honourable members would be aware that the formation of the Tiwi Land Council has been a great success. It is a land council which administers a much smaller group of Aboriginals. No doubt such Aboriginals have much more common interests in an area than the Aboriginals who comprise the Northern Land Council and the Central Land Council. There has been considerable discussion over the years that Aboriginal groups in the Northern Territory should have bodies representing them that are far closer to them and represent their individual needs better. I am sure the land councils are aware of criticism that has been levelled at them from time to time in that regard. I am pleased to see the commissioner's recommendation that an additional land council should be established to look after this area and I think it is a principle which could be followed through in a number of other areas because other groups of Aboriginals in the Territory have sought from the federal minister that land councils be established to represent them in their areas.

#### Review of Darwin Town Plan

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer him to the current review of the Darwin Town Plan and to the Nightcliff/Rapid Creek study that was carried out in 1985 and 1986 and the wide-ranging community consultation that followed the release of the draft structure plan. Will he ensure that the views expressed by the Nightcliff and

Rapid Creek communities will be taken into account and that the recommendations of the community are taken into account and built into the new Darwin Town Plan?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as pointed out by the member for Nightcliff, the Darwin structure plan is presently on display. We are in the process of receiving final public submissions or expressions of interest regarding the directions and details of that plan. The member for Nightcliff also pointed out that there is a plan which specifically relates to the Nightcliff Rapid Creek area. The honourable member quite properly brought this plan to the attention of constituents in his electorate by displaying it publicly in Nightcliff. It attracted a great deal of community interest and, thanks to his efforts, a large number of residents of the Nightcliff and Rapid Creek area participated in the planning process regarding the future of their community. I believe that is indicative of the efforts of the government to ensure that the community is involved in all aspects of planning and all directions of government which affect their lives and their futures.

I can assure the member for Nightcliff that the views of residents of his electorate will most definitely be taken into account in respect of the final Darwin structure plan as it relates to his electorate. I again congratulate him and point out to other honourable members that planning matters do affect their constituents and, if they can bring such matters to the attention of their local communities and encourage input, the result will be urban planning which reflects the wishes and aspirations of Territorians.

#### Batchelor College

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Mr Speaker, I have worked with the minister to make Batchelor College an institution which will provide advanced education and university courses for Aboriginal people not only from the Territory but also from nearby states. Can he advise the House on any progress he has made in getting the college established as an autonomous college of advanced education so that it can receive full funding from the federal government and continue the development courses which are supported by all members of this House?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. There has been a move to establish Batchelor College as an Aboriginal tertiary education centre and, whilst the government does not have any general concern in relation to that, there are some major worries about Batchelor College losing its identity as a college which assists in the education of traditional Aboriginals and Aboriginals from remote areas. Batchelor College has performed a wonderful service for the Territory in that respect over a number of years and the Northern Territory government will ensure that it continues to look after the interests of traditional Aboriginals and Aboriginals from isolated communities. That is why I am presently assessing the situation.

Mr Ede: Is it going to be a rainbow philosophy?

Mr HARRIS: Mr Speaker, here we go again! I have indicated the government's concern to the honourable member, who should also be concerned. If urban Aboriginals start attending Batchelor College, the whole situation can change. It is sensitive and it must be looked at in a correct manner.

Mr Speaker, Batchelor College has provided a very positive program for traditional Aboriginals. That must be maintained and that is what we are trying to do. I am surprised at the way in which the member for Stuart, the opposition spokesman on education, continually knocks programs which help Aboriginal people.

Mr Ede: I am not doing that. Don't be ridiculous!

Mr HARRIS: I have no problem with traditional Aboriginals from outside our borders studying at Batchelor College.

The government is considering the issues at present. I am also pleased to note that, at long last, the federal government has recognised the fact that a great deal of good comes out of Batchelor College. I refer to the White Paper on higher education. I will quote from that:

One institution with an impressive record in tertiary education for Aboriginals is Batchelor College in the Northern Territory. This college has specialised in meeting the needs of traditional Aboriginals from remote areas and has attracted widespread support for its programs, particularly in teacher education. To date, however, development of higher education courses at the college has been constrained by the need to rely on annual funding allocations. The government will therefore move to place its funding on a more secure basis for the 1989-91 triennium.

Mr Speaker, I am very pleased to see that, at long last, the Associate Diploma of Teaching at Batchelor College is to be fully funded by the Commonwealth government. We have been fighting for 5 years to have that recognised and for funding to come from the federal government, and we are very pleased to see that this is happening. We are looking at expanding the courses that are available at Batchelor College in relation to health worker training, police aide training and Conservation Commission training. There are a number of other areas, and the Commonwealth government is also looking at funding associate diplomas in relation to some of those areas.

I emphasise again that the government has to look very carefully at protecting the integrity of Batchelor College. It is something precious to us in the Northern Territory, and we will not let it be ruined or destroyed by people coming in with ideas from outside. We are looking for ideas and views from FEPPI, from the Batchelor College Council and from members of the opposition. I am happy to hear the ideas and views of opposition members. I ask members of the opposition to give their views and we will take them on board.

