

## PART II

### THE QUESTION PAPER

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

Numerical references are to Question Paper page numbers.

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

**23 February 1988**

**20. Staffing of Giles House**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

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

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

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

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

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

Mr SMITH to MINISTER FOR TOURISM

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

**17 May 1988**

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

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

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

2. For what purpose was each request made.

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

Mr BELL to TREASURER

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Mr BELL to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

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

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

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

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

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

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

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TOURISM

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

**62. Hungerford Refrigeration Pty Ltd**

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

1. Did the Territory Insurance Office pay outstanding tax bills incurred by Hungerford Refrigeration or Rupert Hungerford; if so -
  - (a) were the payments for company tax;
  - (b) group tax; or
  - (c) an individual's income tax.
2. Is the TIO's investment in Hungerford Refrigeration secured; if so -
  - (a) in what ways is it secured; and
  - (b) what assets is it secured against.
3. Who first identified Hungerford Refrigeration as a prospect for investment in the Northern Territory.

4. Who made the first approach to Hungerford Refrigeration for it to transfer operations to the Trade Development Zone.
5. Why did the directors of Hungerford refuse to provide directors' guarantees to meet any debts incurred by the company.
6. What were the full terms agreed for the transfer of Hungerford Refrigeration to the Trade Development Zone.
7. What departmental evaluations were made of the Hungerford Refrigeration company; its prospects, its projects and its products.
8. What departmental evaluations were made of the reports prepared for the TIO and the TDZ on the prospects of Hungerford Refrigeration.
9. What is the full extent of public funding (including TIO involvement) in Hungerford Refrigeration.
10. Was a directive issued by the Hungerford Refrigeration Board for the company to pursue local orders rather than export orders; if so, why was this done.

**16 August 1988**

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

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

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

**65. Darwin Private Hospital**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. How many private ward bed nights have been leased back to Royal Darwin Hospital during the last 6 months.
2. What have been the monthly occupancy rates for both the public wards and private wards during the last 6 months.
3. How much rent will Health and Life Care be paying the NT government for the land on which the new private hospital is being built.
4. How much money has the NT government contributed towards the establishment of the new private hospital.
5. If Health and Life Care sell their private hospital, will there be a breach of contract. If so, what conditions of the contract would have been contravened.

6. To what extent has the initial projected cost of the new private hospital been exceeded and supplemented by NT government expenditure.
7. What level of federal subsidy has been received during the last 6 months for the private wards.
8. What is the expected level of federal subsidy to be provided over a 12-month period for the new private hospital.
9. Will the private hospital be providing a rehabilitation service; if so -
  - (a) at what cost will it be provided to the NT government;
  - (b) how will it be made available to clients, who do not have private hospital cover; and
  - (c) how does the government intend to apply the Work Health Act provisions.
10. What arrangements have been made with doctors for -
  - (a) the provision of specialist services at the private hospital; and
  - (b) remuneration of specialist doctors for their services.
11. What cost sharing arrangements have been entered into enabling economies of scale to occur between the Royal Darwin Hospital and the private hospital for -
  - (a) ambulance services;
  - (b) pharmaceutical products;
  - (c) x-ray films and equipment; and
  - (d) laundry and catering.
12. What arrangements have been made to contract out pathology, radiology, catering and any other services to the private sector.

#### 4 October 1988

#### 66. Sentencing under Criminal Code

Mr COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

In court cases relating to slayings as heard by the Alice Springs Court since the introduction of the Criminal Code 1 January 1983 -

1. How many people have been charged with a slaying offence.
2. How many people have been convicted of -

- (a) murder;
  - (b) manslaughter;
  - (c) committing a dangerous act; and
  - (d) other.
3. What is the average head sentence imposed by the judge on the above convicted persons.
  4. What is the average actual sentence served by the above convicted persons.

**67. Treatment of Ear Infections in Schools**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What are the number and percentages of school-age children, by rural school in the Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine areas, that have:
  - (a) glue ear;
  - (b) perforated ear drums; and
  - (c) educationally significant hearing impairment.
2. How many of the schools mentioned in question 1 above have Health Workers involved in full time campaigns at the school to treat the conditions.

**68. Leased Premises**

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

1. How much space being leased by the NT government as at 1 October 1988 -
  - (a) was occupied; and
  - (b) was unoccupied.
2. What are the locations/addresses of the above leased areas.
3. In each case, what is the length of the lease.
4. What is the monthly cost of leasing those areas not occupied.
5. Are there cleaning contracts for the unoccupied leased areas; if so, what is the monthly cost of the cleaning contracts.

17 May 1988

53. **Kormilda College - Expenditure**

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

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

ANSWER

1. Following an estimate by the Department of Transport and Works in mid-1986, which recommended that restoration would cost \$2.1m, the following refurbishing and upgrading work was carried out at Kormilda College -
 

(a) teacher housing	\$ 218 000
(b) boarder accommodation	\$ 610 000
(c) classrooms	\$ 200 000
(d) landscaping	\$ 13 000
(e) other areas, including kitchen, administration, services, recreation	\$ 462 000
(f) swimming pool	\$ 73 000
	\$1 576 000



2. There are no direct arrangements to recoup moneys spent on upgrading the facilities at Kormilda. However, with an expected enrolment of 500 students by 1994, the government can reasonably expect substantial savings in the amount of per capita expenditure paid to students at Kormilda once it becomes a non-government school.
3. Provision will be made within the Department of Education's estimates for:
  - ° payment, from 1 July 1989, of recurrent per capita grants and isolated student allowances in respect of students at current rates; and for
  - ° subvention grants in 1988-89 at a similar level to 1987-88 and reducing grants from 1989-90 phasing out at the end of 1993-94 financial year. The level will be set in the 1988-89 budget.
4. The Interim Board of Governors has advised that the fee structure will be variable according to the following parameters:
  - ° the age of the student
  - ° the student's degree of isolation
  - ° whether the student is entitled to an Aboriginal Secondary Education (ABSEC) Grant or Assistance for Isolated Children (the AIC Scheme).

