

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Third Assembly

Parliamentary Record

Tuesday 19 August 1980
Wednesday 20 August 1980
Thursday 21 August 1980

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NORTHERN TERRITORY LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Third Assembly

Speaker	John Leslie Stuart MacFarlane
Chief Minister and Attorney-General	Paul Anthony Edward Everingham
Opposition Leader	Jonathan Martin Isaacs
Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Industrial Development and Minister for Community Development	Marshall Bruce Perron
Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister for Health	Ian Lindsay Tuxworth
Minister for Education and Minister for Lands and Housing	James Murray Robertson
Minister for Primary Production and Tourism and Minister Assisting the Treasurer	Roger Michael Steele
Minister for Transport and Works and Minister Assisting the Chief Minister	Nicholas Dondas

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Alice Springs	Denis Wilfred Collins
Arnhem	Bob Collins
Barkly	Ian Lindsay Tuxworth
Casuarina	Nicholas Dondas
Elsey	John Leslie Stuart MacFarlane
Fannie Bay	Pamela Frances O'Neil
Gillen	James Murray Robertson
Jingili	Paul Anthony Edward Everingham
Ludmilla	Roger Michael Steele
MacDonnell	Neville George Perkins
Millner	Jonathan Martin Isaacs
Nhulunbuy	Daniel Murray Leo
Nightcliff	Alline Dawn Lawrie
Port Darwin	Tom Harris
Sanderson	June D'Rozario
Stuart	Roger William Stanley Vale
Stuart Park	Marshall Bruce Perron
Tiwi	Cecilia Noel Padgham-Purich
Victoria River	John Kevin Doolan

The Committee of the Whole Assembly

Chairman — Mr Harris

The House Committee

Mr Speaker
Mr Dondas
Mr Leo
Mrs O'Neil
Mr Vale

The Standing Orders Committee

Mr Speaker
Mr Dondas
Mr Isaacs
Mr Perkins
Mr Robertson

The Publications Committee

Mr B. Collins
Mr Doolan
Mrs Padgham-Purich
Mr Steele
Mr Vale

The Privileges Committee

Mr Doolan
Ms D'Rozario
Mr Harris
Mr Perron
Mr Tuxworth

The Subordinate Legislation and Tabled Papers Committee

Mr D. W. Collins
Mr Harris
Mrs Lawrie
Mrs Padgham-Purich
Mr Perkins

Sessional Committee — Environment

Mr B. Collins
Mr D. W. Collins
Mr Harris
Mrs Lawrie
Mrs Padgham-Purich

PART I

DEBATES

DEBATES

Tuesday 19 August 1980

ASSEMBLY CONVENED

The Third Assembly convened at 2.00 pm on Tuesday 19 August 1980 pursuant to notice by His Honour the Administrator.

The Clerk read the notice summoning the Legislative Assembly into session.

COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATHS

The Serjeant-at-Arms conducted His Honour Mr Justice Forster and his Associate into the Chamber.

His Honour Mr Justice FORSTER: Members of the Legislative Assembly, His Honour the Administrator, not thinking fit to be present in person at this time, has been pleased to authorise me to administer the oaths or affirmations of allegiance to the Queen and the oaths or affirmations of service to the Assembly required by the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act to be taken by members of the Legislative Assembly for the Northern Territory.

His Honour the Administrator desires me to inform you that, after all members present have been sworn and an eligible member has been chosen to be your Speaker, he will be pleased to have the member whom you have chosen presented to him later this day at a place set aside for that purpose within the precincts.

RETURNS TO WRITS

The Clerk laid on the Table the returns to the writs for the election of members of the Legislative Assembly held on 7 June 1980.

The following members named in the returns made and subscribed the oaths or affirmations required by law:

Electorate	Name
Alice Springs	Denis Wilfred Collins
Arnhem	Bob Collins
Barkly	Ian Lindsay Tuxworth
Casuarina	Nicholas Dondas
Elsey	John Leslie Stuart MacFarlane
Fannie Bay	Pamela Frances O'Neil
Gillen	James Murray Robertson
Jingili	Paul Anthony Edward Everingham
Ludmilla	Roger Michael Steele
MacDonnell	Neville George Perkins
Millner	Jonathan Martin Isaacs
Nhulunbuy	Daniel Murray Leo
Nightcliff	Alline Dawn Lawrie
Port Darwin	Tom Harris
Sanderson	June D'Rozario
Stuart	Roger William Stanley Vale
Stuart Park	Marshall Bruce Perron
Tiwi	Cecilia Noel Padgham-Purich
Victoria River	John Kevin Doolan

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The CLERK: Honourable members, it is now the duty of the Assembly to choose a member to be Speaker.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Clerk, I propose to the parliament for its Speaker the member for Elsey, Mr J.L.S. MacFarlane, and I move that the honourable member for Elsey do take the Chair as Speaker.

Mr PERRON (Treasurer): I second the nomination.

Mr MacFARLANE (Elsey): I accept nomination.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Clerk, I propose to the Assembly for its Speaker the honourable member for Sanderson, Ms J. D'Rozario, and move that the honourable member for Sanderson take the Chair as Speaker.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arnhem): I second the nomination.

Ms D'ROZARIO (Sanderson): I accept the nomination.

The CLERK: Is there any further proposal? The time for proposals has expired.

Ballot taken.

The CLERK: Honourable members, the result of the ballot is Mr MacFarlane, member for Elsey, 11, Ms D'Rozario, member for Sanderson, 8. I declare the member for Elsey, Mr J.L.S. MacFarlane, elected to the office of Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the high honour you have conferred upon me.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER TO ADMINISTRATOR

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I am informed that it is the intention of His Honour the Administrator to attend in the lounge of the Assembly and I propose to present myself to him there as the choice of the Assembly for its Speaker. I will be pleased if members will accompany me.

AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER OATHS

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have presented myself to His Honour the Administrator who was pleased to congratulate me and hand me the authorisation to administer to members of the Assembly the oaths or affirmations required by statute. I table the authorisation.

ATTENDANCE OF ADMINISTRATOR

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I have to inform the Assembly that His Honour the Administrator intends to attend the Assembly immediately to declare the causes of his calling the Assembly together.

Mr SPEAKER: The Serjeant-at-Arms will inform His Honour that the Assembly is ready to receive him.

His Honour the ADMINISTRATOR: Mr Speaker, honourable members, I have called you together at this time for the dispatch of business and to outline my government's legislative program for the life of the Third Assembly.

My government is pledged to the continuation of the social, economic and constitutional progress that has characterised the past 2 years of self-government. The intention of my government is to carry forward its wide-ranging programs and to build on the momentum already established. Its determination to place responsibility for Territory affairs in the hands of Territorians is well known. It will continue to develop the legislative and institutional framework required to give the fullest meaning and substance to self-government. It will insist on recognition of the Territory as an equal partner in all respects in our nation's affairs.

My government's primary concern will always be the welfare of Territorians. Consistent with its concern for people, approximately 40% of government expenditure has been in the area of social development. Without doubt, this has led to improved services for all Territorians whose numbers grow at the rate of approximately 5% per annum.

In education, some important developments are planned by my government. A bill to establish the Northern Territory Teaching Service will be brought forward and the Territory's own university will be established. The provision of education in remote areas will continue to receive attention as will increased Aboriginal teacher education.

Health programs will also be carried forward. My government has been actively involved in addressing the problems of drug and alcohol dependence. New legislation will be introduced to establish a Territory alcohol and drug dependency authority which will give special attention to the problem of alcohol and drug abuse.

The Schools Dental Program will expand from primary to secondary schools to eventually include all school children, while expansion of mobile services and the training of Aboriginal dental workers will accelerate the program in rural areas.

In the field of community welfare, new legislation will be presented covering all areas of community welfare including child welfare, child abuse, juvenile justice and general welfare. Already my government has announced specific measures to improve the level of services for the handicapped and has encouraged interested groups to make recommendations relating to these services. A study aimed at developing a comprehensive and co-ordinated policy on services to the aged is also under way.

Facilities in the area of youth, sport and recreation will be improved. A youth advisory council has been established. Funds will be made available to assist in the establishment of youth centres and there will be substantial upgrading of Traeger Park in Alice Springs for sporting facilities and developments for other areas within the Northern Territory are under examination. The grants-in-aid scheme will continue as the administrative instrument to support self-help initiatives by a wide range of community organisations. In recognition of the need to enhance the quality of life for Territorians through the development of the arts, culture, scientific research and public education, a major museum and art gallery complex is being erected in Darwin. The initiatives to provide a cultural complex at Araluen in Alice Springs are proceeding. The long-awaited arts centre in Darwin will become a reality.

My government acknowledges, however, that the extent to which it can continue to improve the level of such community services will be greatly determined by the growth achieved by the Territory economy. A commitment to economic growth and development has thus been a hallmark of my government in its past 2 years in office. Rapid growth and development of the Territory

economy is essential to create new opportunities - opportunities for ever-growing employment, opportunities for new enterprises and opportunities for Territorians to share in the benefits of growth.

The creation of new opportunities will be achieved through further diversification of the economy, by the support of new and additional industries and improved transport links and other infrastructure facilities. In these areas, the task of my government is to encourage, to assist and to initiate. A major focus of my government's program to foster economic development will be centred on the development of infrastructures to support economic activities throughout the Territory.

My government will continue with its task of providing an all-weather highway system in the Territory. Plans are under way to improve the Stuart Highway between Elliott and Tennant Creek, as well as major works on the Barkly Highway. Other sections of the Stuart Highway, which are still of the old wartime standard, will be strengthened and widened to a national highway standard. My government will undertake major upgrading of the Victoria Highway, including extensive realignment. Talks with the Western Australian authorities regarding this realignment have already commenced. Major tourist roads will be upgraded during the life of this parliament. The Petermann Road will be completed, as will many other roads to major tourist attractions such as Edith Falls and Standley Chasm.

My government will continue to press both the Commonwealth and neighbouring states to ensure adequate transport links to the Territory. This pressure, which will be uncompromising, will aim to bring about the construction of the rail link between Alice Springs and Darwin, provide a reliable shipping service from the eastern states, see the speedy completion of the Stuart Highway between Kulgera and Port Augusta and improve the road systems which link up with our national highway system. The rail link between Alice Springs and Darwin is not just of vital social and economic importance to the Territory but is a matter of great national importance, and my government will therefore have this as its highest priority during the next 4 years.

The land-backed wharf development in Darwin and the small ships facility will be completed during the life of this Assembly. The need for these facilities is evident and will greatly enhance the immense potential in the Territory for a growing fishing and shipping industry.

My government will continue its aim of assisting the development of a viable regional airline to serve the Territory. The information of Northern Airlines was a major achievement and, during the life of this parliament, my government will promote the consolidation of this airline. Many airstrips in the Territory will be upgraded to meet the requirements of modern aircraft servicing the needs of Territory travellers.

All the initiatives in transportation systems, and particularly the rail link, have distinct defence implications. It is important that my government impresses upon the Commonwealth the case for an improved defence capacity in the north in the light of recent disturbing developments in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

My government has already announced its comprehensive policy with respect to energy developments. Programs will continue to be implemented. These include an accelerated search for and development of indigenous oil and gas deposits, measures aimed to conserve and make secure existing energy supplies and expansion of general industrial activity and mineral processing to improve the economics of electricity generation. A commitment has been made to proceed

with the construction of a coal-fired power-station for Darwin. Territory gas will be piped to Alice Springs for power generation. Studies will continue on the feasibility of dams to generate, amongst other things, hydro-power on the Katherine and Daly Rivers. This should be seen as an act of commitment to developing alternative energy sources throughout the Territory.

My government recognises the necessity to provide adequate and reliable water supplies to the residents of the Northern Territory for both domestic and industrial purposes. The next 4 years will see the benefits of the extensive planning which has been undertaken. A supply of soft water for the residents of Katherine will be available next year and the pipeline from the Darwin River Dam will be duplicated to ensure a reliable service to all residents of Darwin. Work will commence on the water main to Palmerston. In Tennant Creek and Alice Springs, my government will continue to augment the existing bore fields to meet the increased demand in these centres from the rising population and tourist trade. A recreational lake will be constructed for Alice Springs. This will open up recreational opportunities for residents of Alice Springs and surrounding areas. Water and other essential services are necessary to enable additional land to be opened up for residential development.

More subdivisions will be opened up in all centres to cater for the high demand for land and housing. A substantial proportion of the budget will be allocated, as in the past, for these purposes. My government will monitor the existing Home Loans Scheme to ensure that it is not abused and will move as soon as possible to introduce new legislation to promote and regulate the activities of building societies.

My government will continue to encourage and assist particular industries and sectors which will have impact on Territory development and will pay special attention to assisting small businesses. Another area of special attention will be the encouragement to utilise increased power capacity. A mining act has already been passed. This will now be followed by legislation covering hydro-carbons, exploration and exploitation of minerals under territorial waters, transport and storage of dangerous goods, mineral royalties and other legislation, as required, to meet the needs of expanding industry and new technology. In addition, there will be substantial expenditure on community facilities at Jabiru, including the construction of houses, a school, hospitals and a fire station.

Within the Territory, there are major deposits of lead, zinc, gold and uranium which, for reasons associated with technology and with federal legislation, remain unexploited. Development of these resources will be accelerated and, in particular, my government will be concerned to ensure that the development of the Jabiluka and the Koongarra projects occurs as quickly as possible.

A tourist commission has been established to co-ordinate tourist activities and to promote the tourism potential of the Territory. Construction of the Yulara Tourist Village, near Ayers Rock, has commenced. Expenditure is expected to be in the order of \$75m. A new airport to service the village and the national park and the access road to the park have been completed.

Primary production will continue to be a vital sector of the Territory's economy. The 1979 season saw a record cattle turn-off with a record financial return to Territory beef producers. A beef industry consultative committee has recently been established to advise on policies and measures aimed at improving economic viability. A committee of inquiry into pastoral land tenure has been established to examine the most appropriate reform for Northern

Territory pastoral land and is expected to report by the end of this year. Measures to develop the agricultural and horticultural potential have already been announced and legislation promulgated to establish an agricultural development and marketing authority. These measures are proceeding as a matter of priority and a senior executive has now been appointed as chairman of the authority.

My government has moved to assist the fishing industry by a series of projects aimed at diversifying the activities of fishermen traditionally involved with barramundi. The fishing industry will also be a major beneficiary of the small ships facility at Frances Bay.

The Territory is a vast area. The needs and opportunities of its people vary considerably. My government is sensitive to these differences and will seek to encourage cooperation among the various regions, particularly with local communities taking greater responsibility for local affairs as well as being involved in the planning and development of the Territory's future. Following the transfer of the responsibility for public libraries, plans are already in hand for the early transfer of the public health function to local government. Local government is now actively involved in town planning. Other functions under consideration for transfer to local control include aspects of the delivery of services in the fields of welfare, youth, sport and recreation.

The proper use and development of the Territory's natural resources is of utmost concern. Development will be in accordance with an examination of all aspects of environmental policy. The passing of the Conservation Commission Act and amendments to the Soil Conservation and Land Utilisation Act are examples of my government's approach in this respect.

Aboriginal people, of course, will benefit from the growth and development of the Territory. The interests of Aboriginal people will be given attention, particularly in relation to the promotion of development aimed at increasing self-reliance. Employment for Aboriginal people is a matter of grave concern for my government. Wherever possible, stimulus will be given to useful projects in remote areas to attempt to increase gainful employment. The desire of Aboriginal people for as much privacy as possible on Aboriginal land and, in some ways, the very commendable outstation movement and other factors militate against any easy solution to the problem.

The federal government has decided to retain, for the time being, responsibility for housing Aboriginal people and, indeed, unless its transfer to the Northern Territory were accompanied by substantial levels of funding, my government would not be prepared to undertake the task.

Steps already taken to increase self-reliance include increased responsibility for Aboriginal people in health, education and welfare services, economic enterprises and community protection. There have been significant developments aimed at the provision of essential services to pastoral communities and outstations, and support extended to Commonwealth programs for Aboriginal people. In addition, legislation has been introduced to provide for subleasing of land on pastoral properties to Aboriginal people, and to arrange special purpose leases in urban areas. A major initiative to upgrade essential services for Aboriginal communities over a 5-year period has been announced. Negotiations are taking place with the federal government for additional funding to enable the quite massive program to move ahead on target. This project will concentrate on improving facilities such as electricity, water, sewerage and roads.

A high-level taskforce has been established and the process of extensive consultation with Aboriginal communities will continue throughout the program to ensure that the targets are met and that the efforts of my government continue to be relevant to the needs of the Aboriginal communities. An important benefit of this program will be the opportunities which will be created for employment and training of Aboriginal people in providing facilities for their own communities.

In the field of law and order, considerable work has already been done on the criminal code. Work is proceeding and it is hoped to table a draft code in this Assembly at the November sittings. My government has been concerned at the many complaints about unacceptable standards of behaviour in public places. The government is determined to ensure that members of the public can go about their business without interference or molestation. Considerable community alarm has been caused by high crime rates and steps generally will be taken to attempt to control the situation.

The role of the Co-ordinator-General has been redefined and upgraded. Special emphasis will be given to developing mechanisms for achieving more co-ordination in policy development and program implementation. Support will be available to the government in reviewing its priorities to adjust to the changing needs of the Territory and Territorians.

These government initiatives which I have indicated provide the framework for continued progress and development in the Northern Territory during the 1980s. The legislative program provides for a continuation of achievements made since self-government and for the ever-growing maturity of the Northern Territory as a self-governing entity. This program is the result of careful planning and is supported by sound financial arrangements which reflect the Territory's character and needs.

I commend, for your consideration, the wide-ranging program of legislation I have outlined. I wish you well in your deliberations and I leave you to the discharge of your very important duties.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I am pleased to make a statement concerning the organisation of the government and the division of administrative responsibilities.

Following the declaration of the polls for the election held on 7 June 1980, I was able to inform His Honour the Administrator that my party commanded a majority in this Assembly. Acting on my advice, His Honour was pleased to create 12 offices of Minister of the Territory with their respective designations pursuant to section 34 of the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act and to appoint members of the Assembly from this side of the House to the ministerial offices pursuant to section 36 of that act. While the administrative arrangements are outlined in Gazette number S17 of 1 July 1980, I will now detail the ministry of my government for honourable members and for inclusion in Hansard. Mr Speaker, I table a copy of the Gazette.

Firstly, the offices that I hold are those of Chief Minister and Attorney-General. As Chief Minister, I will be responsible for development of government policy, constitutional development, Aboriginal matters, legislation, servicing Cabinet and the Executive Council, industrial relations, employment, workmen's compensation and labour, co-ordination of government administration, administrative services, inter-government relations and electoral and women's

affairs. I will also have under my control as Chief Minister the Northern Territory Emergency Service and will be administratively responsible for the Ombudsman's Office, the Police Force of the Northern Territory which will now carry the responsibility for fisheries' protection and enforcement and also the Public Service Commissioner's Office and the Conservation Commission. As Attorney-General, I will be responsible for law, law reform, administration of justice, civil liberties, corporate affairs, land titles, land titles registration, Supreme Court and the legal profession.

The honourable member for Stuart Park will hold the ministerial offices of Treasurer, Minister for Industrial Development and Minister for Community Development. As Treasurer and Minister for Industrial Development, through the Department of the Treasury, he will be responsible for financial administration and audit, budgeting and financial policy, economic policy and assessment, government revenue and loan raising, financial agreements, financial institutions, rent and price control, automatic data processing and tender boards. He will also have under his control the Racing and Gaming Commission, the Territory Insurance Office and the Northern Territory Development Corporation. As Minister for Community Development, the honourable member for Stuart Park will be responsible for social welfare, local government, correctional services, consumer affairs, arts and cultural affairs, libraries and archives, community grants, weights and measures, sports and recreation, ethnic affairs, youth affairs and community grants to youth and sport associations, and will have under his control the Museums and Art Galleries Board.

The honourable member for Barkly will hold the offices of Minister for Health and Minister for Mines and Energy. As Minister for Health, he will be responsible for health, including industrial and occupational health, quarantine, food standards, alcohol and drug dependence, and will have under his control the Liquor Commission of the Northern Territory. As Minister for Mines and Energy, he will be responsible for the orderly exploitation of minerals and oil, regulation of mining and exploration, mines safety, explosives, geological survey, machinery inspection, construction safety and energy planning and development. He will also have under his control the Northern Territory Electricity Commission.

The honourable member for Gillen will hold the ministerial offices of Minister for Education and Minister for Lands and Housing. As Minister for Education, he will be responsible for education planning, development and administration, curricula development and industrial training. As Minister for Lands and Housing, through the Department of Lands, he will be responsible for land administration and usage, planning and urban development, survey and valuations, and will have under his control the Northern Territory Housing Commission. The honourable member for Gillen will also be designated the Leader of the House which is a designation replacing the previous one of Manager of Government Business.

The honourable member for Ludmilla will hold the ministerial office of Minister for Primary Production and Tourism and will be responsible, through the Department of Primary Production, for that function and also for agriculture, horticulture, pastoral and fisheries development and research. He will also have under his control the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority and the Northern Territory Tourist Commission. The honourable member will also hold the ministerial office of Minister Assisting the Treasurer.

The honourable member for Casuarina will hold the ministerial office of Minister for Transport and Works and will be responsible, through the Department of Transport and Works, for transport by land, sea and air, highways and traffic

planning, communications, design, construction and maintenance of government works, fire services, public water supplies, sewerage and drainage services, government printing and water resources, and will have under his control the Northern Territory Port Authority. The honourable member will also hold the ministerial office of Minister Assisting the Chief Minister.

The honourable member for Stuart will be Government Whip in the Assembly.

The above changes are designed to strengthen ministerial control and to enable ministers to concentrate on implementing government policies and achieving government objectives. While mining and resource development will clearly be the backbone of Territory progress in the immediately foreseeable future, the new ministerial structure is intended to reflect that our efforts in government will be simultaneously directed towards tourism and agricultural development. The functions of the Co-ordinating Committee, comprising all the department heads and heads of statutory authorities, have been expanded, as well as the role of the Co-ordinator-General, to ensure that the planned, co-ordinated development of the Territory is achieved.

OPPOSITION OFFICE HOLDERS

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader)(by leave): Mr Speaker, the portfolio responsibilities for members of the opposition are as follows: I, as Leader of the Opposition, will be Shadow Chief Minister, Treasurer and Attorney-General. Functions coming under my control will be co-ordination of government administration, inter-government relations, finances and financial institutions, women's affairs, cultural affairs, ethnic affairs, public service, administration of law, including liquor licensing and Aboriginal affairs.

My colleague, the member for MacDonnell, as Deputy Opposition Leader, will be Shadow Minister for Central Australia and Shadow Minister for Community Development and Housing. The functions coming under his responsibility are welfare services, prisons and parole, youth, sport and recreation, local government and town planning, and housing.

The honourable member for Arnhem is Opposition Whip and has responsibilities for education, health and conservation of the environment. The functions coming under his purview include education services, library services, health and hospital services, the Conservation Commission and environmental protection.

The member for Sanderson is the Shadow Minister for Development and Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs. The functions for which she has responsibility are mining, tourism, transport, special development projects, energy, labour and industry, and consumer affairs.

The member for Victoria River has the responsibility for primary industry and public works and the member for Nhulunbuy has responsibility for services which include fire services, police, water and sewerage services and vehicle registration.

HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT BILL

(Serial 15)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I move that the second reading of the bill be made on the order of the day for a later day.

Motion agreed to.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received a copy of His Honour the Administrator's speech.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I present an Address in Reply to His Honour the Administrator's speech in the following terms: May it please Your Honour, we, the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory in Assembly assembled, desire to express our loyalty to Our Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Honour for the speech which you have been pleased to address to the Assembly.

Mr SPEAKER, I move that the address be agreed to and seek leave to continue my remarks at a later hour.

Leave granted.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): I second the motion and also seek leave to continue my remarks at a later hour.

Leave granted.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I propose to the Assembly for its Chairman of Committees the member for Port Darwin, Mr Tom Harris, and move that he be so appointed.

Mr PERRON (Treasurer): Mr Speaker, I second the motion.

Mr HARRIS (Port Darwin): I accept nomination.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I propose to the Assembly for its Chairman of Committees the member for Victoria River, Mr Doolan, and move that he be so appointed.

Mr PERKINS (MacDonnell): Mr Speaker, I second the nomination.

Mr DOOLAN (Victoria River): I accept nomination.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I wish to speak in support of my nomination of the honourable member for Port Darwin. Unfortunately, I did not have a chance to make any remarks in support of my nomination of yourself as Speaker of the House. However, I think it appropriate that I say that the honourable member for Port Darwin, during the past term of the Assembly, has conscientiously discharged his duties as a member of this Assembly and has carried them out with a strict regard for the Standing Orders of this Assembly. He is, I believe, a person in every way fitted to discharge honourably the duties of Chairman of Committees of this Assembly.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the honourable member for Victoria River. Although you do not take part in the debates, you would be aware that the committee stages can be somewhat rough. The member for Victoria River is very adequately equipped to deal with such problems in the parliament and it is for that reason that we propose him. He has equipped himself with a knowledge of the Standing Orders and I believe he would be an excellent acquisition to this parliament as its Chairman of Committees.

Ballot taken.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, the result of the ballot is the honourable member for Port Darwin, 11 votes, the honourable member for Victoria River, 8 votes. I declare the member for Port Darwin elected to the position of Chairman of Committees and offer him my congratulations.

APPOINTMENTS TO STANDING COMMITTEES

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of the House)(by leave): I move that, pursuant to Standing Order 15, Mr Speaker, Mr Dondas, Mr Robertson, Mr Isaacs and Mr Perkins be appointed as the Standing Orders Committee.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ROBERTSON: I move that, pursuant to Standing Order 16, Mr Perron, Mr Tuxworth, Mr Harris, Mr Doolan and Ms D'Rozario be appointed as the Committee of Privileges and that the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to sit during any adjournment of the Assembly and to adjourn from place to place.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ROBERTSON: I move that, pursuant to Standing Order 17, Mr Speaker, Mr Dondas, Mr Vale, Mrs O'Neil and Mr Leo be appointed as the House Committee.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ROBERTSON: I move that, pursuant to Standing Order 18, Mr Steele, Mrs Padgham-Purich, Mr Vale, Mr B. Collins and Mr Doolan be appointed as the Publications Committee and that the Committee have power to sit during any adjournment of the Assembly.

Motion agreed to.

Mr ROBERTSON: I move that, pursuant to Standing Order 19, Mr Harris, Mrs Padgham-Purich, Mr D.W. Collins, Mr Perkins and Mrs Lawrie be appointed as the Committee on Subordinate Legislation and Tabled Papers.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr ROBERTSON: I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.

DEBATES

Wednesday 20 August 1980

Mr Speaker MacFarlane took the Chair at 10 am.

PETITION

Development of Unkempt Crown Land

Mr STEELE (Ludmilla): Mr Speaker, I present a petition from 113 concerned residents of Ludmilla concerning a dust bowl in the electorate. The petition bears the Clerk's certificate that it conforms with the requirements of Standing Orders. I move that the petition be received and read.

Motion agreed to; petition received and read:

To the honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory, the humble petition of citizens of the Northern Territory respectfully shows that the residents of the Namarluk Drive area in Darwin would like to see the unkempt crown land along the western side of Namarluk Drive developed as parks for the enjoyment of citizens and as a scenic attraction. The park would be bounded by Namarluk Drive, Dick Ward Drive and Ludmilla Creek. Your petitioners humbly pray that the ministers of government in the Legislative Assembly act to bring this proposal to fruition and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

PETITION

Dust Control on Virginia Road

Mr DOOLAN (Victoria River): Mr Speaker, I present a petition from 120 residents of the Northern Territory concerning dust control on Virginia Road at the 17-mile on the Stuart Highway. The petition bears the Clerk's certificate that it conforms with the requirements of Standing Orders. I move that the petition be received and read.

Motion agreed to; petition received and read:

To the honourable Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory, the humble petition of the residents of the 17-mile area adjacent to Virginia Road respectfully shows that the use of Virginia Road as access to 2 quarries is creating: (a) a traffic hazard - as the trucks pass dust reduces visibility to zero and the truck drivers seem unprepared to keep to the left of the road or reduce speed for oncoming vehicles which include school buses; (b) a health hazard - as the dust hangs in the air for hours and is creating nose and throat problems amongst some members of the community; and (c) an environmental hazard - as the native plants and introduced species are unable to counteract the effects of dust settlement. Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the government will take action to remove the above mentioned hazards from the community by sealing or wetting the surface of Virginia Road, without causing unemployment to the employees or subcontractors of the 2 companies and that facilities be provided at the quarry site for the wetting down of the loads prior to the trucks proceeding along Virginia Road, and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE LAWS

Ministerial Statement

Mr EVERINGHAM (Attorney-General)(by leave): Mr Speaker, honourable members will recall the concern that has been expressed from time to time both in this Assembly and elsewhere about the difficulty of knowing the present position of the law because there have been few recent consolidations and reprints of legislation. This difficulty has been accentuated, as you would know Mr Speaker, by the necessarily large number of amendments associated with self-government and the continuing legislative revision program carried on by the government.

Before self-government, the printing of annual volumes of legislation and the reprinting of the more substantive pieces of legislation were the responsibility of the Australian Government Printer and were supervised by the Attorney-General's Department of the Commonwealth. In the light of other demands on their services, the printing of Northern Territory legislation did not attract a particularly high priority and, consequently, there was a backlog which is only now being corrected. With the availability of up-to-date equipment in Darwin and the present capacity of the Northern Territory Government Printing Office, the Legislative Draftsman has begun printing all the legislation of the Territory and will begin keeping up-to-date pamphlet reprints for purchase by the public.

The actual setting up and printing of the reprints did not commence until about April of this year. Within that short period, experience has shown that the exercise might not be as protracted or expensive as originally feared. To date, there have been 58 acts reprinted and these are available for purchase through the Information Centre in Darwin. There are 23 that are awaiting printing and 28 others which will shortly be sent to the printer. In all, there are about 220 acts to be reprinted in this program.

Honourable members will see that, on straight figures, half the exercise has or shortly will be completed. However, amongst the remaining acts to receive attention, there are some rather daunting examples such as the Crown Lands Act, the Local Government Act and the traffic legislation. These will take a little time to complete. Nevertheless, the program is ahead of schedule and proceeding apace.

By the middle of next year, it is anticipated that a start will be made on the reprinting of the regulations. At least until the primary reprinting exercise is completed, individual pamphlet copies will be available for purchase at the item price. It is not intended to include these as a subscription item. When the whole exercise has been completed, the reprints will be available in 12 binders and, at that stage, the government will be looking at striking a subscription rate for the updating service.

Over this and the next few sittings, honourable members will note certain schedules of minor amendments appended to certain bills converting specific references to 'ordinance' to 'act'. These amendments are to facilitate the reprinting exercise and I trust that the House will bear with us until the disposal of these matters.

ALLEGATIONS OF HIGH LEPROSY RATES IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

Ministerial Statement

Mr TUXWORTH (Mines and Energy)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I refer to a recent

interview provided by the federal opposition spokesman on Aboriginal Affairs, Mr West, on the 'After 8' program. In the course of his interview, Mr West supported a statement made by Professor Hollows: 'Leprosy rates in Northern Australia are amongst the worst in the world'.

Mr Speaker, I would say emphatically that this statement is incorrect. Leprosy treatment in the Northern Territory is of the highest level by any standards. The incidence of the disease has been falling steadily over the last 30 years and there are less than 30 active cases in the Northern Territory at any one time. At present, new active cases average less than 0.4 people per 1,000 and the number of active cases has steadily dropped from 13 per 1,000 in 1951.

Extensive specialist rehabilitation support is provided for old and non-infective cases in the Northern Territory, including tendon transplants to correct deformities. The Northern Territory Medical Service is also undertaking a number of research programs, including immunology, and on peripheral nerves with a view to the restoration of sensation to insensitive limbs.

Mr Speaker, I would like to make it absolutely clear that leprosy in the Northern Territory is under control and we now get only a few new cases each year. In the interview I refer to, Mr West gave quite a wrong impression by quoting figures for old cases which have been cured, and are therefore non-infectious, as if they were active and infectious. The Department of Health can be proud of its pioneering work on leprosy control and research and we are fortunate indeed to have working for us Dr John Hargrave who is one of the world experts on this particular disease.

Mr Speaker, I am getting increasingly irritated by examples of this nature whereby some federal politicians attempt to grab the limelight and notoriety by making startling statements about conditions in the Northern Territory about which they remain almost totally ignorant. For the benefit of honourable members, I would like to table a report by the Department of Health called 'Current Notes on Leprosy Control in the Northern Territory' and I seek the leave of the House to do that.

Leave granted.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I move that the document be noted and seek leave to continue my remarks at a later date.

Motion negatived.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I do not know whether the government is just being bloody-minded but the procedure I have just sought to implement is perfectly normal. The minister spoke without speaking to the opposite number on this side so we did not know what he was talking about. He made his statement, tabled a document and, according to the Standing Orders, it is perfectly proper for any member to move that the document be noted and to seek leave to continue his remarks at a later date. Now, unless the government is intending to proceed, I will move the suspension of Standing Orders to enable me to do that.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Opposition Leader seeks leave to continue his remarks at a later date. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

ASSEMBLY SITTING TIMES

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of the House)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that during the present session of the Assembly, notwithstanding any previous resolution of the Assembly, Mr Speaker may, at his discretion, appoint a time for holding the sitting of the Assembly, which time shall be notified to each member in writing.

Motion agreed to.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR MEMBERS

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of the House)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that, if the time between the determination of one sitting day and the commencement of the next sitting day is 2 months or more on any occasion during this session, all members of the Assembly shall be deemed to have been granted leave of absence for such interval between the sitting days.

The intention of the motion is fairly obvious and one might reflect back on the life of the previous parliament. I understand that it is the practice of the federal parliament to move a motion granting leave at the end of every session where it is to be more than 2 months before the beginning of the next session otherwise members may be deemed to have vacated their seats. If we reflect back on the last election, there were only 150 votes between there being an official opposition and an unofficial one. In fact, there are people in this House who would not want to see another election.

Motion agreed to.

BROADCASTING OF ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of the House)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that this Assembly, for the purposes of section 24 of the Legislative Assembly Powers and Privileges Act, authorises the broadcasting of the budget speech of the Treasurer on Thursday 21 August 1980 and, for the remainder of this session, authorises a broadcasting of proceedings on such occasions as Mr Speaker may determine.

Motion agreed to.

DELEGATES TO AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that the delegates of this Assembly to the Australian Constitutional Convention be myself and the honourable Leader of the Opposition and that, in the event that either delegate is unable to attend the convention, the honourable Leader of the House shall act as substitute delegate.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I would like to speak to the motion and perhaps foreshadow an amendment. It would be appropriate if the Chief Minister is unable to attend the Constitutional Convention that the Leader of the House attend instead. If I am unable to attend, I think it would be proper if I were allowed to nominate a nominee to represent me. As the Chief Minister knows, many of the motions have been carried unanimously but there have been occasions, at the Perth Conference, for example, where the Chief Minister and I did not show our normal unanimity on subjects and divided one each side. Obviously, if I am unable to attend, it would be incorrect for the Leader of the House to represent me. Even though we do go as Territory

delegates, we have to understand the political realities of the Constitutional Convention.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I indicate that I am certainly prepared to accept such an amendment. I simply point out to honourable members that this motion has identical terms as that moved by me on a previous occasion and certainly there was no intention on the part of the government to attempt to preclude the opposition from nominating a substitute for the Leader of the Opposition. It has simply been customary in the past that this Assembly be represented at the Constitutional Convention in that way.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I move an amendment to the motion that the delegates to the Australian Constitutional Convention be the Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition or their respective nominees.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

DELEGATES TO AUSTRALASIAN STUDY OF PARLIAMENT GROUP

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that during the full term of this Assembly the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory be represented at meetings of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, not conflicting with sittings of the Assembly, by 2 members, 1 nominated by the Chief Minister and 1 nominated by the Leader of the Opposition for each meeting.

Motion agreed to.

RECONSTITUTION OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister)(by leave): I move that, during the present session of the Assembly, a committee to be known as the Sessional Committee on the Environment consisting of Mrs Noel Padgham-Purich, Mr Denis Collins, Mr Tom Harris, Mr Bob Collins and Mrs Dawn Lawrie be appointed, that the committee be empowered to inquire into and, from time to time, report upon and make recommendations on all matters relating to uranium mining and processing activities and their effects on the environment within the Alligator Rivers region, that the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to sit during any adjournment of the Assembly and to adjourn from place to place, that the committee be empowered to authorise the release of transcripts or evidence taken during public hearings and to publish information pertaining to the committee's activities from time to time.