Mr Ede: I have done that. I have been going to the federal government about funding.

Mr HARRIS: You have not done that at all.

It is very important, and I cannot emphasise it enough, that Batchelor College should continue to look after the interests of traditional Aboriginals and Aboriginals from remote areas. We will be pursuing that, and I will be talking further with people who have a direct interest in Batchelor College. We want to work together to ensure that it is able to provide the necessary teaching opportunities for Aboriginal people. I am pursuing that matter and will be making a statement about Batchelor College in due course.



Municipal Services in Alice Springs and Katherine

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

What action has been taken to ensure that services to residents included in the expanded Alice Springs and Katherine town boundaries reflect the level of rates that are paid?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that is a good question. As honourable members would know, the boundaries of both Alice Springs and Katherine have been extended during this year. Considerable concern has been expressed by rural residents with regard to the potential for fairly hefty rates to be imposed. Those of us who live in rural areas know that, generally, we do not require the level of services that are provided in suburbia. Prior to moving to have the boundaries of the Alice Springs and Katherine Town Councils extended, I sought from those councils their assurance that they would establish advisory committees in order to obtain the views of the people in those extended areas and to ensure that these were taken into account when rates were set. That course of action was agreed to, the advisory committees were established and, in fact, had very substantial input to the councils' thinking on rating for those extended areas.

I have foreshadowed the introduction of a bill to amend the Local Government Act during the course of these sittings. As a part of the amendments, we will seek to provide once again the flat rating option. That was one of the requirements of the rural residents. Certainly, the councils also sought to have that option made available to them again. When we amended the act in 1986, we thought that the flat rating option was still there but a recent court case in NSW indicates that it is not available to councils. We will seek to amend that. Negotiations are continuing with provider departments such as Transport and Works with regard to funding that they would normally have made available in those extended areas. The idea is to have those funds made available to councils so that they can carry out the work that would normally have been done by the government.

There was a fair amount of trauma in establishing the extent of the boundaries of both those towns, and I can understand that. Nobody likes to think that his way of life will be disrupted in any way and that he might have to pay for something that he did not have to pay for before. After speaking to councils and people in rural areas, it was quite obvious that nobody really minded paying if he received the service. The actions that we have taken to ensure that the rate will reflect the level of service will prove to be satisfactory to those people.

Letter to Editor of Panorama Magazine

Mr BELL to Mr SPEAKER

Mr Speaker, I gave notice to you earlier today that I had intended to ask you the following question. I refer you to your letter to the editor of Panorama magazine in relation to the article 'Sea of Stone' written but not edited by Penny Van Oosterzee that I discussed in last night's adjournment debate. How can you justify having written that letter as Speaker of this Assembly and not as the member for Braitling?

ANSWER

Honourable members, I do not believe that the question which has just been asked by the member for MacDonnell is an appropriate one to be asked of the Speaker during question time. I believe that I should reply from the Chair at question time only to questions which relate to my administrative responsibilities as Speaker. However, I have taken note of the question asked by the honourable member and will reply to him in writing as soon as possible.

Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Mr Speaker, in view of the heated public debate following recent search and rescue operations following maritime disasters such as those experienced by the cargo vessel Singa Sea and the yachts in the Bicentennial Round Australia Race, could he outline the Territory government's attitude to the carriage of EPIRBs, the emergency position indicating beacons by pleasure craft and commercial vessels?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, matters relating to sea rescue are often brought to our attention by the media. They seem to be headline grabbing and usually are associated not only with loss of life and trauma but are also often extremely expensive operations. What has been of concern to the federal government, and quite correctly so, is the high cost of mounting rescue and search operations. Sometimes the search to find lost boats has a very heavy impact on the public purse. State and territory governments are often involved in such exercises, and at great expense to their budgets.

At a recent Transport Ministers Conference, there was a proposal for an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon system - EPIRB. That system would involve the fitting of a small radio beacon to all vessels that go outside sheltered waters, whether they be fishing boats, commercial craft or pleasure craft. The projected cost of a beacon is \$150. Against the potential cost to the public purse and even the capital costs of a small boat owner, \$150 is a very small price to pay to ensure that, if there is an emergency, the boat can be located quickly, minimising the cost of the search and rescue and giving a greater chance of preventing loss of life.

The system would operate from a central locating terminal which, at this stage, is proposed for Alice Springs. That would provide some additional capital injection into the Alice Springs area and a few extra jobs. The capacity of the system extends some 600 km offshore. It would offer not only the opportunity to locate quickly and recover vessels offshore, whether they be fishing boats or large ocean-going vessels, but would have application on land. The member for Sadadeen is saying that we must not forget the Todd River. The Todd River might not be an appropriate case but people who venture by vehicle into the remote outback could carry one of these beacons. That could help to save the lives of stationhands or adventurous tourists. The beacon could be either rented or purchased for a total cost of \$150. This is a most innovative and imaginative rescue system. It certainly has the support of this government and, I am sure, of all boat owners and users who travel into sometimes very dangerous waters off the north shore of Australia.