The government first established this sessional committee in the first session of the Second Assembly and the committee was re-established in the second session. I propose that it be re-established now as a means by which the Assembly can scrutinise the activities of the uranium mining industry in the uranium province. As uranium mining develops in the future, the committee will be useful in ensuring that, as far as possible, development takes place in harmony with the physical, social and economic environment of the Territory.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arnhem): In support of the motion, I would like to say that the opposition welcomes the re-establishment of this committee. I wish to commend the Chief Minister. I was very pleased to note that the scope of the activities of the committee has been broadened. The activities of the original committee were confined to Kakadu National Park. Obviously, in line with some of the remarks that the Administrator made yesterday in respect of Jabiluka and Koongarra, and the government's aspirations in that direction, the

activities of the committee have been broadened to include the entire Alligator Rivers region and I certainly welcome that.

One thing that I must say, and probably there would be few members of the original committee who would disagree with me, is that I was disappointed in the lack of activity by the previous committee. The honourable Minister for Education touched on a problem which is common to every one of us: the great difficulty in getting a number of people together in one place at any one time. I might say that these remarks are meant in no way to disparage the chairman or any member of that committee. However, it did seem to be a problem that activities were often curtailed because it was impossible to get the 5 of us together in one spot. I support the Chief Minister's statement on the importance of the work of this committee and I certainly hope, for the sake of the Territory, that the work of the committee somehow or other, in this new session of the Assembly, can be a lot more active than it was in the last.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of the House)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the introduction of bills without notice at this sittings.

I do this for the sake of convenience. It seems to me that rather than seek leave to introduce every bill individually - and I have discussed this matter with the Opposition Whip - it would make sense to simply suspend Standing Orders to allow the introduction of legislation during the next 2 days. I assure the House that this is in no way a lead up to slamming legislation through at this sittings. All of this legislation will lie on the table until November for due scrutiny and study by members.

Motion agreed to.

JABIRU TOWN DEVELOPMENT BILL

(Serial 29)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The Jabiru Town Development Authority is about to enter into contracts with Ranger, Pancontinental and Noranda in relation to the sharing of the cost of construction and development of the town of Jabiru and for the funding of the authority by the companies for these purposes. Ranger is what is called a participating body under the act and hence, under the act, the authority has clear power to contract with Ranger in relation to such a matter. However, as neither Pancontinental nor Noranda has yet received approval to mine, they are not participating bodies. It is therefore necessary to amend the act so that there is no doubt as to the authority's capacity to contract with the non-participating bodies.

The Jabiru Town Development Act is also deficient in that it contains no express power for the authority to enter into contracts for any other purpose although it has a general power to do all things necessary or convenient in the exercise of its powers. The proposed amendment will clearly establish the contractual capacity of the authority in relation to its powers and functions.

Members of the Assembly are probably aware that the first permanent residents of Jabiru have moved into the town. The Jabiru Town Development Authority is therefore required to provide a range of municipal services. However, the authority, in the exercise of its municipal functions, does not have the customary statutory liability limitation for acts of nuisance or negligence enjoyed by supply authorities or municipal bodies generally and it is therefore considered necessary to amend the act to provide that protection. Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

UNIVERSITY (INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS) BILL
(Serial 13)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr ROBERTSON (Education): Mr Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The government has already announced its intention to open a university in the Northern Territory by 1982. This is a momentous step in the direction of expanding the educational opportunities available to Territory residents. The 2 principal concerns of the government in implementing this policy are that the new university be appropriate to the needs of the Territory and that it be an institution of quality. Members can be assured that the government will give particular emphasis to these 2 factors. To do this, a considerable amount of forward planning is required. Obviously, it is not possible to set up a new university overnight. Many questions have yet to be resolved in advance of the opening of the doors to students. To this end, this bill is introduced.

I stress that this bill is an interim measure only and does not constitute the legislation under which the university will ultimately operate. Accordingly, members will observe in clause 10(g) that one of the functions of the proposed planning authority is to make recommendations to the minister on the form of legislation required to establish a university. The interim senate also has powers in the bill to make recommendations in respect of the future legislation as part of its general powers to advise both the minister and the planning authority.

Members will no doubt have many questions to ask concerning the form and development of the new university. I do not want to lengthen this speech by dealing with such issues at this time. It is suffice to say that, in many matters concerning the university, no final decision has been yet taken by the government. This bill is designed to create the necessary administrative machinery whereby government decisions can be taken and arranged in important areas on the basis of proper planning and research and after adequate consultation with the community and with all responsible bodies including those of the Commonwealth.

As members will be aware, the government has already taken a number of initiatives designed to promote the introduction of a new university. In particular, the Chief Minister has already taken the matter up as to the need for a university in the Territory in discussions with a wide range of persons including the Prime Minister and other Commonwealth ministers. In all these discussions, the point has been continually stressed that Territorians are disadvantaged in comparison with residents in the south in the degree of access to a full range of educational options. For those Territory students

who wish to pursue tertiary studies at the highest level, the usual course is for them to have to physically move out of the Territory to enter a university. In so far as it is practical to do so, the government is determined to create an institution whereby this type of necessity ceases to exist.

The government has taken the initiative of appointing Dr James Eedle, the former Secretary of the Department of Education, as Planning Vice-Chancellor of the new university. A small planning unit is already being created to assist Dr Eedle in his task and this team will form the nucleus of the university planning authority specified in this bill.

The government also recently invited the vice-chancellors of the Universities of Queensland, Deakin, New England and James Cook to Darwin for discussions with a wide cross-section of the community. I should stress that the vice-chancellors were not invited in a representative capacity nor as part of any formal standing committee. The purpose of their visit was to enable the Northern Territory to draw from their personal advice and experience in matters of concern. I feel that their visit was of considerable benefit and that they will greatly assist in our planning.

Turning to the bill, the first important aspect is that it enables an interim senate to be appointed of not less than 6 persons. It is considered preferable not to specify the membership at this time, other than in respect of the Planning Vice-Chancellor, so as not to pre-empt decisions on the membership and composition of the permanent governing body of the university under later legislation. However, it is the government's intention to appoint a representative cross-section of the community to the interim senate, including interstate representation where practicable. The interim senate will have wide powers to advise the minister and the planning authority. In 2 respects, its recommendations will be a prerequisite to action by the planning authority: in respect of the advance appointments of any officer, office or position in the university and the authorising of any courses of study to be offered by the university. I would refer members to clause 11(3) of the bill in this regard.

The second important aspect of the bill is that it enables the planning authority, as a legal entity in its own right and with wide powers, to prepare and execute plans for the development of the university prior to opening its doors. In view of the government's announced timetable, there is much to be done before 1982 and, accordingly, it has been thought necessary to frame these powers in a wide manner so as not to create any holdups from a legal point of view. The authority will have power to deal with relevant Commonwealth authorities and other interested bodies and institutions to acquire and hold property, to enter into contracts, to execute plans and do all other necessary things to enable a university to commence with as few problems as possible. It will have its own source of funds for this purpose under legislative appropriation. It will have power to appoint Territory public servants to the authority although it will not be limited to this source for its staff. The planning authority will be constituted by the Planning Vice-Chancellor or, in his absence, the assisting Planning Vice-Chancellor if one has been appointed.

It is the government's intention that, after the establishment of the university under subsequent legislation, this bill will be repealed and the administration of the new university will be passed to the permanent senate as part of an autonomous institution in the tradition of other universities should that be the course adopted by the government. The enactment of this bill will give the plans for the new university a firm legislative foundation and create the necessary legal framework within which these plans can be

implemented. It will also advance the cause of the university in its discussions with the Commonwealth as a sign of the firm intention of the Territory government that Territory residents should be provided with as wide a range of educational options as possible. In the view of the government, it is appropriate that residents of the Territory should enjoy substantially similar advantages to those persons resident in the states and the ACT, not only in educational fields but generally. I believe that the majority of Territory residents support the government in this view and, particularly, that they support the announced intention of the establishment of the university for the Northern Territory.

I seek the support of members for the early passage of legislation in November to assist in the establishment of the university and commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

LEPROSY AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 6)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr TUXWORTH (Health): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

This bill is a simple one. It removes the prohibition on a person being within 400 yards of a leprosarium. In effect, the restriction denies the public access by land to the East Arm slipway. Previously, the access road to the slipway was within the boundaries of the leprosarium. The area of the leprosarium has now been reduced but the access road to the slipway is still within 400 yards of the leprosarium.

The current Leprosy Act commenced on 25 July 1955. This act provides for the exclusion of all persons from the leprosarium except leprosy patients, certain medical personnel and those specifically authorised by the Chief Medical Officer. The act also prohibits persons from being or remaining within 400 yards of the boundaries of a leprosarium. Any medical reasons there may have been for the 400-yard prohibited area are no longer valid as the disease is now believed to be transmitted by long-term close contact with infected cases of leprosy. Infectivity is reduced almost immediately by modern chemotherapy and the leprosarium itself provides an adequate buffer zone between the hospital and the general public. The leprosarium will remain closed to unauthorised persons.

This bill will enable the public to have access to the East Arm Road and the waterways beyond. The schedule to this bill contains a number of formal amendments changing the word 'ordinance' to 'act' wherever appearing. It is a bill, Mr Speaker, which will meet with the approval of all members of this Assembly and I commend it to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 12)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

Honourable members will recall that the Criminal Law Consolidation Act was amended in 1978 by the addition of section 382A which gave the Supreme Court wide discretionary powers to deal with persons unfit to plead. This bill seeks to rectify 2 procedural anomalies which have become apparent in section 382A.

Clause 3A of the bill seeks to give the Supreme Court power, where a person is found unfit to plead to an indictable offence, to discharge the person absolutely or to conditionally release the person or to detain the person in safe custody. As section 382A now stands, the Supreme Court has these powers only where the person was found by the magistrate to be unfit to plead. Clause 3B of the bill seeks to give the Supreme Court power to vary any conditions imposed when releasing a person from custody under section 382A(6)(b) or to absolutely discharge that person.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

HOUSING AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 14)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr ROBERTSON (Lands and Housing): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to make some necessary amendments to the Housing Act. The objectives of these amendments are firstly to enable the Housing Commission to sell flats and town houses, which are suitable from both a technical and administrative point of view, to approved tenants and to allow the Housing Commission to make loans under the Northern Territory Home Loans Scheme to approved tenants to purchase such dwellings. Under the Housing Act as it now stands, the Housing Commission is restricted to selling only those dwellings which are detached, single residential dwellings; for example, houses. The desire to own one's home is universal and my government is committed to assisting Territorians to fulfil this desire. However, there are some sections of the community, including retired couples, childless couples and single people, who do not desire or aspire to ownership of the usually more costly conventional house on its own suburban block, but who prefer the home unit style of living. The amendment to this act is designed to cater for these people and will make home ownership more accessible to a wider section of the community.

It is envisaged that flats and town houses selected for sale will be offered initially to existing tenants and, if they do not wish to purchase, to other applicants. Existing tenants who do not wish to avail themselves of the offer will be transferred to other accommodation of equal or higher standard. Sales will be negotiated on a cash basis or through the Northern Territory Government Home Loans Scheme, the Public Service Staff Sales Scheme or normal commercial channels or through a combination of these.

As well as the changes which the bill is making to the act, the opportunity is also being taken to correct and update the terms of the Housing Act. Members will be aware that the Housing Act has been amended on a number of occasions and, in accordance with the government program, will be reprinted in due course. These amendments are self-explanatory. They remove unnecessary matter, correct and update cross-references and put sums of money into the correct style. These amendments will facilitate the reprinting of the Housing Act in due course.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

CHILD WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 28)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr PERRON (Treasurer): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to allow the Childrens Court to be held in the same building as other courts provided it is kept physically and entirely separate from those other courts. At present, section 28 of the act provides that the Childrens Court must be held in a separate building to other courts or, if the Childrens Court is held in the same building as other courts, it must sit outside the normal business hours of other courts. As honourable members will know, a new law court building was recently opened in Alice Springs. It was intended to use court room 4 as the Childrens Court. This court has a separate entrance and waiting area. The government recognises the need to keep the Childrens Court and other courts separate but does not believe it is necessary to have the Childrens Court located in a separate building. The government believes that a quite unreasonable burden would be placed on the taxpayer if this were to be done. When the new lower court building in Darwin is completed, a similar situation will arise. The problems are, and will be also encountered in country areas, where there is no separation of facilities.

This bill simply seeks to enable Childrens Courts to operate in the same complex as other courts whilst ensuring that the facilities and proceedings of the Childrens Courts are kept separate from the facilities and proceedings of other courts. Present arrangements whereby the Childrens Court must be held in a different building to other courts are causing administrative difficulties and I commend this bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr ROBERTSON (Leader of the House)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I move that so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent 3 bills relating to crown lands, local government and control of roads being presented and read a first time together and 1 motion being put in regard to, respectively, the second readings, the committee report stages and the third readings of the bills together, and the consideration of the bills separately in the committee of the whole.

Motion agreed to.

CROWN LANDS AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 16)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 17)

CONTROL OF ROADS AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 18)

Bills presented and read a first time.

Mr ROBERTSON (Lands and Housing): Mr Speaker, I move that the bills be now read a second time.

These bills are almost identical to bills that lapsed from the previous Assembly dealing with what is commonly known as airspace rights. In recent years, a shortage of off-street parking has become evident in Darwin's central business district but development of multi-storey car-parks has been hampered by the scarcity of suitable vacant land. As a result, the Corporation of the City of Darwin, with government funding, proposed to have such a structure built utilising airspace above the lane adjacent to the Smith Street Mall. The legal status of such a development is in some doubt under existing law and the purpose of these bills is to enable the municipal councils to permit this type of construction.

I direct my remarks principally to the Crown Lands Amendment Bill as it is this bill which will enable these new powers to be exercised by councils. The object of the crown lands legislation is to empower a council to permit development to occur over public roads and, in fact, under them as well. The concept is not new and it has existed for a number of years in other states such as New South Wales and South Australia. The bill is not limited to parking proposals in the central business district nor, indeed, is it limited to Darwin. It is designed to cover any council within the meaning of the Local Government Act and includes any road or mall.

The amendment to the Control of Roads Act is intended to ensure that, if a road is closed, the council is not automatically divested of an interest it may have under the Real Property Act. The amendment to the Local Government Act relates to powers of the council in relation to roads and malls when it requires certificate of title of those roads and malls and the limitation to the exercise of these powers.

Honourable members will be aware that the Corporation of the City of Darwin is anxious to go to tender on this multi-storey car-park immediately. There is some fear within the corporation that it requires this legislation to be enacted and operational before it goes to such tender. I do not share its view. Unless I am absolutely convinced that it is vital in the interests of people - and normally I would expect to use letters of hardship to you, Sir, rather than suspension of Standing Orders - I am not prepared to ask this House to shove this legislation through in just 2 days. The legislation will lie until November. The best opinion I have is that there is no bar to the Corporation of the City of Darwin going to tender on this proposal and, indeed, commencing construction. Honourable members will be aware that I used very similar words when I introduced, as Minister for Community Development, a proposal to close Smith Street to allow the construction of a mall. I refused to ask the Assembly to push that lot through. All members would be aware that that program went ahead without any hitches whatsoever. The only time it becomes a problem is when some clown wants to take out a prerogative writ against it. I cannot imagine anyone wanting to hold up the construction of a much-needed car-park facility in Darwin.

Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

FAMILY PROVISION AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 19)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to enable some but not all de facto spouses to apply to the Supreme Court for provision out of the estates of their deceased spouse. At present, de facto spouses cannot apply at all. For some years, de facto spouses have been able to apply in South Australia and Western Australia and they are given rights under some Commonwealth legislation; for example, in the Social Services Act.

It may be said, Mr Speaker, that further legal recognition of de facto relationships might weaken the institution of marriage. That is certainly not the intention of this bill nor do I believe that its passage will have that effect. The government firmly believes in and strongly supports the institution of marriage. There are, however, a large number of couples in the Territory living in de facto relationships, probably proportionately more than anywhere else in Australia. Some of these relationships are permanent and involve a degree of dependence which imposes a strong moral duty on one partner to make provision for the other in the event of his or her death. Provision is, of course, often made but sometimes it is not. This can happen through forgetfulness or simply through ignorance of the law: one partner believing the other perhaps will inherit when, in fact, as a matter of law, he or she will not.

Mr Speaker, I believe a balance has to be struck between the duty which some people owe to their de facto partners and protecting the institution of marriage. In striking this balance, the government has given considerable thought to the criteria upon which de facto widows or widowers should be able to claim and how 'de facto widow' and 'de facto widower' should be defined. In South Australia, to have a claim, a de facto spouse must have been cohabiting with the deceased at the time of death and either have been cohabiting for a period of 5 years or for periods totalling 5 years out of the preceding 6 years immediately before the death or had sexual relations with the deceased resulting in the birth of a child. Any criteria based on the length of time 2 people have lived together must be purely arbitrary and would probably work an injustice. If the period were fixed - for example, at 3 years - some deserving cases of 2½ years would fail and some less deserving of 3 years might succeed and so on. Western Australia sets no time period and that, Mr Speaker, I think is the correct approach.

The government also regards the alternative South Australian requirement, that of the birth of a child, as inappropriate. There seems little logic in linking the birth of a child to the existence of a de facto relationship. To enable a person to claim from another's estate when that person may only have lived with the deceased for a very short period seems wholly unreasonable. The requirement with regard to the birth of a child can, and in South Australia has, produced unintended and absurd results. In one recent case, A married B, they had children, they later divorced. Shortly before A's death, B went back to live with A but did not remarry him. B claimed and succeeded on the grounds that she had, in the distant past, had sexual relations with A resulting in the birth of a child.

Children themselves, in any event, have a claim. In Western Australia, in order to claim, the de facto spouse must be (i) wholly or partially maintained by the deceased; (ii) ordinarily a member of the household of the deceased; and (iii) a person for whom, in the opinion of the court, the deceased had some special moral responsibility to make provision. The second and third criteria I have just mentioned have been criticised as being too vague and

waffly to be of any practical use to the court. It is obviously difficult to interpret what is meant by 'a special moral responsibility'. It is very subjective.

I turn now to the approach taken in this bill. Clause 4 inserts a definition of 'de facto widow' and 'de facto widower'. The definition seeks to equate as closely as possible with legal widows and widowers those de facto widows and widowers who are intended to be able to claim. Casual relationships are clearly outside the scope of the definition.

Clause 5 adds de facto widows and widowers to the list of those who may claim and ensures that only those who are maintained immediately before the death can apply. 'Maintained' is defined in existing section 7 to mean a contribution to the maintenance of a person being a contribution that, in all the circumstances, can be regarded as other than a nominal contribution.

I draw honourable members' attention, Mr Speaker, to existing sections 8 and 22 of the act which will apply to claims by de facto spouses. Section 8 gives the court a wide discretion to take all relevant factors into account, including the character and conduct of the applicant. Some couples may wish to live together but consciously and deliberately not want the consequences which flow from legal marriage to apply to them. Section 22 enables the court to find out and take note of the reasons why a person has not made provision. The court can receive in evidence a statement filed by a testator setting out his or her reasons. Section 22 is, therefore, a most important rider to the provisions of this bill and will in most, if not all cases, enable de facto couples who wish to remain outside the scope of the bill to do so.

The government believes this bill will meet a genuine social need in the Territory. Its provisions are progressive but sensitive. The government recognises, however, that some people may feel that a proper balance between the duty owed by de facto partners to each other and protecting the institution of marriage has not been struck or could be achieved in other ways. The government would welcome comment from honourable members before the next sittings so that, if there are constructive amendments which we can accept, these can be drafted in plenty of time for the next sittings. Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

TEACHING SERVICE BILL (Serial 20)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr ROBERTSON (Education): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

Mr Speaker, I stated during the course of the last sittings of the House in April that the government would, as a matter of top priority, reintroduce legislation to establish a Northern Territory Teaching Service by the beginning of the 1980-81 academic year. I also stated then that the reintroduced legislation would embody the principles contained in that bill. The Chief Minister confirmed this undertaking in his policy speech on 26 May 1980. Since then, the Commonwealth government has indicated that it will do all in its power to enact the necessary complementary legislative arrangements in time for the beginning of 1981. We can only hope, Mr Speaker.

I do not propose to reiterate the reasons for establishing a Northern

Territory Teaching Service as I believe that they are now well understood by members of the House, by teachers and by the public generally. In preparing this bill, I have taken into account all of the views expressed by the many bodies who contributed to discussions after the presentation of the earlier bill. Members will recall that a most intensive period of negotiation and consultation has taken place with the Northern Territory Teachers Federation, at present in the gallery, with parent groups and representatives of business, industry and many private individuals. This bill, I believe, will be of great significance to the effective delivery of educational services to students and to the satisfaction of parents and employers in the Northern Territory.

I now wish to comment on the major characteristics of the bill in general. The bill provides for the establishment of a teaching service with an independent commissioner. The commissioner's role, which I will describe in more detail later, has been designed to be consistent with the way in which the education system has actually operated in the Northern Territory for several years and the way of operation of the Commissioner of the Commonwealth Teaching Service so that disruptions may be minimised. The commissioner's roles and functions have, as far as possible, been made consistent with the roles and functions of the Public Service Commissioner of the Northern Territory and a great deal of care has been taken to integrate the way of operation of the commissioner with the system of administration employed by the Northern Territory government as a whole.

The bill provides for the retention of rights on transfer and conditions on transfer no less favourable than teachers enjoyed as at 1 January 1980. Mr Speaker, we are going to have to give a little bit more consideration to the question of entitlements. The 1 January 1980 discussions came out of an undertaking I made to the general conference of the Northern Territory Teachers Federation because of moves apparently to erode the rights of the Commonwealth Teaching Service members at that time. If members look further on, they will find that there is also a reference that the conditions of service be not less than those at the date of transfer. Clearly, a conflict exists and it is really a drafting problem. Elaborate protection of teachers' rights and interests are contained in the various appeals sections of the bill and I will detail these later.

The bill also provides for ongoing consultation by the commissioner on matters relating to the provisions of the teaching service. It should be remembered by members that the prime purpose of the bill is to enable the government, through a teaching service, to make provision for education for all people of the Northern Territory and, in particular, to provide for the access of all children to educational programs appropriate to their individual needs and abilities. That, of course, is the philosophy contained in the Education Act, the most important piece of legislation in the education area. In recognition of this, since the secretary of the Department of Education has responsibilities under the Education Act for the delivery of education services throughout the Northern Territory, this bill differentiates very clearly between the functions of the Secretary of the Department of Education and the functions of the commissioner. Generally, it gives the Secretary of the Department of Education the same normal powers which heads of departments in the Northern Territory require to carry out their responsibilities. In the same way as I have mentioned above, the powers, roles and functions of the commissioner have been integrated with the roles of other commissioners in the Northern Territory in respect to the way in which this government operates.

I now turn to the more salient points of the legislation before honourable

members. The first clause of significance relates to the usual definitions. I would draw the attention of honourable members to the definition of 'transferred employee' and 'transferred officer' since these have significance to part VI of the bill which details the arrangements for transfer of officers and employees from the Commonwealth Teaching Service to the Teaching Service of the Northern Territory. Clauses 4 to 8 are standard provisions similar to those which exist in other pieces of legislation. Clause 9 provides a broad statement of functions for the commissioner following on his powers generally and to his powers of delegation in clauses 10 and 11.

Clause 12 provides for the commissioner to have support staff and the commissioner is deemed, therefore, to be a prescribed authority for the purpose of the Public Service Act. Clause 14 relates to the appointment of officers and is similar to the Northern Territory Public Service Act. Clauses 15 and 16 are of special significance since they establish the relationship between the commissioner, on the one hand, as the person who makes an officer or employee available for the performance of educational duties and the secretary, on the other hand, as being the person responsible for directing teachers in their duties and for deploying officers and employees to whichever schools or educational units he thinks fit. Again, this is a normal relationship between the head of a department and the commissioner.

Clause 17 relates to the method of calling applications for the service and clause 18 details the requirement that all appointments be made on a probationary period not exceeding one year unless the commissioner otherwise determines that probation should continue for a further period not exceeding one year. Clause 19 empowers the commissioner to engage temporary employees, at the request of the secretary, to perform educational duties. In the Northern Territory context, this is an important provision given the high turnover of teachers and the number of teachers who are on paid leave or leave without pay for a variety of reasons. Once again, the duties of employees are directed by the secretary.

Clause 20 provides for an appeal to the commissioner by an officer or employee if he feels he has grounds for complaint arising out of a direction as to duties given by the secretary under either clause 15 or clause 19(3). This provision is almost identical to the provision contained in the Public Service Act, the only significant change being that, in clause 6, the commissioner is required to consult with the secretary following an appeal which the commissioner upholds. The reason for this requirement is to ensure that the new direction will be one which will not be likely to be subject to subsequent appeal. In other words, we want to get on with the job. The successful operation of this provision for protecting officers and employees depends upon the strength of ethics and the professionalism of the teaching force. Only teachers can ensure that this provision is not abused. I am confident that its purpose will be respected. Certainly, this provision, which is almost identical with that in section 65 of the Public Service Act, has not caused problems in the operations of the Northern Territory Public Service. As far as I am aware, not one appeal has ever been carried to the commissioner under section 65 of the Public Service Act. I hope teachers are of the same mind. Nonetheless, it is an important protection for capricious and unconscionable instructions and properly belongs in this legislation.

Clause 23 has a related division dealing with reclassification. It should be noted that clause 24 requires the commissioner to consult with and obtain a report from the secretary before reporting to the Administrator under clauses 22 and 23. Again, it is a standard provision used in the Northern Territory Public Service Act.

Clause 25 sets out the relative powers and functions of the secretary and commissioner in relation to the filling of a vacant position. Consistent with the Northern Territory Public Service Act, the secretary appoints, transfers and promotes an officer and the commissioner arranges gazettal and determines that the positions are filled by officers possessing specified qualifications. Let me say, Mr Speaker, that it is not unprecedented in the Northern Territory Public Service for the permanent head of a department to promote a person to a position and the commissioner to overrule it. This is as it should be if a person is not qualified to hold the position. This clause also makes provision for regulations concerning temporary promotion or transfer of an officer or an employee to fill a vacant position.

Clause 26 sets out the criteria for determining efficiency which is the single criterion for selection of an officer. Clause 27 is the normal section for provisional promotion. Clauses 28 and 29 set out the procedure for appeal against promotion and the establishment by the commissioner of such promotions and appeals boards as are necessary. It should be noted by members that it is a significant change to the situation which prevails under the Commonwealth Teaching Service in that the Appeals Board should consist of the Chairman of the Promotions Appeals Board, an officer nominated by the secretary and one officer nominated by the Northern Territory Teachers Federation. In other words, it is a situation analogous with the one which exists in the Northern Territory Public Service.

Clause 30 is a particularly significant provision since it empowers the commissioner, after consultation with the secretary, to develop recruitment and promotion procedures which the secretary will be bound by. This provision, when combined with part V, which is concerned with the establishment of a teacher advisory council, contains adequate protection for members of the teaching service who may be concerned that existing procedures, such as peer assessment, may be endangered. While it may not be endangered, I am quite sure that just about every teacher in the Northern Territory and members of the executive of the Teachers Federation are not happy with the method of operation of the peer assessment system at the moment. There will be provision for consultation and negotiation between the commissioner, the union and myself in it to try to streamline that system and get some sense into it. Once again, the commissioner's powers in respect to recruitment and promotion procedures are similar to those given to the Northern Territory Public Service Commissioner.

Part IV sets out the provision for discipline of officers. Clause 39 gives the secretary the power of suspension for 1 month if, in the secretary's opinion, an officer is inefficient, incompetent, unfit or unable to perform his duty or is guilty of misconduct. The secretary is required to inform the commissioner in writing of the suspension and the grounds for it. The following provisions detail the commissioner's function in relation to appeals, retirements on the grounds of inefficiency, disciplinary actions for misconduct and so on. Clause 37 provides for appeal against disciplinary action by the commissioner. Appeals against disciplinary action by the commissioner are dealt with under part IV which establishes a Disciplinary Appeals Board.

Division 5 relates to tenure and is a standard provision as is clause 39 which deals with excess officers. Part IV, mentioned above, which establishes the Disciplinary Appeals Board, consists of a fair and detailed provision for the protection of teachers rights. It should be noted by members that each panel of an appeal board should consist of 3 persons drawn from the following groups: a magistrate and 3 legal practitioners appointed by the minister, 10 persons nominated by the Secretary of the Department of Education and 10 persons nominated by the Northern Territory Teachers Federation. The method is very

similar to that which operates under the Public Service Act. The idea of appointing the 2 lots of 10 will allow the appeals board to sit anywhere in the Northern Territory without having to fly hordes of people all over the countryside. Again, I would stress that this lengthy clause contains standard provisions for dealing with these matters.

Part V establishes a Teacher Advisory Council. The prime purpose of the Teacher Advisory Council is to advise the commissioner on matters relating to the teaching service. The composition of the Teacher Advisory Council provides for a chairman, 3 persons nominated by the Northern Territory Teachers Federation and 3 persons nominated by the secretary. All of these shall be appointed by the minister by notice in the Gazette for a period not exceeding 2 years.

This composition of the Teacher Advisory Council, I believe, will provide the commissioner with balanced, impartial advice on matters such as qualifications, experience necessary for entry into the service, guidelines for eligibility for promotion and other similar matters relating to the teaching service.

Part VI concerns transfers to the service and, as I mentioned earlier, these provisions provide the necessary arrangements for the protection of officers transferring from the Commonwealth Teaching Service to the Teaching Service of the Northern Territory. It is to this in particular that the complementary Commonwealth legislation to amend the Commonwealth Teaching Service Act will be directed to allow for these transfers to take place. Again, these are standard provisions for the protection of officers and are similar to those applied for the transfer of other departments and authorities from the Commonwealth to the Northern Territory Public Service.

Part VII empowers the minister to make arrangements for the training of student teachers in the Territory, which will become increasingly important in future years. Clauses 59 and 63 are standard provisions relating to outside employment, resignations for the purpose of elections to parliament, bylaws, annual reports and the regulations to the Teaching Service Act.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I believe the bill which I have just outlined provides a firm basis for the establishment of a teaching service in the Northern Territory and one which will complement the Education Act in its prime purpose of delivering educational services effectively and ensuring the provision of the highest possible standards of education for children in the Northern Territory.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

POWERS OF ATTORNEY AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 22)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Attorney-General): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

Honourable members will recollect that, earlier this year, the House passed the Powers of Attorney Act. Section 8 of the act provides that powers of attorney used to effect dealings in land must be registered. 'Registered'

is defined to mean registered in the general registry office under the registration act. It was intended that people be able to continue to use the existing system of depositing copies of papers under the Real Property Act as an alternative to registration under section 8. It was thought that the words of section 4(2), 'this act extends the powers authorising dealings with land', were sufficient to ensure that the provisions of the Real Property Act were not overridden. The government, however, has received advice that there is some doubt about this. The present bill seeks to remove those doubts and ensure that powers of attorney used to effect dealings in land may be either registered under the Powers of Attorney Act or copies thereof deposited under the Real Property Act. There always was and still is intention to watch both systems in operation and then to review the position.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

CROWN LANDS AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 21)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr ROBERTSON (Lands and Housing): Mr Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

This bill is a reintroduction of legislation designed to enable the implementation of the government's policy to change the Territory's land tenure system from one based on leasehold to one based largely on freehold title. All but 2 members would recall that the previous Minister for Lands and Housing gave a very detailed speech in respect of this bill. I will not tie the House up by going right through the same thing all over again. I apologise to our 2 new members but they can certainly refer to Hansard for details.

The measure was foreshadowed in the life of the previous parliament and is a similar bill to one which has since lapsed. The proposed change will have a major impact on the Territory's development and economic progress. The creation of unconditional freehold title will give Territory residents and landowners rights similar to those existing in some of the states. Administration of property laws will become more streamlined and efficient, bringing to an end the present system with its complicated array of leases and conditions.

The legislation does not cover large parcel holdings as the question of pastoral tenure is currently the subject of an independent inquiry. Other exceptions include special purpose leases or other leases listed in the second schedule to the bill. Leases being freeholded will be recalled on a systematic basis to allow for necessary amendments to be made to the title instrument. It will be an automatic system with no charge to the lessees.

The bill also establishes the machinery for the disposal of crown lands under the freehold system and specifies that the maximum size of a grant will not exceed 150 square kilometres. The government will retain the right to issue some leases in future based on development considerations and for concessional land grants such as sporting and cultural organisations.

Part II of the second schedule specifies areas where leases will soon be granted or may be offered during consideration of this legislation but which will not fall within the provisions for immediate conversion to freehold. Other leases are expected to be granted prior to the commencement of the

proposed act, meaning that the second schedule will have to be reviewed possibly in the committee stage or by regulations. Obviously, the business of getting land into the hands of people is not going to cease simply because Robertson tabled this. There will be some administrative problems associated with it.

Mr Speaker, the massive change proposed to the Territory's land tenure system will necessarily make sections of our existing law redundant. Schedule 1, I am pleased to say, specifies some 62 pieces of legislation proposed to be repealed. I knew there was very good reason for introducing this piece of legislation. Those familiar with the Territory's existing land tenure system will appreciate that the measures contained in the legislation are momentous.

Over many months, a great deal of effort has been exerted to ensure that the change to freehold will be as smooth as possible. The government has encouraged discussion on the subject. It has moved cautiously towards the implementation of its policy goal and it has subjected the existing body of law to searching examination. The bill now before the House proposes dismantling land control which evolved in the Territory and its replacement by a system giving Territorians the security of freehold title.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 15)

Continued from 19 August 1980.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

This is a very small bill to amend the schedule of the Holidays Act to provide that the Queen's Birthday holiday will be observed on the second Monday of June each year. The act presently provides that the day for the observance of the Queen's Birthday is the day fixed by the Sovereign.

The reason this bill has been introduced is that, at the Premiers Conference in June of last year, the decision was taken to observe the Queen's Birthday on a fixed day throughout Australia as from 1981. The decision was accepted by the Northern Territory and by the states with the exception of Western Australia. The day agreed to was the second Monday in June. I have recently been advised by the Prime Minister that Buckingham Palace has agreed to the proposal to formalise the day for the observance of the Queen's Birthday. This bill will therefore implement the decision taken at the Premiers Conference and will ensure that, as from next year, the Queen's Birthday will be observed on the second Monday in June.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Continued from 19 August 1980.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): In resuming my remarks supporting the

motion for the Address in Reply, might I just say that one of the most pleasing things that I have seen around Darwin recently - and I regret that I have not been able to participate in the exercise - has been, to a partial extent, the implementation of the program for construction of bicycle paths along the side of major roads.

As honourable members will be aware, the government has been attempting to ensure the establishment, particularly in Darwin and Alice Springs, of a network of bicycle paths. At this stage in Darwin, these are only evident along East Point Road and along the connector road. Crowds of people use the bicycle paths along the connector road at times and it is a great encouragement to continue with the program because, if one thing has militated against a determination to pursue this program with the utmost vigour, it has been a seeming apathy of the greater part of the population in getting on 2 wheels and moving themselves by that method. I certainly do not exempt myself from criticism in that regard. However, I have certainly drawn encouragement from what I have seen almost everyday coming in along the connector road and I will certainly be urging my ministerial colleagues to continue our program of establishing bicycle paths in urban centres wherever it is possible and with the ultimate aim of linking all parts of Darwin and of Alice Springs by suitable traffic ways.

Mr Speaker, His Honour the Administrator was pleased to mention the Yulara Tourist Village. I think that it is not inappropriate for me, as the minister responsible - because the Yulara Tourist Village construction is under the control of the Conservation Commission - to give honourable members a brief resume of the progress on that site. Honourable members are already aware that it is one of the major civil construction projects in the Territory. In the last few days, additional contracts involving some millions of dollars have been let for roadworks and for the water supply. At present, the establishment of the construction camp at Yulara Tourist Village is complete and the airstrip is complete except for environmental rehabilitation work that is currently in progress. The temporary unsealed access road to the national park is complete. I believe the problem is that, for some reason or other, it has still not been possible to agree on the siting of an access road from the village through to Ayers Rock with the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. Hopefully, a greater degree of reason will assert itself in that area. I understand that tenders have been let by the Department of Transport and Works for the village roadworks, the water and sewerage reticulation and the air terminal contract. As I mentioned, the airstrip is already completed but there is no terminal at the newly sealed airstrip as yet. It is capable of handling jet aircraft but the terminal contract should be let by September this year.

The Electricity Commission are proceeding with design work for the power generation plant and the village electrical reticulation contract is expected to be let during December this year. In the first half of next year, I understand that the prototype viewing-platform, an initial housing contract, a contract for a water desalination plant, sewage lagoons, power-station fuel facilities and a microwave telephonic communications link to Alice Springs are planned to be let. At the same time, a low-key town management function will be set up under the sponsorship of the Conservation Commission.

It is estimated at present that the total value of expenditure on the project will be in the order of \$77.8m. No doubt that includes the cost of construction of hotels, motels, caravan parks and a camping ground. I understand that an enormous degree of interest has been shown in the advertisements that the Conservation Commission caused to be published internationally as

well as across Australia. I believe that there are upwards of 70 applications for permission to construct accommodation at the village site.

The Conservation Commission's committee, which is answerable through the Director of Conservation, Doctor Goff Letts, to myself ministerially, will obviously vet these applications first of all and, in due course, recommendations will no doubt be made either to the Director of Conservation or to Cabinet as to who the successful tenderers will be. Certainly, I hope that that process will be completed within the next 3 to 4 months and these people given the go ahead as soon as possible.

Turning to another topic relating to the government program for the improvement of facilities in Aboriginal communities, which His Honour the Administrator again touched on in his speech to this House, at the last sittings I tabled 3 draft reports which covered the 5-year development program for essential services in remote communities and the government has been continuing to develop this program in consultation with Aboriginal communities. My latest information is that there has still been very little feedback from Aboriginal communities in relation to actual comment on the 5-year program and I would ask honourable members, where it is possible, to attempt to use their good offices to encourage the community councils and representatives to provide, if possible, written comment to the government in relation to the 5-year development program.

As you know, the program includes major proposals which are directed to upgrading essential services, especially water supply, sewerage, electricity and access to Aboriginal communities. No doubt, I should say little more about the details of this rather than to attempt to foreshadow what my colleague, the Treasurer, will be announcing in the budget tomorrow. Certainly, I think I can say confidently that there will be an advance on what was expended in that area last year.

What has been achieved since I made the statement to this House some months ago is an agreement from the Prime Minister that Northern Territory officials can meet with federal officials to discuss the topic of additional funding for these essential services. That is a very important breakthrough because, at least, we are getting the federal government to the discussion table to talk about additional funding to enable us to bring environmental health standards in these communities up to what anyone would regard as acceptable. You will no doubt remember that, in my statement to the House before the election, I mentioned that we would be making a special approach to the Commonwealth in an effort to obtain the additional funding. I believe that, if we press ahead diligently, there is every chance that we will be able to persuade the federal government to come some of the way towards meeting what I regard as a federal responsibility to have put these communities in as good a position as possible at the time that the Northern Territory assumed responsibility for them.

His Honour the Administrator also made passing reference to the plight of Aboriginal people in their communities. There is a great need for additional housing. I would reiterate the statement I made earlier that it is estimated that something in the order of 2,400 houses would be needed to satisfy the current needs of Aboriginal communities. The Northern Territory government could not undertake such a program without vast funding from the federal government. The federal government has seen fit, at this stage, to retain responsibility for the provision of housing in Aboriginal communities and it deals directly with housing associations and other organisations in the communities. I certainly make it plain that the Northern Territory government

would not accept that responsibility unless, at the time the responsibility was devolved on the Territory, a considerable amount of funding were programmed for a fixed number of years to enable the backlog to be caught up with.

I turn now to a subject that is fairly dear to my heart. I know that honourable members of this House support this and have carried out a great deal of action on this themselves: the completion of the railway from Alice Springs to Darwin. I do not need to remind honourable members that this is probably the longest outstanding political commitment in Australian history because it was a term of the Northern Territory Acceptance Act that the Commonwealth would complete the rail link from Adelaide to Darwin. In the last couple of months, I have deemed it necessary to embark on a fairly active campaign to promote the Territory's cause in this regard. A review was carried out of the feasibility of this link by Commonwealth and Territory officers. This review was published in July and, whilst it was not everything that we could have asked for, it certainly was quite a satisfactory document in many ways. Since it was what one might call a compromise document, the Territory was entitled to make comments on it and we did this. However, it is obvious that, if we just accept that situation and leave the document where it is, with all the competing demands for infrastructure finance on the Australian government scene today, it is doubtful that the Territory will be successful in obtaining a financial commitment rather than a political commitment for the construction of this railway in the foreseeable future unless a great deal of pressure is applied.

For that reason, with the support of my ministerial colleagues, I have been urging on federal ministers, including the Prime Minister, the importance of an immediate decision to commence construction of this rail link and I have enlisted the support of the political leaders of Victoria and South Australia. I have solicited support from industry and I have written to people right across Australia in an endeavour to create a groundswell which will help the Territory which, regrettably, because of our small population, does not have a tremendous amount of political influence in Canberra. I am endeavouring to create a groundswell of national support for the fulfilment of this promise which was made by the national government to South Australia so many years ago.

I do not believe that one should arouse anticipations in the Territory community and, quite frankly, at this stage, I am certainly not in a position to say that I believe the campaign will be successful this year. I want to place it on record here today that I think the \$180,000 that was put forward in the budget last night for a survey could be something that easily could be written off or the survey held for use in 10 or 50 years time. I would not want anyone to build any hopes on the fact that there was \$180,000 proposed in last night's budget. I caution the media to go very slowly in using that as some straw in the wind to believe that a positive decision might be announced later this year. Certainly, that is what I am aiming at and I know that everyone in this House and probably almost everyone in the Northern Territory would wish that such a decision could be taken this year. It seems to me appropriate that the announcement should come at the time the rail link from Tarcoola to Alice Springs is opened. It will be my endeavour to bring pressure to bear to obtain a commitment at that time.

Since the Commonwealth government has not seen fit to place a firm date for completion of the rail link on its own behalf, we should nominate a time for them. I therefore believe and I would hope that I would find support for this in this House, that we should press the Commonwealth to complete the rail link by 1988 which is the bicentenary of Australia's settlement by Captain Arthur Phillip. I understand that it would be feasible to meet that target. The

General Manager of the Australian National Railways and, indeed, the Chairman of the Australian National Railways Commission have both assured me that the line could be constructed in as little as 7 years. Therefore, presumably, it would be possible to meet the target of 1988. In any event, Mr Speaker, a date for completion has to be mooted abroad and that is the one that I am pushing for.

I do not think that there is a great deal more that I can say in commenting on His Honour's speech and I commend the motion to other honourable members of this Assembly.

Ms D'ROZARIO (Sanderson): Mr Speaker, in speaking to this motion of the Administrator's address, I too would like to cover the few areas which are of interest to me. Some of them are particularly of interest to those good folk of Sanderson who saw fit to return me to this House.

The matter of the transport services which the Chief Minister has traversed at length are of some interest to me, both because I am the opposition spokesman on transport and also because the matter of transport bears very heavily on the daily lives of all Territorians. Most people who have lived in the Territory for a few years have what southerners would regard as an overdeveloped sense of isolation. Sometimes our southern friends can be a little cruel to the Territorian mentality. It is also true that our isolation is both a physical and mental phenomenon and that it is not necessary to be mentally isolated from activities in the rest of Australia even though we are physically isolated from them. But there is no doubt that in all aspects of our daily lives, from the economic development of the Territory to our social and recreational pursuits, Territorians do indeed suffer the disadvantage of being physically isolated. We commend the efforts of the honourable Chief Minister and his ministerial colleagues who have put up a vigorous campaign in trying to convince the Commonwealth government that a financial commitment ought to be made for the completion of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway.

I think that most developed countries are seeing that the heyday of railway development is just about over. Railway development was at a peak in the last century and the early part of this century. With the common use of the motor vehicle for private and commercial transport, railway development has rather slackened off. However, we in the Northern Territory have given our southern friends something to think about because we are the only community at present asking for an interstate railway. Most other communities in Australia are seeking for urban transit railways which are related to their public transport facilities.

Mr Speaker, it is easy to see why the Commonwealth forgot about us because the need for a railway to the Top End died a natural death when the enthusiasm for railways declined some years ago. However, I think that railways will come into their own again. We now have the situation where the days of our continued reliance on the private motor vehicle, and indeed on the commercial vehicle for the transport of goods over long distances, are certainly numbered. As our reliance upon oil increases, the Commonwealth government may well see that the interstate railway between South Australia and the Northern Territory is the only long-term feasible solution to our long-haulage transport needs. I am not saying that we should not have any regard to our road transport or, for that matter, to our shipping services but I think it needs to be remembered that, whenever we have any component of transporting goods overland, we require some land-based mode. In my view, it certainly seems that the railway is the best option.

We are most impressed by the Chief Minister's very enthusiastic effort to

convince the Commonwealth government of the need to construct this railway and we too look forward to having our own celebrations in 1988 as part of the general bicentenary celebrations.

In the recent past, there has been some discussion between myself and the Commissioner for the Australian National Line relating to sea transport links for the Territory with other parts of Australia. It has been suggested to that gentleman that he rationalise the sea services so that the Darwin Trader were diverted to another route and that we instead were given 2 smaller vessels which would be more suited to our needs. Although this idea has been treated with a somewhat cool reception by that commissioner, he has led me to believe that the matter is not closed. I certainly hope not because, certainly from the commercial point of view, the proposal that we have put would give a great impetus to industrial development.

It has been suggested that, because the present service has a fairly long turnaround time, is getting more and more unreliable and is under threat of discontinuation every year, something more permanent which would give commercial wholesalers and dealers some better idea of their inventory stocks would be needed. My proposal to the commissioner is that 2 smaller vessels, which are already operating between the east coast as far as Cairns, have their routes extended to take in Darwin. This would minimise the external problem of backloading from the Top End to southern areas. Commendable as it might have been 2 years ago when the Australian National Line itself undertook an investigation as to what means it could implement to generate backloading from Darwin, we have offered to them the solution that, if indeed the vessels are coming as far as Cairns, then even if there were not backloading, they would still be travelling at full capacity between Cairns and other eastern seaports. I hope that the honourable Minister for Transport and Works will assist me in my little venture which would increase transport services to the Northern Territory.

Last night, whilst listening to the analysis of the federal budget, I was pleasantly surprised to see that the Commonwealth government had made an allocation to improve the civil aviation facilities at Darwin Airport. All members of this House have, at one stage or another, remarked on the inadequacy of the airport terminal at Darwin. I am sorry that we have no details as to the extent of this allocation nor, indeed, what these facilities are related to, but we hope that they will soon be operational and put us one step along the way to being a truly international air terminal instead of the barn that we have out on the Stuart Highway at present.

I was pleased to see in the Administrator's speech that the Northern Territory government will embark upon a program of improving services to both the handicapped and to the aged. In the last 2 years since self-government, there has been great enthusiasm for accelerated development and, in the rush to achieve all those things relating to economic growth and to a greater prosperity for the Territory, it is sometimes forgotten that there are people who cannot enjoy to their full potential these benefits that come from community development. On very few occasions have members of this House actually spoken about services to the handicapped. This is probably because we have been busy with legislative programs relating to accelerated economic development of the Territory.

We know that 1980 has been set aside as the International Year of the Disabled Person and all members of the Assembly would have received letters from various groups which are doing something to commemorate this year in other parts of Australia. I must say that activity in the Northern Territory does not seem to be all that evident. I hope that this program of improving services

to the handicapped will be a wide-ranging one and that it will afford to the handicapped persons who live in the Territory the opportunity to share fully in both the economic side of Territory life as well as in its recreation.

I do not know exactly what the government has in mind. From time to time we have spoken about concessions to the handicapped people for motor vehicle registration and providing special areas in the city where they may park their cars. However, I think we really need to look at this problem in a much more comprehensive way so that, whenever we are doing something for those people who are fully capable both physically and mentally, we should have some regard to the problems of the handicapped. I have spoken before about the physical design solutions to this particular problem and I hope this will become more evident in public buildings and in road design. A few days ago, I attended a performance at the Adelaide Festival Theatre and I was very pleased to see that they had special boxes reserved for persons who attended in wheelchairs. These had ramps; they were like little opera boxes where the handicapped were able to fully enjoy the performance without having to track upstairs. The designer had consciously incorporated in his design for this wonderful theatre these facilities for handicapped patrons.

Moving on to the problems of the aged, we know that the Northern Territory population tends to be young. We are all enthusiastic for progress and, in that particular progression, we have often left the aged behind. They have been expected to hobble along at their own pace and, if they could not match ours, we have tended to forget about them. Although the aged are not all that numerous as a percentage of our population, we have people who have been born in the Territory and have decided to retire in the Territory. We must have some regard for these people who really want to live here and do not want to be pushed out. Last year, a great number, by Territory standards, of what we might call oldtimers decided they could no longer live in the Territory for one reason or another. I think this was one of the reasons why the Chief Minister saw fit to institute an oral history program because we saw that, by these people leaving us, we were losing something. We are poorer for their leaving and we should do what we can to make living in the Territory easy for the aged even though they might be in a minority. I hope that program for housing the aged, in making food prices cheaper for them and other programs which would involve them in the recreation of the Territory and in a full social life will be implemented. Certainly, I would assist in any programs that the government wishes to implement in that regard.

I turn now to matters which are of particular interest to my electorate at the moment. The Administrator saw fit to mention the social development programs of the Territory and made reference to the fact that, by these programs, we would be assisting Territorians who were growing in numbers at a fairly remarkable rate by Australian standards. A decision was taken earlier that there would be private subdivisions in the Sanderson electorate. While they are in progress, I feel that I should address some remarks which I hope the Minister for Lands and Housing will read at his leisure. I would certainly like to take him on a tour of some of the area at his leisure. Whilst nobody argues that this development is now under construction, what I would ask the minister to assist us with is the field management of these contracts. We have very extensive areas of land being developed by 4 companies out in the Leanyer district of my electorate. I must say the manner in which this is being done leaves a lot to be desired especially for residents who live in the near vicinity of these developments.

Firstly, the entire areas of these subdivisions have been virtually cleared. I do not know why the subdividers concerned could not have just

centre line flagged the subdivisions and proceeded from there. They have completely removed the vegetation from these large areas of land which has led to enormous dust problems for the people living on Vanderlin Drive and in that vicinity. It has led to problems of vegetation damage. Some people have been completely unable to do anything about the dust that has been generated from the vegetation removal exercises.

The noise that is generated by these subdivisions is completely legitimate. One has to expect that, whilst these large construction projects are taking place, there will be a great deal of noise. However, all of this is exacerbated by the fact that large numbers of commercial vehicles are now entering these streets without any regard for speed limits and without any regard for the poor condition of the roads upon which they travel. Where they have decided that the road is not good enough for them, and in many areas it is not, they have just gone ahead and cut their own track which they are now using. This in itself is causing a great deal of nuisance and concern to residents. I visit this area 4 or 5 times each day and I would find it extremely difficult to offer any solution to the contractors as to what should be done. Some residents asked for water trucks to wet down the dust and thereby minimise it. Of course, the extent of the works is such that, even if a truck were sent down every quarter of an hour, it would barely do the job.

Mr Speaker, if the government has taken this decision and these subdivisions are going to continue in this way, then it means that the honourable minister must set guidelines for the field management of these projects because there are people living in established residential subdivisions in the near vicinity who are finding it almost impossible to cope with the construction that is occurring.

I have recently written to the Secretary of the Department of Transport and Works asking him to undertake a few simple steps which I think might ameliorate the problems. If the trucks persist in using these unsealed tracks, they should be gravelled and speed limit signs should be erected. Even though there is a generally applicable speed limit, the drivers have no regard for it. Also, I mentioned one or two of the other things relating to the actual sites which could be implemented so as to minimise the inconvenience to households in the Vanderlin Drive area. Whilst nobody says that the subdivision should cease forthwith, I think that there are things that can be done and that the minister should please do them.

Mr Speaker, there was a reference in the Administrator's speech to the question of house buying and we were pleased to learn that the home-lending scheme is to be looked at again, to be upgraded and that misuses are to be eliminated. Certainly, we are very cognizant of the fact that one of the things that keeps Territorians up here is the prospect of purchasing a house; the prospect of being an owner-occupant. Things that can be done to encourage owner-occupancy of houses, in our view, would lead to a more stable population and to permanence in the population. We certainly support that.

However, the other side of the coin was not canvassed at all: the plight of the homeless. Time and again in the press we read statements made by organisations which are active in the social welfare fields that they are unable to cope with the numbers of people who are in need of cheap housing or emergency accommodation. The Northern Territory has entered a period of accelerating growth and rapid economic development but, in our rush to do these things, we should not forget the disadvantaged. The homeless will not go away and it is pointless to say that we cannot help them or that we should not help them. The fact is that they are here and, if they are here, it is a

blot on the conscience of every member of this House if they continue to be without roofs over their heads.

Whilst I would approve of a reinvestigation into the home-buying scheme that is currently in operation, I would certainly like to see also a lot more done to assist those who have no prospect of buying their own house but indeed are forced to seek low-cost accommodation and, in some cases, emergency accommodation.

The Administrator's speech has outlined for us a number of things which will no doubt keep us busy over the next 4 years. I hope that, whilst development is taking place, members of this House will think occasionally of those who might not be able to participate in this development because, despite the fact that we tend to think that what is good for the Territory is good for everyone in the Territory, we know that the reality of the situation is that many people miss out. I think that it would be the mark of a generous and compassionate government if it had regard in its development programs for those who are either unable or who just simply cannot cope with the pace that we will see over the next 4 years. I can say this because I am youngish and healthy and have every expectation of participating in the exciting time ahead of us, but I am well aware that many of my constituents are not. I hope that other members of this House will also think occasionally of those who are not in so happy a position as we are.

Mr TUXWORTH (Health): Mr Speaker, in responding to His Honour's address I would like to say that one of the important jobs before the government and this legislature in the years to come is to improve the quality of life for all Territorians. However, the truth is that the quality of life can mean different things to different people. While I do not really have a great deal of argument with some of the comments made this afternoon, by the previous speaker in particular, I believe that it is important that we set the foundations for a pattern of development and economic growth that will enable us to provide services and facilities to the less privileged in a manner that is more befitting our purse.

I believe that there are some programs that the Northern Territory population as a whole, particularly some groups, could embark upon to improve the quality of life without great handouts of money from one government or another. I am referring here to an issue that is pretty dear to my heart: a program of tree planting not just in one centre or another but right throughout the Territory. I happen to come from an area where it is very difficult to grow trees. In some parts of the Territory, you just drop a seed on the ground and, before you know it, your tree is 6 to 8 feet high.

I do not believe that it is necessary for us to throw in the towel because it is hard in some parts of the Territory to embark upon programs of improving the environment. Places such as Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, Tennant Creek, Elliott and a few others are all worthy of a little extra time and effort to improve the environment. I believe it is incumbent upon us as legislators to try to encourage the town councils and community groups in all of these places to undertake programs of improving our environment, particularly by tree-planting programs. It is very easy to say that it is somebody else's responsibility but I do not believe it is somebody else's responsibility. It is a responsibility that falls upon all of us - the householder, the city councils and the government as a whole. I would like to put it to honourable members that that is a program that we could embark on over the years to come.

One other program that reflects importantly upon the quality of life for some people in the Northern Territory is the radio-telephone facilities. You,

Sir, would be quite an authority on this particular form of communication and I am sure other members are also familiar with the difficulties that we have with our radio-telephone system. Telecom would say that we have little to complain about with our radio-telephone system because we are one of the very few places in Australia to have it and we ought to count our lucky stars and be grateful. At the same time, it would also say that the service is unsatisfactory, is definitely not meeting today's needs and there is much room for improvement.

I feel that the statement made to me recently that there is a need for improvement would have to be the understatement of this decade. I have constituents who can run up telephone accounts of \$10,000 a quarter and who have to wait 3 or 4 hours to place a call. In fact, they have to wait 7 or 8 hours to receive a call back from people who were not there. Despite all of these frustrations, their requirements are so great that they can still manage to spend \$10,000 a quarter on the use of a telephone. It would be fair to say that, between the lot of us here, we would be flat out racking up a telephone bill of \$10,000 a quarter, yet we take it as a matter of course that it is available to everybody.

I am very concerned at the lack of development of telephone communications in the Northern Territory, particularly at Warrabri where there are 600 people and a school of 200 to 300 children. They have a very large requirement for a telephone. They are 13 miles from a microwave tower. It would be quite possible today to install a VHF telephone that would give them STD dialling anywhere in Australia. One of the hardest battles that I have had to fight is to obtain consideration from Telecom for these people.

In the Barkly area, there are a series of stations such as Walhallow, Alexandria, Brunette, Alroy, Cresswell, Rocky and Anthony. All of these stations have large communities and some have more than 100 people on the payroll. They have a very great need for a telephone. Some of them do not even have radio contact although most do. The lethargy of the Telecom people has been causing me great despondency. The Telecom people would say to me, 'When McArthur River goes, we can put in a microwave system and we can put in a digital radio control system and all will be well'. I think it is time - and this will be my crusade for the next 4 years - that Telecom appreciates that the need is there now.

Mr Everingham: You have picked your time well. The satellite will be ready in 4 years.

Mr TUXWORTH: The problem is that the satellite will not help telecommunications in remote areas. The satellite will most definitely provide groundstation reception in radio and television for all those people but phones are not on.

Mr Speaker, Telecom believes that we must not rush into putting a microwave system through this part of the country because the digital telephone system will be available in 4 or 5 years and it will be easier to dial. The difficulty that I find with that is that, after 4 or 5 years at the current rate of development in technology, Telecom will say to me that, if we wait another 2 or 3 years, we will have a brand new system which is even better than the digital system. When I was first elected in 1974, one of the first jobs I sought to accomplish with Telecom was the installation of VHF radio-telephones for people living within 59km of a microwave tower - very simple technology and very easy to do. With a little push Telecom agreed, even at the exorbitant price of \$7,000 per connection. However, here we are in 1980 and more than

50% of the people who have the ability to go onto the microwave have not been connected.

Mr Speaker, perhaps there will be the ability in 1984 to use a digital radio system that is even better than the microwave system but that is only if the technology will be readily available and if it will be connected up a lot quicker than the VHF radio-telephone system. I believe that the time has come for Telecom in the Northern Territory to address itself to the great responsibility it has of bringing the wider community into contact with the rest of Australia. It is not just a matter of running a microwave from the Barkly Highway to Borroloola; it involves distributing the microwave system through the VRD area and to Ayers Rock as the Chief Minister mentioned a moment ago.

The problem that these people are confronted with could not physically be solved within 2 years. I put it to you, Mr Speaker, and I will certainly put it to Telecom, that now is the time to install the microwave system in the Northern Territory and not procrastinate and wait for some new technology that will most likely become available in 1984 but would not be connected by 1990. The need is very great now.

I do not know whether the honourable members are aware that Hermannsburg, which has the largest radio-telephone account in the Northern Territory, currently places 750 calls a week. Given that you have 20 consumers on each bank of the radio-telephone - and I have the fourth largest consumer in my electorate, Brunette Downs - it is a wonder that anyone else gets to make a telephone call when people in communities of this size take up the network for 750 calls a week. I do not believe that it is acceptable for us, as legislators, to accept this situation any longer and we have to move to do something about it.

His Honour the Administrator touched briefly on the need to see the development of the Jabiluka project which is run by Pancontinental and also the Noranda project at Koongarra. I believe it is very important for the Northern Territory that these 2 projects are seen to be moving as soon as possible so that the companies organising them can get themselves into the market and start forward selling their uranium. The announcement 2 days ago of the forward sales by Ranger to 3 Japanese utilities, amounting to \$2000m, was very encouraging, particularly at a time when the market is depressed. But there is general agreement in the uranium industry that the market for uranium will boom in 1984-85 and that the most successful benefactors from the market improvement will be those organisations and countries which are currently in production and have the capacity to expand production without bringing new mines on stream.

I believe that we have 2 excellent projects here that should be given the green light to develop as soon as possible so that their principals can start moving on the world market to sell the product. The reality is that good uranium sales are generally made on the basis of 15 and 20-year contracts. If this country, and particularly the Northern Territory, wishes to benefit from the purchases that are going to be made in the mid-1980s, then now is the time for us to start moving on the 2 projects. I will not go into the details of the benefits that will come out of the projects. I think all honourable members are aware of the scale that is involved in the development. But I do not think that we can afford to sit around any longer pretending that the world is going to beat a path to our door.

While I am on this topic, I would also like to say how gratified I was to

see the announcement in the federal budget of expenditure to improve the environment of the former mining project at Rum Jungle. I saw a figure of \$12m and I thought that perhaps somebody had left a dot out of it. The Commonwealth is not famous for being so generous but perhaps I am being unkind to them in saying that.

Mr Isaacs: \$200,000! A miserable \$200,000.

Mr TUXWORTH: That sounds right. I must say that sounds more like what I was expecting. It is certainly not enough and, if the figure of \$12m was right, then that is about what we would be looking for to do the job. It is something that I believe we must press for with the same zeal that we are pressing for the railway under the leadership of the Chief Minister. The fact is that, when that project was allowed to develop in the 1950s, very few people could even spell environment let alone tell you what the considerations were in relation to mining and the environment. We have a problem there that has developed and it is important that it be rectified and I am more than happy to join in the bunfight to get funds from the Commonwealth to get the project rehabilitated.

I have one more topic that I would like to touch on. It relates to the Northern Territory and its close proximity to its neighbours. Last year during the Timor confusion, for want of a better word, the Northern Territory government, through the Commonwealth, made an offer of assistance to the Indonesians in the form of a medical team for Timor. That offer was initially ignored and subsequently refused. I feel that our offer was treated very unjustly by the Commonwealth and the Indonesians. It was a genuine offer to help people whom the Northern Territory has an affinity with and it was an offer made to help people who we believed had a need at a particular time. I would just like to express my regret that both the Commonwealth and the Indonesians were not able to see their way clear to allow our team to go to Indonesia to help in a small way.

In conclusion, I would just like to say that I believe the Administrator's speech touched briefly on the many things that have to happen in the Northern Territory in coming years. As the honourable speakers said before me, it is a very exciting time and I am sure that this Assembly will be able to rise to the occasion to do what has to be done to make it succeed.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arnhem): Mr Speaker, I wish to reply to the stirring speech of the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy and also to join in the commendation of the Chief Minister about the use to which the new bicycle path is being put. One of the things I am very pleased about is the fact that a cycle path has been established and use is being made of it. This proves the effectiveness of expenditure of money in that direction. I have indulged in riding a bike in Darwin. I have no dispute whatever with the Chief Minister's comments about himself and myself. I can see readily that, next to me, the Chief Minister is sylph-like by comparison. I live in the rural area of Darwin and I did in fact attempt to ride to work. I found that there was a distinct paradox about riding a bike to keep fit and having to take my life into my own hands everytime I did so. It seemed to me, after a couple of near misses on the Stuart Highway at 7.30 in the morning, that riding a bike to work was a straight road to Ward 13 at the Darwin Hospital. Because of the Chief Minister's interest in this particular recreation - I might add it is a very enjoyable way of keeping fit - I hope the government will continue to put extra funds into this area as a result of being heartened by the use to which this bicycle path is being put.

I invested \$160 on a bike and I enjoyed riding it. In fact, I succeeded in losing 3 stones in weight as a result. After a couple of pretty hairy experiences caused by ignorant drivers on the Stuart Highway early in the morning, and because I was enjoying it so much, I compromised at weekends by taking the bike out on the Arnhem Highway and riding out to Humpty Doo. Late one Saturday afternoon, coming back along the Arnhem Highway, I was approached from the rear by a Toyota loaded with revellers. I think they were from Jabiru. They exercised their minds and gave themselves some entertainment initially by throwing empty beer cans at me from the back of the truck and then passing me and repassing me a couple of times. After getting tired of that, one of them leaned out, put a friendly hand on my shoulder and pushed me off the road. That was the end of the bike and almost myself. I gave up riding a bike with the obvious result. Quite seriously, I hope that the government is encouraged by the use which is being made of this lone bicycle track and that we will see many more in the Northern Territory.

The Minister for Mines and Energy was quite correct in that there was a figure of \$12m mentioned in the budget last night in respect of the rehabilitation of Rum Jungle but I am afraid it is very much a situation similar to that of the railway line. Although a figure of \$12m was mentioned, in fact a sum of \$200,000 was allocated in the budget. Of course, that is \$100,000 less than the original loan amount that has been spent on rehabilitation. The minister knows as well as I do that it will cost much more than that - in fact, \$10m to \$12m - to rehabilitate Rum Jungle mine. The matter of most serious concern is not the cosmetic problem at Rum Jungle. The major problem in regard to pollution at Rum Jungle - and it is a serious problem - is that the pollution is continuing. The copper ore in the acid-leaching dump, a natural process generated by rainwater, is continuing every wet season. In the days when the mine was operational, a system of scrubbers operated extracting the copper from the acid solution at the bottom of the stack but those scrubbers are now not operational and the copper is simply dumped into Copper Creek every wet season and the pollution continues. I certainly join the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy in continuing to prod the Commonwealth government to make more money available in this area.

I must comment, in passing, on a fact that I have spoken about in this House before. It is very interesting to consider that the pollution at Rum Jungle was caused by an operation conducted by one of the wealthiest and largest mining companies in the world - CRA. As is often the case, the pollution problem, the part remedy of which will cost upwards of \$12m, is being tackled not by the company that caused the damage but by the taxpayers. As far as the mining industry at least in the past has been concerned, that is par for the course. They make the mess, they make the profits and the taxpayer cleans up the mess afterwards and foots the bill. That is the case with Rum Jungle. No attempt whatever has been made to involve the company financially in the cleanup. As I have said in this House before, the company has a clear moral responsibility - and it is very proud of its new status as a corporate citizen of Australia - to assist the federal government financially in cleaning up the mess it left in the Northern Territory.

I must also comment on the government's intention to go ahead with the Jabiluka operations which pose quite daunting environmental problems. Earlier this year, when people were commenting on the 1970s and what they thought the 1980s would bring, I remember very clearly a comment made on television by Phillip Adams because it certainly struck a chord with me. It was something I happen to believe very strongly. He said that he believed that the 1970s had ushered in a new social phenomenon, international terrorism, and the 1980s would be the decade of the terrorist. Unfortunately, it certainly seems that those words are already coming true.

I would like to see the curtailment of the anti-people activity at the Oasis Store complex and better planning in some parts of the electorate. I think some of the planning that has taken place in the Coconut Grove area has been quite atrocious. If you are game enough to walk down Nation Crescent, you will find that it is probably not a very nice place. I feel sorry for the people who have to live in such overcrowded circumstances. I have pledged that I would support in this term the provision of new parks and recreation areas and improved services and transportation for those citizens.

I trust that the inconvenience to the residents in Ludmilla south will be finally ended with the completion of the flyover. This flyover will take about 1½ years to complete and no doubt it will provide tremendous benefits to those people living in the northern suburbs. It certainly will not be of much benefit to those people at Ludmilla. I am pleased that, after a dozen years of frustration, Ludmilla north will at least be able to join other roads by Fitzer Drive and Nadpur Street. The bicycle tracks, most of which are in that general region, will be further utilised as the population grows.

I support entirely the general thrust of the Administrator's speech. As far as my portfolios are concerned, I was particularly delighted that reference was made to tourist activity at Yulara and, in the context of roads, places like Edith Falls.

New offices are being opened by the Tourist Commission. In Sydney, we opened on the ground floor of a building in King Street in recent weeks after coming off the 11th floor of a building in Carrington Street. There has been an immediate rise in the product sold and the movement of visitors into the Northern Territory. There are record figures.

Major promotions will take place during 1980 and 1981 because of the budget allocation that was distributed to the Tourist Commission a few months ago in advance of the formal budget being brought down tomorrow. I support the commitment of this government to the recreation lake for Alice Springs. I cannot say too strongly that I think that this will be of tremendous benefit to those people in Central Australia. Those of you who have had the opportunity and the pleasure of travelling around the Ord River scheme would measure the cost of that scheme against the ultimate potential industrial development of the region. I can only say that Sir Charles Court must go to bed shaking hands with himself at having been able to secure that commitment from the Commonwealth back in those times when money seemed to have a little more value than it has today.

It is important during the next term that the tourist sites and developments be expedited and that the roads to these sites be developed. If I could take a leaf out of the honourable member for Victoria River's book, there must be better access provided to places such as Jasper Gorge. I think the Northern Territory has not even started when it comes to tourism. This is almost our second major industry at this time and I believe that it will fulfil all my expectations during the coming term.

I was pleased to see mention of further commitment to major national highway development, particularly the Victoria Highway. I think we have seen significant development in the last few years: major bridging and miles and miles of upgrading. It has certainly been better than any comparable effort in the states. We are very fortunate that we have been able to obtain the funds so far and I look forward to supporting any movement for better road access. It has always been a policy of mine that there should be all-weather access within the Northern Territory as soon as possible.

The next 4 years should see the success of staged agricultural development. There is no doubt that the problems will be immense. One problem that we experience right throughout the Northern Territory is weeds such as salvinia and mimosa. I do not know how extensively most of you have looked at the river systems of the Northern Territory but I am sure that Mr Speaker will agree with me that, at places like Wollongorang - a no-man's land; no one ever goes there except the honourable member for the area - there are weeds by the square mile. If anyone can tell me that it is an easy matter to get rid of weeds, he can have my job tomorrow. There are biological controls being looked at for the control of mimosa. It seems to be scattered right across the Northern Territory. The weed is down the Ord River system, the Stirling River and the West Baines River. I could go on and on. This is the type of problem that will be experienced in staged agricultural pastoral developments, especially in the Top End.

I think that the fisheries development will be an important part of the Northern Territory's industrial development base over the coming term. It is my sincere wish that, where industries are becoming less viable, such as the barramundi fishery, successful alternatives will be found for existing fishermen. I think that our emphasis should be placed on local fishermen rather than on international fishermen. We have international agreements and I noted that a candidate for the ALP criticised the international fishing agreements in the press in recent weeks. There may be some truth in what he said. There are some international agreements being written that are not worth the paper they are written on. In fact, some of the agreements have lapsed through lack of effort and not all those agreements have been supported by the Northern Territory government. In the main, the Commonwealth asks the Northern Territory through me and the matter is taken to Cabinet. We do support quite a few of the applications but, in some cases, we do not see that they are much use to the Northern Territory.

I do not have much more to say. I think that the challenge will come to Northern Territorians. We are a very young people. We lack experience and we lack expertise in some places but we certainly have a great willingness to compete as evidenced by the junior footballers who are playing in Darwin at the present time against others from all over Australia. Even being a minister of the crown is the sort of job that you do for some years and you pick up your ticket as you leave rather than have a ticket before you go in. I might have said this before but I certainly seem to find that one never has enough experience to do everything that one has to do. Mr Speaker, I am very pleased to support the sentiments expressed in the Administrator's speech.

Mr LEO (Nhulunbuy): Mr Speaker, firstly, I have been asked by the electorate to tell you that Nhulunbuy is part of the Northern Territory. For the past few years, Nhulunbuy seems to have been recognised by only a few of the Northern Territory's departments all of which have been charged with collecting taxes and excise. Unfortunately, the remainder, those charged with providing services, have ignored that particular part of the Territory.

Nhulunbuy is the third largest community in the Territory and has contributed greatly to the Northern Territory's resources for an extended period of time yet the amount of interest shown by the Northern Territory government in Nhulunbuy ranges from non-existent to precious little. The residents of the vigorous community are intelligent people. This was clearly demonstrated on 7 June when they rejected the government at that time by unseating the Country Liberal Party member whose party's views and record clearly did not represent their best interest. The cynical approach by various government ministers to the legitimate request for simple and universally recognised services such as adequate accommodation led to the questioning of the Liberal Country Party's

credibility.

After being confronted by this particular problem of the lack of suitable accommodation, a problem which has existed and has been documented by various government departments from as far back as 1972, did the government adopt the conciliatory approach of seeking to maintain industrial harmony? No, through the press came an eloquent statement saying that this was the first time the relevant minister had heard of the problem and that concerned public servants were wasting their time threatening the minister. That surely represents an all time high in diplomacy from a government minister. The problem will not disappear and the government has a responsibility to all the members of the Northern Territory communities.

However, the Minister for Lands and Housing need not feel like Robinson Crusoe. We have seen 6 years of promises concerning certain road sealing projects. These promises were made by successive ministers and departmental heads all of whom it appears have let cynicism prevail. There have been 6 years of substantial neglect towards Nhulunbuy sporting community. Nhulunbuy, which is not blessed with the numerous cultural facilities Darwin enjoys, has only sports to offer as its major recreational outlet, but the numerous local and visiting sporting bodies are being subjected to completely inadequate changing and toilet facilities simply because the government refuses to uphold its responsibilities. We have seen 6 years of ineffective consumer legislation in a community which has extremely limited retail competition. We have seen 6 years of floundering with the problems of race relations and land rights. We have seen 6 years of legislative hypocrisy which enables this government to adopt progressive legislation on the right of police entry but does not allow this government to adopt progressive legislation on industrial relations. Rather, they proceed on a time-consuming and exhaustive inquiry with the time lapse involved and probable conservative outcome benefiting not the majority of Territorians, the wage and salary earners, but rather benefiting the employers, a minority who are not necessarily Australian let alone Northern Territorians.

I conclude, Mr Speaker, by reaffirming that Nhulunbuy is part of the Northern Territory and, whilst the flag may have been fluttering somewhat belatedly over the rest of the Territory, it has yet to be raised in Nhulunbuy.

Mr PERRON (Treasurer): Mr Speaker, in responding to the address by the Administrator, I would like to touch briefly on the next few years in the Northern Territory as I see them. Unfortunately, I have not had a lot of time to prepare very much for the Address in Reply today. I have had a fair bit on my plate for the last week or so.