Excise on Beer

Mr LEO to MINISTER for TOURISM

My question relates to his responsibilities as the minister responsible for the Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission. In the interest of lowering the rate of consumption of alcohol and of the CPI in the Northern Territory, will he be instructing the commission to take such steps as are necessary to ensure that licensed retailers pass on the recently-announced reduction in beer excises, particularly those excises which relate to low alcohol beverages?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there was discussion with the Australian Hotels Association a couple of months ago as to why the retail price of beer did not reflect the differential in impost duties in relation to low alcohol and normal strength beer. The answer from the industry at that time was simply that the difference in tax was not substantial enough to warrant a difference in the retail price. It was only a few cents on a case of beer. I will be talking to the industry about the new excise duties and I will advise the member in due course.

Mount Samuel Mining Tenements

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Yesterday, I asked him about mining industry concerns with sacred sites at Mount Samuel. Since that time, the Director of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority has intimated in the press that the mining industry should have been aware of those sites. Can he further clarify the history of the Mount Samuel mining tenements especially in relation to the so-called sacred sites?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I do not think we have heard the last of Mount Samuel. I believe that it will be a name that will be as well known as Coronation Hill because, as each day passes, the similarities become more striking. For the benefit of honourable members, the mining industry has been active in this region since the 1930s. The member for Barkly might like to correct me, but I see that he is nodding his head in agreement. Certainly, it has been highly active there in the last 25 years. All this activity has occurred without mention of the existence of sacred sites. Nobody said: 'Do not dig any holes here because this is a sacred site'.

Given that history, it was certainly a reasonable expectation of the mining industry that such impediments did not exist in the region. I understand - and the member for Barkly may be able to give some local knowledge - that some of the exploration licences held and some of the activity carried out in that area was by Aboriginal people. I see the honourable member nodding in agreement on that, and that is a message that has been given to me as well.

Mr Bell: Why don't you introduce a statement so that we can all discuss it instead of asking these repeated questions?

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, that is why they were surprised when, 3 or 4 months ago, they were told that the whole of the Mount Samuel area was a 16 km<sup>2</sup> sacred site complex, and that all mining activity should stop. It is all very well to say that sites of significance were mentioned at an inquiry or at this or that hearing, and that any such reference constituted a world-wide broadcast of the facts of the matter. Quite clearly, we cannot expect the mining industry to be intimately acquainted with such fine detail. It is up to organisations such as the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority to identify areas of significance to the industry. That is one of the major industry concerns about the activities of the authority. In most cases, the authority only makes its concerns known after exploration has occurred, development plans are prepared and considerable cost has been incurred. Mr Speaker, I can tell you when this really came into headlines, if you want a precise date. It was the day that Australian Petroleum, I think it was, announced that it had hit an intersection of 100 g over 2 m. That was the day when the concerns started.

Let me reinforce to the honourable member for MacDonnell ...

Mr Bell: Why don't you do your homework, you mug.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. The honourable member will withdraw that remark.

Mr BELL: I unreservedly withdraw any reference to the capacity of the minister.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will withdraw the remark without comment.

Mr BELL: I withdraw the remark without comment.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, in most cases, the authority only makes its concern known after exploration has occurred. The point that I am making is that, the day that the 100 g intersection was announced, it became a sacred site. I have said many times in this Assembly that it is always the spouting whale that is harpooned. Mining companies would be well advised, in this instance, to keep quiet when they find something. I do not help them in that regard because it is usually fairly exciting information, but we are starting to have detailed analysis of just what happens and just when sacred sites become of significance. That was certainly the day, the very minute, when that company announced that intersection.

It may be surprising news to the authority that the world is not populated solely by lawyers and anthropologists - at least not yet. The authority seems to conduct its affairs in a reactive manner. In other words, you announce what you intend to do and it tells you why you cannot do it. This way of doing business causes great frustration and cynicism and, if the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority has a poor reputation in the mining and development industries, it has only itself to blame. The authority and its adherents have a particular way of dealing with cynicism. Anybody who speaks out against their actions is branded as anti-Aboriginal and therefore a racist, and that is the ultimate cynicism.

As the minister responsible for orderly mining development in the Territory, it is my duty to see that a proper balance is achieved between development and the legitimate interests of Territorians, including Aboriginal people. That is what this government attempts to achieve and that is what we

will achieve in this particular case. As I said, we have not heard the end of the Mount Samuel episode; it has only just begun. As we have already established today, mining activity in the area began at least as far back as the 1930s, and it should continue.