I would just like to mention to honourable members that the 2 principal things that will show the rest of this country that the Northern Territory is about to really put itself on the map are the financial arrangements and the administration of land. It seems to me that most of what governments are all about stems from these 2 areas and one of them is not much good without the other. You can have a great deal of money as a government but, unless you allow people to put land to its best economic, social and recreational use, you will not get very far. If you have a great deal of land but not financial resources to direct toward assisting the community, you will not get very far either.

The Northern Territory has both these areas going for it. In the administration of land, we have still a fair way to go but we have come some distance from where we started 2 years ago. We made a fair bit of progress in

land administration during the last term of the Assembly. We passed much legislation that dealt with land. We made it easier to excise land, we made titles easier to grant, we streamlined the sale process to a fair degree and we introduced a system of direct applications. Whilst the latter may not have turned off a great deal, it has turned off a number of very important proposals which would not have been turned off under the old system without a great deal more bureaucratic procrastination and potential developers being disappointed through having to put land through public competition systems.

During last term, as far as resources available to us allowed, we pushed a fair bit of land turn-off. Indeed, honourable members may recall that the government had unexpected levels of income during the last year, in particular, and the year before that from land sales. That was somewhat of a demonstration that we turned off more land than we thought we could at the beginning of the year.

That is probably a good sign because getting land into the hands of people is really what it is all about; letting them get on with the job. We have a fair way to go in land administration and we are hindered to some degree by land administration systems which have evolved over the last hundred-odd years and which have a revolution or two to go through yet before we really get where we should be. However, the legislation which was introduced again into this House recently to freehold the majority of land in the Northern Territory will certainly be the next major step in streamlining and putting on a more sensible footing the administration of land in the Northern Territory.

Financial arrangements are the other side of the coin - from my point of view. The Memorandum of Understanding which we have with the Commonwealth is without question now a proven document and would have to be the best financial deal that anyone could have negotiated for the Northern Territory. A large degree of the credit for that, apart from the Chief Minister who had the final say during the negotiations from the Northern Territory side, should go to officers of the Northern Territory government during the final period leading up to self-government. I think that they will be the unsung heroes of the Northern Territory in this financial deal which has proved to be such a tremendous asset to us. If honourable members have made any calculations on the federal budget which was handed down last night, they will be aware that the Memorandum of Understanding has turned out very beneficial to the Northern Territory. We are a long way ahead of the states in regard to proportions of the national cake and I do not think that, as Territorians, we should ever lose sight of the fact that Australians elsewhere are indeed supporting us financially to an enormous degree. They are supporting us within a system of economic arrangements that has existed in this country for a long time, a system where the less populous states have had much higher per-head-of-population grants than the more populous states. That is because we are in a federation of Australian states where the policy is to assist the more remote communities of Australia to develop. Eventually, we should be on an equal footing with the states without needing disparities in taxation or representation. Just the same, whilst it is within the context of Australia's economic structure, it should still be appreciated that Australian taxpayers are supporting us to a very large degree.

With these 2 very big things going for the Northern Territory, land administration and an excellent financial arrangement, we are entering into an era which will allow the Territory to really make its mark on the Australian scene both economically and socially. I guess that is what we are all here for, to try and do the best we can.

Over the next 10 years, I would hope, we will see a railway line constructed

One of the problems with nuclear energy and the misuse of uranium in the construction of nuclear weapons is that - and I cannot simply push aside the thought, even in the context of the Territory's development of its economic resource of uranium - we now have stockpiles in the world in excess of one million times the nuclear arsenal that was sufficient to destroy Hiroshima. It is a matter of considerable public comment that governments are engaged internationally in the most insane policy of nuclear overkill. Recently, we had a statement by the French government that it intends to substantially upgrade its nuclear arsenal and in fact accelerate its development of the neutron bomb. This is a fairly frightening development because the neutron bomb allows the prospect of tactical nuclear warfare rather than strategic nuclear warfare, the use of nuclear weapons on select subjects such as tanks and people. It can destroy the people without destroying the buildings.

One of the problems with uranium is that it is an indisputable fact, despite the rhetoric of politicians, that international safeguards are an international joke. That has been proven time and time again. The sad story is that, despite all the talk, pieces of paper and promises, in all cases so far of diverted uranium supplies that have been subsequently used to build a nuclear weapon in these maverick countries, those supplies have been obtained from so-called peaceful sources of uranium. There is no need to go through the list. India has already exploded a bomb which was the result of obtaining a reactor from Canada for the peaceful generation of electricity. It is clear beyond any doubt that Pakistan is moving toward that same end. The great resource of the Israelis in all kinds of fields has been demonstrated. There is certainly no doubt in the minds of the CIA that they possess at least the capability of putting a last little piece in a nuclear weapon, if they have not done so already, because of their success in diverting a large amount of uranium on the high seas obtained through legitimate commercial interest by circumventing so-called safeguard agreements. In fact, it has become something of an international joke.

What I find frightening is that, for years, we have lived with at least a little peace of mind in thinking that, providing the nuclear balance is maintained in the world, providing only the superpowers have access to nuclear weapons, providing it is a case of Russia and the United States and Great Britain, we have some hope of surviving the next 10 years without some fool pushing the button. Now we have a case where quite small countries and governments not at all renowned for their stability are in possession of at least the capacity to construct nuclear weapons. I find that a fairly sobering thought. There is one fact that we cannot escape: the increase in the peaceful use of uranium for the generation of electricity is putting into the hands of these governments the means whereby the 'illegal' nuclear weapons can be constructed. I find it a very sobering thought indeed that, almost inevitably, Northern Territory uranium will find its way into the construction of a nuclear weapon.

There has been much talk about the federal government's attitude towards the boycotting of the Olympic Games and the breast-beating as far as Afghanistan is concerned which, very clearly, has just been demonstrated in the budget as being to the Prime Minister's electoral advantage prior to an election. In that context, I find it very interesting to note that 900 tonnes of Northern Territory uranium from Nabarlek will be reprocessed in the Soviet Union. It is all a bit of a joke except that there are many people, including me, who are not laughing too much about it.

I have already commented at some length in this House on the government's 5-year plan for Aboriginal communities. I do not want to reiterate the remarks

I have made about this except to commend it again. Obviously, there will be some significant consideration given in the budget papers which will be brought down tomorrow.

I also wish to support the honourable Minister for Mines and Energy in the comments he made about the frustrations of communications in the bush. It is something that I live with all the time. I am also rather amused by Telecom's attitude towards the so-called efficiency of the radio-telephone service. It is a very frustrating business, particularly in times of stress, where you have to sit around for 5 or 6 hours, which I have done on numerous occasions, waiting for a telephone call which very often does not even eventuate. It is an extremely frustrating business.

I will be most interested also to see what allocations will be made in the budget for primary production in the Northern Territory. I had discussions over the last couple of days with people who will be hopefully participating in this new scheme of agricultural development. It is obvious that it is most unlikely to get under way this growing season. I guess that is something that we will have to wait for in 1981.

One of the significant things that has happened in respect of my own electorate, which the Administrator touched on in his speech, was the establishment of Northern Airlines in the Northern Territory. I wish to make some comment on this. Northern Airlines have had teething problems in establishing these new services. In the main, most people in receipt of the services have been patient and the airline, I believe, has shown an extremely positive and cooperative spirit in trying to overcome the problems that have occurred. However, there is one problem which is still current. A term was used earlier in this sittings by the Leader of the Opposition: 'bloody-minded'. I can only use that term in respect of the attitude of the East-West pilots. There is a problem with seniority which is likely to bring the airline grinding to a halt; I hope it does not. I believe that the attitude being displayed at the moment by East-West pilots is most unfair and unreasonable. Many of the flying employees of formerly Connair and now Northern Airlines have shown a commendable degree of loyalty to both the management and to the Northern Territory by remaining in their jobs under fairly adverse circumstances at a time of low morale when the opportunities to gain lucrative positions elsewhere were freely available to them. In fact, I know that pushing a DC3 around the Territory, an old aircraft, is a frustrating thing for all of them. George Washington, one of their senior pilots, said to me on many occasions that he started off during the war flying the most modern aircraft available to man and he has been going backwards ever since. I can sympathise with him.

Now, when these people have an opportunity of at least getting into decent aircraft, and having their working conditions improved, we find that the East-West Airlines pilots are going to put them out of business because they are demanding that the pilots who have been flying for Connair for 10 or 12 years are to be put at the bottom of the seniority list and that East-West Airlines pilots, who have never been employed in the Northern Territory, are going to take precedence over the pilots of the Northern Airlines service. Just in the last couple of days, I saw a disgraceful telex from the airline pilots in New South Wales - an absolute ultimatum - stating that they intended to crew the first F27 aircraft in New South Wales, fly the aircraft up here and simply operate them. In other words, to physically come up here, move in the aircraft and start flying them. They may have a little bit of trouble getting anybody to put oil in the engines and selling tickets at the counter I understand. But that is the intention. I hope that the government will do all in its power to speedily resolve what looks to be developing as an extremely serious problem in the smooth running of the Northern Territory's airline. I

condemn the East-West pilots for their extremely unreasonable stand on this matter.

Everyone has been talking about things close to their hearts so I will too - education. I want to make some comments as a result of what has been said to me by my constituents about the establishment of the new university. I withheld making any comments on this until I have been able to obtain some feedback from the electorate. A number of times in public, the Chief Minister particularly has made great play on the fact that one of the substantial areas that the new university will concentrate on is Aboriginal studies. I want to say advisedly to the Chief Minister that many Aboriginal people are getting sick and tired of being studied.

I want to be careful in making this comment because I do not want to see it being construed as a blanket criticism of anthropologists. I do not feel that way about anthropologists at all. There are many anthropologists who are currently providing invaluable service to Aboriginal people, particularly in the context of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, in preparing anthropological evidence that is so necessary for land rights cases in court, preparation of claim books and so on. But at the moment, and again it is not a personal reflection on any one, there are 7 postgraduate anthropologists working in the area between Maningrida and Oenpelli alone. I find it somewhat daunting to think that there will be a school of Aboriginal studies established at Charles Darwin University and, to the best of my knowledge, absolutely no consultation at all - and that is becoming rather a tired word I can see - has been carried on with the subjects of this research, the Aboriginal people themselves. I am extremely worried about the prospect of not only my electorate being subjected to the attentions of postgraduate students but having to put up with hordes of undergraduate students based and living here in Darwin as well.

Many applications from anthropologists are rejected by communities simply because it is a pretty busy field and there is not much room for many more out there. One of the problems is simply finding a place to house them. When Aboriginal people themselves cannot find a place to live, it is a bit hard to see somebody who is chasing a PhD arrive in a community, move into a house for 12 months and then disappear again to write up his paper. I do not want that to be seen as a blanket condemnation of anthropologists at all. But I wish to sound a note of warning that, before any further public statements are made and before any further plans to proceed with the establishment of a school for Aboriginal studies here in Darwin are made, someone ought to go out first and talk to the specimens who are going to be studied because the constituents in my electorate are getting to the stage of being a little bit sick and tired of being studied.

I want to talk about the problems associated with being an isolated teacher, teaching and working in an isolated school. I hope that the Minister for Education will take up the plight of teachers working in the bush. There are many problems associated with this and I will highlight one of them.

This is the July edition of the Northern Territory Department of Education gazette, the Bulletin. It has a note in here that says the Commonwealth Teaching Service is phasing out freight subsidies on perishables for teachers living in isolated communities and it is doing it in the most ridiculous way possible. It is phasing this out gradually so that, if a teacher is appointed after 1 July 1980, he or she will not get any freight subsidy at all on perishables but teachers who currently get it still will. That provides a really charming situation for a small school. The amount of friction it is

causing is incredible. For example, at Milingimbi, 3 teachers get absolutely no freight subsidy whatever and every other teacher on the staff does. To overcome this, they are putting together all the unused freight subsidy and banding it out as a club to the ones who do not get it. I commend this action. I might add that, if a teacher who has been at Milingimbi for 5 years transfers to Maningrida, he also loses the freight subsidy. It is a most ridiculous method of phasing out something which should be continued in any case. I would hope to get an assurance from the Minister for Education that, under the establishment of the new Northern Territory Teaching Service, that freight subsidy will be replaced.

There are many other anomalies attached to living in the bush which I have not got time to go into now. I am sure the minister is aware of them. I can cover most of those by asking the minister to get in touch with the committee that has been especially set up by the department to look at the problems of isolated schools and thus find out just how much progress it is making in its deliberations. There are many other problems not the least serious of which is being typecast as a bush teacher. I remember only too clearly the case of an academically highly-qualified teacher, a principal of a school, who had chosen to remain in a community for 11 years and who gave great service to that community, applying for positions in urban schools and being unable to get them. On my taking the problem up on his behalf in a very unofficial and quiet manner, I was told by a senior officer of the Education Department: 'Well, has this gentleman had 11 years' experience or has he in fact had one year's experience 11 times?' Now, it is pretty disheartening to have that kind of comment made and at the same time to read public statements by the Department of Education that bush teachers are not discriminated against in any way as far as transfers are concerned. The fact is that they are and I would like the minister to have a very careful look at that. The plight of teachers in the bush and the problem of getting decent teachers to go and live in the bush is serious indeed. I remember at Umbakumba school in 1973 that, apart from the principal of the school, every single member of the staff was a first-year school teacher. It does not do them any good to be in an isolated position where they have no professional liaison with fellow teachers to improve their own experience and it does not do the consumers any good either.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mrs O'NEIL (Fannie Bay): I move that the honourable member's time be extended.

Motion negatived.

Mr STEELE (Primary Production): I am pleased to be standing here again and pleased to be able to join in the Address in Reply to His Honour. My personal pleasure is enhanced by the overwhelming support I received from the people of Ludmilla. No doubt the member for Arnhem is enthused by my victory also. My hopes and wishes for the electorate have been expressed to those constituents.

I would just like to talk about electoral matters for just a couple of seconds. I would like to see a few things happen in what is quite a disfigured electorate, separated by a very main thoroughfare, now joined by another very main thoroughfare and isolated into several residential pockets. I would like to see the removal of the 2½-mile depot during the current term. I made a pledge to the electorate that I would try and see that that was carried out during the term. This would provide additional residential land and no doubt strengthen my own personal electoral base.

to voluntarily cook play lunches and lunches for the children. They were simple meals but they were nutritious. As well as providing the children with healthy nutritional meals, they helped overcome some social problems at Snake Bay. I saw the kitchen in operation and I think it must have been very hard for the children to be sitting in the schoolroom while their lunch was being cooked because the smells used to be pretty good.

Anyway, at the beginning of the year - I think it was February - because of the increase in numbers, the principal decided that the cooking would be discontinued in the classroom which meant a disbanding of the mothers group which meant that the children were at some nutritional disadvantage because they did not get the meals that they had previously received. An application was made to the Education Department for a demountable kitchen. This was promised way back in February and it is now August. This demountable has not gone over there.

In the meantime, the mothers group has been disbanded and I do not think that this is in the interests of the cooperation that the mothers extended to the teachers. I do not think that it is in the best interests of the children to have this discontinued and I have taken this up by correspondence with the minister and by telephone conversations with officers in the Education Department. But this is the third school in the Tiwi electorate, the third country school, that I see suffering from a great disadvantage. As I said earlier, I do not think that these conditions would be tolerated in any suburban school.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arnhem): Mr Deputy Speaker, like every other member of this House, I also admired the Coat of Arms on the wall but, thanks to the honourable member for Tiwi, I am afraid it will never be the same again. To quote Mae West, 'Why make an issue out of a little bit of tissue'.

The honourable the Leader of the House is no respecter of maiden speeches as he demonstrated again this afternoon. I still remember my maiden speech only too well which was interrupted after only one sentence by the honourable Leader of the House on a point of order which caused the House to then adjourn for 10 minutes and we all went outside before I could continue.

The honourable Minister for Education made some remarks this morning which I cannot allow to pass concerning COGSO's public statements on the dollar-for-dollar subsidy for schools. I say at the outset that the philosophical aversions which COGSO has to the dollar-for-dollar subsidy is supported entirely by the opposition. I have no doubt whatsoever that the honourable Minister for Education received the COGSO statement on dollar for dollar as I did and as I am sure many other people did. It is a fairly succinct document which sets out certain matters whether you agree with the sentiments or not. It certainly sets out in very clear terms why COGSO is objecting to it. It could not be much clearer.

I made notes this morning while the honourable minister was replying to the question from the honourable member for Port Darwin. He said a number of things which I am sure are going to annoy and upset members of COGSO considerably. I hope that I have got this right. I wrote it down as accurately as I could. He said: 'I could have had the system operating other than for the recent spate of publicity given from either the entire COGSO or merely one officer of that organisation'. Let me take up that point immediately. I was fortunate enough to have the time to be able to attend the recent conference of COGSO and, let me assure the honourable Minister for Education, the one subject on which there was great unanimity was the objection to the dollar-for-

dollar subsidy. It is certainly not simply the views of the President of COGSO who put his name to the press statement as he must but it is in fact the view of that organisation.

The minister went on to make a fairly extraordinary statement when he said in criticising COGSO: 'It seems as if the body which purports to represent parents does not want the money at all'. He went on to say: 'It is not the intention of this government to provide substantial sums of taxpayers' money in an area which the parent representatives believe it is not required'. Well, what an extraordinary misrepresentation of COGSO's public statements on the dollar-for-dollar subsidy. Not only do they go to some lengths to point out that they want the money but they want it increased. It is simply the basis on which the dollar-for-dollar subsidy scheme is based.

The honourable minister then went on to say that he intends to go and see COGSO to find out what their objections are to the dollar-for-dollar subsidy. Could I suggest to the minister that all he needs to do is to read their public statements carefully because a clearer statement of their objections could not be found.

COGSO executive believes that the reintroduction of the dollar-for-dollar subsidies will be turning the clocks back 10 years to the time when the schools in the welfare areas got what they needed and the schools in the poorer areas went without. To sum up both COGSO's and the opposition's feelings about the dollar-for-dollar subsidy, as admirable as it appears to be on the surface, it will make the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. It happens to be a fact of life in the Northern Territory, and the minister is well aware of it, that there are some schools which the parents themselves are happy to refer to as rich schools and some which are poor schools. In other words, there are some schools in the Territory that are fortunate enough to come from a particular social structure where the parents are people on reasonable incomes, where they have the leisure time to devote to active council work to raise large sums of money - very admirably too, I might add.

The whole question of school fees, which this business of dollar for dollar revolves around, is one of great interest to me and it has been for some time. I looked at it carefully and I found there are great disparities in the way in which school fees are administered, in the way in which the money is spent and in the accounting which is made to the parents as to how it is spent. In fact, I think some schools - I know of one in Alice Springs - have admirable ways of accounting to the parents for every cent of the money while other schools virtually submit a one-line budget if you like. It is a fairly controversial area, the area of school fees. The dollar-for-dollar subsidy will simply exacerbate the problem that exists, not alleviate it.

I say again, I believe the motivation in providing it was excellent. I believe certainly there is no intention to bring about an unfair, inequitable situation but that is the effect it will have. I would urge the minister, along with COGSO, to simply reconsider the way in which the money is allocated.

One of the other interesting things about school fees, as the Department of Education is well aware, is that about \$1m a year is raised by parents in the Northern Territory. That simply is not school fees alone; that is money raised by school fetes and general parent activity. It is very interesting that the department actually takes into consideration, with its budgeting for schools, the amounts raised by school fees. I find that very interesting. When you have a rich school, a school wealthy in parents who participate in the school's activities, you get X amount of dollars provided for consumables - rubbers,

pencils, books and so on - and to another school, with half the pupil enrolment of school X, that has children from greatly disadvantaged areas, the department has given for consumables a sum of \$2,000 in excess of that given to the school with 700 pupils. You have 300 pupils at one school receiving X amount of money and a school with 700 pupils receiving \$2,000 less. The reason is that a great proportion of the school fees raised in that wealthy school are used for the purchase of consumables. That is actually taken into consideration by the budgeting of the Education Department and many parents find that fact very hard to take.

I have had representations made to me on this subject and I do not always please the people I talk to because the statement I make is, 'Yes, that is true because the department recognises the inequitable difference between the socio-economic groups from which the parents of both those schools come and they try to alleviate it to some extent by giving that extra money'. What I am saying is that this dollar-for-dollar scheme puts the clock back 10 years. The whole business of school fees, I remember very well, started from library books. The whole concept of school fees was first introduced to provide library books to schools. The Whitlam government in 1974 recognised the inequality of this and removed the necessity for parents to contribute money by giving a direct grant to schools for school library books. As often happens in a case like this, the school fees were then simply continued. Along with other money raised by parents, school fees are responsible for raising up to \$1m a year.

Along with COGSO, I believe that that \$500,000 should be made available. It is quite wrong of the minister to suggest that they do not want the money. In fact, it should be increased to at least \$600,000, which is about equivalent to the amount raised by school fees at the moment in the Northern Territory, and it should be distributed to schools by the Department of Education in a responsible manner, taking into consideration the inequalities that exist from school to school. It would be a very simple matter - I have not got time to go into it this afternoon - to still maintain the interest and enthusiasm of parents involved in a school by the very simple act of increasing greatly the responsibilities of school councils. That is a subject which I wanted to take up in the Address in Reply this morning but I will do that in detail at a later time, hopefully during this sittings.

I say again that I must take the minister to task for that complete misrepresentation of COGSO's attitude and for making quite unwarranted criticisms of a very hard-working organisation by saying things like, 'The body which purports to represent parents does not want the money at all'. That is a total misrepresentation and I am sure that many people in COGSO will be very annoyed by those comments from the minister. Along with COGSO, I would ask the minister to reconsider the implications of a dollar-for-dollar scheme. It will in fact succeed in making more facilities available to schools which already benefit from better facilities and make smaller schools, which simply do not have the parents who can raise the first dollar, poorer and less able to cope than they already are.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Jingili): Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a few things that I want to comment on in the adjournment debate this afternoon. First, when inquiring into the reasons for naming of various streets in my electorate, I found that Borella Circuit in Jingili was named after a man called Albert Borella who was the Territory's one and only VC winner. I must confess that this was a source of some surprise to me because I have never heard Borella's name celebrated around the Territory as one usually does when one thinks of people who have received that award. I believed it was a matter that should

be kept in the eye of at least the people who live in that area. I have made arrangements for a small cairn to be erected in a park in Borella Circuit and a plaque placed on the cairn to commemorate the fact that Borella Circuit, Jingili, is named after Albert Borella and to give a brief account of the circumstances in which he won with distinction the award of the Victoria Cross in the First World War.

The honourable member for Fannie Bay has already beaten me to the punch on another matter that I wished to speak about. I really do not think it is possible to laud The Beat of Our Arts much higher than the honourable member for Fannie Bay has already done so I will not attempt to do so. Suffice to say that I emphatically agree with everything that she said in relation to this performance. It was fantastic. Of course, I imagine one sees the thing through jaundiced eyes when one is looking at one's 2 daughters singing in a choir. It was a magnificent choir of almost 500 children on the first 2 nights and the numbers slipped a bit on the third night. It was still fantastic and the whole program was something really to be remembered. The convener did not lose his opportunity to put in a plug for the performing arts centre at the conclusion of it all and I got it right between the eyes as usual. There is never a night that you can really have off, Mr Deputy Speaker. Something always crops up. I certainly agree that performances such as that will be greatly facilitated by the construction of the performing arts centre, which is a fair way down the track in the design stages at the moment. There is some action in contemplation to go one step further from the design brief to a more detailed phase which will probably take another 9 to 12 months before the matter can then be taken further.

It will certainly be a great asset to Darwin and a place where symphony orchestras can play, where the acoustics will be good and where the audience will sit in comfort. For all that, I do not think it is reason to stop bringing symphony orchestras to the Territory simply because we do not have the performing arts centre at this time. I hope that, if not the South Australian Symphony Orchestra which I believe will be able to come back to the Territory next year, perhaps the Queensland or Western Australian Symphony Orchestra will be able to come. That performance too was a memorable one and it is certainly a very long time since Darwin had last seen a symphony orchestra concert. The turnout at the amphitheatre was ample evidence of the support in this city for this sort of event.

Finally, Mr Deputy Speaker, I turn to the matter of international air communications to and from Darwin. I am dismayed to note that Qantas is apparently intending to reduce the number of its services out of Darwin. This really causes me a great deal of concern. Qantas markets itself as Australia's overseas airline. It is a publicly-owned corporation and, in the final analysis, I suppose it would expect to fall back on the Australian taxpayer's dollar. Over the past several years, Qantas has deliberately equipped itself with aircraft that may be best suited in the economic sense for servicing large urban centres of population whilst, at the same time, claiming to remain Australia's overseas flag carrier. Because of their size, its Boeing jumbo jets are apparently unsuitable for landing in ports such as Darwin to pick up the amount of traffic that a city of this size can generate. That is not Darwin's fault; that is something that the management of Qantas should have foreseen at the time that it put itself in the predicament of completely re-equipping its fleet with 747s.

If that airline is to continue to be able to say with truth that it is Australia's national flag carrier, then it had better do something about serving adequately other parts of this country than Sydney and Melbourne because, quite frankly, that is about all it does at the moment. It has a

right through the centre of the Northern Territory which will be a tremendous economic boost to the Northern Territory and which will provide spin-off benefits nationally. We are seeing already the beginnings of increased defence expenditure in the north. This has economic and social benefits and may even cost us. It will assist the nation to prepare itself in the event that it is ever placed under threat.

We have already heard announcements that a university will be established in the Northern Territory and a very substantial museum is on its way to completion. Just a few years ago, most Territorians thought we would be stuck with a museum in a building like Browns Mart. The old building was blown away in the cyclone and in its place we will have a very fine building on a very fine site.

In the next decade, we should see gas and possibly oil piped to Alice Springs and used both in the refinery and in the powerhouse. We will see an agricultural development scheme go through its difficult first few years and hopefully get off the ground in a very big way. We will see, I am sure, a great deal of mineral development as a result of a high level of activity in mining administration and an easing of the system so that people are encouraged to seek and exploit natural resources. On top of this, I think we will see a continued liaison with the Asian region where I have long felt that Australia's future and, more particularly, the future of the Northern Territory lies. I think that communication, visitation and trade between ourselves and the Asian region will simply escalate year by year and I would suggest that, in a decade or so, we will certainly have very regular shipping services to and fro hopefully using Darwin as the beginning of a land bridge from Asia to the rest of Australia via the railway line.

They are just a few of the things that come to mind when I think that the Northern Territory really is entering its most important and very crucial 10 years of real development. It has taken us a couple of years to sort out many of the initial problems and to perhaps gain a bit of experience. I think the Minister for Primary Production mentioned that we are perhaps a bit inexperienced - I am sure we are inexperienced, Mr Speaker. To make it worse, we have a very small Assembly and a necessarily small ministry. I think that this Assembly is fairly overloaded with work and, combined with its inexperience, the job is not made easy. But notwithstanding that, I am sure we will all be in there doing our best. We have shown that we have been able to hold the Territory together and on course. It is a matter of more of the same from here on in. With harder work, more diligence and picking up experience as we go, we will get there and the Territory will begin to take off with a momentum of its own.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEELE (Primary Production): I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mrs O'NEIL (Fannie Bay): Mr Speaker, I do not have a great deal to say but I would like to comment on the Coat of Arms which has been added to the Chamber. I think it looks really excellent, particularly with the spotlight on it. Hopefully it will detract our attention from other parts of the walls which are not quite so good to look at. I commend those involved with placing it there because I think it certainly enhances the Chamber.

The other matter I wanted to mention was the performance by Darwin school

children last Thursday, Friday and Saturday. It was entitled: 'The Beat of Our Arts'. It did not receive much publicity but, despite that, the Greek Hall where it was held was packed to capacity on all 3 nights and there were people standing at walls and windows and certainly in the foyer. The Chief Minister went on Saturday and will recall that. It was a truly beautiful performance. It was absolutely marvellous, amazing, outstanding. I cannot think of enough adjectives to describe the quality of that performance by those hundreds of school children. There were many children involved. The choir alone was comprised of about 400 kids. It had only 2 rehearsals as a total group and yet went on and performed admirably. The orchestra had 40 kids or so and was also of excellent standard. The dance was also done by the school children. I think that everyone who was involved, particularly the employees of the Education Department, are to be commended for that excellent effort.

Last year, during the International Year of the Child, a mass of Saint Francis of Assisi was performed. I think that it was from this that the latest production arose because it was realised just what good work could be produced. I am quite sure that, on a smaller scale, productions could be produced in other places such as Alice Springs, which really demonstrate to all our citizens, and not just to parents, the very high standard of artistic endeavour in Northern Territory schools. We really are very privileged to have such a high standard of teachers and instructors. It is hard to imagine them getting better but I am sure they will. I am told that, after last week's performance, the kids immediately asked what they would be doing next. We enjoyed it all so much.

One thing that has to be said is that, despite the generosity of the Greek Community in allowing the hall to be used, it really is inadequate. We lack a proper venue for such performances in the Northern Territory and we are all looking forward in Darwin to seeing something specific happening in regard to the performing arts centre on the Esplanade.

Something similar happened recently when the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra was here. The performances were very well received but the performances for school children, which are very important to them educationally, were held in the middle of the day with kids sitting in the sun down at the amphitheatre. That was, once again, a most unsuitable venue and, when we have something better, I am sure we will find that the standards will improve even more.

I would like to say that the performances by our very own school children are an indication of the high standard of artistic talent amongst them and also the adults in the Northern Territory. Considering that we bring people up here at very great expense to provide musical entertainment or entertainment of a similar nature to the people of the Northern Territory, we will have to look more and more to using local talent for this type of thing. I know that the Arts Council will be organising a tour from Alice Springs to Darwin by an Alice Springs folk group fairly soon. I think that that is the sort of development of artistry in the Northern Territory which can only be commended.

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH (Tiwi): Mr Deputy Speaker, this afternoon I would like to speak on 2 subjects. The honourable member for Fannie Bay has already commented on the very interesting addition to the Chamber in the form of our Territory Coat of Arms. I would like to also comment on the high standard of the artistic merit of this Coat of Arms. I would also like to comment rather differently than she did while still reiterating what she said.

People in the Northern Territory, especially members of the Assembly, have a natural commonsense approach to life in that some of us have a rather basic,

realistic approach to life. I do not think crudity or prurience comes into it. If I may, I would like to bring in a little bit of sex here. In keeping with our sensible approach to life, I would like to applaud the sensible, anatomically correct differentiation between the 2 representations of the red kangaroo in our Coat of Arms. It has not been reproduced so carefully before. I would also like to comment on the facial reproductions that make the differences even more apparent. They are even more distinct in nature. Nevertheless, the spirit of truth and honesty is well represented by these 2 models. I think they should be accepted both artistically and zoologically.

I turn now to something a bit more serious than sex. I have in front of me, Mr Deputy Speaker, a petition on a very serious subject which has been gathered and prepared by certain people in my electorate. It is rather an informal sort of petition in that, because of certain technicalities, it could not be presented this morning. I would like to read it:

This is a petition raised on behalf of Parents and Friends Committee of the Middle Point Primary School. We are petitioning against the removal of a demountable classroom used by first, second and third grade students at Middle Point Primary School. We, as parents and friends, object to this as we feel there is great need for the teaching facilities to stay as they are. The removal of this demountable classroom will interfere with the carrying out of the proper education of our children ...

Mr Deputy Speaker, I realise that, in speaking about this, I have parliamentary privilege. I am not knocking the government department about which I am going to speak. The officers say that they have a certain policy to follow. However, it also concerns another school in my electorate in that it was planned that this demountable be taken from one school and be given to another school.

This petition contains the signatures of 68 people who live near Middle Point. They are parents, teachers, workmen, all sorts of people. It is quite an interesting petition because there are comments on it also. Evidently, it took 10 years to get that demountable out to Middle Point and now these people, due to a certain policy of the Education Department, stand to lose it. It would be very interesting to tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker, how this classroom is being used and what will happen when it does leave the Middle Point School. I hope that this does not eventuate; I hope something can be done. However, it was planned to take this demountable classroom from Middle Point and to take it out to Point Stuart Station School.

At present, the demountable classroom is being used for 12 children. At Point Stuart Station, it will be used for 8 children. There are only 32 children who attend school at Middle Point School but this is because some children who were there last year have not been in attendance this year although they are still in the area. While not saying that the Point Stuart Station School does not need a classroom, I feel that to take it from the Middle Point school, where it is being used to its full capacity and where some hardship will be created if it does go, is not really the best way to attack the problem. I think it shows that certain officers of the Education Department are extremely shortsighted and they do not seem to have any clear future planning policy regarding rural schools. I will not comment on a similar unjustifiable deprivation at Snake Bay School which is also in my electorate. I will not comment on that today but it seems to me that the situation would never occur in a city school whereby a used classroom would be taken away from one school and given to another school, no matter how great the need of the

second school for the classroom. They do need a school at Point Stuart but, surely to goodness, somebody in the Education Department can find a demountable classroom elsewhere without robbing one school to give it to the other school.

I will continue reading from the petition which was presented to me. This demountable is at present a classroom for years 1,2 and 3 and a transitional child. The other demountable, where the 12 children will be going, at present has many uses. There are 6 uses for which the other demountable is being put. I do not think there would be many country schools in the Territory, if any, which would have so many uses for one demountable. The other demountable where these children were supposed to be going is the library which is continually being expanded. Some new shelves have been ordered to improve the shelving. This demountable is also the film room and television area. It is also the principal's office where the school secretary works and all official documents and school records are stored. It is also the duplicating room, the staff room and the welcome area for visitors. This is where 12 children are going. It is also the medical room used by the medical sisters in their routine visits. It is also the place where the adult pottery classes are held every Thursday night. That might not be completely relevant to ordinary everyday teaching of children but I assume that, if the pottery classes are held there, there would be certain materials which would need to be stored or at least put on shelves.

I have a picture in front of me, Mr Deputy Speaker, which shows Alan Taylor from the Education Department testing a student in the playground on Tuesday 12 August 1980 because there was no space in a room to test this child. The two of them are sitting out in the open at a desk. They say their enrolment is at present 32 children and there is a possibility of an increase in numbers because the number of families in the village does fluctuate. I did say that, last year, there were more children there but those children have not come to the Middle Point School this year even though they are still in the area.

At present, an area close to the Middle Point School, Lambell's Lagoon, is undergoing an electrification program which means more people will be coming to live in the area, especially more people with young children. Again, it points out the lack of knowledge by certain officers of the Education Department of what should be done by way of forward planning to cope with the increase in population in rural areas. I do not find that to be very satisfactory. I know the statistics for the number of people who live in the rural area are way below the actual number of people but what many people do not realise is that the people out in the rural area do not stand still. They are busy populating the area and the population is increasing all the time.

I think that is about all I have to say about the demountable at Middle Point School. I would like to see this demountable stay at the Middle Point School and another demountable be obtained from somewhere for the Point Stuart Station School. The honourable minister has said that people from somewhere else would complain but I would point out that it seems to me that the country schools are taking the brunt of any deficiencies in the education system in the Northern Territory.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I do have a little time left so I will speak about what happened at Snake Bay. At Snake Bay, they did not have so many things in the one room but they had a kitchen and a schoolroom combined. This was highly unsatisfactory. As the number of children increased, the cooking had to be discontinued in the schoolroom. This cooking was not ordinary cooking; it was done by a group of concerned Aboriginal mothers who had banded together

dog-in-the-manger attitude about letting anyone else do anything for the rest of the country. I have no brief for Ansett Airlines; I have given them plenty of stick in their time and I will continue to do so. I have no particular brief for TAA. As far as I am concerned, they are both pretty much the same. The only substantial difference is the colours on the tails of their planes. However, I must say that they do have the type of aircraft, Boeing 727s, which are very suitable and economical for servicing Darwin and bringing it into connection with other South-east Asian ports. If Darwin can be connected with Singapore, with Jakarta - fortunately, we now have a once-weekly service by Garuda by a DC9 from Darwin to Bali and onwards to Jakarta each Saturday - with Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Bali and perhaps Manila by aircraft such as 727s, then I believe that would be the ideal situation for us. All you really have to do is get there and you can go anywhere. When I made a brief visit to Singapore and the Philippines earlier this year, I found that the aircraft that I flew in from Singapore to Manila was a Boeing 727 of Singapore Airlines. It is worthy of comment that Singapore Airlines, Malaysian Airlines, Garuda and Philippine Airlines have not equipped themselves with one aircraft to the exclusion of all others. No doubt they could, and perhaps it would suit them on economic grounds to do so, but they have various areas to service and at least they seem to make the effort to have the range of aircraft necessary to provide an adequate service.

The honourable member for Elsey remarked to me yesterday that, at present, Qantas seems determined to take the NT out of Qantas. That is the way it looks to me and I believe that we must give the present management of Qantas and the federal government the message very loudly and clearly to be included in Qantas' schedule of operations failing which we want open skies here for domestic and other international airlines to operate in and out of Darwin as it pleases them and not as it pleases the bureaucratic wallahs in the Department of Transport and in Qantas in the south.