Undoolya Road

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware of claims that the dirt section of the Undoolya Road, east of the town from the jump-up out to the quarry, is in a very dangerous state, that bulldust abounds and there are great boulders, and that it is claimed that a grader is not sufficient to restore the road to a safe condition? Would he undertake to check with his department the accuracy of those claims and, if they are found to be true, urgently restore that road to a safe condition so that the huge contract for moving 20 000 t of rock out there at the moment can continue?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, to answer the question of whether I am familiar with the actual complaints, I am not. I certainly am aware, however, of the problems with roads, such as the Undoolya Road, which receive fairly heavy and continuous use by large trucks which do not exactly dawdle along. The drivers are out to earn a quid and they want to move as quickly as possible. Other roads in the region, such as the Tanami Road, suffer from similar pressures from heavy vehicles. It is very difficult to keep up with the maintenance of those roads.

An additional problem for officers of the Department of Transport and Works in the Alice Springs region in recent times has been repairing the extensive damage inflicted by the flood. Between \$1m and \$2m-worth of damage has had to be repaired in the post-flood period. That has tied up the local construction industry's plant and equipment and there has been considerable pressure to finish the job. Honourable members will be well aware that the first priority of the Department of Transport and Works was to open those roads again and re-establish access to communities. That being said, I am sure that the department will address the specific case mentioned by the member for Sadadeen as quickly as possible.

The long-term solution for Undoolya Road and the Tanami Road lies in the actual construction of the roads. The gravel which is used at present is not appropriate for heavy traffic because it is lacking in binding material. Water is also a problem, especially with the Tanami Road. We have to be innovative in overcoming the serious problems of providing long-term access to communities, particularly those in areas that can be of commercial value to the Territory.

Upgrading of Moil Primary School

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

He would be aware that, during the past few years, the Moil Primary School Council has made various submissions, fully supported by myself, requesting the allocation of funds for upgrading of the school. Indeed, recently he met with representatives of the school council and the acting principal to discuss this matter. Has the school council's submission been considered and, if so, what is the outcome likely to be?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, for a moment I thought the member intended to ask me about preschool air-conditioning. I visited Moil Primary School recently, as the member indicated, and I am concerned that some aspects of maintenance of the school need to be examined in more detail. Officers of the Department of Education will be visiting Moil shortly to assess the situation. They will identify essential maintenance items and items with high educational priority. The council's submission will be fully considered by the department in the context of the total operation of the school. It is highly likely, as I indicated to the people whom I met, that the department will undertake essential services at the school and will then negotiate with the school council in relation to the other items raised in the submission. I can assure the honourable member that the submission will receive full attention. Whether certain requests are carried out will depend on the funds available as well as the expertise that is available to the school council to ensure that, if it is given responsibility for particular activities, those can be carried out effectively.

#### Firefighting Services in Aboriginal Communities

Mr TIPILOURA to CHIEF MINISTER

What action is the government taking to establish volunteer firefighting services in Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot answer the honourable member's question immediately. I will seek some advice on whether the government has any program under way or planned and will advise him on the next sitting day.

#### ANPWS Charges for Entry to Kakadu National Park

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for TOURISM

The National Parks and Wildlife Service announced yesterday that it would be introducing charges for entry into Kakadu National Park. What effect will those charges have on tourism and on ordinary Territorians who, in going about their usual business, are required to enter into and stay at the park?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Karama for his question. Of course, the announcement made by ANPWS yesterday came as a complete surprise to everyone.

Mr Smith: Rubbish! Come on, you have known that for months.

Mr POOLE: Mr Speaker, it certainly did come as a complete surprise because there had been no discussions with the Northern Territory government or the tourist industry with regard to levels of charges in national parks that are operated by the ANPWS in the Northern Territory.

With regard to the industry, of course, tours have already been sold at rates which do not take these charges into account. The information that we have at the moment from the Director of the ANPWS indicates that park fees will be staged in at Kakadu and that fees already imposed for visitors to

Uluru are to be revised. Basically, there will be a fee of \$10 for each adult visiting Kakadu from 1 January next year. There will be no charge for children under 16. The fee will cover entry to the park and to the audiovisual display at park headquarters at Kakadu, for which a separate charge is made at present, and recreational fishing, remote-area camping and things such as guided tours.

At this point, I should indicate that we have no disagreement with the ANPWS in relation to the charging of fees for entry into parks on the basis that we believe that, in the national parks, and probably in Territory parks in the future, the user will pay. Considerable amounts of money are collected and spent by governments on maintaining facilities. On the basis of some rough calculations, it is interesting to note that, in Kakadu alone, the federal government will collect in the vicinity of \$2.5m per annum. I note in the budget this year that some \$3m is to be spent on Kakadu. Of course, that is still a long way from the \$70m that was promised many years ago.

I am told that there will be camping fees at developed campgrounds at the East Alligator, Jim Jim and also at the campground at Waterfall Creek when it is completed. These fees will be \$5 per night per caravan, \$2 per night per tent, and overnight charges of \$2 per person per night. In Uluru National Park, a park-use fee, which will be valid for 2 weeks, will be applied from 1 October this year. It will be \$5 for an adult. Again, there will be no charge for children under 16. I am pleased to say that an annual park-use fee will be available for regular visitors and local residents, but we have no information as to what that fee will be.

Mr Smith: \$20.

Mr POOLE: Fortunately, there will not be any charge for persons engaged on legitimate business or traffic passing through, but therein lies another tale. It is very interesting to note that, despite representations that have been made over many years by the industry and the Northern Territory government - and even, I believe, by members opposite - again this year there is no financial provision to seal the road from Ayers Rock to the Olgas. That is a national disgrace. The damage that is done to vehicles using that road and the accidents that are caused are a matter of great concern to this government. The project first appeared on the design list some 7 years ago, and still nothing has been done. This year, it has been scrubbed off completely.

At both Kakadu and Uluru, charges for commercial filming and still photography were introduced from the first of this month. There will be charges for other commercial activities carried out under permit at both parks from 1 January next year. A proportion of the fees raised will be retained by the ANPWS and applied to park management and park development. However, there seems to be no provision for recompensing the Northern Territory government for the tens of millions of dollars that it has spent to upgrade and maintain roads and to build new roads. The Northern Territory government should have been involved in all talks leading up to this announcement and it is a matter of great concern that our interests have been ignored once again.

The principle of entry fees for national parks and other such facilities is well established. It is a commonplace occurrence for people down south and it is a legitimate means of obtaining funds needed to maintain and further develop visitor attractions. However, we believe that any such fees should be the subject of discussion with all interested parties, including the Northern Territory government and certainly the tourist industry which, after all,

provides the transportation to bring the majority of people to visit these attractions. Certainly, sufficient notice should have been given prior to the introduction of charges so that adjustments could be made to tour program costings.

The facilities that exist in the Northern Territory, both at the national park level and in the Conservation Commission park areas, are becoming better and better. In principle, I guess the time has come when the user should have to pay to go into these areas. However, I cannot make the point strongly enough that it is time that the ANPWS actually sat down and talked to the government and the industry prior to doing things such as this which will vitally affect the tourist industry in the Northern Territory.

#### Upgrading of Gravel Road to East Alligator River

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Does the government intend to upgrade the gravel road between the Jabiru end of the Mudginberri turnoff to the East Alligator and, if so, will that benefit tourism in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I recall some questions from the Leader of the Opposition either late last year or early this year regarding the Oenpelli Road and other roads in the Kakadu area. He was laying the blame for the lack of upgrading at the feet of the Territory government. The situation needs to be explained, particularly in regard to the Oenpelli Road, for honourable members to understand fully the complexities of ownership and responsibility. These are shared over 3 different sections. One section is entirely the responsibility of the federal government through the ANPWS, another section is clearly a Territory road and another section has some relationship with a mining company.

The immediate plan is to upgrade the section from Cahills Crossing to almost halfway back to the highway. That section has already been designed and has been included in the program on a joint funding basis with the ANPWS. We have not heard yet whether it has specific funds for that purpose although it was quite confident that it would obtain its share of the costs of the first section. The next section will be a matter for further negotiation with the mining company concerning the route and its contribution to the cost. The original proposal for an upgraded road in that area was to avoid all of the major creeks by routing it through a section of land that is currently held under lease by Ranger. That involves negotiation. That is the preferred option because it would give far better wet weather access. The other option is to upgrade the existing section of the road. Whilst it would provide improved access for tourists and for people in the Oenpelli area, it would not be quite as good as the other solution. We must await the details of the ANPWS roads budget for this year. However, we are hopeful that it will find funds to accept its fair share of responsibility in providing a safe and reasonable access road into that region.

#### ANSWER TO QUESTION

#### Tourist Commission Involvement with the Wynn's Safari

Mr POOLE (Tourism): Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to answer a question that was raised in the adjournment debate last night by the member for Stuart in relation to the Tourist Commission's involvement with the



Wynn's Safari. The member suggested that perhaps the Tourist Commission had not assisted the Wynn's Safari to the extent that it should have. I would like to lay that matter to rest.

The Tourist Commission has been involved in the organisation of the Wynn's Safari for many years. In my former capacity as Chairman of the Tourist Commission, I was instrumental in assisting Hans Thorstrup put together the package that originally started the Wynn's Safari in the Northern Territory. This year, on receiving advice from the Wynn's Safari organiser that the safari would start from Alice Springs and proceed via Darwin to finish in Sydney, the Tourist Commission immediately seized that opportunity of getting what could be termed 2 bites at the cherry and offered total support to ensure the success of the venture. To ensure that we achieved a level of spectator participation, a prologue competition was designed to attract average family travellers and non-competitor travellers to converge on Alice Springs from every capital city. This was strictly a fun competition but we decided to obtain 10 000 Wynn's Safari brochures and distribute them in Australia and overseas through our international network of commission offices. We also provided some medallions, which were quite expensive to produce, and organised media launches for the event in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. We will be participating in the hosting of a breakfast for finishers of the safari in Sydney.