Mrs LAWRIE (Nightcliff): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am going to raise a couple of issues over which the Northern Territory has some control. We do not have any control over the operations of Qantas. I think that the honourable Minister for Education may be underestimating the public concern regarding the CLP policy statement on the dollar-for-dollar subsidy funding for schools. I am not a particularly humble person so I will not make all the cliched statements such as 'begging with all due humility', but I do ask the honourable minister to consider carefully what has been stated this afternoon by the honourable member for Arnhem in his capacity as Shadow Minister for Education and the remarks that I am about to make.

As the honourable minister is well aware, I am associated closely with 2 schools - Nightcliff Primary and Nightcliff High School. Both these schools have a keen interest in and are members of COGSO and the issue of dollar-for-dollar subsidies has been canvassed at large by these 2 particular schools. Both have expressed their agreement with the COGSO statement. That is very interesting in itself because Nightcliff Primary School could be considered one of the more affluent schools. However, it realises in its wisdom that it would be inequitable and unfair for that school to continue to raise money because it serves a relatively wealthy community to a degree which may disadvantage those schools which are more worthy and deserving of the taxpayer's dollar. After all, it is the taxpayer's dollar we are considering. We all understand that, to a certain age, education is free and compulsory in Australia. It is funded by the public purse. We all appreciate that. I am pleased that the schools with which I am associated recognise that they should only receive their fair share of government funding notwithstanding the parental ability to raise more money from within their own resources.

If one looks at the history of school fees in the Northern Territory - and I really dislike that word because there is no compulsion on parents to pay that fee - I think one would find that it was Parap School in the Darwin area which some years ago decided that, rather than the continual struggle of a few people to raise money through a school fete and through enterprises such as that, they would simply ask parents for a contribution across the board which would alleviate the necessity, as they saw it, to hold the school fete to raise money for extras which were considered desirable. I choose my words with care because surely we are not talking about having to raise money in this way for items of equipment which are considered necessary as distinct from desirable. The Minister for Education clearly understands the distinction which I am drawing.

However, over my long association with the Nightcliff High School, it has become apparent to me that the more money which is raised by that high school through the levying of fees and through other means, the more items we want to buy of the type considered extras and not essentials. This school can provide the minister with example after example of this. Perhaps it has been bureaucratic thinking and not the minister's which has led to the increasing cynicism of board members. When we ask for cupboards or equipment for a particular program, we find that we are expected to meet the costs ourselves through the school fees.

Let there be no misunderstanding by any members present who do not have children attending schools or who are not associated in some other aspect of scholastic life in the Northern Territory. There is a very heavy compulsion put upon the kids to pay their fees, although they are not compulsory. I think it is about time that this pressure was resisted. I have many friends among the community at large who say that either the government of the day make a clear statement that it cannot continue to adequately fund education in the Northern Territory and that the schools must raise extra money - which is an entirely different proposition - or make it quite clear that it will in fact fund schools adequately in a manner which provides free and compulsory education for our students and, further, that anything the school wishes to raise above and beyond that, by whichever means it considers the best and the most pertinent to that particular community, is in fact to be used for items which are not necessary but which are obviously desirable. I think this distinction is becoming blurred and I am quite irate about the encroachment of the Department of Education by their wish to use this money, which is raised either by fetes or by the levying of what is not a compulsory fee, for items of equipment and for programs which, in the ordinary sense of the word, are necessary and not simply desirable.

In conclusion, might I also mention the need for a performing arts centre in the Northern Territory. Also, very shortly we will be talking again of the need for a new Parliament House to house the Parliament of the people of the Northern Territory. We have not heard much about it over the last few months because we have been embroiled in an election. But, now that we are all back in the harness and working, might I say first that I hope that, at every stage of the planning, site development and calling for ideas for our Parliament House, local architects are consulted and are enabled to make contributions to every aspect of the planning of the new Parliament House. I say that quite deliberately because the large expensive complexes which we have seen developing over the last couple of years, certainly in Darwin, have not had the degree of local expertise which I feel was due. The local Institute of Architects, by and large, is an imaginative and competent group of people and deserves consideration.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.

DEBATES

Thursday 21 August 1980

Mr Speaker MacFarlane took the Chair at 10 am.

PETITION

Parkland in Millner

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): I present a petition from 21 residents of the Millner electorate requesting that crown land in Millner be developed as parkland. The petition bears the Clerk's certificate that it conforms with the requirements of Standing Orders and I move that the petition be received and read.

Motion agreed to; petition received and read:

To the honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory of Australia, the humble petition of the undersigned residents of the Millner electorate respectfully sheweth their desire that blocks 7565 and 7566 Brayshaw Crescent Millner be developed as parkland. These are blocks of crown land and residents request they be developed as parkland to ensure there is adequate open space in this newly developed subdivision and that their children have a safe place to play. Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the honourable members of the Legislative Assembly act to ensure that lots 7565 and 7566 Brayshaw Crescent are developed as parkland, and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

PETITION

Dust Problem in Sanderson

Ms D'ROZARIO (Sanderson): I present a petition from 108 residents of the Northern Territory concerning a dust problem in the development of new private subdivisions in Sanderson. The petition bears the Clerk's certificate that it conforms with the requirements of Standing Orders. I move that the petition be received and read.

Motion agreed to; petition received and read:

To the honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory, the humble petition of the undersigned residents of the suburb of Wulagi respectfully sheweth that there is an urgent need to investigate and remedy the problem which has been created as a result of the development of the new private subdivision in Sanderson opposite Vanderlin Drive. A serious dust nuisance exists as a result of trucks using an unsealed section of road thus causing inconvenience to surrounding residents. Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the honourable members of the Legislative Assembly act to ensure the problem is rectified, and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

CYCLONE TRACY RELIEF TRUST FUND REPORT

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I table the Report of the Darwin Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund for the months of November and December 1979 and for January, February, March, April, May and June 1980. For the

information of members, I should add that there are no spare copies for distribution but that copies are available in the library.

I move that the report be noted and seek leave to continue my remarks at a later hour.

Leave granted.

MESSAGE FROM ADMINISTRATOR

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received a message No 1 from the Administrator. It reads:

I, John Armstrong England, the Administrator of the Northern Territory of Australia, pursuant to section 11 of the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978 of the Commonwealth, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a bill entitled the Appropriation Bill 1980-81 to provide for the appropriation of certain sums out of the consolidated fund for the service of the year ending 30 June 1981.

Dated this 19th day of August 1980.

J.A. England, Administrator.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL (Serial 11)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Attorney-General): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

Since self-government, a number of bills have been passed by this Assembly for the purpose of correcting minor defects in statute law and to update the laws of the Territory. This was especially so in consequence of the transfer of executive powers to the Territory on self-government. Earlier this year, a program was started to reprint the statutes in force in the Territory and, as I mentioned yesterday, some 50 acts have now been reprinted and the job is continuing at a reasonably rapid pace. As amendments are made to acts, they will be reprinted so that it will be fairly easy to consult the law of the Territory without having to riffle through multitudes of acts and pieces of legislation.

It is appropriate, therefore, that we take action to update many of the outmoded expressions in legislation. One particular one that this bill removes is references to ordinances by the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act. This Assembly passes enactments and references to ordinances and the laws of the Territory should therefore be changed to acts to reflect this. Honourable members will notice that only a small proportion of acts currently in force are affected by this bill. At further sittings of the Assembly, further bills of this nature will be introduced. In addition, as bills to amend particular pieces of legislation are brought forward, the opportunity will be taken to include a schedule making this type of amendment. The bill is a purely machinery bill and no changes of substance are made.

Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

PUBLIC SERVICE AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 27)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

This is a short bill and its purpose is twofold. It seeks to amend the Public Service Act by firstly deeming the establishment of a Department of the Legislative Assembly. The amendment vests the Speaker with ministerial and necessary Public Service Commissioner-type powers and the Clerk of the Assembly with Chief Executive Officer powers in respect of the deemed department. It also provides for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk of the Assembly to be appointed by the Administrator on a recommendation of the Speaker. The establishment of a Department of the Legislative Assembly under the control of the Speaker will remove any suspicion of political interference in the operation of the Assembly and will accord with usual Australian parliamentary practice. The amendment sought is on similar lines to section 9 of the Commonwealth Public Service Act.

Secondly, the bill seeks to amend the Public Service Act so that the rights of public servants who have been provisionally promoted prior to the issuing of administrative arrangements orders varying existing units of administration will be protected where it is determined that promotion action should proceed in the interests of efficient government. The amendment sought is similar to section 50A of the Commonwealth Public Service Act and will overcome the current difficulties whereby provisional promotions made prior to the issuing of administrative arrangements orders varying existing units of administration will normally lapse thus necessitating renotification and possible financial loss to the individual concerned.

Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr Tuxworth (Mines and Energy): I move that so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent 3 bills relating to industrial safety being presented and read a first time together and 1 motion being put in regard to respectively the second readings, the committee report stages and the third readings of the bills together, and the consideration of the bills separately in the committee of the whole and the passage of the bills through all stages.

EXPLOSIVES AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 7)

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 8)

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 10)

Bills presented and read a first time.

Mr TUXWORTH (Mines and Energy): I move that the bills be now read a second time.

Members will be familiar with these bills as they were introduced in the April sittings of the Assembly. The bills are the same as those previously presented except that some minor drafting revisions have been included, such as deleting the word 'ordinance' and substituting 'act'. The purpose of these bills is to increase the penalties for breaches of safety provisions in the various acts covering safety in industry. We hope that this will act as a deterrent to employers to foolishly think that they may cut corners and costs by ignoring proper safety procedures and hence risk the lives of Territory workers.

The penalties have been increased very considerably. For example, under the Inspection of Machinery Bill, the owner of machinery which is not guarded correctly could be liable for a fine of up to \$2,000 where it is currently set at \$100. There are similar examples in the proposed bills amending the Construction Safety Act and the Explosives Act where, according to the seriousness of the offence, penalties of \$2,000 or \$5,000 are proposed. We believe that this measure will prove effective in ensuring the compliance with safety acts.

I commend the bills to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

MAGISTRATES AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 23)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr EVERINGHAM (Attorney-General): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks to do 2 things. First, it repeals existing section 10. That section provides that magistrates can only be removed from office following a resolution of this House. The section which this bill substitutes provides that the Administrator can remove magistrates on the advice of the Executive Council. Secondly, clause 5 of the bill substitutes a new section 13 to ensure that the minister and Chief Magistrate have power respectively to appoint the places in the Territory where courts shall be held and direct magistrates and justices where they are to sit and what duties they are to perform.

With respect to the first point, members may be aware that in some jurisdictions, including New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and the United Kingdom, magistrates are removable at will. In others, they are not. In most jurisdictions, magistrates are public servants and their removal from office does not necessarily affect their job security because, even if they cease to be magistrates, they may still be employed as public servants. However, because Territory magistrates have elected not to become public servants, their removal from office does affect their means of livelihood. The government recognises this and the bill therefore contains safeguards against arbitrary dismissals.

In almost all other jurisdictions, magistrates are recruited locally. There is usually, therefore, adequate opportunity to assess their competence and suitability for appointment. The Territory is in a somewhat different position. Whilst the government is anxious to recruit magistrates of sufficient calibre from the ranks of the local profession, it will obviously be necessary to recruit some magistrates from interstate for some time. All possible care is taken with such recruitment but the lack of opportunity to see prospective appointees in action can make assessment difficult. In these circumstances, the government believes that the ancient and uncertain procedures associated with removal by resolution of parliament are inappropriate in the Territory. The government does believe, however, that magistrates should be removable at will. Their independ-

ence must be seen to be preserved. Clause 4 of the bill therefore provides that they shall not be removed except on certain grounds. The safeguards built in to preserve the independence of the judiciary will also operate to provide some job security for Territory magistrates. Clause 7 of the bill provides that the provisions of clause 4 will apply to existing magistrates as well as future appointees.

It is the policy of this government, so far as it is possible, to take justice to the people and it will become increasingly necessary for magistrates to sit in outlying areas. Ultimately, it may be necessary or desirable to have resident magistrates in places such as Gove, Jabiru, Katherine and Tennant Creek. The government believes that there should be power to direct magistrates where they shall sit and believes that this power is properly exercisable by the Chief Magistrate. These directions may not always be popular with or convenient to individual magistrates but are obviously necessary to providing the most efficient system of administration of justice. I have no doubt that the Chief Magistrate will consult fully with his colleagues and take their wishes into account wherever possible. Clause 5 gives the minister and the Chief Magistrate the necessary power to ensure that justice is taken to the people.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

ELECTRICITY COMMISSION AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 24)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr TUXWORTH (Mines and Energy): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The amendments contained in this bill deal with 3 separate matters: the question of responsibility for electrical safety in mines; the conflict between this act and the Interpretation Act as to the procedures for introducing bylaws; and the correction of some drafting imperfections. Both the Department of Mines and Energy and the Northern Territory Electricity Commission became aware some time ago that there was a conflict over the apportionment of responsibility for electrical safety in mines. Section 13 of the Electricity Commission Act confers upon the commission the functions of promoting the safe use of electricity and of setting and enforcing standards of electrical installation, apparatus, equipment, implements being used or available for use within the Northern Territory, and generation, reticulation and consumption of power. The Mines Regulation Act, which is still in force, states that inspectors appointed under that act and who, of course, are part of the Department of Mines and Energy shall be responsible for electrical safety in mines. This intention has been restated in the Mines Safety Control Act which has not yet been commenced. There is in the latter act a long and exhaustive list of situations which constitute a mine and for which inspectors under that act are responsible.

Clauses 3 and 4 of this act should be read together and they state that, as from the commencement of the Mines Safety Control Act - and I am pleased to say that that time is not far off because work on the regulations is almost complete - there will be 2 clear areas of responsibility. This will regularise what has in fact been the practice. After discussions between the Secretary of the Department of Mines and Energy and the acting General-Manager of the Electricity Commission, it was agreed that there may well be occasions when it is convenient for the commission to employ the services of an inspector from the

Department of Mines and Energy. Section 19(2) of the Electricity Commission Act permits this to happen. I therefore foreshadow the withdrawal of clause 5 of the bill.

Turning to the second matter, subsections (4) and (5) of the act are in conflict with the provisions of the Interpretation Act and, on the advice of the Department of Law, they will be removed. Lastly, the further amendments of clause 7 were inserted at the request of the draftsman and they bring the Electricity Commission Act into line with current drafting practice.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

APPROPRIATION BILL (Serial 25)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr PERRON (Treasurer): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

It is my pleasure to present the government's budget for 1980-81. This is the third budget of the self-governing Northern Territory and by far the biggest of that trio. The funds available to the government this financial year will total \$654,393,000. After allowing for special appropriations of some \$15m, which I will detail later, \$639,215,000 is available for distribution through the Appropriation Bill 1980-81. An additional \$26m will be available to authorities for capital works projects under the Northern Territory Semi-Government Loan Program. By historical comparison, the first self-government budget, which I presented to this Assembly in 1978, appropriated \$350m. The year just ended saw total appropriations rise to \$530m.

This budget continues and expands the proven pattern of its predecessors. We have entered the 1980s with the financial muscle to continue the programs of rapid development and economic stimulus which became the feature of Territory life just over 2 years ago. This position is possible because of the year-to-year increases in Commonwealth funds secured with self-government and because of escalating local revenues due to an expanding economy. This budget will generate further expansion in what was described recently in a respected banking review as 'probably the fastest growing area in the Australian economy'. In human terms, this will translate extra jobs, more opportunities for Territorians, improved services and accelerating development. It will encourage more growth in the private sector. We are again in a position to demonstrate the sound funding principles built into the Memorandum of Understanding with the Commonwealth. The government is able to support a strong development, accept new challenges and provide services to an expanding population without imposing unreasonable taxation. This is not a temporary phenomenon. This is the keystone of a sound future.

As would be expected, the budget contains confirmation of the government's intention to carry out undertakings given to Territorians during the recent election. Some of these undertakings have been honoured already - for example, reduced registration fees for 4-cylinder vehicles, the abolition of registration fees on motor cycles, the \$25 saving on the basic water allowance charge, improvements in the range of pensioner benefits and the increased limit on borrowing under the government's Home Loans Scheme.

In addition, the budget allows for other commitments pledged by the government including: a reduction amounting to 10% in payroll tax; the abolition of

payroll tax on salaries of apprentices; a scheme to refund wholesalers for federal tax paid on interstate freight charges; increased allocations for health, education and housing; funding for handicapped people; substantially increased allocations for the Territory Development Corporation and the Tourist Commission; funding to enable planning to proceed for the promised university; initial funding for the new agricultural and horticultural development program; funding for preliminary detailed studies on Darwin's coal-fired power-station; and provision for further investigation of other energy sources, including hydro in Katherine.

Mr Speaker, the budget is presented in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act and the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act. Before turning to the budget itself, I might make brief reference to the continuing effect of constitutional change. During 1979-80, the process of devolution of power continued with the transfer of 3 functions from the Commonwealth, the full-year effect of which will be reflected this financial year. The first of these was the Supreme Court function in October 1979, followed in February 1980 by additional activities previously performed by the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Then, in early June 1980, responsibility for the regulation of air transport passed to the Territory. During the current year, responsibility for additional state-like marine functions will also be transferred.

The budget overview: The government's development priorities have been established with an eye to continue the unfolding story of economic progress. That progress requires increasing expansion of the private sector and financial recognition for rolling programs which will continue beyond this financial year. We are aware that our past pattern of expenditure has raised private investor confidence in the Territory to unparalleled heights. There is no reason to doubt that the priorities established and reaffirmed in this budget will confirm that confidence and indeed promote it further.

Capital works expenditure incurred on behalf of the department will be \$91.8m and, separate from the capital works program, \$1.2m will be expended by the Conservation Commission. The government will provide \$50m to the Housing Commission as part of its total budget of \$70.8m. The Electricity Commission will finance capital works of \$18.5m from semi-government borrowings. These funds are not included in the budget itself. These are the government's capital funds which will spread into the community through contracts let. I now turn to cite the major items and what may be termed the basket of encouragement dollars.

The Northern Territory Development Corporation budget will double to \$10m. The Tourist Commission will receive \$2.6m and the Department of Mines and Energy will get a 45% increase to \$7.7m. The budget provides \$13.3m for development in the beef and agricultural industries, including funding of \$2.5m for the new Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority. Fisheries development will be aided by \$1.5m. There will be a total cash outlay of \$38.1m on Territory roads, an area of expenditure vital to Territorians and particularly to the tourist, mining, pastoral, agricultural and retail industries. \$23.2m of this will be applied to new road construction and \$14.9m to maintenance. In order to improve access to the more isolated centres, 1980-81 will see a start on an improved program to upgrade airstrips servicing isolated communities. Maningrida, Bathurst Island, Snake Bay, Elcho Island, Hooker Creek and Numbulwar are on this year's program. On the energy front, the budget allocations confirm the government's policy to move the Territory away from dependency on high cost oil for electricity generation.

The government's commitment to promote Territory development is not a single-minded determination. We are also concerned to expand and improve our service delivery responsibilities to the general public and thereby encourage a more stable Territory population. We will settle for no lesser standard than is the southern expectation. Education expenditure this year will be \$85.8m compared with \$75.4m in 1979-80. In addition, \$350,000 has been allocated to fund planning for the Territory university. The budget available for the Department of Lands will be \$15.6m including provision for the purchase of serviced land. Against that figure, \$8.4m was allocated last year. The total available for water and sewerage services will be \$30.3m. Health services expenditure will rise 13% from \$67.5m to \$76.6m. The allocation for the Department of Community Development with its expanded functions will go up 33% to \$45.3m. Fire services will receive \$4.5m and a sum of \$20.6m is provided for the Territory Police.

Mr Speaker, appropriations now before honourable members have been carefully balanced to provide a fair division of available resources between the development needs of the Territory, on the one hand, and the service functions on the other.

The budget expenditures: I now turn in more specific detail to the expenditure proposals.

The Territory Development Corporation: An allocation of \$5,750,000 is included in this budget to the Territory Development Corporation. To this must be added the corporation's opening balance and reserves of \$3,250,000 and borrowings under the Semi-Government Loan Program of \$1m, bringing the total funding available to the corporation, this financial year, to \$10m. From this position of financial strength, the corporation will embark on an ambitious promotional campaign to attract new investment and industry to the Territory and vigorously promote existing businesses through loans, guarantees and advice.

Mining and energy: Mining is the Territory's most valuable industry. Annual production is over \$250m according to the latest available figures. Uranium has now joined bauxite, manganese, gold and copper amongst the Territory's major mineral exports. I am pleased to be able to announce that this year the Northern Territory will, for the first time, receive revenue from the Commonwealth in lieu of royalties on uranium. The mining operations at Nabarlek have advanced to the stage where actual sales and delivery of uranium ore will take place over the course of the year and, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, 1.25% of net sales is payable to the Northern Territory government. The estimated receipts this year are \$933,000.

This budget provides \$7.7m for the functions of the Department of Mines and Energy, an increase of \$2.4m or 45%. Together with increases of like proportion in the 2 previous years, this reflects the government's determination to promote discovery and development of mineral and energy resources and to use such resources to create an economic base for the benefit of Territorians generally. This expenditure encompasses important new and continuing initiatives.

Government expenditure on geophysical and drilling work will be doubled. Library services and geological data systems will be improved, providing the mining industry with a basic framework necessary for accelerated exploration. In the face of expanded exploration activity, the government will give positive assistance to the industry to ensure that the delays of the past do not recur. The department's staff will be expanded to speed up the processing of mining applications. At the same time, the issue of mining titles will be planned and controlled so that the environmental and economic interests of the Territory

are fully protected. Expansion within the department will enable it to cope with demands associated with new mining projects and to provide effective supervision of safety and environmental aspects.

Energy cost is a major constraint in the promotion of significant new economic activity in the Territory. The budget allows even more emphasis to be given to the relatively new Energy Division so that it may more thoroughly research and investigate the Territory's energy options and assist industry to implement various new energy applications, including solar electricity generation. \$100,000 is provided for investigations on dams for the Katherine proposed coal-fired power-station for Darwin. The budget also provides for the implementation of a third stated policy undertaking in the energy area. I refer to the introduction of a 10% subsidy on the approved new cost of solar heaters and air-conditioners for households and industry.

Mr Speaker, the government expects the 1980-81 Commonwealth subsidy to the Territory on account of losses by the Electricity Commission to be in the order of \$48m. The final figure will be arrived at on the basis of the difference between an accepted estimate of the costs of running such a commercial undertaking in our special circumstances and revenue expectation based on anticipated sales at the same overall unit of power return as averaged under the basket of charges applied in north Queensland.

Primary production: An expanded Department of Primary Production will give emphasis to future activity aimed at the development potential of the Territory in agriculture, horticulture, beef and fishing. The department will receive a total of \$12.4m, an increase of \$2.2m or 22%. Projects commenced in 1979-80 will continue in 1980-81, including the cropping development scheme (\$115,000), feral animal research (\$205,000) and the brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication campaign (\$1.6m). Added emphasis will be given to the fishing industry through the provision of \$400,000 for a number of projects related to the development of inshore fisheries. As mentioned earlier, the budget also allocates \$2.5m to the new Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority. This major initiative of the government is designed to provide the Territory with another expanding industry by significantly increasing the value of farm produce in the Territory.

Tourism: The tourist industry continues as one of the significant growth areas of the Territory economy. Its annual turnover is now estimated to be worth in the region of \$85m. Provision is made for a \$2.6m allocation to the Tourist Commission and, during this year, in excess of \$700,000 of that amount will be spent on an extensive interstate television promotional campaign. The commission will also contribute towards the construction of transportable tourist information centres for use on location within the Territory. As part of measures to increase facilities and accommodation for the tourist industry, provision is made in the Lands Department's budget for services to be provided for a rural tourist area in Alice Springs as well as a camping area in Batchelor. Higher funding for the Territory Development Corporation is also designed to increase loan capital available to the tourist accommodation sector.

Housing: The government will provide a total of \$50m this year to the Northern Territory Housing Commission compared to \$42.4m last year. \$14.5m of this has been made available by the Commonwealth as a specific purpose grant. A further \$20.8m will be available to the commission from internally-generated funds and borrowings of \$2m. Details of the various sources are listed in Budget Paper No 4. The commission this year will devote some \$39.5m to new dwelling starts and completion of works in progress. Territory wide, new dwelling starts will total some 800 units compared with 700 last year. In Darwin, the program will total 607 starts, 94 in Alice Springs, 61 in Tennant Creek, 20 in Katherine, 12 in Batchelor and 6 in Alyangula.

Honourable members will already be aware of the restructured government Home Loans Scheme announced earlier by my colleague, the Minister for Lands and Housing. A total of \$26.9m will be available for the scheme this year, the bulk of it from within the budget and \$1m from public borrowings. The popularity of the Home Loans Scheme is demonstrated by the fact that it has attracted an average of 90 applications monthly since its inception last October. Up to the 30 June, loans approved under the scheme totalled some \$20.7m. Additionally, I expect it will be possible during this year for the government, under special arrangements with Nabalco, to extend the Home Loans Scheme to Gove. The operation of the restructured loans scheme will be closely monitored to ensure that banks and finance institutions contribute fairly to home purchase and construction in the Territory. The scheme was not designed to replace the private loans sector and modifications will be introduced if necessary. The commission has budgeted \$1m for industrial housing, \$1m for survey construction and repair work associated with staff housing on Aboriginal settlements, \$1.5m for rental rebates and basic interest grants and \$835,000 for other expenditures including plant and equipment and the Katherine office.

Lands: The government has already announced plans to give private developers the opportunity to open up the Sadadeen subdivision and future urban areas in Alice Springs. This follows the successful attraction of developers to the Leanyer and Karama subdivisions in Darwin during the course of the last year. This new approach to generating rapid service landturn-off is proving its worth and it is intended to further expand the scheme in Darwin to involve the planned Brinkin subdivision. The capital works program makes provision for external water and sewerage services for the planned development of Palmerston. Auctions are being planned in Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine for November. They will involve remaining land in Darwin's central business district and those residential lots available after the needs of the Housing Commission have been met. In Alice Springs, some 20 residential lots will be offered and, in Katherine, the remainder of the works depot subdivision will be auctioned.

The strong demand for land in all centres, including Mataranka, Tennant Creek and Katherine, reflects the new prosperity in the Territory and the high levels of investment and confidence engendered since self-government. This budget will provide for the commencement of subdivisions in Tennant Creek, Batchelor and rural areas. Major developments in the supply of land in Katherine were commenced in 1979-80. Further details are contained in Budget Paper No. 5. Services will be provided to the Frances Bay subdivision in Darwin to boost the maritime and fishing industry developments already undertaken. External services will be provided to the Hudson Creek area and the noxious industry zone in Darwin to meet the burgeoning growth of local industry. In Alice Springs, the Mount Nancy industrial subdivision will be commenced.

Conservation Commission: In 1979-80, the commission spent \$10.3m. This budget provides for an increase of \$600,000. The allocation includes \$138,000 for land conservation studies basic to the government's agricultural and horticultural schemes and \$1.2m for capital works. Construction at Yulara Village will enter its second stage in 1980-81 and the commission has been funded \$465,000 for town management functions. Capital projects sponsored by the commission are listed in Budget Papers Nos. 4 and 5.

Health: Provision is included in this budget for outlays totalling \$76.6m by the Department of Health in 1980-81. This represents an increase of some \$9m or 13% over the previous year. The 1980-81 budget allocation provides for funding for Casuarina Hospital's first full year of operation and for the continuance of geriatric rehabilitation and psychiatric services at the old Darwin Hospital. The Commonwealth contribution under the provisions of the Health Insurance Act is \$25.3m towards the net cost of running hospitals in the

Territory during this year. This money will be received as a Commonwealth specific purpose payment to the Northern Territory. Funding is also provided under the Department of Health allocations for grants-in-aid for various community organisations for operational and capital purposes. This assistance will total some \$4.1m this financial year.

Education: The budget for the Department of Education totals \$75.6m, an increase of some \$9.6m or 15% over the previous year. In line with an election undertaking, \$500,000 has been provided for dollar-for-dollar subsidies on money raised by school organisations for direct educational purposes. \$100,000 has been provided for establishment expenditure for the new Territory Teaching Service. \$96,000 has been provided for the expansion of Aboriginal Teacher Education programs. Additionally, funding is provided for the continuance of programs introduced during 1979-80, including the full year's effect of this government's decision to increase assistance to independent schools to 20% of the Northern Territory government schools' average cost of educating a student. As mentioned earlier, provision has been made to enable university planning to proceed.

Community colleges: Allocations totalling \$10.2m have been made available for the operations of the community colleges in Darwin and Alice Springs. After discounting 1979-80 expenditures for the one-off purchase of a computer for the Darwin Community College, the increase for the colleges is some \$1.3m or 14%. Specific funding is provided in the budget for the operations of FM radio stations in both centres, additional equipment for trade and general courses and the operation of the School of Catering and Tourism in Alice Springs.

Industries Training Commission: As honourable members will be aware, the government has established the commission to provide one training agency for Northern Territory industry. The budget allocates \$1.5m for its operation this year. The commission's role will include manpower forecasting and the identification and analysis of training needs and manpower development requirements of industry. As a link between industry, government and the education system, the new commission will fulfil the need to enable our workforce to keep pace with advances in technology.

Police and emergency services: Police funding has been increased by \$1.4m to a total of \$20.6m. The 1980-81 budget includes provision for the fisheries enforcement function and for a further intake of police cadets. Provision of \$671,000 has been made for emergency services, an increase of \$99,000 or 17% over last year. Much of the increase relates to the expansion of counter-disaster planning, training and operations.

Community Development: Including functions which transferred in 1979-80, funds amounting to \$45.3m have been provided for the Department of Community Development, an increase of \$11m or 33%.

I draw honourable members' attention to some of the specific items included in the allocation. \$800,000 is provided for the devolution of library services to corporations in Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine. \$5.9m has been provided for operational subsidies, the establishment grants and capital grants on a dollar-for-dollar basis to the 4 corporations. This included \$1.4m in respect of the local government tax-sharing entitlement payable by the Commonwealth to the Territory. Funding has been provided to increase concessions to pensioners in respect of electricity supply to one half of quarterly accounts. Additionally, administrative arrangements are in hand for the introduction of a subsidised airfare scheme for pensioners each 2 years. The commencement for the eligibility period is 1 July 1980.

The government will continue with its policy of assistance to community bodies engaged in youth, sport and recreation, and art and cultural affairs. Provision of \$2.6m is included in this budget for this purpose. The allocation included funding for grants and low-interest loans to licensed community-based recreation clubs.

Provision of services to Aboriginal communities: The government recognises that Aboriginal communities still lack the standard of services available to the people in the major Territory centres. For this reason, we have embarked on a plan to redress the situation. The government is committed to actively involve local communities in planning and implementing projects to be undertaken. As a first step, this government has programmed new works to the value of \$14.6m, scheduled to commence this financial year. This amount will only touch the surface in righting the serious deficiencies. More rapid progress would be possible if Commonwealth funding were provided and the Territory has approached the Commonwealth for such assistance. Although a final response is still awaited, the Territory has gone ahead and made a commitment to this program from within its own resources. This budget also provides \$17.1m in relation to the provision of town management and public utility services to Aboriginal communities. Additionally, provision is made for grants to Aboriginal youth, sports and recreation activities.

Museums and art galleries: An additional \$477,000, an increase of 56%, has been provided in this budget including provision for staff for the new museum's complex due for completion in July 1981. This new facility will prove to be a major tourist attraction in future years whilst providing a modern high-standard education and cultural facility for Territorians.

Racing and gaming: Provision of \$545,000 is included in the budget to cover the operations of the commission, an increase, after allowing for non-recurring payments made during the last year, of \$200,000 or 58%. The increased allocation allows for the establishment of a casino inspectorate in Alice Springs and on-going research into gambling. Revenues from bookmakers' turnover tax and licence and permit fees are estimated to be \$672,000 of which some \$368,000 will be set aside for the Racing Industry Assistance Fund.

Office of the Auditor-General: The assessed cost of provision of audit services on an agency basis by the Commonwealth is \$520,000 in 1980-81.

Sales tax, freight subsidy for wholesalers: \$500,000 is included in the allocation to the Department of the Treasury to cover the introduction of a scheme to refund the equivalent of federal sales tax paid on interstate freight, handling and insurance charges. This new scheme, announced prior to the recent election, is a positive step by this government to encourage the development of commerce in the Territory with attendant benefits to consumers through a wholesaling sector competitive with that operating in southern states.

Capital works program: A major factor in sustaining economic growth in the Territory is the government's capital works program. Full details of the proposed program for 1980-81 are set out in Budget Paper No 5. The value of works in progress as at 1 July 1980 was \$85.5m. This year, the government will put out to contract new projects valued in the order of \$100m making a total value for works in progress during the course of the year of approximately \$185.5m. The budget provides \$91.8m for expenditure against the total program for the current financial year.

The planned expenditure by regions in 1980-81 is as follows: Darwin - \$49,343,000; Gove - \$887,000; Katherine - \$10,481,000; Tennant Creek - \$10,635,000;

and Alice Springs - \$20,454,000. The total is \$91.8m. Planned expenditures in Alice Springs, Katherine and Tennant Creek show substantial increases on last year. Significant works programmed for 1980-81 include stage 2 of the Yulara Tourist Village, schools at Humpty Doo, Karama and Leanyer, stage 2 of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Centre at Batchelor and the first stage of the Community College of Central Australia.

New major works and works in progress will ensure the orderly turn-off of residential and industrial blocks in Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Batchelor and Borroloola. Water supplies at Tennant Creek, Darwin and Alice Springs will be upgraded and major road works are to be programmed for the Stuart, Barkly, Plenty, Arnhem and Tablelands Highways. A bridge is to be constructed on the Bynoe Road at Tumbling Waters and other major upgrading projects will be undertaken during the year. In all, new roadworks totalling \$26.8m will be commenced. The new program for the upgrading of services in Aboriginal communities of \$14.6m is an increase of 59% on the \$9.2m programmed in 1979-80.

Advance to the Treasurer: Honourable members will note the provision of \$12m as Advance to the Treasurer in 1980-81. The Treasurer's Advance represents 1.8% of the total budget and provides for emergent and unforeseen expenditures which cannot be included in departmental appropriations including the cost of national wage cases.

Staffing: In total, \$200m has been provided for the staffing of the Northern Territory Public Service this financial year. Excluded from this figure are the staffing needs of the Electricity and Housing Commissions, the Port Authority, operational trust funds which are part of the Department of Transport and Works and uranium regulatory services. From 1 July, the Northern Territory government became fully responsible for the provision of town management and public utilities functions on Aboriginal communities. 52 staff are involved at a cost of \$768,000. Some staff increases will occur in 1980-81 to provide for top priority government initiatives including the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority, mining and energy, industries assistance, education, casino inspectorate in Alice Springs, Tourist Commission, a second police cadet intake, the university planning unit and also the museum. Mr Speaker, the government, during the course of this year, is further examining a proposal to introduce the system of permanent part-time employment in the Northern Territory Public Service. Additional information on salaries is contained in associated budget papers.

Special appropriations: The Appropriation Bill does not include funds totalling \$15.2m which have been set aside to meet appropriations made under other acts of the Territory. Items included in this category are the remuneration and expenses of the Supreme Court Judges-\$301,000 (under the Supreme Court Act); the Northern Territory government contribution towards the Legislative Assembly members' superannuation fund-\$300,000 (under the Legislative Assembly Members' Superannuation Act); interest and sinking fund payments \$10,620,000; and expenses associated with public borrowings of nearly \$4m (both under the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act).

Revenue measures: I now turn to the revenue estimates. Once again, the government has been able to decide its expenditure priorities in a manner which avoids the need for additional state-like taxes. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the government will provide relief to the motorist, will reduce the cost of water to the householder, industry and small business and will materially assist employers and small businesses by cutting payroll tax by 10% and abolishing payroll tax on the wages of apprentices.

Amendments to the Payroll Tax Act are being introduced in this session of the Assembly. I now detail the sources of revenue totalling \$654,393,000. Under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, the Commonwealth will provide \$404,930,000 for recurrent and capital general purpose payments. In addition, the Territory will qualify for specific purpose payments estimated to total \$152,379,000. Honourable members will note that the specific purpose payments are detailed in Budget Paper No 2 - 'Statement of Revenue Sources'.

In addition, funds from local revenues and the balance in the Consolidated Fund total \$97,084,000 and are made up as follows: Territory taxes, charges and miscellaneous receipts - \$65,856,700; loan repayments-\$23,846,000; interdepartmental recoveries - \$4,855,300; and balance in the Consolidated Fund from 1 July 1980 - \$2,526,000. This is a total of \$97,084,000. This compares with the total of \$91m last year.

In summation, the budget confirms the Territory on the development course which began with the constitutional move to self-government. That development process is accelerating and there can be no remaining doubt that the Northern Territory is increasingly becoming a preferred place in which to live and invest. New initiatives and projects already under way will be funded through this budget and assure Territorians that the government can and will do its utmost to further stimulate the economic growth of the last 26 months.