The event was of great economic significance to the people of Alice Springs. Only last Friday, a local business supplier told me that, in 1 day in that week, he sold \$23 000-worth of goods to 1 of the team participants in the safari. It is probably timely to comment quickly on the attitude of some of our local businesses in that regard. I am aware that the operator of one of our roadhouses was approached to provide a refuelling stop for competitors and was offered the assistance of a tanker of gas and a number of people to help pump the fuel into the vehicles to enable them to continue on their way. That would have had a total bill of about \$36 000 for 2 hours work. He actually knocked this back on the basis that he had been operating there for 20 years and did not want anyone else to touch his petrol pumps.

There was a total of 210 entries consisting of motorcycles, 4-wheel-drive and 2-wheel-drive vehicles of all descriptions. There were some 93 overseas entries. The support equipment consisted of 6 coaches, 7 trucks, 20 official vehicles, helicopters and light aircraft. There were 12 media vehicles. The international media coverage that will result is tremendous. I would hate to have to put a financial figure on the exposure that the Northern Territory will receive because I understand that regular television segments are carried in the UK, Japan, Germany and North America. It is invaluable exposure.

I am happy to say that the Tourist Commission contributed over \$10 000 in cash and at least the equivalent of that amount in time spent in organising media launches, the participation of the interstate bureaus and the provision of maps and all kinds of bits and pieces through the bureaus in the respective capital cities and our overseas offices.

Budget Allocation to Education

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The Northern Territory Teachers Federation, the Leader of the Opposition and the President of the Council of Government School Organisations, Richard Creswick, have all claimed the allocation to education in the 1988 budget has been cut in real terms by \$3.5m. Is this true? If so, what ramifications are there for education?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the allegation that the budget allocation for education has been reduced in real terms is unfounded. The allocation has been increased by nearly 6%. Treasury accepts that the inflation rate is about 5.6% and therefore this is a small increase of 0.21%. However, it is an increase and it is not a cut as such to the education budget. If we include the allocations for the Darwin Institute of Technology and the University College of the Northern Territory, we can say that we have increased our allocation by 1.06% in real terms. Alternatively, if the effects of the recent national wage case are included, we can say the real increase in Northern Territory education spending will be more than 2%.

Unfortunately, the time available at these sittings may preclude further debate in relation to the budget for my portfolio. I hope to be able to pursue that later on today but I ask members to read the detailed information and take part in the debate as it progresses. A circular will be sent to schools shortly indicating that it is nonsense to say that there has been a cut to the education budget. Overall expenditure on education will rise by almost 6% over the amount allocated in 1986-87.

There is a strengthened commitment to Aboriginal education, to isolated students and to the special needs of particular schools throughout the Northern Territory. An additional \$1.35m has been allocated to the development of community education centres in 8 Aboriginal communities. Members opposite have been pursuing those projects and we are ensuring that they go ahead this year. Increased allocations have been made to improve the provision of vehicles to schools in remote communities, a very important part of providing education in those isolated areas. Above-formula staff have been allocated to 11 Aboriginal community schools and, in addition, above-formula staff are also being allocated to schools in large, isolated centres and in urban areas. I will be elaborating on that subject in my contribution to the budget debate.

To assist isolated students, the government has allocated \$186 000 to the home loan video scheme so that students in isolated areas are not disadvantaged by the Commonwealth decision to withdraw funding support for the scheme. I think all members will support that inclusion. The level of per capita funding based on the number of students enrolled in schools has been maintained. For post-primary students in Aboriginal communities, the level of per capita funding has been increased from \$90 to \$120 per student. There have been increases in a whole range of areas across the education budget, there has been a considerable increase in the allocation for repairs and maintenance and for minor new works.

Before opposition members or members of various organisations comment publicly on so-called cuts to education, they should look at the papers and check their facts because, in this case, they are totally incorrect.

Education has fared very well this year and we will ensure that we continue to provide a very good education system to Territorians.

#### Failure of Tourist Commission Officer to Acquit Amex Card Expenses

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TOURISM

Can he confirm that, during the period 1984-86, a senior officer of the Tourist Commission failed to acquit - that is, to properly account for - his American Express card expenses on a monthly basis as required by the commission, and that an amount of \$50 355 had been spent on American Express without being properly accounted for by that senior officer?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot confirm that. The figures involved are totally strange to me. I will seek information and provide it to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SMITH: I have a supplementary question, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: As I advised the House last week, the matter of supplementary questions has been referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

#### Greenhouse Effect

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the government taken any action to monitor the Greenhouse Effect and its ramifications for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, some action is being taken. During the last few years, increasing attention has been focused in the scientific community on what is termed the Greenhouse Effect. Indeed, I raised this matter in the adjournment debate on 24 February this year. Officers of the Northern Territory government have now attended 2 interstate conferences on the Greenhouse Effect and its implications across the world. More interstate conferences are scheduled and we will be attending those.