The sensitive economic barometer of development - industry production, population, capital investment, private sector building approvals and new car sales - all continue on an upward trend. However, I would point out that the current optimism must be tempered by a realistic appreciation of external factors which could impact on the long-term outlook. International oil prices, world prices for minerals and Commonwealth policy in a number of important areas all fall within this category.

The Territory government is convinced that our upward economic spiral will reach new heights should the Commonwealth eventually accede to our request for a realistic zone tax allowance and announce a commitment to the extended rail link from Alice Springs to Darwin. The argument for northern development is the national interest and our campaigns for tax concessions, the railway and for cheaper air services with better frequencies and new air terminals consistently expressed this view.

The potential of the Territory, discussed for a century or more, is at last being realised. The proposals now before honourable members have been designed to maintain the pace of that realisation and to further broaden our economic base. In tandem with this philosophy of development is the careful allocation of resources to the service side of this government's responsibilities. The Territory's young, our handicapped and disadvantaged have not been neglected in our budget considerations. The government's entire program will provide more stability for Territory families. Our approach, our design, has kept people uppermost in our minds. New commercial and industrial activity has but one end goal: to provide a wider range of opportunities for resident Territorians and the thousands of other Australians who each year are opting for a life in what has become known as a frontier of action.

I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL

(Serial 30)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr ROBERTSON (Education): Mr Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

Firstly, I apologise to the House. This is, of course, a piece of legislation which should have come in as a cognate bill with the Teaching Service Bill. It was designed purely to allow for the delegation of authority by the Secretary of the Department of Education to the commissioner or teachers in the field. Quite clearly, functions and powers given to the secretary under the Education Act, needed for the establishment of our own teaching service, should be delegable to principals and the like within the system. Otherwise, the whole mechanism will break down. Mr Speaker, that is the sole purpose of this very simple piece of legislation and I commend it to the House.

Debate adjourned.

PAYROLL TAX AMENDMENT BILL

(Serial 26)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr PERRON (Treasurer): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to amend the Payroll Tax Act to allow employers to have a 10% discount against payroll tax in respect of wages paid from 1 July 1980. It is estimated that the 10% payroll tax discount will reduce the impact of this onerous tax on private employers by an amount in excess of \$1m. The result will be not only a boost for the viability of business in the Territory but also direct encouragement to increased employment. Honourable members are well aware of this government's commitment in cooperation with the states to secure a more general form of funding which will allow the eventual complete abolition of payroll tax. Whilst this case is being pursued with the Commonwealth, we will absorb the loss of revenue arising out of our initiative. We are well placed to do this during the expansionary phases of activity in the Territory.

The government has also undertaken to relieve employers of all payroll tax relating to wages of apprentices paid from 1 July. Legislation to extend tax relief in respect of particular classes of employees was assented to last May and regulations to effect this tax relief in respect of apprentices will be made shortly.

With these measures to reduce payroll tax, we have firmly established ourselves as a pacesetter in Australia. The opportunity is also being taken in this bill to introduce technical amendments to the Payroll Tax Act in order to further refine the provisions which grant exemptions from tax to religious and other non-profit-making institutions. The proposed changes in the wording of the act are in line with recent amendments in several other states and are designed to ensure that the existing exemptions will apply in respect of the wages of persons during the period such persons are employed in the work of the kind ordinarily performed by such non-profit-making bodies.

Finally, the schedule to the bill contains other minor amendments to the Payroll Tax Act to bring the wording into line with Territory legislative practice. These minor amendments stem largely from the legislative changes

associated with self-government. I commend the bill to honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

DANGEROUS GOODS BILL
(Serial 9)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr TUXWORTH (Health): I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The Territory has never had comprehensive legislation covering the handling of goods and substances recognised as dangerous and likely to cause injury or damage to persons or the environment. Man has developed new chemicals and substances which have benefited the community in many ways and most of these chemicals and substances have little or no potential adverse effects upon man or the environment. However, some substances in commercial use can present a serious safety, health or environmental hazard. The Northern Territory has been relatively free from these dangerous goods but, as our industrial base grows, the accident possibilities involving dangerous goods will increase. Experience interstate and overseas has highlighted the need for comprehensive legislation to cover the handling and use of dangerous goods and it is the purpose of this bill to ensure that Territory people are protected when dangerous goods are handled and used.

Dangerous goods will be classified in accordance with a worldwide classification system. The need for this classification and appropriate rules to cover these goods was first felt at sea. Many maritime countries regulated the transport of these goods but, although the need for international regulation was recognised by the 1929 International Conference on Life at Sea, it was not until 1960 that a unified code was recommended. Work has also been proceeding through the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations to promote a universal code covering matters relating to the carriage of dangerous goods by all forms of transport.

Thus, today, we have the 1976 United Nations recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods, the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code of the International Maritime Consultative Organisation and the International Air Transport Dangerous Goods Code of the International Air Transport Association. Each of these uses essentially the same system of classification of dangerous goods. In Australia, the maritime section of the Department of Transport is preparing to use the IMCO code for its regulations relating to the shipping of dangerous goods. This will replace their red book under the Navigation Act. The Australian Transport Advisory Committee has very recently approved a model code for the transport of dangerous goods by rail and road. This code uses the same international classification. The Dangerous Goods Bill is therefore complementary to these international and Australian codes in that it will have the same requirements of classification, packaging and labelling.

The classification system I have just spoken about places dangerous goods in 9 categories. However, this bill will only cover 8 of these 9 categories as class 7, radioactive substances, has already been covered in other legislation, namely, the Radiation Safety Control Act and the Radioactive Ores and Concentrates

(Packaging and Transport) Act. This bill will not apply to mines as the handling and use of dangerous goods will be covered under the Mines Safety Control Act.

The main points of the bill are: the appointment of inspectorial staff, the specified power of inspectors, including the power to destroy dangerous

goods in the interests of the public, the licensing of the manufacturing, storage, transporting, selling, purchase and possession of dangerous goods - prescribed amounts will be exempt from licensing - to allow for the establishment of disposal areas, the right of appeal to the minister regarding a decision of the inspector, and regulation-making powers, including the design and handling of containers, notification of accidents and the qualifications of persons using specific dangerous goods.

This bill will bring the Territory into line with the rest of Australia and the world in the handling of dangerous goods. It will ensure effective protection of the Territory's people and the environment from incidents involving the handling and the use of these goods. I commend the bill to the honourable members.

Debate adjourned.

INQUIRY INTO LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR EMPLOYEES REPORT

Mr EVERINGHAM (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I table the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Leave of Absence of Employees in the Northern Territory. Accompanying the report is the transcript of evidence of the inquiry and exhibits that were tendered to the inquiry.

In tabling the report, I should point out that honourable members are acquainted with the history of the Employment (Leave of Absence) Bill 1978 which sought to incorporate into one act provisions for annual leave and sick leave for non-award areas and for long-service leave and public holidays for employees in the Territory. Suffice to say that problems associated with the contents and the drafting of the bill have resulted in the bill not being proceeded with and subsequently lapsing. Such were the objections to the bill that, on 20 September 1979, the Assembly agreed to a motion to establish a public inquiry under the Inquiries Act to inquire into, report on and make recommendations concerning leave of absence for employees in the Northern Territory.

We all know the terms of reference of the inquiry. The government was fortunate to be able to ask for the appointment of the honourable James Edward Taylor CBE to chair the inquiry. That report is in 3 volumes and we are now considering the report and its recommendations. The tabling of the report will, however, allow public consideration and comment by all interested parties.

I move that the report be noted.

Debate adjourned.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Continued from 20 August 1980.

Mr VALE (Stuart): Mr Speaker, in rising to support the Address in Reply to His Honour the Administrator's speech, I cannot help feeling that he gave us more than just a forward outline of the government's legislative program. His Honour also implied that he was satisfied with the state of affairs as they presently exist in the Northern Territory. I am sure his attitude is shared by most people who are proud to be Territorians.

It is interesting to reflect on the degree of opposition that existed 3 years ago to the concept of self-government and then contrast that with the endorsement of the actual success of self-government that we saw at the polls 2½ months ago. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that some people, thankfully very few in numbers, need everything put on a plate in front of them before they

too will contribute to improvement of their lifestyle. Some people, and I look opposite when I say this, at one time displayed a strange and now historic resistance to the very worthwhile changes that self-government then promised and has now delivered. Others, and there are many tens of thousands, are showing themselves to be increasingly motivated and excited at the many advantages of self-government. In a mere 26 months, that achievement of constitutional advance has done what the continuation of the colonial rule that we knew before would have taken decades to fulfil. His Honour said that we are here to build on the momentum already established and I am certain that we can and that we will. The initial 2-year threshold we have just crossed is a solid foundation for this. With respect, I congratulate His Honour for his optimism.

Both the Administrator and earlier speakers in this debate have raised a number of issues very dear to my heart as the member for Stuart, the Territory's largest electorate. I found extremely interesting the remarks made by the member for Barkly and the member for Arnhem concerning the level and standard of services provided and, in many cases, not provided to people in the more remote areas of the Northern Territory. Notwithstanding this, I must say that, of all the federal ministers with whom I have had contact over the years, the present Minister for Post and Telecommunications has proven the most cooperative for the people in Stuart. Through Mr Staley, we have achieved a commitment that Yuendumu will see the installation of a manual telephone exchange in 1981. Also, through Mr Staley, elsewhere in Stuart numerous pastoral properties and Aboriginal communities have progressively been linked either to manual or to direct subscriber trunk dialling services. I find it hard to complain of the rate at which this is occurring. Nevertheless, I will be maintaining the pressure for the time being.

Previous speakers also took up His Honour's reference to the Mereenie crude oil project. At long last, the refinery at Alice Springs has become a potential reality and I welcome the progress. It will ensure for the southern half of the Territory a reliable supply of major petroleum products for approximately 40 years. My association with the Mereenie project dates back to 1965 and the opposition has never delighted me more than the day it tabbed me the 'member for Magellan'. By the time our next elections come round, the Mereenie saga will, I am sure, have come to fruition.

Alice Springs' long-awaited recreation lake is a popular move in the Centre. The lake will also add to Alice Springs' tourist appeal but I believe will be most used by Centralians in their pursuit of recreational facilities. The Yulara Tourist Village has been mentioned a number of times. Any discussion on this mammoth project always brings to mind a general accommodation shortage for tourists in Alice Springs. New development is now commencing at an unprecedented rate. However, the fact is that, as fast as new beds are provided, we find that there are still not enough. The situation augurs well not only for our tourist operators but also the general building and construction industry. Of course, the now recognised accommodation shortage is not a Territory phenomenon. Most tourist promotion conscious places around Australia have the same problem.

Hand in hand with the government's tourist initiative is the commendable role in the substantial upgrading of the Territory's highways and rural roads. These are vital to a number of industries and the rate of accelerated progress in only the past 2 years is quite astonishing to say the least. The Plenty, Petermann, Tanami, Glen Helen and Hermannsburg road projects are all extremely costly but the economic returns to the Territory will be many times more than this.

His Honour said: 'employment for Aboriginal people is a matter of grave concern for my government'. Employment for Aboriginal and other people is also a matter of grave concern for hundreds of Aboriginal people and, in fact, all

Territorians. I frequently find Aboriginal people raising this issue with me. In my electorate, there is an increasingly widespread view amongst Aboriginal people themselves that the delivery of unemployment benefits must be restructured. Many of them would like the introduction of a situation that saw unemployment benefits passing directly into their councils for distribution on a work-performed basis. These people, and they are not a small minority, are sick and tired of just sitting around. They want work. They are also sensible enough to know the reward for working should be paid after the work is done. Unemployment cheques now turn up whatever happens and this is no incentive to work. This system is criticised by the Aboriginal people I am talking about. There is work they can usefully do if organised along appropriate lines.

I call on the federal government to take up their concern and perhaps look over the border into the Kimberleys where, I understand, the Department of Social Security does indeed pass so-called unemployment benefit payments directly to the Aboriginal councils. It is then up to those councils to allocate money to individuals who have been seen to provide sufficient service to at least their own community to deserve the payment in the first place. Mr Speaker, I am not the author of this suggestion; I wish I was. I believe it is an idea which should be taken up not only by Aboriginal communities but also by town councils and other authorities not only across the Territory but perhaps across Australia.

The member for Barkly called for some street planting schemes to be stepped up. In recent weeks, Ti Tree, possibly one of the untidiest towns along the Stuart Highway, embarked on an ambitious tree planting program. The government has happily provided hundreds of trees and the recently formed Ti Tree Progress Association, comprised of both Aboriginals and Europeans, is to be commended for the progress now in evidence.

In conclusion, I want to refer in passing to what the Chief Minister is often heard to describe as our greatest natural resource, Territory children. There is much in the government's program for this term that is directly related to their needs in this increasingly demanding and competitive world. I congratulate the government for its very genuine interest in this area. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the organisers of the week-long event that ended in Darwin only yesterday, the Australian Schoolboys' Football Championship. Darwin should feel honoured to have been chosen for the 50th anniversary of this competition. The events of the past week have been tremendously successful and, quite conspicuously, have attracted the attention of a great number of Territorians. They might only be schoolboy competitors but, on a per capita basis, the results of these matches seem to have been as eagerly followed in the Territory as the people of Melbourne might have followed a major VFL round.

Mr Speaker, I congratulate the government on the program outlined on Tuesday by His Honour and must tell you that I am still proud to be on this side of the House.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, I would like to say a few remarks in support of the Address in Reply to the Administrator's speech. First, I would like to make some comments on the Administrator himself. The Administrator was appointed to that position in May 1976. He had just retired as a member of fact from the Australian parliament as the member for Calare. He was taken out of that marvellous life of retirement and brought to the Northern Territory at a time of great change and great constitutional development. I would like to put on record my own views that I believe the Administrator has played a most significant part in the development of the Northern Territory's constitutional history and has given great stature not just to the office but to the Territory as a whole.

On many occasions, I have been in the company of the Administrator at various communities, large and small, and, on every occasion, he has carried out his office in a most commendable way. People in the Territory, I believe, genuinely admire the Administrator and that is a great tribute to him. Not only was he taken out of retirement in 1975 or the middle of 1976 to become the Administrator of the Northern Territory but he has had his term extended until the end of this year, again simply to accommodate the problems of the election coming at the end of his term. Again, at a time when he thought to retire he has had his term extended. I would like to place on record my appreciation of the job he has done as Administrator of the Northern Territory.

One of the matters raised in the Administrator's speech was that of transportation and the member for Arnhem has spoken about the great problem affecting pilots of the new airline of the Northern Territory, Northern Airlines. I would like to make a few remarks which, I hope, will give the government some way of lending its assistance with a view to solving the problem. We all know that Northern Airlines is a subsidiary, but not a wholly-owned subsidiary, of East-West Airlines. Very shortly, if it has not already happened, 49% of the stock of Northern Airlines will be put out to Northern Territory people to take up. I would hope, and I feel pretty confident it will happen, that Northern Territory people will take up the full 49% share. If they do, it cannot be said that East-West Airlines wholly owns Northern Airlines.

However, the East-West pilots are taking the view - and I am afraid that they are backed by the company - that the Northern Airlines pilots will have to go to the end of the queue in terms of seniority when the integration of the 2 airlines takes place. I might say that the East-West Airlines Company is showing great lack of nerve in its attitude to its newly-acquired pilots. I believe that the company's view is that, simply because they have rescued the pilots from an airline which was faltering, therefore the pilots owe East-West Airlines something and ought to consider themselves lucky that they have been given a place in the seniority list even if it is right down at the end of the queue.

I believe that East-West Airlines and the pilots who are employed by East-West Airlines ought to be told, not in a hectoring way but in a way which presents the facts, that the pilots of Northern Airlines have played a considerable role in the development of the Northern Territory and that the new airline, rather than just being a small subsidiary of East-West Airlines, is an entity of its own and is identified very much with the Northern Territory. Their views ought to be taken into consideration.

The Northern Airlines pilots have been most conciliatory - and I would like to commend them for their attitude - in trying to arrive at a solution. They have put forward a number of proposals to the East-West pilots which have been flatly knocked back. The point has now been reached where the Flight Crew Officers Tribunal will hear the matter on 28 and 29 August in Sydney. I believe that the Northern Territory government could play a significant part in achieving a successful resolution of this problem by being represented at the tribunal hearings. I urge the government to attend the hearings in Sydney and to seek leave to intervene, not on behalf of the pilots so much but to present the history of Connair and the take-over of Northern Airlines and to put forward what I believe are the relevant facts that I have presented here this afternoon.

If the government did that, it would find that that would assist the pilots of the Northern Territory very greatly. It seems to me that the East-West pilots have one thing in mind. In the last decade, when Ansett Airlines took over MMA and Airlines of South Australia, the Flight Crew Officers Tribunal, as it was then constituted, made a decision that all Ansett pilots who were employed by the company prior to the date of acquisition had seniority over the

new pilots. The East-West pilots are now seeking to have the same principle applied. However, the facts, as we all know, are different. Although it is true that Northern Airlines has been acquired by East-West, in no way is it being totally subsumed in the same way that MMA and Airlines of South Australia have been. It is most important that the Northern Territory government enter an appearance at the hearings and put the case. I believe it would have a very marked effect on the result of the tribunal hearings.

I might say that, on this occasion, it is very much a matter of a dog-in-the-manger attitude of the pilots themselves. As I understand it, the Pilots Federation is totally hamstrung. It has members in both camps and, although it has acted in some ways as an intermediary, it has been totally unsuccessful. The result is a hearing before the tribunal at the end of this month. I urge the Territory government to seek leave to enter an appearance and to put before the tribunal the facts of the situation. I am sure that that would assist the pilots of Northern Airlines very greatly indeed.

Mr Speaker, there is another matter that I would like to mention that does not result directly from the Administrator's speech. It is a matter that I have shown an interest in over the years and it relates to the establishment of the Northern Territory Electoral Office. I said at the announcement of the results of the election that I believe that the Northern Territory Electoral Office had conducted the poll extremely well and nothing that has happened since has changed my view on that. I believe it did an excellent job in circumstances which obviously were somewhat rushed. An election was not due till August; it was told in May that there would be an election in June and it performed very creditably indeed.

I wonder whether the Northern Territory can afford the luxury of having the mechanism of a Northern Territory Electoral Office. However, since a decision has been taken to establish one, I would like to see the government utilise the Northern Territory Electoral Office as much as possible. There is a great deal of expertise there. It has shown on a number of occasions, because the personnel has not changed very much, that it can run an election well. In 1981, 3 local government elections will take place in Katherine, Tennant Creek and Darwin. In the last Assembly, I think on 2 occasions, validating legislation was passed to regularise circumstances which arose simply because of the lack of expertise of the returning officers employed by the local government authority. It is a situation that does not bring credit to the parliament and can be easily side-stepped by giving the experts, the electoral office people, the opportunity to run those local government elections. It certainly makes them useful; it certainly justifies their existence.

In terms of running a proper election, I do not believe we can go beyond the Northern Territory Electoral Office. Again, I ask the Chief Minister, who does have responsibility for the electoral office, to consult with the Minister for Local Government with a view to seeing whether or not we can have the elections for local government regularised once and for all. If the Northern Territory Electoral Office runs them, we will be confident that they will be run fairly, properly and that we will not have to pass validating legislation after the event because some presiding officer has misread or miscalculated as has happened in the past.

The other matter that I wish to speak about has been the subject of a number of petitions in the Assembly over the last couple of days. The Minister for Primary Production presented a petition yesterday and the member for Sanderson presented one today relating to dust problems in their electorates. I have similar problems in mine.

Darwin itself seems to be subjected to dust because of the winds that we have at the moment. Because of the roadworks which are taking place, a very severe dust problem exists. Even in established areas, Winnellie for example, the dust problem is severe. I live in Parap but I am quite sure that I get the dust from Winnellie whenever the wind blows. It is a matter which can be easily fixed if the government takes it upon itself to do something about it. I have spoken in the past about job-creation schemes and the employment problem. This does not seem to rest very heavily with the government. The Treasurer does not seem to worry too much about it either. His electorate cops the dust and I am sure that just about every member who comes from a Darwin electorate knows what I am talking about. The government could do a lot worse than to look at the problem in Winnellie with a view to a grass-planting and tree-planting program there of some magnitude not only to beautify the place but to ensure that residents of nearby suburbs do not suffer the problems that they do at the moment.

I spoke to a person who lives in the Sanderson electorate who told me that the solar hot water systems need a hose run on them almost every week simply because their efficiency is downgraded greatly by the amount of dust which collects on them as a result of passing trucks. In terms of the unemployment problem which we have at the moment - and we know that the unemployed are mainly unskilled people - it seems to me that the government could be killing 2 birds with the one stone: providing employment opportunities and beautifying the areas whilst making sure that nearby suburbs do not suffer from dust.

Mr Speaker, the only other matter that I wish to reflect upon was raised by the Administrator obliquely in his speech, that is, Aboriginal affairs. It seemed to me that there was a qualification on the Aboriginal outstation movement. The Administrator qualified the merits of the outstation movement and talked about the Aboriginal people's desire for privacy etc. We have heard the Chief Minister on many occasions berating the members for Arnhem and Victoria River for their condemnation of tourist plans and development programs in Aboriginal communities. I believe it runs along the same theme. What members opposite do not understand but clearly what Aboriginal people do understand, as shown by their vote in the last election, is that, if you are going to talk in terms of self-determination and self-reliance of Aboriginal people, then it has to be at a pace and in a way determined by them.

I believe without qualification at all that the outstation movement is a success and ought to be encouraged. It concerned me greatly to see the qualification in the Administrator's speech because it is a reflection on this government and its attitude about the further development of Aboriginal people. I believe this and I spoke in a similar vein to a group of tourist operators. We will do a great damage to Northern Territory development by insisting that, at this stage, Aboriginal communities be developed for tourism and so on at our request and at our pace. It seems to me that, the more you hold a gun at people's heads, the more likely they are to dig their toes in. I am certain that is the position with Aboriginal people. Their view is not just of the Northern Territory but is a national view. They see the attitude of governments right around this country in terms of the situation in Queensland, the Aurukun and Mornington Island examples, the fights that they have with the South Australian government in the Pitjantjatjara area, which seems to be at a fairly delicate stage of negotiation, and the outrageous actions of the Court government in Western Australia in regard to Noonkanbah. They see those things happening and Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory discuss those matters as well as their own problems. So long as governments fail to recognise the right of Aboriginal people to their land, Aboriginal people will dig their toes in and will oppose governments in the manner that they have shown recently.

I believe that, if we are talking about harmony in race relations, then people must come to terms with fundamentals. It is no use saying that one agrees with land rights, as the current government of the Northern Territory does, if one's actions belie that. The proof of that proposition has been amply demonstrated in the recent election. You cannot trust the government if they say in the communities, 'We support you and we will do things for you' and by written word and by action you have a different situation entirely. It does not help when pressure is placed upon Aboriginal communities to accede to different requests for tourist developments, mining developments and desires by other developers to interfere in areas which have some significance to Aboriginal people. The more that happens and the more it has government backing, the more will be the opposition of Aboriginal people and their supporters. It does no good to qualify the various fundamentals of Aboriginal land rights. Land rights ought to be a fact of life; they ought to be accepted by people.

When various organisations look at the legislation which regulates land rights, they find it bewildering. In my discussions with organisations they have always come down to the statement, 'We believe that Aboriginal people ought to have land rights' but then they qualified that by saying that they do not understand it. Perhaps I might conclude the remarks I have to make with regard to Aboriginal affairs this way: in addition to the government saying that it supports Aboriginal land rights, there ought to be a program funded by government - and no government is immune to this - to explain to people, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, the meaning of land rights and the ramifications. It should be made clear that, when one talks about closure of seas and land claims, one is not saying to white people that they cannot go there. One is saying that, if people wish to enter Aboriginal land or the seas that have been given to the care and custody of Aboriginal people, they may but they must seek permission.

Having studied the way Aboriginal people have operated when they have been given that power and control over the last 2 or 3 years, I believe that Aboriginal people have been way ahead of non-Aboriginal in their determination to be conciliatory and in their determination to handle that power and that authority in a responsible way. I believe that there should be a program by government, not just lip service as we have had in the past by both federal and Territory governments but a program of real education of people to make them aware of the difficulties with regard to land rights from both points of view and to ensure that people are aware of what land rights mean to both Aboriginal people and to non-Aboriginal people.

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH (Tiwi): Mr Speaker, it gives me much pleasure to join in this debate today in reply to the Administrator's address to the Assembly. In reading through the Administrator's speech, there are several points on which I would like to comment.

The Administrator mentioned the government's determination to place responsibility for Territory affairs in the hands of Territorians. I think this is a most important beginning because, unless Territorians govern the Territory, it will not be as good a place to live as we would like. I think our government has shown that the Territory can be governed by Territorians to the great benefit of the Territory. I would like to see the governing of the Territory by Territorians not only at the state level and the local council level but also further down the scale to the actual people in different areas. I am referring to the people in the rural area of Darwin who sometimes have decisions of public servants foisted upon them whether they like it or not. I have spoken of these decisions before in regard to certain roads that are not repaired, certain street signs that are erected without consultation with anybody and other things like that. If people have been encouraged by this government to come to the Territory

to live and to continue to live in the Territory, they should have a say in how the Territory should be governed and how their little particular part of it should be managed by the government.

My next point is on the subject of education. The Administrator said that provision of education in remote areas will continue to receive attention. I spoke yesterday about a demountable for Middle Point School and Point Stuart Station School and I also spoke about the deficiency at the Snake Bay School. I think it is such an important subject, Mr Speaker, that I would like to re-iterate the remarks that I made yesterday about education in country centres. If it can be more important than education in the city - and all education of children is important - but if it can be more important, then I think it is more important because the teachers and the children work under some disadvantage and every help must be offered to them.

The Administrator also spoke about community welfare, the importance of child welfare, child abuse, juvenile justice and general welfare. The point I would like to speak on is the subject of juvenile justice. When we see the words 'juvenile justice', we are inclined to think it means that juveniles must have justice because there is an injustice committed against them by non-juveniles. There was a very unfortunate incident which occurred in my electorate. It was an incident of injustice perpetrated on one juvenile by another juvenile. It happened several times on a school bus. It was a situation that could have turned very nasty for the child victimised through no fault of his own. After much consultation between officers of the Education Department, the Police Department and the Transport and Works Department, the situation was remedied. It is important to remember that juvenile justice is important not only between juveniles and adults but between juveniles themselves because, unless adults are prepared to listen to them and make sure that they get a fair go between themselves, they will grow up not thinking much of our system.

The next point in the Administrator's speech of interest to the Tiwi electorate is the subject of new industries, improved transport links and other infrastructures. In the rural areas, there are not many big industries except certain individual ones. Most industries in the rural area are very small, family industries. I think it is very important that these be considered in any government overall view of industry in the Northern Territory.

The Administrator spoke also about the importance of an all-weather highway system in the Territory and nobody would gainsay this. What is more important to me than an all-weather highway system in the Territory - I do not travel over the highways much - is all-weather roads in the Tiwi electorate especially in the rural areas because some of those roads are certainly not all-weather roads. I was very interested to hear other members talk about sophisticated bicycle tracks in the urban electorates. We do not necessarily want bicycle tracks; we just want plain, ordinary roads.

I was also very interested to hear that the honourable member for Arnhem takes his exercise riding a bike. He mentioned that he had been up the Stuart Highway and down the Arnhem Highway. I was wondering whether we could come to some agreement whereby he could do me a good turn by running my cattle in and I could do him a good turn by clocking his speeds on the highway.

The next point that concerns me in the Administrator's speech is the remark that he made about reliable water supplies being important to the residents of the Northern Territory for both domestic and industrial purposes. The people who are on a reticulated water supply in the rural areas regard this as a very sore point. Before they were connected to our town water, they signed a document which stated that the reliability of supply could not be guaranteed past the

11-mile. I think those horse and buggy days have disappeared. These people past the 11-mile in the rural area are paying exactly the same for their so-called reliable supply of water as the people in town are paying. Whenever there seems to be a discontinuity of supply, it is at an unfortunate time. Somebody rang me to express his concern. He had just returned home from work one Friday afternoon - it was a long weekend - and he did not have any water. He had horses to water. Because he was used to a reticulated water supply, he did not have 44-gallon drums available with which to obtain water from the watering point. He looked up the telephone book and rang the emergency number. The man from Wormald answered. I have spoken to them and they are really good blokes. They are very sympathetic but all they say is, 'Sorry, love, you will just have to ring back at 8 o'clock on Monday morning'. This is not much help to somebody who has to water his horses over the weekend and it is certainly no help to anyone who owns a nursery which is his sole source of income.

All in all, it is a wholly unsatisfactory situation. I think that the time has more than arrived when the people in the Water Supply Branch have to do something constructive for the people in the rural area. I have written to the minister, I have telephoned these people several times and I have suggested that they do what the Electricity Commission has done. The Electricity Commission has put out a booklet explaining very clearly how people can join in the electrification of their particular area - what money they have to pay, what money they do not have to pay and all the conditions surrounding the supply of electricity to a block. It has set out to reach the people and the public relations in this area is second to none. I cannot see for the life of me why the water supply people cannot do the same.

The next subject in the Administrator's speech that I found interesting was the mention of a committee of inquiry into pastoral land tenure. I find this very interesting as would most people who are concerned with land in the Northern Territory. It will be an all-embracing inquiry because there are so many aspects to be covered to make sure that everybody who has a connection with pastoral land is considered equally favourable. To my way of thinking, land is very precious and must be used properly. It must not only be used for present occupancy but must also be properly preserved for future generations. In this inquiry into pastoral land tenure, I see several important aspects which will have to be considered: firstly, absentee landlords; secondly, Aboriginal land; thirdly, overseas ownership; and, finally, the fact that we all live in the Northern Territory together. All of these points connected with pastoral land tenure have to be considered so that everybody will get a fair go in the Northern Territory. Land must be used to the greatest benefit not only of the particular landowner but also the Northern Territory of the present and the Northern Territory of the future.

There is one thing that concerns me a little now but I think that my concern will vanish in the future. It concerns me that agriculture is very fragmented in that people are doing so many things. With the development of the new Agricultural and Marketing Development Authority, some cohesion will be brought into the whole agricultural scene. I do not think that I am looking at the world through rose-tinted spectacles in saying that, provided the whole scheme is started off in a small way with somebody's feet well and truly on the ground, watching what is being done and what has been done and watching what the people want for the future and what they can do for the future, this fragmentation will vanish and agriculture will come together as a cohesive unit.

The Administrator spoke about public libraries. The new primary school at Humpty Doo will have a public library incorporated into the school library which is using government capital investment to the betterment not only of one section of the community, namely the children, but also another section of the community, their parents and others.

The Administrator mentioned the fact that the federal government still has responsibility for housing Aboriginal people. In my electorate, Mr Speaker, this has given rise to some confusion and to great dissatisfaction with the federal government. It has given rise to confusion in that it is very hard, not only for Aboriginal people but also for people who visit Snake Bay and Garden Point to try to help them, to differentiate between the federal responsibility and the Northern Territory government responsibility. There are 3 houses at Garden Point which are still the responsibility of the federal government. They are in the most disgraceful, disgusting state that I have ever seen.

It seems that the federal government is completely deaf to any letters that are written to it or any remarks that are passed on by federal politicians who come up here. This is to the gross disadvantage of the Aboriginal people living in these 3 houses. I have never seen such bad houses in my life. Because the housing association at Garden Point is doing the best it can to catch up with the backlog in housing, the 3 families are forced to live in these houses.

At Snake Bay, a similar situation holds. Some of the houses cannot be occupied because they are in such a shocking condition. They have not been repaired by federal government officers. Nobody will live in them; nobody would want to live in them. This adds greatly to the confusion of the whole housing situation and it also makes it a bit more difficult for the Northern Territory government because it has no involvement with that housing. I will just conclude my remarks by saying that the federal government - and I do not know how - certainly should be brought to task about the housing in those 2 places.

The Administrator said that the efforts of the government will continue to be relevant to the needs of the Aboriginal community. On Monday, there was an official ceremony at what has been Garden Point for 150 years and which has now reverted to the Tiwi name of Pularumpi. The people of the area wanted the name changed and it has been changed back to the original name. It was a very happy occasion and the honourable member for Victoria River was over there as well as the Leader of the Opposition. I think that they would agree with me that it was a very happy occasion. It was attended by many people, both visitors and friends from Darwin and also Tiwi people from the 2 islands.

In conclusion, it has given me much pleasure to speak about these points of interest in the Tiwi electorate and I am very pleased that they will be included in this debate.

Mr DOOLAN (Victoria River): In his speech on the opening day of this sittings of the Assembly, His Honour the Administrator touch on quite a few matters of great interest to Territorians and, in particular, to the people of my electorate. I was delighted to hear that the government will undertake major upgrading of the Victoria Highway including extensive realignment. I would hope also that the government will be considering upgrading the Buchanan Highway and the road through Victoria River Downs that links the Buchanan and the Victoria Highways. To do so would open up Jasper Gorge to the tourists and I thank the honourable Minister for Tourism for his support of my contention that Jasper Gorge offers a tremendous tourist potential.

The Administrator said, 'My government will continue to press both the Commonwealth and neighbouring states to ensure adequate transport links to this Territory. This pressure will be uncompromising'. I am glad to see that the government has apparently undergone a change of heart in this regard because I would suggest that bridging the Georgina River near Camooweal in Queensland at the expense of the Northern Territory government could hardly be classified as unpromising pressure.

His Honour devoted a considerable part of his speech to Aboriginal people of the Territory. At one stage, he remarked, 'The interests of Aboriginal people will be given attention, particularly in relation to the promotion of development aimed at increasing self-reliance. Employment of Aboriginal people is a matter of grave concern for my government. Wherever possible, stimulus will be given to useful projects in remote areas to attempt to increase gainful employment'. This statement can only be commended.

Later in his speech the Administrator said, 'A high level taskforce has been established and the process of extensive consultation with Aboriginal communities will continue throughout the program to ensure that the targets are met and that the efforts of my government continue to be relevant to the needs of the Aboriginal communities. An important benefit of this program will be the opportunities which will be created for employment and training of Aboriginal people providing facilities for their own communities'. Again, His Honour's remarks are most commendable. Personally, I trust that this high level taskforce is not comprised of the 3 recently failed CLP members now employed by the Chief Minister's Department on his personal staff.

Unemployment rates are unbelievably high in Aboriginal communities and I agree with the necessity for training Aboriginals so that they may be employed in providing facilities for their own communities. However, job opportunities are fairly limited in this area and the high level taskforce which His Honour mentioned must look very hard at alternative ways of providing employment in consultation with Aboriginal communities. In order to achieve any success at all, this taskforce must start from scratch and try to find out what the Aboriginal community sees as meaningful work rather than what Europeans see as meaningful employment. My statement by no means implies that what Europeans see as meaningful and what Aboriginal people see as meaningful are mutually exclusive. Aboriginal people do possess certain skills which are often more highly developed and come more naturally to them than to Europeans and it is this type of field which should be investigated more thoroughly. An actual example of this may be seen at Nguiu with the development of an enterprise which is now producing nationally known fabrics which are in great demand. This enterprise started off on a very low-key level and is now a highly profitable industry in conjunction with a pottery industry at Bathurst Island.

The Administrator mentioned that legislation has been introduced to provide for subleasing of land on pastoral properties to Aboriginal people and to arrange special purpose leases in urban areas. It so happens, Mr Speaker, that Aboriginal people on pastoral properties are not particularly interested in subleases. Recently, I was requested to prepare a submission to the Inquiry into Pastoral Land Tenure in the Northern Territory and, in the process, I did quite a bit of research. My inquiries led me to believe that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission, following advice from their legal experts, make it abundantly clear that both of these bodies have expressed grave reservations with regard to the security of tenure offered by sublease. In the report of the Woodward Commission, in paragraph 228, in relation to the creation of community areas on pastoral leases, it says: 'The form of tenure which I envisage for such cases is a special purposes lease'. I believe that most reasonable people would take cognizance of the remarks of such an eminent jurist as Justice Woodward.

My advice is that a sublease is not as satisfactory as a special purpose lease because a sublease is merely an agreement between the lessee and the community and, as a result, the Aboriginal community does not hold title to land. I have also been advised that the Department of Lands and Housing has advised pastoralists not to agree to excisions by SPL. As the Northern Territory government has demonstrated clearly its attitude to Aboriginal land claims since the

advent of self-government by opposing, in one way or another, every claim that has been lodged to date, with the sole exception of the Amadeus claim, it is only logical that its Department of Lands and Housing would recommend to pastoralists a less secure form of tenure than SPL. The opposition of pastoralists and their advisers to the granting of special purposes leases seems to have had its genesis in the feeling that they would have less control over an Aboriginal group than they would have if the group had only a sublease.

In relation to the future of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, I have 3 documents. One is 'A Statement of Policy for the Improvement of Aboriginal Communities'. The second is headed 'Development of Aboriginal Towns, a Discussion Paper' which is compiled by the Department of Health and seems to me to be far the better of the 2 papers. The third document is 'A 5-year Plan for Essential Services at the Remote Communities'. I would like to make some comments on these in line with what the Administrator said in his address.

Firstly, in the 'Statement of Policy for the Improvement of Aboriginal Communities', at page 6 paragraph 2, we read: 'The achievement of these objectives in employment will require a commitment on the part of Aboriginals themselves to accept such employment and to make every effort to ensure that their young people undertake measures to equip themselves for employment of this kind'. The achievement of these objectives in employment assumes that the nature of the employment is such that the community will wish to undertake it. Therefore, it must essentially be a program geared to the needs of individual communities in which administration, health, housing, maintenance and education respond to the community rather than maintain an image of an imposition lessening their effectiveness.

Paragraph 3 draws attention to the need for an innovative and effective administrative system. The innovative, effective administrative system can only be successful if it does not revert to bureaucratic dogma. It must be fluid and responsive. At page 9, there is another comment. Paragraph 3 also mentions tenant counselling which I will be talking about later. Paragraph 4 says: 'It takes note in a positive way of the ideal opportunity which these schemes present for vocational training in a wide range of skills and the employment which will be possible'. I think that the implementation of a competent vetting body for potential European employees is also essential. This would minimise wastage and monetary loss, not only in the housing area but in all areas. The European concept of rip-off in Aboriginal communities is still prevalent with resultant disillusionment by Aboriginals with European efforts to develop communities.

At page 14, it states: 'There are still aspects to be negotiated with the Commonwealth and with Aboriginal communities, but we are well along the way and it is the intention of this government to undertake a commitment and to formulate a definitive plan to bring about a significant improvement in services and facilities in Aboriginal communities over the next 5 years'. I would like to point out that improvement in services and facilities does not necessarily correspond with social improvement. I can quote from personal experience in the 1960s under the old Social Welfare Branch. Facilities such as community dining halls were introduced. Without any doubt, this improved the diet of the community but it was a social disaster. People were lined up in a queue, cafeteria style, and sat wherever there happened to be available space. The result was that families seldom sat at the same table together. Mr Speaker, a family meal is not just a feed; it is a social occasion when people sit down with their spouse and their kids and have a meaningful discussion. This just did away with all of that. As a result of herding people in a race to collect meals and sitting them down anywhere, the family, as a unit, was almost disintegrating. Fortunately, in 1972, the federal Labor Party was returned to office and community dining halls went out of fashion through a new department and a new director.

The second document was compiled by the Department of Health. As I said, I think it is by far the best document. It is called 'The Development of Aboriginal Rural Towns, a Discussion Paper'. There are a couple of things which I would query in it. In paragraph 2 on 'Background' on page 3, it says: 'The Northern Territory government has inherited 30 to 40 rural townships with perhaps the same number of smaller camps and villages'. And yet, in the 5-year plan, we have an entirely different number. On the front page, it says: 'The approach of the taskforce was organised in 3 progressive stages, consultation with 40 major communities and an appraisal of 530 outstations to assist total requirements'. There seems to be quite an amazing discrepancy in the figures quoted. The Health Department paper lists a maximum of 80 possible rural townships, smaller camps and villages yet the 5-year development plan is talking about 570 communities. I just do not know what they are getting at.

On page 10, under 'Vocational training and the development of a comprehensive range of skills in Aboriginal communities - basic skills requirements', it says: 'The program is to be primarily directed to Aboriginal people resident in their communities to enable them to gain the skills to deal with their day-to-day vocational problems. Conventional, professional and technical entry requirements, courses and examinations will, in most instances, be inappropriate and specific formerly recognised rural community courses and staff categories will need to be tailored to local Aboriginal needs'. I would like to know if any arrangements will be made to reach higher standards or if the local course is seen to be enough. I refer to such things as the Aboriginal teacher education. I would like to know whether the potential is being considered for higher training as the 5-year plan progresses.

The last paper and the one about which I have the most criticism is the 5-year plan. For instance, under 'Housing' on page 7, paragraph (f), we read: 'The question arises of whether the one standard, suitable to the needs of both Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal Northern Territory Public Service staff, can be developed or whether 2 or more standards will need to be considered. It is thought that there will be considerable advantages in providing all new accommodation required for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff to a common standard or nearly so. This would lessen the likelihood of charges concerning discrimination'.

If you turn to page 12, it gets even worse. It says: 'All new staff housing on settlements will be provided with the same or very similar external appearance but with different standards of internal finish. Such action should minimise the problem of discrimination and help to ease racial tension in settlements'. For God's sake, it will do the reverse. It will increase racial tension and it will point out very clearly that there is discrimination. I am not talking about staff and people living down the camp. These comments are in respect of housing for Northern Territory public servants. Is the person who prepared the paper so dumb that he imagines Aboriginal public servants do not go into European public servants' houses and, if he thinks they do, does he also think they are too stupid to notice the difference? Northern Territory public servants should not be discriminated against with regard to housing. Here we have a double standard being considered conditional upon a person's racial origin. It seems to whitewash a potential visual display of housing discrimination.

On page 13, we find mention of staff housing management committees. These committees should comprise: 'One representative from each of the Northern Territory government departments with a presence in the community, one member representing the community council and one part-time Northern Territory Housing Commission employee to act as secretary'. I suggest that such a committee is going to be very heavily loaded. It could quite likely consist of 4 Europeans and 1 Aboriginal. We are not talking about a normal European town; we are talking

about an Aboriginal community. Therefore, I think it suggests a disproportionate representation in the community in favour of Europeans. It would never work because the Aboriginal person would be outvoted or would start to sulk and say, 'Oh well, to hell with it. No one listens to me'. This staff housing management committee has various functions and determines eligibility for houses on various criteria but there is nothing mentioned about the size of the building blocks. What size building blocks are being considered in this wonderful era of the next 5 years planned by the Northern Territory Public Service? Also, there is an underlying assumption that Aboriginal people wish to live in a nuclear family situation with the same constraints as an equivalent European family. I can assure anybody that they do not.

Three areas which these housing committees are supposed to look at are alcohol abuse, noise pollution and other nuisances. That could be a lot of things. This is the responsibility of the staff housing management committee and what eludes me is just where the local council or the community government fits in. Does this preclude the local council or a community government from any form of control of social behaviour and in handling other nuisances as it sees fit? I think it is a dreadful paper, Mr Speaker.

On page 20, there is mention of social behaviour. It says: 'In order to render the expenditure of funds on new and restored houses more effective or, in other words, reduce the likelihood of early serious damage being caused by the occupants, the government should step up its activities in the community development area within settlements'. Well, I would suggest that it is the community that should step up activities rather than the government.

On page 21, it says: 'Greater efforts must be made to minimise the incidence of alcohol abuse'. It does not say how or by whom. Finally, in paragraph 5, it says: '...community housing at a unit cost per dwelling ranging from \$30,000 to \$35,000, based on 1979 prices, at the same time recognising that investigations may show that houses of a lesser standard may well be more appropriate in some instances'. I think they could wipe out 'lesser standard' and substitute 'different standard' or 'culturally-relevant housing'. It is a bit rude putting that there. It is quite obvious what the intention is.

As other members have done in this debate, I would like to take the opportunity to thank my constituents for returning me to office in Victoria River. For this I am most grateful. I found it was a lot easier election to contest than the 1977 election. In my opinion, it was a classic example of the old dog for the hard track and the pup for the road.

Mr D.W. COLLINS (Alice Springs): Mr Speaker, I count it as a great privilege and an honour to be elected to this House and I thank the people of Alice Springs for so honouring me. I would like also to put on record my thanks to a number of people who assisted me in the election campaign. Firstly, I would like to mention Senator Bernie Kilgariff, who was a former member of this Assembly and the first Speaker in this House, and Mr Sam Calder MHR. These gentlemen's encouragement and advice were of great help and assistance to me. I would also like to mention ministers of this government, in particular Mr Roger Steele and Mr Ian Tuxworth, who assisted me in the door-knocking campaign and again gave considerable encouragement and help. I would be remiss if I did not mention and thank my colleague, the member for Stuart, Mr Roger Vale, whose hard work and enthusiasm in the pioneering field did not do my electoral chances any harm at all.

It is said that if you want to win you have got to back a good horse. I fully acknowledge the Everingham government and the high regard in which it was held throughout the electorate. My election to this House was rightly aided by

the government and its high standing in the community. I had an army of friends. I had my family. I would like to pay tribute to my wife, members and supporters of the Country Liberal Party, both in Alice Springs area and in the Top End and, in particular, the Alice Springs Young Country Liberal Party who all worked tirelessly in helping me be elected. I thank them all. I also believe that I received some rather unexpected help from one of those quirks of fate. A certain similarity in beards between myself and another member of this House helped me gain some very vital second-preference votes and I am grateful to assistance from wherever it may come.

I would now like to address myself to the address given by His Honour the Administrator, particularly in relation to some topics relating to the electorate of Alice Springs. It has been very obvious since the advent of self-government that growth and expansion have been at a great rate and one of the big problems we have, and it has been mentioned in this House, is the lack of housing and serviced land. I was very pleased to hear in His Honour's address that this matter is being attended to with the utmost speed. Subdivisions are being developed. The first land should come off in Alice Springs in the Sadadeen subdivision in May and an ongoing program which is very important is being produced to help to overcome this situation.

I do have one suggestion which, in the short term, may provide some solution to this housing problem. In the Alice Springs electorate, there are a number of empty blocks and also there are a large number of houses that are nearing the end of their economic life. Quite a few of these are in zones which are suitable and allowable for developing such things as flats and holiday units. In particular, holiday units interest me because, if holiday units were developed on such blocks, they would produce, in the short term, housing for many of those people who do not have housing. In the future, as blocks were turned off and houses were built so that people could go to proper housing, these holiday units could revert to their original purpose. This is a very important point because, as the Stuart Highway gets progressively sealed and there is less and less dirt road, people from down south and the eastern states will be very tempted indeed to get in the family car and drive up to Alice Springs and the Centre. Those people are the ones who cannot really afford the frightfully expensive airfares and motel accommodation. Holiday units, I predict, would be an excellent choice and they could look after themselves. It may be something which the Territory Development Corporation could look into although I do not see that there is much need for government interference in this area. It is something which could be done between private people. It just means it may need a little bit of a push.

Tourism is obviously a very important interest to Alice Springs and the residents there. It will be the source in the future of considerable employment and, in the Territory, we have to learn to welcome tourists and that tourist dollar. I must confess that there are times when people say that tourists are a nuisance. Overall, I believe that we have an excellent opportunity to meet people from all over the world who come into Alice Springs as tourists. If we treat them well, we will not only be doing them a service but they will go away contented and pleased with their visit to the Territory and they will send other people to us as well. That would serve the employment problem about which we are concerned.

I was very pleased to note in His Honour's address that mention was made of law and order. Many people from my electorate spoke to me about their fear of not being able to walk the streets free from interference. I strongly believe that every person on legitimate business should have that freedom to walk unmolested and without fear along the streets and I heartily endorse efforts which may be made to enforce this situation.

The Alice Springs electorate is one in which there are many families with young children and the provision of schools in the electorate will be very important. The new east side valley subdivision is one of those and no doubt Sadadeen stage one, when it comes off, will also be in that situation. I know that the honourable Minister for Education is well aware of this particular problem and that things will be done to provide a new primary school within the area because the Ross Park Primary School is almost filled to capacity. Education is an area of vital concern to me as I know it is to all Territorians because, unless we can guarantee a high-quality education for our children, parents are going to be very concerned and will consider sending their children down south. If they do that, then they will have a problem of expense and the breaking up of the family. Many families may say, 'Well, it is best if we return to the south'. I am sure that that is not what we want. We must have stable families and we must look into every aspect of education and continue to upgrade the standard wherever possible.

In the Alice Springs electorate, there are a number of roads which I look forward to seeing constructed in this term, particularly the road from the newly reconstructed bridge around Kurrajong Drive, the reconstruction of Undoolya Road, the upgrading of the Undoolya causeway and the RSL crossing. I would like to see culvert systems put in there and a sealed road put across. This is done in most other states. People in my electorate, particularly those who work at the powerhouse, are very concerned about the corrugated road which they have. That is another one that I would like to see constructed. I am also very keen to see an extra link between the electorates of Alice Springs and Gillen down Telegraph Terrace so that the congestion at the Larapinta Drive corner, which is a real bottle-neck, may be eased.

It is very pleasing to hear that the bike tracks in Darwin are getting considerable use. I would like to report that there are bike tracks in Alice Springs and they are getting considerable use also, not only from bike riders but from joggers who enjoy the safety of jogging along that track free from motor cars. I certainly will encourage everything that can be done to expand the spread of bike tracks throughout the electorate.

There was mention made this morning of the recreation lake. I am not too sure if it is to be at the old Telegraph Station or not, but I know that it will be a very welcome addition to the town, to the townspeople and to visitors. I am sure that anybody who has been to Mt Isa or Broken Hill and has seen the difference that a lake in an arid area makes will appreciate the benefits that such a lake will bring.

Alice Springs is a very sports-minded town. Almost every game that is played seems to be played there and many hundreds of people are involved. Facilities are short but efforts are being made. I am pleased to see that Traeger Park will be upgraded. I certainly support moves being made by the council for a sporting area outside of the Gap.

Agriculture is hardly an area which falls within the actual electorate of Alice Springs, but it is an area in which I have a personal interest. I have even had a little dabble at it once or twice and I come from a family involved in that area. I am very keen to see that, wherever possible, the Territory can become self-sufficient in the production of fruit and vegetables, particularly in that southern region.

I was also delighted to hear that the Alice Springs powerhouse will be fuelled by gas. This will stop the need for transporting oil. There have been occasions when the Alice Springs power-station has almost run short of fuel and

this gas should prevent that. I was also delighted to hear news about the refinery. Although, with the parity pricing, we may not have much cheaper petrol, I think that, in the future, we can have guaranteed supplies of petrol. This is something that many other people will be envious of indeed.

Attention has been drawn to the financial arrangements this government has with the federal government and no doubt some fine bargaining was done by members of this government and people in government departments. I would also like to pay a tribute to the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser, who came to the party with this arrangement. It was he who threw down the gauntlet that we could take up self-government and which the previous Everingham government took hold of with both hands. It has proved to be a success and I think we should acknowledge that the Prime Minister, in these financial arrangements, is giving us an excellent base from which to develop. We are being funded by the southern taxpayers but I believe that, in the national interest, this is a very commendable and very wise thing. These are exciting times. I am very proud to be involved in this Assembly and hope that I can make some worthwhile contributions to it.

Mrs LAWRIE (Nightcliff): Mr Speaker, in His Honour's address on behalf of his government, he stated: 'My government is pledged to the continuation of the social, economic and constitutional progress that characterised the past 2 years of self-government'. All I can say is that it is a pity about that. If we are talking about the social, economic and constitutional progress, there is precious little of which we should feel very proud in what has occurred over the last 2 years. Certain things, of course, have been set in train and we have had the progressive handover to the Northern Territory government of such functions as education. When I see in the Northern Territory serious unemployment - there seems to be little or no inroad being made on that - when I see housing in the top end of the Northern Territory at a crisis point - and very little seems to be being done about that; there is a lot of hot air but not much brick building - when I see health services being curtailed and I notice that the Dripstone Health Centre apparently will not proceed, when I see that some education services, particularly the capital works program, have been cut back, then I wonder about the statement of a commitment to this supposed continuing progress.

Mention was made of constitutional development. I know there have been many press releases lately, emanating mainly from the Chief Minister's office, about the Chief Minister's desire for the north-south railway and his efforts on our behalf. Of course, they are efforts which we all support but there does seem to be an assumption that the federal government will listen to the Northern Territory government. I have reason to believe that the federal government listens to the government of the Northern Territory when it suits the federal government and not otherwise. One outstanding example was raised in this House by the Minister for Mines and Energy.

On 22 November last year, in response to a series of questions from myself and the member for Port Darwin, the minister spoke of efforts his government made to convince the federal government of the need to send a health team to Timor to assist and to alleviate the extreme distress of the people of East Timor as a result of the armed intervention of the Indonesian people. He is reported in the Hansard of that date as saying that he had received a reply from the office of the Prime Minister which he deemed unacceptable. He said: 'We will follow up the matter by contacting the federal government every 2 or 3 days until there is a result because it seems to me that it is taking them an unnecessarily long time to consider an offer of the sort that we have made'. That was 22 November 1979. Months have passed and I do hope that a telex went every 2 or 3 days as the minister undertook to send.

We find the honourable gentleman admitting yesterday: 'I have one more topic that I would like to touch on. It is related to the Northern Territory and its close proximity to its neighbours. Last year during the Timor confusion...'. I might pause there; it was more than last year. They have been confused in Timor since the Indonesians marched in. '... for want of a better word, the Northern Territory government, through the Commonwealth, made an offer of assistance to the Indonesians in the form of a medical team for Timor. That offer was initially ignored and subsequently refused. I feel that our offer was treated very unjustly by the Commonwealth and the Indonesians'. He went on to say it was a genuine offer to help the people. Mr Speaker, I share his sentiments. Obviously, I share the sentiments of the Northern Territory government because it is extremely unlikely that any Cabinet member in the present government would have taken such action unilaterally. I am quite sure that he had full Cabinet backing, meaning Northern Territory government backing. It did not suit the Commonwealth to assist us in this reasonable offer; they ignored it and eventually refused it.

I note that the Chief Minister has been honest in saying that he is not holding his breath for the construction of the railway this year and I pay him credit for having acknowledged that the federal government is again treating us with a little less than the concern we feel is our due. I bring these points forward to show that, when we talk about constitutional development and the role that the Northern Territory government has to play in federal affairs, I voice my concern that our role is only as important as the federal government lets it be and wishes it to be seen to be. I am not holding my breath for any great advances in constitutional development in the next 4 years.

The honourable Chief Minister spoke about bicycle paths and a couple of other people have raised this subject and have said how nice it is to have the bicycle paths. The connector road from Nightcliff to Fannie Bay is a good example. I am also delighted to see that bicycle path and I am more than a little amused because, in giving evidence to the original parliamentary works committee of inquiry into what was then the Palmerston arterial road, sometimes misnamed the Palmerston Freeway, I was the first politician to suggest that we should have a bicycle track and I was absolutely rubbished by the senior departmental people who are now advising the honourable Chief Minister. The same gentleman was involved but, since he is a public servant, I would not name him; that is unwise. Anyone with a long memory finds a small amount of amusement in what was abhorrent yesterday being the thing of today and the sentiments apparently being espoused by the same people.

One of the nice things about the connector road, apart from the bicycle track, is that, if one comes through at high tide, one can actually see families fishing. I think that is marvellous. I hope that the powers that be, when they have to upgrade the road slightly because of some extra pressure that may be put upon us, will not litter that road with the signs we see on Trower Road and on the bridge: 'No Fishing from the Bridge', 'Children Forbidden' and that kind of thing. I put in a plea now for the continuation of the delights of the family being able to go crabbing and fishing in close proximity to the Fannie Bay connector road. It is rather nice.

A couple of people mentioned the Coat of Arms which we now see in the Assembly. I would like to say that I think it adds respectability and dignity to this Chamber. I have always admired the Coat of Arms and I am also delighted to see the Northern Territory flag displayed on every available occasion. I am also delighted with the little lapel pins, the little Northern Territory flag badges, which one sometimes receives from the Chief Minister's Department and which are very much appreciated by the recipients. Perhaps it is salient to remark that that is the badge of the people of the Northern Territory and not of

the Country Liberal Party.

Mr Speaker, having pleased half the House, I now displease the other 18 members. The honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke about the proposal to close the seas within 2 kilometres adjacent to Aboriginal land. I do not concur with his outlook and I have stated so publicly on many occasions. More importantly, in 1975, in company with the then government leader, Dr Goff Letts, and a couple of other members, I flew around the coastal communities talking to them about the Aboriginal rights bill, which had then just been introduced, and voiced to the people my concern that, if they pressed for a closure of the seas within 2 kilometres of their areas of land, they would cause more problems than they would ever cure, they would create greater divisions than they believed possible and that other methods could be used to ensure the safety of their traditional hunting grounds.

It has at last become apparent to the people of the Northern Territory that professional fishermen who have an existing right to fish in those waters will not be excluded. They will continue to be able to fish. The concern which the Aboriginal people have, and which I share, that their sustenance may be taken from them and they could well be fished out is not covered by the proposed closure at all. Amateur fishermen, unless they receive permission, are the ones who will be excluded. There have been many articles in the press from one side or the other and we certainly have seen big divisions in the community over this particular issue. The amateurs say, with justification, 'We are not the ones who are fishing the place out yet we are the ones who are going to suffer'. What I think is not appreciated by some people, black and white, is the very deep feeling that many Europeans, along with Aboriginal people, have for the sea. The country has recently been populated - it is only a couple of hundred years old after all - by people who came from largely maritime nations. I speak as a sixth generation Australian who understands the genuine dismay of people who feel they will have to apply for permission to be in salt water within 2 kilometres of an area without otherwise committing any act that would lead to some deprivation for the people living on the land.

Europeans are extremely sensitive on this issue. They cannot understand how their presence in a boat within 2 kilometres constitutes an affront to the Aboriginal people. It is a pity there is not more opportunity for the Aboriginal people and the European people affected to talk to each other face to face because I think many of the difficulties and misunderstandings could then be resolved. At the moment, I am extremely concerned that no one seems to appreciate a legitimate concern of Europeans who cannot understand why such a prohibition would come into effect. They do understand that they may apply for permission but salt water has a slightly different connotation than entry onto land.

One of the reasons that they become so stroppy about this, besides their own feelings about the right of access to salt water, is the fact that the poor, hapless amateur fisherman of the Northern Territory finds his access to so many waterways restricted. We saw in the Administrator's address mention of the Inquiry into Pastoral Land Tenure, a point which was taken up by the honourable member for Victoria River. It is again germane to advise the House that there is a large body of opinion in the Top End which states quite categorically that it wants access to natural waterways. It is worried about any proposal to alter pastoral lease tenure which may further exclude people from access to waterways, to recreation and fishing. We must remember that we are talking about pastoral lessees, not freehold owners of land, and we again see a proliferation of signs - 'Do not enter', 'Trespassers shot', 'Keep out' etc. There are precious few places for the amateur fisherman to go. When we see advertisements in the paper calling for submissions with regard to inquiries into a proposal to close off

water adjacent to Aboriginal land, I must say the poor Aboriginal people cop the frustrations not only for a proposed closure of that area, but the frustrations resulting from an inability to get to fresh and tidal waters for recreational fishing because of the actions of pastoralists and others who exclude people. I would ask that the government bear that in mind when considering the report which no doubt will be tabled in this House and about which I will speak at that time.

On the same subject, I would like to say that the Chief Minister and a member of his staff addressed a group of fishermen recently. I was not present but they said there was some implicit notion that I was in favour of the closure of the seas. This apparently was put by the Chief Minister's staff member, not the Chief Minister. Mr Speaker, I leave it on public record that they know me well enough; they thought that was very strange, because they had read everything I had said, not just what was shown to them. They treated that implicit suggestion with the derision it deserved. I do not think I could have made it more plain or more public that I am opposed to the closure of the salt waters and the first people I told were the Aboriginal people concerned. They got the message from the first. I might say they appreciated it and they said to me, 'You speak with one tongue'.

I would like to conclude my remarks by saying how much I believe the people of the Northern Territory appreciate the present Administrator, Mr John England, and his wife Polly. I have been here 20 years and have seen a succession of administrators, all of whom applied themselves to their positions, but never has there been such a popular administrator. Never has there been one who has so successfully raised his office above politics and who has so successfully gained the respect of all Territorians. If the present Administrator is to leave at the conclusion of this extended term, I think the Territory will be all the poorer. As is sometimes flippantly said in talking of other people, his will be a hard act to follow. He has the respect of all of us and so has his wife.

Mr HARRIS (Port Darwin): Mr Speaker, in speaking to the Address in Reply, I would like to relate my comments to 3 matters that were raised in the Administrator's speech. The first concerns the wharf. Mention was made of having a reliable shipping service between the eastern states and Darwin. I could not agree more. I have always believed that the future of the top end of the Northern Territory is very closely linked with the development of our port. The advantages that would be received if companies and individuals could again have confidence and faith in the operations of the wharf would be tremendous. I would like to say that the reliability of a shipping service is far more than just having a ship come once a week or once a month to Darwin on a regular basis.

Reliability is having goods delivered to the doorstep and, unless we are able to have a regular shipping service, coupled with reliable handling of goods, then I believe we may as well forget the service altogether. Somehow, the Northern Territory government, the responsible organisations and the unions have to get together to discuss this matter. I believe these problems can be solved and, in order to encourage people to use the shipping service, they must be given some guarantee that their goods will be delivered to their doorstep. Most of the people whom I know in the Territory want Territory development. They want the Territory to go ahead. We may have different ideas of how we should go about this development, but I believe that one of the ways that would open the door for development would be for us to have a reliable shipping service.

The second point that I would like to touch on is the continued efforts of the Chief Minister in pushing for a rail service from Alice Springs to Darwin. Most other members have commented on this. When I was a boy, we used to travel

down the track with my father. Mention was made regularly of the possibility of having a rail link between Darwin and Alice Springs in the future. When we stayed at Tennant Creek in the old Goldfields Hotel, which was a pretty rough pub in the early fifties, discussion often arose about the possibility of having a railway station at Tennant Creek. A section of land was put aside for that particular purpose in Tennant Creek. Because of the lack of legal follow-up on this piece of land, there is no longer a plot set aside for this purpose. However, there is a real possibility that, in the near future, Tennant Creek will have a railway station.

There is no doubt that a rail line between Darwin and Alice Springs will benefit all of the people in the Northern Territory. It will benefit the people on the land, the people in the urban areas and the people who live alongside the railway line. But there is one aspect which has not been emphasised enough and I believe it has to be canvassed a little more: the benefit this rail service will give to the aged people of the Northern Territory. In every other state of Australia, aged pensioners receive concessions on their rail fares. Why should that not happen up here? Why shouldn't our pensioners be given the rights of these other people? Why should they be penalised because of isolation?

The third point that I would like to comment on is in regard to government assistance to organisations and associations such as the Northern Territory Pensioners Association and the Northern Territory Handicapped Persons Association, associations which provide an important and wonderful service in our community. Whilst the Northern Territory government has assisted financially many such organisations, it is becoming increasingly obvious that careful consideration will have to be given to the methods in which this assistance is to be given if these organisations are to survive. Some of the associations are finding it very difficult at present to continue operations, not knowing if financial assistance in the current year will be forthcoming or not. I speak specifically of Tracy Lodge. It is a magnificent complex and has provided a tremendous boost to the living standard of our aged people. Places such as Tracy Lodge rely very heavily on financial support from service clubs, from government or from a combination of both. If any area of finance that was received the previous year is not forthcoming, then that association finds itself in financial difficulty.

The competition that is generated in the field of raising money for these associations is tremendous. To give an example, last year a 'lovely motherhood quest' was run. The money from this quest went towards Tracy Lodge. This year there was no 'lovely motherhood quest'; there was a 'lovely tinytots quest'. The money raised from this quest went to the Northern Territory Handicapped Persons Association. One could go on naming the various quests and competitions that are set up to raise money for these needy causes and each year this will worsen. It is very hard to expect a city the size of Darwin or towns the size of Katherine, Tennant Creek or Alice Springs to continually provide large sums of money for this purpose from their communities.

Let us not forget the other areas that tap into this source of money, those raising funds for sporting bodies and clubs in the area. The service clubs in our communities have provided, over the years, a tremendous service. They have helped in the building and operation of places such as Tracy Lodge. However, we cannot expect the service clubs and associations to continually provide assistance to the same club or the same association year in, year out. I believe that I am touching here on the principle which governs government initiative on such matters. Should the government be involved in the continual funding of such associations as Tracy Lodge or should these associations, which provide a magnificent service in the community, be self-sufficient?

I believe that, because of the restrictions placed on the revenue-raising powers of these associations, the second option is not possible. It is obvious that associations such as Tracy Lodge need to be able to plan ahead and, in order to do this, they need to have some means of continual funding. I believe that this must cover a period of at least 3 years. To continue to go on from year to year without knowing where funding is to come from will only mean that these vital services in our community will not survive. The only revenue that Tracy Lodge receives is from the residents of that lodge and, again, this is governed by the Aged Persons (Homes and Hostels) Act which provides for 85% of the basic age pension to be paid. This allows for a small amount to remain with the pensioner, as it should, for his own personal needs and requirements. Apart from that, there is assistance from the federal government in the form of personal-care subsidies which are paid to Tracy Lodge when a resident meets certain requirements. But again, this subsidy is minimal and barely meets the cost of providing those extra services. On the expenditure side, there has been assistance given by the Northern Territory government and Tracy Lodge, indeed, is grateful for this assistance. But again, it is only minimal.

There are obviously many other groups in a similar position to that of Tracy Lodge and I have only raised the matter this afternoon because I believe that, if the Northern Territory government is to continue to provide incentives for our aged people to remain in Darwin, some alteration to the method of funding must be looked at so that we are able to provide operational subsidies of a continuing nature. Perhaps another method would be, and I believe that certain states have implemented this method, to allow for deficit budgeting to approved associations - I emphasise 'approved associations' - such as Tracy Lodge. This might be more acceptable to the people than the arbitrary handout and it would mean that these associations would still need to make the effort to raise money each year; they would still need to make the effort to make the association operate economically. Where they could not legitimately make ends meet, then the government would be able to assist in that shortfall between its income and expenditure. This shortfall could be arrived at by forward budget estimates so the government would know the exact amount.

Mr Speaker, in concluding my remarks on the address, I would just like to say that we cannot allow associations such as Tracy Lodge to falter. In order to make sure this does not happen, consideration must be given towards improving the methods of continual funding.

Mr PERKINS (MacDonnell): In rising to speak on the address in reply this afternoon, Mr Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation to His Honour the Administrator for his speech in which he outlined the government's program for this next term. In doing so, I would also like to convey my appreciation to those people in the electorate of MacDonnell who re-elected me to this House for another term. I would like to place on record that it is indeed an honour and pleasure to be able to serve the constituents of MacDonnell again in the Legislative Assembly. I would like also to welcome the 2 new members to the Legislative Assembly, especially my colleague, the new member for Nhulunbuy. I hope that their stay in the Assembly over the next term will be as meaningful and as productive as the stay of the other honourable members here gathered.

I was interested in the program of the government which was outlined by His Honour the Administrator. I was interested to note that top priority will be given to Territory development in the areas of energy, mining and essential services and in relation to transport and roads. Indeed, there was much talk about development in the speech by His Honour the Administrator and I will be saying a bit more about that.

I would like to turn to a couple of matters which I was happy to see in that speech. In the first place, the government is indicating that it will be introducing some legislation in this House to establish a Territory alcohol and drug authority. I believe that this is not before time and, after many committees and many reports in relation to problems of alcohol abuse in the Northern Territory, I do not need to emphasise here what a social problem alcohol is in the Territory. Honourable members would be well aware that it has caused a great deal of social damage and disruption in the Territory overall. It is encouraging to see that legislation will be introduced to establish a Territory alcohol and drug authority which, hopefully, will have the power and the teeth to come to grips with this particular problem in a significant way.

I was interested to hear of the resurrection of the recreational lake in the Alice Springs area. I want to make it clear that, at the outset, I am not opposed to the concept of a recreational lake in the Alice Springs area. I need to emphasise that because there might be a fear on the part of the Minister for Primary Production that I might be opposed to this particular concept. I want to assure him that I am not.

I wish to point out that there were submissions made to the Department of Transport and Works last year - I was one of the people who made a submission - regarding the recreational lake in the Alice Springs area. Unfortunately, I have not yet received a response to my submission and I doubt very much whether any other person has received a response. In those submissions, various problems were raised regarding the proposal and, in particular, the idea to establish a lake north of the Bungalow, otherwise known as the Telegraph Station, in the Alice Springs area. Outlined in these submissions were hydrological problems, environmental protection problems and those problems which relate to Aboriginal sacred sites. These are significant problems and we all ought to be concerned about them. Obviously, there has to be some adequate and proper response. I am just hoping that, in the course of this Assembly, we might have an indication from the Minister for Transport and Works as to the progress of the recreational lake and whether there will be a response to the submissions which have been made to his department.

I was interested this morning to hear the response from the Chief Minister to a question about the existence of Aboriginal sacred sites in that area and whether the government would go ahead and establish the recreational lake in that area in view of the existence of these sites. I cannot really stress enough that, in that particular area on which it is proposed to establish the recreational lake, there are significant Aboriginal sacred sites. I think it would be rather improper and would create a dangerous precedent if those particular sites were disturbed in order to make way for a recreational lake. There are other areas in the Alice Springs district that could be used for the purposes of a recreational lake. The people of the Centre deserve a recreational lake not only for the tourists who visit Alice Springs but also for the local people. That is why I have indicated that I am not opposed to the concept of a recreational lake. However, I would urge the government to take adequate and proper account of the concerns which have been raised by the Central Land Council and individuals in the Alice Springs community about the potential damage which a recreational lake in the area to the north of Alice Springs and the Telegraph Station would cause.

I mentioned earlier that the main thrust of the speech by His Honour the Administrator was concerned with the development of the Territory in the areas of energy, mining, essential services and transport, and roads. However, I am disappointed and concerned that housing in the Territory will not really be given the same sort of priority which it deserves in the government's program.

I believe that housing development in the Territory ought to have the same priority and the same prominence as, for example, development in relation to energy, mining and transport. I am concerned to note that there was only a brief reference to housing in His Honour's address and I am even more concerned to note that it was actually claimed that more subdivisions will be opened in all centres to cater for the high demand for land and housing. I do not think that this is enough. I submit that housing is emerging as a key factor in the economic future of the Territory and that, unless the government is able to take immediate action to upgrade housing development as a priority, then I believe that the growth and the development of the Territory will be jeopardised.

I think that the lack of adequate and suitable housing is an issue which would be most likely to inhibit the smooth development of the Territory. I think it is generally well known that the housing shortage in the Northern Territory is critical and it is not just a problem in Darwin, Nhulunbuy, Alice Springs or Katherine but it is a Territory-wide problem. I submit that, in the tackling of this problem - and obviously this involves the acknowledgement of the severity of the problem - the government ought to regard this as a first priority if there is to be any credence given to its claim that the people and the human development of the Territory are uppermost in its mind. I happen to believe that it is the people of the Territory who are the most important resource and I do not think that we ought to be losing sight of this particular fact. I do not think that, with all the emphasis on other kinds of development, we ought to sacrifice the development of the people of the Territory. Unfortunately, a critical housing shortage would lead to the Territory acquiring a reputation as a homeless north. If the government is not prepared to do anything about this in the short term, it means that the economic development of the Territory is actually doomed to falter. The government must recognise the severity of the housing problem.

Let us look at a few facts in relation to housing in the Northern Territory. Recently, a survey was done by the opposition on a Territory-wide basis. We looked at housing in relation to public servants and we found that there is a serious housing situation and that, particularly in the Centre, there are overcrowded conditions. It is interesting to take note of the figures.

In Alice Springs, at the time the survey was taken - the results were derived from housing and employment figures up to 30 June and 7 July of this year - it is interesting to note that there is only 1 government house available per 7 public servants who reside there. In Katherine and Nhulunbuy, there is 1 government house per $4\frac{1}{2}$ public servants. In Tennant Creek, there is 1 government house available per 4 public servants. In Darwin, there is 1 government house available per 2.9 public servants. Those particular figures are disturbing. It would indicate that there is a critical shortage of housing accommodation for the government's own employees and that the employees of the government are living in overcrowded conditions in the Territory. The problem is not just here in Darwin. As those particular figures would indicate, the problem is even greater in the Alice Springs area.

Let us look at some other figures which have been brought to light in a recent survey conducted by the Northern Territory Council of Social Services. I might say that the council conducted a survey in an attempt to draw the government's attention to the seriousness of the housing problem in Darwin. The council established a register in the Darwin Mall and the Casuarina complex for people in need of low-cost emergency housing. In a period of only 4 days, the following figures were compiled. It was found that there were people living on beaches and in cars. In that particular category, there were 82 adults and 6 children. Other people were living in tents and doubling up in flats and

caravans. In that particular category, there were 177 adults and 101 children. The survey indicated that 136 of the people who used the register indicated they were dependent upon unemployment benefits or had no income and 31% registered as being in the low-income bracket. There were some who were employed part time.

In those particular figures, there is an indication of the nature and extent of the housing and accommodation problem in the Territory. As I have indicated, it is a problem not only here in Darwin but also in Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Alice Springs. Indeed, there are many homeless people in the Northern Territory and the government must do something to assist them. Having said that, it is important that the government put its priorities right and ensure that there is more emphasis and greater prominence given to human development in the Territory, in this case housing development, and that we do not end up with the reputation of being the homeless north.

I would like to join with other members in thanking His Honour the Administrator. I would also endorse the remarks which have been made by other honourable members about the contribution of His Honour the Administrator.