For those honourable members who are not conversant with the Greenhouse Effect, it is a build-up of major gases in the atmosphere. These gases include carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and methane. The ceiling of pollutants is causing the earth's atmosphere to become warmer by preventing the escape of heat. In a recent article in the Sunday Territorian, the Director of the CSIRO in Darwin said that the Greenhouse Effect would produce some fairly significant changes in the Northern Territory environment and that we needed to be aware of probable trends. These changes include higher rainfall, a shorter dry season, more cyclones and more intense cyclones, and increased climatic extremes. Also, Alice Springs will receive more summer rain.

Climatic change is not new in the earth's geological history. What is particularly significant in this case, however, is the rate of change. We are not talking about evolutionary change over thousands of years. We are facing the prospect of significant climatic change within the lifetime of people born now. As a consequence of the alteration in weather patterns brought about by

the Greenhouse Effect, we can also expect some significant changes to the Territory's land mass. Kakadu, or at least the lowlands of Kakadu, will revert to the mangrove swamp that it was some 6000 years ago. The growth of rainforest in the Top End will increase dramatically and the sea level will rise significantly, thus affecting all freshwater floodplains.

I would invite honourable members to read last Tuesday's NT News which contained an article outlining the alterations to the Darwin coastline which will be brought about by the Greenhouse Effect. The issues are potentially enormous. An increasing number of articles about the Greenhouse Effect are appearing in magazines and I urge all honourable members to follow events in this regard.

The scientific evidence and research available thus far would indicate that the results of the Greenhouse Effect in the Territory will not be as adverse as they will be in other areas of Australia. In some of the southern states, planning has already begun for what will occur when the Greenhouse Effect becomes apparent. Honourable members may be aware that, in South Australia, planning legislation is being reviewed so that damage from the effect may be minimised.

While current scientific research would indicate that the Greenhouse Effect will be less adverse in the Territory than elsewhere, we must monitor the situation very closely and take whatever action is necessary. With this in mind, I wish to advise honourable members that I will be asking a number of relevant organisations located in the Territory to form an advisory committee to the Northern Territory government. In the coming week, I will be approaching the CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology, the University College, the Darwin Institute of Technology, the North Australian Research Unit, the Conservation Commission, the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries and the Department of Lands and Housing to seek their cooperation in relation to the membership of this advisory committee. I envisage the committee being in place within a matter of weeks. It will monitor the scientific research being undertaken in relation to the Greenhouse Effect and resultant climatic changes. It will cooperate with other relevant organisations, both inside and outside Australia, and it will advise the Territory government on any appropriate action that may need to be taken.

Mr Speaker, while it would clearly be wrong to be alarmist, the Greenhouse Effect raises issues of great community concern. It is therefore incumbent on the government to take a responsible approach. We will do this through the establishment of this government advisory committee.

#### Failure of Minister for Tourism to Acquit Amex Card Expenses

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TOURISM

Can he confirm that, at the date he resigned as Chairman of the Tourist Commission to contest the Araluen by-election for the CLP, he had not given an explanation for an amount of \$50 355 of Tourist Commission and taxpayers' money which he had spent against American Express credit cards?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can confirm that I had addressed those matters and had acquitted various amounts of travel expenditure. I am not sure what the final figure was, but all those amounts were audited by the Auditor-General and any balances that were outstanding were paid by myself.

Darwin and Alice Springs Airports

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has he had discussions with the FAC to ensure an immediate start for both Darwin and Alice Springs Airports? Is he able to advise whether the FAC will take over the existing Darwin Airport operation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, yesterday, the Chief Minister expressed some concern, and quite correctly so, that there was inadequate information contained in the announcements by either the federal government or, at the time, by the FAC as to what their specific proposals were for the Darwin and Alice Springs Airports. The only announcement that we had had from our federal representatives was that the projects would be completed within 3 years. Obviously, that is unacceptable to Territorians. No detail was given. There are constraints such as no passenger head charging and no imposts on the federal budget. This government had done its sums and we knew what the whole financial operation of the airports would be. We were confused by what the figures meant and I am sure there is still much to be revealed about how the FAC will finalise its financial packages. However, that is a concern for them, not for us.

What is important to Territorians is when the airports will be commenced and when they will be finished. It is as simple as that. Previously, I had had amicable discussions with the FAC. Since the federal government budget, I have spoken with senior executives of the FAC. I have had assurances from both Mr Bill Swingler and Mr John Spencer, the Executive Officer and the General Manager, that the FAC will commence construction on Darwin immediately following resolution of its financial position and lease arrangements for the Darwin Airport. That is a little vague because, whilst it had been indicated by the federal members that transfer would occur in October, unfortunately there were also some statements indicating that planning would commence after October. Obviously, that is wasting another 2 to 3 months.