I would hope that the housing issue which has been raised by myself and other honourable members will be given the urgent attention which it deserves. We hope to see, in future, some positive action on the part of the government to acknowledge that it is a severe problem in the Territory and a recognition that action has to be taken to rectify the problem.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr DONDAS (Transport and Works): I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

This morning I was asked a question by the honourable member for Sanderson relating to the Cape Don and Cape Hotham lighthouses. Cape Don is a manned lighthouse and there are 2 cottages on the island, an airstrip, access roads and probably one or two services buildings. It is planned to de-man the lighthouse in about 1984 or 1985 and install an automatic light. Once that is done, all they will need is a small area for gas cylinders. When it is de-manned, the Department of Administrative Services, who have the responsibility, will dispose of the unwanted property. As a point of interest, I believe that the Department of Administrative Services have received correspondence from the Northern Territory Conservation Commission expressing interest in certain buildings over there.

In relation to Cape Hotham, the only thing there is an unmanned lighthouse and a small storage area. I believe that the Department of Administrative Services have not given any indications that they are going to get rid of it.

Mrs O'NEIL (Fannie Bay): Mr Speaker, the member for Port Darwin had some very admirable things to say about funding voluntary organisations in our community. He referred particularly to Tracy Lodge as an organisation which needs more definite ongoing funding. I would like to talk this afternoon about an organisation in Darwin whose problems are exactly the opposite. Its problem is not one of ongoing funding but of capital funding. I refer to the Darwin Family Centres Incorporated.

This is a non-profit community based group which runs both the Family Day Care system and also a number of family centres at Marrara, Nightcliff, Parap and Wanguri. The family centres, sometimes known as creches, and the Family

Day Care system are partially funded by the Office of Child Care under the honourable Senator Dame Margaret Guilfoyle's department. It only receives part of its funding from the Office of Child Care. The rest of its money for its ongoing operation is derived from parent fund-raising mechanisms and fees. The problem which this very admirable community-based organisation faces is that of obtaining money to provide buildings in which it can operate. As I said, it operates 4 creches in Darwin. It is about the creches that I would like to talk first.

They receive from the office of Child Care about 30% of the salaries of their staff. All the rest of the money is raised by the parents who run the organisations. Because of the limited government assistance they receive from the federal government, they are able to provide for extra community needs such as assistance to parents on low incomes, some occasional care, care for handicapped children and service areas in the community which are uneconomic for commercial child care centres. Indeed, for this reason, they receive the funding from the federal government. Nevertheless, in order to provide this care, for which there is a very great demand, they require buildings from which to operate the child care centres. In Darwin, they have a particular need for 2 new centres. The previous Minister for Community Development, after negotiating with this group, allocated \$275,000 to the Corporation of the City of Darwin.

The history of that allocation is as follows. The family centres approached the Northern Territory government about possible funding to replace the creche at Nightcliff which is in a demountable that is about to fall to pieces and also to replace the one at Casuarina, an area where there is a large number of children and a very great need and where there had earlier been a creche in temporary buildings which had been removed. The family centres were told to obtain sketches and costing for the building of Nightcliff. The centres did this and, on 8 March 1979, obtained a quote from Civil and Civic of \$137,000 for a centre to cater for 40 children. This quote, which was amended slightly but not significantly, was forwarded to the Department of Community Development in May 1979. In that month, a meeting was held between the city corporation, the Department of Community Development, the family centres' representative and the architect. The department decided to hand over the money for construction to the corporation and gave management responsibility to the Darwin Family Centres. \$275,000 was handed over in June 1979. I can remember the then minister, the member for Casuarina, making a press statement to that effect. In July 1979, however, the Corporation of the City of Darwin announced a change in conditions. It said that the YWCA would operate the Casuarina one and the Darwin Family Centres would operate the Nightcliff one. The Chief Minister supported calls by the family centres at that time for the initial conditions set by the Minister for Community Development to be maintained and, after many hassles, the city corporation finally agreed to revert to the initial conditions set down by the minister.

We thought those buildings finally would go ahead. On 16 January 1980, project management had been given to Venturin with no costs or designs decided upon despite the great amount of work that had earlier been done by Civil and Civic at the request of the department. A letter was sent to one of the officers of the department from the family centres outlining its concern at the subsequent escalation of costs to \$361,000 and, subsequently, to \$449,000 at the end of May 1980. At that stage, nearly 12 months after the original money had been allocated on fair estimates, Venturin withdrew and Civil and Civic were back in again. They looked at their original design and, after 12 months, the cost of building those 2 centres had escalated to \$310,000. Of course, the city council only has the \$275,000 which was originally allocated. I am told that the basic groundwork which had commenced on the Nightcliff centre has now

ceased because Civil and Civic know that the council does not have that extra money.

The only reason that the council does not have that extra money is because the minister did not stick to his commitment that the Darwin Family Centres would be the operating body and because the Darwin city council spent 6 to 8 months hassling about who the contractors would be and allowing the costs to escalate. If the original commitment had been stuck to, those buildings would now be completed and would be providing child care for families in Darwin. They are not operating in the same sense as commercial centres operate but provide additionally for single parents who might have financial problems, handicapped people and others. It is not surprising that Darwin Family Centres are more than a little concerned. I hope the new Minister for Community Development, who said only yesterday that governments are about land and money, and we know the organisations have the land, will find the money so that those 2 centres can go ahead.

Darwin Family Centres have even more problems. It is pretty amazing when you think that it is exactly the sort of community-based organisation that one would think any government would want to support. It also runs the Family Day Care system. The Family Day Care system is also supported by the Office of Child Care. It is a system whereby child care takes place in the home of registered minders who are appropriately supervised by well-qualified people. The scheme provides playing equipment of good quality and matches children and families appropriately. For example, it is able to provide special facilities for children of different ethnic backgrounds so that they are cared for by people who speak their language. It provides those extra things in the community which private child care systems, no matter how good, and many of them are very good, are unable to do and remain economically viable. It provides after-hours care which is most essential for shift-workers.

You would think that this is exactly the sort of organisation which would receive the support of both our federal and Territory governments. The Family Day Care system also needs offices from which to operate. At the moment, they have 14 staff, not all full-time, operating in Darwin. They operate out of 2 tiny offices in Parap. There was the suggestion put forward at one stage that they would be given a building from which to operate on the land where the Casuarina Family Centre is to be built. It would be most appropriate that they would be in the same place. There would be an advantage in having it in that area in which there is such a great need for child care. It was thought that, under a previous minister, some commitment came from the Department of Community Development that the \$80,000 or \$90,000 that was needed would eventually be provided, perhaps in this budget. I doubt very much that it has been provided. We are not talking about ongoing funding; we are talking about capital funding to enable these organisations, which are otherwise independent financially of the Northern Territory government and which provide services for the Northern Territory government, to provide those services.

The sort of services that they provide for the Northern Territory government include emergency care for young children. Once upon a time in Darwin, we had Dundas House which looked after children requiring short-term care by the department. The first organisation that the department approaches when it wants to find temporary care for a child is Darwin Family Centres yet we have not seen that this government is prepared to provide basic and capital funding so that they can have buildings from which to operate. I think that is shameful. I hope the new minister, who thinks government is about lands and money, also thinks that government is about people now that he is the Minister for Community Development and can find his way clear to sort out this problem so that these organisations can continue.

The Family Day Care system is also having problems with the federal government. In the presence of a number of people, the honourable federal minister indicated in Darwin last year that it would receive funding to expand the number of children in the system in Darwin. That money has not arrived. As a result of the undertaking from the minister that it would get that extra funding and under very great pressure to provide services to the community, this organisation expanded the number of children it is caring for. There are actually 416 of them. Unless that money comes from the federal government fairly soon or there is an undertaking that it will arrive, there are 116 children in Darwin who will have nowhere to go and their parents will have nowhere to send them. I hope that all honourable members, particularly members of the government and the new Minister for Community Development, will exert such pressure as can be exerted on the federal minister, Senator Guilfoyle, to ensure that that money arrives in Darwin so that this excellent community organisation can continue its work.

It simply is not true that the private sector can provide the sort of services that this organisation provides. I cannot repeat that too often. There are many excellent child-minding centres in Darwin as there are in many other areas of the Northern Territory. They cannot economically provide that emergency care, that casual care, that assistance to under-privileged families, that extra assistance that handicapped children require, and still make a profit. They should not be expected to. It is the legitimate function of a caring government to ensure that that happens and to support community organisations which are prepared to undertake that onerous task.

Every year, we have Universal Children's Week and Universal Children's Day. Before this Assembly sits again, that will have passed because it is always the fourth week in October. The theme this year around Australia is 'Children in the 80s - the future can be better than the past'. I certainly hope that, before we sit again in November, this problem is overcome so that the future of our children in the Northern Territory will be better than it looks at the moment.

One other matter I wanted to raise in the adjournment is in response to an answer that the Minister for Health gave to the honourable member for Sanderson yesterday. She asked him once again, as I have asked him in the past, about people being told when they attend the hospital in Darwin and perhaps in other places in the Northern Territory, 'Do not come to outpatients. Do not come to the hospital. Go to a private doctor'. The minister says he does not know anything about it and I say the minister is deceiving the Assembly. He is not telling the truth. He knows that is happening; he knows that is the policy of the hospital. That is what they tell people. When they talk to me or somebody like me, they always say, 'We are not just directing them to private; we also suggest that they might go to the community health clinics'.

We can also see that the policy of this government is not to provide community health clinic services anymore if it can help it. As the honourable member for Nightcliff pointed out earlier this afternoon, the Dripstone Community Health Centre - on which work started before the cyclone and for which money was allocated in last year's budget - has now ceased to exist. There is no mention of it in the capital works program and it is apparently not going to proceed. Clearly, the intention of the government is to direct people for primary health care out of hospitals and to the private practitioners. If that is the policy of the government, the minister ought to have the guts to get up and say so. I am sick and tired of this Assembly seeing me and other members address questions to the Minister for Health and him not answering them. I hope that next time we assemble, or even before, he has the courage to say what his policies are.

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH (Tiwi): Mr Speaker, I would like to say a few words about a reply to a question I received yesterday from the honourable Minister for Transport and Works. My question was in relation to fire services in the rural area. I asked what was happening about the proposed 19-mile fire station and the honourable minister said it was due for completion in May 1981. When the people in the rural area know this, they will be very pleased. I think the members of the fire brigade will be very pleased also because, until adequate fire services such as the proposed 2-bay fire station are provided for the rural area, the people who live there will feel very unsafe and the firemen themselves will feel very frustrated by not being able to do the job because of circumstances. I have spoken of this on a number of occasions and I will continue to speak about the lack of fire services in the rural area until I actually see this fire station with my own eyes.

An unfortunate incident makes me speak about the lack of fire services in the rural area. I think it was 4 weeks ago that a fire occurred in a house at McMinns Lagoon. Two fire brigade vehicles were on the site. It happened late one afternoon when somebody was cooking in the kitchen. The fire brigade arrived 20 to 25 minutes later. It seemed a long time to the people who were waiting but, considering the distance they had to travel, it was a pretty good attendance. I would like to say that, after 20 to 25 minutes, there was not much left of that house. In fact, I went around to see the house the next morning and to see the people who used to live in it and their family. The roof had collapsed, there was no wood left in the house and it had been reduced to charcoal. The people salvaged only a few dishes, part of a crockpot and some First World War medals.

This points out the lack of fire services that exist in the rural area to cope with emergencies. With the best will in the world, the firemen and many others have spoken to me. One rang me up before this sittings and asked me again to say that there is a lack of fire services in the rural area. These men are one of the best groups of blokes in the Northern Territory as are the bushfires men and the police. They are hard working, they are confident, they are very helpful in times of emergency and they handle people in a kind and cheerful way.

I would like to touch briefly on a few points, which I have raised before, connected with the fire services. I would like to keep them in front of honourable members of this House until we get adequate fire services in the rural area. Since 1974, there has not been much change in the complement of the fire brigade. I cannot speak for the whole of the Northern Territory but certainly for the Top End. If anything, there has been a downgrading of services. There were 4 stations in 1974 but there are only 2½ stations now. The half station would be the one that is operating at the 14-mile. It is operated by men who work certain overtime shifts. They do the job to the best of their ability but, again, they are not operating under the best conditions. There have been 2 volunteer fire groups drawn from the rural area: one at Noonamah and one at McMinn's. The one at McMinn's is not going properly yet because it is associated partly with the progress association group there and has not completely formalised its work as a volunteer fire group. Whilst realising that, from the government's point of view and the public's point of view, it is very good to have the general public realising that there is a need in the community and getting off their backs and doing something for themselves, it also points out the lack of official services that are extended to the people in the rural area.

I will not labour the point any further, Mr Deputy Speaker. Seeing is believing and I look forward very much to seeing the completion of this fire station at the 19-mile in May 1981. I sincerely hope that May 1981 is a firm

date because, in my view, talk of this fire station has been going on for 4 years. Until the minister gave me that answer, it looked like a 'gonna' job. It is distinct from the police station which is planned for the 19-mile because consideration was initially given to that at the beginning of this year. The date for completion will be January next year.

The second subject on which I would like to speak is perhaps a small matter but it is very important to some people. While the government has to make certain regulations for certain situations, I do not think a blanket consideration should be given to all situations because there are often exceptions to be considered. There was a caravan fire in the rural area last year in which one little kiddie was burnt. The fireman who found the child's body in the caravan still thinks about this situation. Although it is part of his job, unfortunately, he still thinks about it and he also thinks that it might not have happened if there had been a bit more forward planning.

The matter that I am coming to could also concern the death of a child. I understand - I think my information is correct - that school buses do not pick up children within 1.6 kilometres of a school. The Howard Springs School is in Whitewood Road. Between the Howard Springs Caravan Park and the Howard Springs School there is a rather dangerous stretch of road on which some young children and some pre-school children have to walk. The parents are very disturbed, not by the distance the children have to walk but by the dangers which they could encounter on that walk to school. The part of Whitewood Road that I am referring to crosses a swamp. When the swamp is filled, there is 8 feet of water on either side of the road. The children are usually on the road before and after school. School buses are also on the road at that time taking children further away from school. There is other traffic on the road at that time, mainly parents picking up or dropping off children at school. At those particular times in the morning and afternoon, there is more traffic on the road and especially across this causeway. I have spoken about the condition of the pavement on the causeway and a bit of patchwork was done on it. When the children are walking on this road, they have about 3 feet on either side between the pavement of the road and where the traffic travels legitimately. When the water is in the swamp - 8 feet deep on either side - I do not consider it to be safe for young children to be walking. They would only have to trip once and they could go under the wheels of a car.

Having had a few children myself, I realise that children have to learn to be a little independent. But it takes a while for a child to grow and I think it is only fair to say that most parents realise this. They also realise that the child is a human being and is part of a family. They want maximum care and attention given to their children, not only by themselves but by the authorities. One might ask why parents cannot drive the children to school themselves. Most of the people who stay at the Howard Springs Caravan Park and around there are one-car families. They are not wealthy people in the rural area; they are mostly one-car families and the car has usually taken the breadwinner to work so that there is no car available to take the child to school. Also, they are young families and, in most of these families, there are very young children who are pushed around in prams. It would be highly undesirable to add a mother plus a pram or a pusher plus young children to the traffic across this highway. I have contacted the Department of Education about this very upsetting anomaly and I will be doing something further to see if it can be remedied.

Ms D'ROZARIO (Sanderson): Mr Deputy Speaker, most people in the Darwin area would have read with some regret of the passing on of Granny Lum Loy, that dear lady who was a great identity in the Top End for the best part of this century. I would like to extend my sympathy to the members of her family and

indeed to the Chinese community of Darwin amongst whom she was a very honoured and respected member.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the honourable Minister for Transport and Works for his reply to my question on lighthouse reserves in the Top End. The reason why I asked this question is that recently the Departments of Transport and Administrative Services decided that many of the lighthouse structures on the Australian coastline are no longer necessary for their needs and would be auctioned to the public. Amongst these are many fine buildings, including the original lighthouse buildings which have original lighting mechanisms that are still in very good order. Of course, technology has caught up with even this aspect of life and the Department of Transport is progressively installing automatic devices which would do the same work without the traditional lighthouse keeper.

This particular proposal irritates me somewhat because I would like to see the original lighthouses turned over to the National Trust in the various states and the Territory. People might say that they are only lighthouses after all and ask what harm there is in their being auctioned to persons who look forward to the romantic lifestyle. I must say that most of the structures I mentioned are quite historical in their own right. There is a particular style of architecture that we find in our lighthouses and, if those structures and lighting mechanisms could talk, there would be many a tale of our maritime history that could be told. I commend the Conservation Commission for making the approach to take over the care and management of the structures. I for one would like to see them classified by the National Trust and made available for those people who have particular interest in maritime history or that particular architectural style.

Yesterday, I asked a question about travel by the unemployed on public transport. I was pleased to hear in the response by the Minister for Community Development that there was also a further option of free public transport for all patrons of the bus systems in Darwin and in Alice Springs. Reference was made earlier about what has been ridiculed in the past being acceptable today. At least as long ago as 1973, when I proposed at public forums that there be free transport on public transport for persons who wish to avail themselves of that service, I was roundly ridiculed because the general principle has always been that we must recover some of the cost of service. What is often forgotten is that the administration of the recovery far exceeds what could reasonably be expected in revenue. I am pleased to hear that there might well be the option of free public transport in Darwin and Alice Springs. I certainly would commend that particular scheme.

While I am talking about public transport, I might say that I was amazed to see the introduction of articulated buses in Darwin streets. I have no quarrel with the design of these particular vehicles or the routes on which they travel. I find them quite attractive but I was amazed that the government sought to introduce larger vehicles on public transport routes instead of reducing the size of the vehicles and perhaps increasing their frequency. What we find wherever we look at public transport is that at off-peak hours it is a completely uneconomical service. If the size of the vehicles had been reduced and their frequency increased during the peak hours, travel would have been much more comfortable and, at off-peak hours, they would not have been carrying such an unused capacity. Anyway, we have this articulated vehicle and it is certainly a sight around Darwin streets and is much commented upon as well.

I address the next matter to the honourable Minister for Transport and Works because I hope that he will battle for that sector of the labour force that is affected by this proposal. I am referring to the proposal by the federal Minister for Transport, Mr Hunt, to more or less compel all state and territory governments, who participate in the roads grants arrangements, to do away with the use of day labour and to use private contractors. By any standards, private contractors do reasonably well out of the government's road building programs and certainly I would not say that, because there was no day labour, a particular proposal ought not to proceed. The sensible thing to do would be to get the project moving and, if there were no day labour, then the project ought to be undertaken by private contractors.

The federal minister's intention is almost one of compulsion. He has written to all state roads ministers in the following terms:

The federal government will be seeking to ensure that maximum use is made of private contractors in the construction of national roads. This is an objective which the government intends to pursue vigorously and the ways and means of achieving this objective is a matter which I suggest should be discussed in the proposed review of the roads arrangements to be undertaken over the next 12 months as agreed by the Australian Transport Advisory Council. As a preliminary to this review and so that I have a clearer picture of the position as now outlined, I have asked my officers, during their discussions with your officers leading to the approval of the national roads programs, to make inquiries on the extent to which private contractors are intended to be used this year. My government is working on the basis that, when the legislation is amended, this is one area that may need to be amended to give full effect to our intentions.

It is really the final paragraph of that letter that concerns me because it is not a matter of choice on the part of state governments but a matter of compulsion. The clear indication of this letter is that the federal minister intends to amend the relevant legislation in order to give effect to this intention that private contractors will be used exclusively on the construction of national roads. We have seen a trend over the last few years of a diminishing contribution of day labour to road construction. We have reached a stage where not many of the day labour force of the Department of Transport and Works are engaged on road construction. Nevertheless, I think that this particular proposal of the federal minister threatens these men's jobs. I would ask the honourable minister to go into battle for these gentlemen at the next Transport Advisory Council. They do require these jobs and we require them to be there. If he is simply going to back down under this threatening, bullying tactic of the honourable Minister for Transport in the federal government, then he will be selling these men's jobs down the drain. I ask him to register his strong protest at any compulsion to use private contractors.

Mr DOOLAN (Victoria River): Mr Speaker, I would like just to bring to the attention of the Minister for Transport and Works the price of diesel fuel in the Territory. It is of vital interest to people in the country who use diesel fuel in pumps and for lighting plants. My understanding is that to produce diesel requires a far simpler refining process. I can see no reason why diesel should cost any more in transport than petrol and we are encouraged to use diesel because it causes less pollution. It may come out of the exhaust looking a lot blacker but it precipitates and goes to the ground and does not mix in the atmosphere.

I rang 2 different garage proprietors in Darwin and one quoted diesel fuel and super petrol at exactly the same price - that was BP Bagot. At Shell Airport Gates, diesel fuel is more expensive than super grade petrol. I would ask him to approach the federal Minister for Transport because I think it is quite unfair. One pretty stupid piece of logic that was advanced to me was that you can drive a lot further on diesel. That is quite immaterial; it does not matter a damn. I can see no reason why it could possibly cost more to transport.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arnhem): My Deputy Speaker, the honourable member for Fannie Bay talked earlier this afternoon about ministers who do not keep their commitments. An incident occurred this morning that would have to take first prize as being the most despicable breaking of an absolute commitment given by a minister of this government since self-government. Of course, the honourable Minister for Education knows perfectly well that I am referring to him.

On 30 April this year, the honourable Minister for Education seriously misled this House. As a consequence of misleading this House, he also misled the constituents of my electorate, the parents who send their children to Dhupuma College which, in the most appalling manner, was closed summarily, without prior notice, this morning. Honourable members would recall that, on 30 April this year, the Minister for Education made a ministerial statement in this House in connection with Dhupuma College. I would not have to remind any member of this House the status which should be accorded to ministerial statements in this House.

The minister knows as well as I do the history of Dhupuma College. There have been doubts about its continuing role as a site for educational services for Aboriginal children because of the continuing deterioration of the buildings and the facilities. As a result, the Department of Education sent a team of people to visit all of the communities whose children attend that college and to consult with them in a very proper and a commendable manner - and I commended it at the time - in relation to their feelings about the closure of Dhupuma College. In fact, I attended in 2 communities with the officers concerned. The feelings of people were forthright and unanimous as the minister well knows. Every single community consulted said emphatically that it wanted Dhupuma to remain open and stated - and the department has this on file - the reasons why. I do not have time to go into that this afternoon.

The minister made a ministerial statement in April this year. Of course, I will not be able to quote all of it: 'Mr Speaker, since the Northern Territory government took over responsibility for education last year, a constant concern has been Dhupuma College'. The minister went on to say: 'The college will be rebuilt on its present site in 2 stages with detailed planning for this reconstruction to commence immediately. This will mean the first intake of students into the new college facilities will occur at the beginning of the 1983 school year. I believe members would agree that there are some short-term needs at the college which are already overdue. The most pressing need is to improve staff accommodation and I take the slightly unusual step of committing the government, even before budgetary considerations, to providing on-site accommodation facilities for teachers in the next financial year'. I repeat those words: 'I commit the government'. 'The government will provide funds for the purpose of maintaining and, where necessary, improving student accommodation and I mean that to include the maintenance and improvement of all learning accommodation at the college'.

The minister went on to say: 'An important part of the redevelopment of Dhupuma College must involve the communities from which students come. In

that regard, I can assure honourable members that the community leaders from surrounding areas will be consulted on the major decisions on the college's future'. That was not only a categorical undertaking in a ministerial statement that the college would be rebuilt in 2 stages but an undertaking to the Aboriginal people that nothing would happen to affect the future of Dhupuma College without further consultation with them.

It is no news to anybody now but Dhupuma College was closed by this government this morning. A large team of officers, without prior notice, called an emergency meeting this morning of the staff of the college and announced that the college will be closed. There will be no Dhupuma College after this term. The government did this purely, of course, for political expediency. No notice was given at all to the students, their parents or the staff of the college because it was going to be obvious when there was no mention of Dhupuma College in the budget papers that were tabled this morning. That is despite the minister's absolute commitment by ministerial statement earlier in the year that that college would be rebuilt. Of course, the children are not even going to be allowed to finish their school year at Dhupuma College - a despicable act on the part of the Minister for Education.

The reason is that the minister knows full well what the reaction from Aboriginal communities would be to the proposal to close Dhupuma College. He can anticipate and does anticipate the reaction that this broken promise of his will provoke in Aboriginal Communities. So it is going to be a fait accompli - the usual bulldozer style of his government. It is something which we have become used to seeing over the last 3 years. It will close the college, it will call an emergency meeting of the teachers concerned and it will tell them that there is going to be no Dhupuma College within 24 hours. The kids will not be allowed to finish their school year because the minister does not want the embarrassment of Dhupuma College running for another term with further protestations that it should remain open. It is a viable college with people fighting to maintain it at Nhulunbuy, so he closed it immediately. Don't mind the dislocation that this is going to cause to the lives of the teachers whom he showed scant consideration for; don't worry about the dislocation this is going to cause to the Aboriginal children who go to that college. They cannot even finish their school year.

It is more important for political expediency to avoid any further embarrassment for him and his government of having a college in its dying stages over the final term with people being able to put up a fight to try to hold him to the promise that he made in this House in April this year. It is a fairly despicable piece of work on behalf of the honourable Minister for Education and says much for his ministerial statements. He has given notice to every member of this House and to my constituents that nothing the minister says, either inside or outside this House, is worth 2 bob. Nobody can pay any attention to anything the minister says in future.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am well aware of the financial problems of the continued existence of Dhupuma College - as is the minister. I am not aware of any major change in that particular situation since April this year. I am perfectly well aware of the per capita comparisons that can be made and have been made between Dhupuma College, Kormilda College and Geelong Grammar - as the minister has done already today. The minister knew that 12 months ago, the Department of Education has known it for years and we have all known it for years. But despite having all of that information at his disposal, the minister saw fit to commit his government in a ministerial statement in April this year to a firm plan to rebuild in 2 stages Dhupuma College and to consult Aboriginal people before any further moves were made as to its future etc. We have seen this morning how much promises of this government and, in particular, that minister are worth.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to advise the government to stop wasting its money. Rather, stop wasting the taxpayer's money on the employment of people in Aboriginal liaison units. Stop wasting taxpayer's money in the employment of any number of ministerial officers to do with Aboriginal liaison because the honourable Minister for Education has just demonstrated in the clearest possible way why this government has no credibility whatever with Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people cannot believe anything that this government tells them even when it is made in the Legislative Assembly by a minister in charge of a particular department.

Now, you can only have 2 conclusions to draw from, only 2. Firstly, the minister knew when he made this statement that it was dishonest - a very detailed statement it was, I might add. I went on to commend him for making it. I said: 'Mr Speaker, the opposition welcomes the absolutely categorical statement of the Minister for Education about the future of Dhupuma College...' I took a great deal of pleasure in photocopying the minister's statement and sending it across my electorate - poor fool me. I will know better than to do that in future. The minister could only have been totally dishonest when he made that statement, knowing he was going to renege on it, or unbelievably incompetent. Either way, either dishonest or incompetent, the minister should resign as Minister for Education. There is not the slightest doubt about that. This was not a passing comment the minister made in the House; it was a categorical assurance in the form of a ministerial statement with details as to what was going to happen at Dhupuma College. It was a promise that has been absolutely broken in the most disgraceful manner. There was no prior notice to the students and no prior notice to the staff. A meeting was convened this morning and Dhupuma College was closed today. 'You're out on your ear, you've got the option if you want it of going to Kormilda College'.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I say again that this government is wasting its money on Aboriginal liaison units; wasting its money on any further attempt whatever to better the liaison between the government and Aboriginal people. It is a fairly disgraceful effort. It is a pretty momentous decision to break absolute commitments to Aboriginal people. There is no doubt whatever as to why the people in my electorate cannot believe anything this government tells them.

I must say that this decision has upset me enormously because I had a lot of faith in the Minister for Education. I had great pleasure in photocopying his ministerial statement and sending dozens of copies to councils and to parents of the kids who I knew were particularly concerned about that college. I am extremely upset about seeing such a categorical assurance over a very major work - to quote the minister again, 'I commit the government' - treated in such a totally cavalier manner. I do not believe, knowing the respect that the minister has for the conventions of Parliament and the importance that ministerial responsibility has, that he was knowingly dishonest when he made that statement. I can only believe that the minister did not do his homework when he made that statement and is therefore unbelievably incompetent. In any case, Mr Deputy Speaker, he should resign.

Mr ROBERTSON (Gillen): Mr Speaker, this certainly does require me to say a few words. It is quite true, as was recorded in Hansard, that I made a statement here in April indicating the government's intention at that time to rebuild Dhupuma College on its present location. As the honourable member for Arnhem knows, I do regard very seriously the responsibility attaching to a minister making a ministerial statement of that kind. However, there is a greater responsibility on a minister and that is one of good government.

Now, the honourable member can say that a Minister for Education ought to know in depth every figure pertaining to those functions within his portfolio. Nonetheless, in April this year I had had the function of education for only a very brief time indeed. We knew and he knew that there was an extremely expensive program going on at Dhupuma College. I must say that I was always firmly of the view, as every statement I have ever made has indicated, that it was the nature of the beast, if you like, that caused those enormous costs. I did not know until very late in the period last year that, in order to run an institution like that in an extremely isolated location, it was necessary to maintain a pupil-staff ratio of 2 to 1. I do not think it reasonable that I could know every detail of that portfolio at that time. I did not know that the figures were pertaining only to the general recurrent salaries and normal administration and did not take into account the additional cost of capital commitment repairs and maintenance, which brings the figures up to a degree of staggering proportions. The figures are as follows. In straight recurrent wages and so on per student, per year for Dhupuma College, it costs about \$10,800 per student. The average cost of a primary and immediately post-primary student in the Northern Territory is less than \$2000. Let us recognise the fact it is a residential college. Let us look at Geelong Grammar which the honourable member mentioned. Mr Deputy Speaker, you could send every student from Dhupuma College to Geelong Grammar by first-class return airfare, to Australia's most expensive and sophisticated college, and pocket \$3000 per student at the end of the year. I owe something to the general taxpayer of this country in addition to the Aboriginal people who, I know, are going to be hurt by this unavoidable decision. We have a responsibility for good government throughout.

The reality is that Kormilda College and Yirara College are, leaving aside the air fares, still and will still remain the most expensive colleges in Australia. There is something significant there in that they are not utilised to the full. Of course, by increasing the number, you could use them to the full and bring down the per capita cost to a more reasonable level. This is not to be taken as any sort of threat to those institutions. They are quite a different ball game altogether.

The honourable member referred to a survey done approximately 18 months ago and he talks about honesty in this place. He knows and his colleagues know, contrary to what he just stated here, that every community in his own electorate did not say it wanted to go to Dhupuma College. What he said was untrue. How dare he talk about honesty. I have the information in front of me to which the honourable member referred to. The honourable member stated that, unanimously and without reservation, all of the communities said they wanted their students to go to Dhupuma. That is not so. This information came from departmental offices.

There are only 2 communities on this list of 10 which gave unreserved support to Dhupuma College. If he did his homework, the honourable member would be very well aware that there were 18 students and their families on Elcho Island who were very disappointed because of the decision taken to zone the 2 residential colleges in the Northern region. The Commonwealth was concerned about its costs and it tried to maximise the use of Dhupuma College by zoning the area. Elcho had to send its children to Dhupuma if it wanted to send them anywhere. Eighteen students nonetheless applied to go to Kormilda. That was hardly what one would call a unanimous resolution to go to Dhupuma.

Milingimbi has mixed feelings about residential colleges generally. The community is divided on the issue. There are strong feelings that the department should develop local secondary courses. There was some support for attending Kormilda. Others desired to see Dhupuma redeveloped on the current site.

This is all factual; I am not hiding anything. In 1979, they had the opportunity of choosing either college and 50% at Milingimbi chose Kormilda College. This was not just reflection or the honourable member's version of reflection; they actually applied to go to another college but, because of zoning, were unable to.

The point I am trying to make is that the majority of these students will now welcome the opportunity of being able to go to Kormilda College. Admittedly, there will be many people who will be disappointed in not having the opportunity to go to Dhupuma and I accept that. Of course there will be. We know the very long-standing appreciation that the people in the Roper River area have for Dhupuma. Honourable members would also be well aware that Umbakumba has a very strong desire to send its students to Dhupuma College. That is 2 out of 10 yet the honourable member said that all the communities wanted to go to Dhupuma.

As for my concern in this matter, it would be as good a method as any to simply read the letter of instruction that I felt duty bound to send to the secretary of my department having regard to the astronomical costs:

As you are aware, the government has been examining its objectives and the effectiveness with which public funds are being utilised in achieving those objectives.

Of course, this is something we are still doing: examining where we are going and what sort of value the taxpayer is getting for his money. We are determined to achieve that value for money and, at the same time, keep our program going. The letter continues:

As you would also be aware, I have been concerned for some time about the costs associated with operating Dhupuma College, including the high maintenance bill required for the present run-down facilities. It was with this in mind that I announced the proposal to rebuild the college on its present site. The in-depth review of the government's expenditure has, however, revealed that the cost of running the college, not including capital or repair costs, amounts to \$10,800 per student per year. A new facility at Dhupuma would not reduce these costs. The per capita costs are approximately \$3,500 above those at Kormilda College where cost per student would be reduced even further if the institution was fully utilised which it is not at present.

Bearing in mind that we have spare capacity at Kormilda College and the ability to provide post-primary education at selected locations, the massive burden of continuing to operate Dhupuma will not, in my view, be any longer tolerated by the taxpayer. I therefore ask you, whilst doing everything possible to minimise destruction to students' progress, to close Dhupuma at the end of this term. You will please advise me as soon as possible as to how you would provide the continuing education of the students affected. I would also expect advice as to the re-employment of permanent staff and any proposals for the possible re-employment of temporary staff.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am very concerned about providing for the future education of the children affected by this unavoidable decision. It would not just border on crass irresponsibility in financial management to have allowed this situation to continue; it would have probably been the sort of thing that would have turned the entire population of the Territory away from us.

Mr ISAACS (Millner): Mr Speaker, conservative governments around Australia have shown that, while they appear to be in favour of the establishment and in favour of convention, they are the first and the only party to tear conventions up when it suits them. I do not need to detail the history of conservative governments throughout Australia to establish that point. The Country Liberal Party in the Northern Territory, although it claims to be an independent party of the Northern Territory, fits very nicely and snugly into the milieu of conservative government throughout Australia's history.

The minister seems to think that he can discuss the matter of Kormilda College in a vacuum. If the statement that he made now was the statement he had made on 30 April, I suppose we could have listened to it and accepted that it would have been crassly irresponsible and stupid to have kept the college open. I think he would have been criticised for it. I am sure the member for Arnhem and the now member for Nhulunbuy would have criticised him for it, as I would have because I have made statements about it as well. Nonetheless, it would have been a decision taken and it would have been an honest decision. The minister knew, as we did not know, that there was an election to be announced about 8 days after that statement. Perhaps that may have influenced the statement. The member for Arnhem has been a bit more charitable to the minister than perhaps I might be.

The fact is that the minister cries poor. He says, 'Give us a break. This was April 1980 and I had only just been given responsibility for education'. The minister was given responsibility for education on 1 January 1979. Although education had not then been transferred, he was relieved of the onerous duties of responsibility for community development. These were handed over to the Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation at the time, now the Minister for Transport and Works.

The minister knew about Dhupuma and, in fact, as the member for Arnhem says, it has a long and tragic history. In fact, it was the then federal Minister for Education, Senator Carrick, who was given the responsibility for what would happen about Dhupuma. We know that his department here urged him to close it and we applauded at the time the strong representations and protestations made by our current Minister for Education who, at that time, had liaison responsibilities for education. I am sure that it was a result of his actions that Senator Carrick did not close Dhupuma College. So it is not new.

On 30 April this year, after much agitation by the various communities and after consideration of a review that had been undertaken by the Territory government, the minister gave a firm and complete commitment. The figure of \$10,000 that he has trotted out today is not new. In fact, I understood the figure to be slightly higher. I thought the cost was something in the order of \$12,000 or \$13,000. Be that as it may, we are not cavilling about that.

As the member for Arnhem says, nothing has changed between 30 April and 21 August. Certainly, there has been nothing new with regard to Dhupuma College but there has been with regard to this Legislative Assembly. It is no longer the Second Legislative Assembly, it is the Third Legislative Assembly. The minister made a statement on 30 April regarding Dhupuma College. He now says that the reasons which he gave then - and which we thought were good reasons even to the point where the member for Arnhem let his electorate know what the minister had said - were, to use his own words, 'crass irresponsibility and stupidity'. Nothing has changed since the decision of 30 April except that there has been an election. The minister now believes that the college should not continue.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I think that is a tragedy because I share the same view of the minister's attitude to parliament as the member for Arnhem does. I think that he has shown that; I do not dispute that. His words are the ones, I believe, which will ring long and hard in this parliament, not just about him but about other ministers. He says that, if the college were to remain open, it would be crass irresponsibility and stupidity. Those were his words and that was his decision on 30 April.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.

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