The Territory government has put much in place already in the way of planning, conceptual design and the bringing together of project management submissions, and the FAC has assured us that it would more than welcome any support that we can provide. I am pleased to announce that the head of the Department of Transport and Works will be meeting with the FAC next Monday in Sydney to run through all of our information. We will provide every possible support. In the meantime, what is required is for the federal government to expedite the resolution of the financial arrangements. These will be a little bit difficult for it to swallow because, quite logically, the whole project has to stand alone in a commercial sense.

Our figures were verified by the federal Department of Transport and Communications. If our proposals relied on \$30m approximately of grant and still required something like a \$6 passenger head tax, then something has to be resolved to ensure that the FAC is able to meet the commitments that have been made on its behalf by the federal government. Some would say that this is great for the federal government because it avoids a direct injection of funds. We had believed all along that the federal government had a responsibility. Previously, it had committed \$95m in 1983 terms, probably \$130m in today's terms. We thought \$30m was reasonable and we bent over backwards to make sure the project came together.

Mr Speaker, there have been very positive assurances from the FAC officials. They are extremely confident people and I have a great deal of respect for their commercial ability. They know what the business is all about, they have agreed to cooperate to the fullest extent and I am very confident that we will get construction started by the end of this calendar year, as we proposed in our submission. If they utilise our programming and our support, then I am sure that we can have construction completed by our originally-stated objective of May 1990.

That is what this whole debate is about. That was what the Chief Minister was concerned about yesterday. Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition, who has not really shown the slightest interest in this whole matter during the last 3½ years, is not helping things now. His attitude is counterproductive. He is trying to bag a genuine concern the Chief Minister is expressing on behalf of all Territorians. The Territory government is more than happy to provide all of its technical, financial and construction team information. Through the Treasurer, we have agreed also to transfer back the \$10m loans entitlement to the federal government for allocation to the FAC so that it can get some cash to commence immediately. The Territory government has done everything possible and will continue to do everything possible to see that this project is completed quickly. Territorians can rest assured that I will maintain a very positive interest in this project, and in Alice Springs Airport, until such time as we see aircraft pulling up at that new terminal.

In relation to the Alice Springs Airport, we will be providing to the federal government our impression of how things ought to be going. On behalf of Alice Springs residents, we will ask that they receive a fair hearing in respect of the forward planning. We have had assurances that the doubling of the existing facility will proceed immediately, and that is fine. But the long-term planning needs to be balanced and needs to take into account the interests of Alice Springs people and, indeed, all Territorians. We will be using our best endeavours, in a constructive manner, to ensure that that occurs.

In regard to the specific question by the previous Minister for Transport and Works, this is a team and there is no doubt that this is a team. The previous Minister for Transport and Works did as much as anybody else to get us to this point, and I acclaim his efforts. He asked about the utilisation of the existing terminal. I understand that that is not contemplated and, in the meantime, some tenders have been let for some concessional arrangements at the existing terminal. I am pleased to note that they are only for a 2-year period. That is a positive indication by the federal government that that old hangar is seeing the last of its days.

#### Failure of Minister for Tourism to Acquit Amex Card Expenses

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TOURISM

Can he confirm that, on 7 May 1986, 1 month after he had been elected to this parliament, he still had not explained the \$50 000 in American Express credit card expenses that he had incurred in the Tourist Commission and that the Auditor-General was forced to write to the Tourist Commission giving it a deadline of 2 weeks to produce that information that he had failed to supply, as he had been required to do, on a monthly basis, over the previous 2 years?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, again, without looking at the dates, the times and the amounts, I cannot confirm that.

Mr Smith: \$50 000.

Mr POOLE: I would certainly dispute the amount of \$50 000. Really, off the top of my head, I cannot remember the figures. All the amounts that were owed to the commission, on a Tourist Commission credit card for which the account was paid by the Tourist Commission, were acquitted by myself to the satisfaction of the Auditor-General and members of the Tourist Commission.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr SMITH (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I move that so much of standing orders be suspended as would prevent me from moving a motion of want of confidence in the Minister for Tourism and Minister Assisting the Chief Minister on Central Australian Affairs.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Want of Confidence in Minister for Tourism

Mr SMITH (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I move that this Assembly has no confidence in the Minister for Tourism and the Minister Assisting the Chief Minister on Central Australian Affairs as his conduct, when Chairman of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission, evidenced that Mr Poole is not a fit and proper person to hold the responsible position of minister in that, when Chairman of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission: (a) over a period of 2 years, he failed to acquit his American Express Card expenses of \$50 000 in a manner determined by the commission; and (b) despite requests from the Auditor-General, he had not acquitted these expenses prior to his resignation from the position of Chairman of the Tourist Commission.

Mr COULTER (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, pursuant to standing order 95, I accept the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition as a want of confidence motion and ask that any further questions be placed on notice.

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