The Commonwealth's student assistance schemes are designed around these above criteria. The NT assistance schemes take into account the student's degree of isolation, handicap and family income.

The base level of fees for both tuition and boarding is \$6000 per annum in total, and discounts are offered so as to minimise family contribution and maximise Commonwealth and NT student assistance schemes.

5. The government has recently agreed to grant to the Interim Board of Governors a Crown lease in perpetuity over the land in question.

#### **61. Trade Development Zone**

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

1. How many letters of intent have been signed by firms indicating an intention to establish in the Trade Development Zone.
2. How many letters of intent have been translated into binding agreements to establish in the Trade Development Zone.

## ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

---

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

### ANSWER

1. 21 companies have signed Letters of Intent.
2. 6 companies have signed Primary Agreements following a Letter of Intent, with an additional company (Railex Fadelli) signing an Agreement without a Letter of Intent. Total 7 Primary Agreements.
3. Of the 7 agreements signed, 5 companies have established in the zone. In addition to these 5 companies, 1 other company is currently finalising start-up arrangements. The other is still negotiating on BMP arrangements prior to confirming start-up intentions.

4. A legal opinion from Morris Fletcher & Cross on whether or not the agreements are legally binding on the parties has been sought and obtained. In short, the opinion is that the agreements are legally binding but, for obvious commercial in-confidence reasons, I do not propose to table that response.
5. Moneys paid to Mr K.K. Yeung since 1985 in conjunction with his activities on behalf of the TDZA total \$624 127. The specific components of this amount are not appropriate for release as public information and are a matter between K.K. Yeung and the TDZA.
6. As per question 5.
7. As above.
8. As above.
9. Over the period 1986 to 30 June 1988, Mr McHenry has spent 183 days overseas and 45 days interstate.
10. In respect of Mr McHenry's overseas travel over the above period, the total cost thereof amounted to \$105 596. It is not proposed to provide a break-up of cost in respect of each trip.

Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, my question relates to the state of the Trade Development Zone and its management. Was it this year or last year that Mr Col Fuller, the former head of the department and a member of the Board of the Trade Development Zone Authority, informed him of his concerns about payments to Mr K.K. Yeung and, secondly, what action did he take as a result of the concerns raised by Mr Fuller?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in this Assembly, matters relating to the Trade Development Zone are carried by the minister responsible for the Trade Development Zone. Questions from the honourable member in relation to the Trade Development Zone generally should be directed to the appropriate minister.

Registration of Vehicles from Interstate

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer to a recent television advertising campaign pointing out the need for interstate drivers to register their vehicles after living in the Territory for 3 months or longer. Could he inform the House of the success or otherwise of this campaign?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can advise the member for Ludmilla that the campaign to encourage interstate transferees to re-register within the Northern Territory has been most successful. That campaign was based on some requirements of the Motor Vehicles Act that were implemented last year requiring that people who moved to the Northern Territory transfer, within a period of 3 months, not only their motor vehicle registrations but also their licences unless there is some good reason for the registrar to grant them a dispensation. The reason for this requirement is quite obvious. Territory roads are very expensive to maintain and there needs to be equity in regard to the third party insurance provisions in that the Territory pool of funds ought to reflect the total use of Territory roads by its citizens.

This has been a problem for some time, particularly in Alice Springs, as you know only too well, Mr Speaker. In fact, some time ago, you drew to my attention various practices of individuals and companies who were bringing fleets of vehicles to the Territory and maintaining their interstate registration for long periods. The Territory's annual registration inspection is most important, particularly in regions where vehicles are used on gravel roads which can lead to a rapid deterioration in the condition and safety of vehicles.

The television campaign has led to a substantial increase in vehicle registrations in the Territory. In the period from 1 July to 12 September, there were just over 3000 registrations in 1987 compared with 3422 this year. August is normally a very heavy registration period and there have been some 400 more registrations this August than last August. I believe these increased registrations are directly attributable to the campaign. It has been extremely successful and the Territory coffers are being appropriately filled. Territorians will no longer have to bear the burden on behalf of

companies or individuals from interstate who fail to transfer their vehicle registrations to the Territory.

Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

The Chief Minister was the minister responsible for the Trade Development Zone during the period to which this question relates. Was it this year or last year that Mr Col Fuller, the former head of the Department of Industries and Development and a member of the Board of the Trade Development Zone Authority, informed him of his concerns about payments to Mr K.K. Yeung, and what action did the minister take as a result of the concerns raised by Mr Fuller?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I rise to make this simple point. Discussions between ministers and their departmental heads or between ministers and board members of authorities which are responsible to them are obviously matters between those parties. There is no possibility of maintaining a working relationship with the public service or board members if the Leader of the Opposition is able validly to rise in this Assembly and ask whether this or that conversation occurred last week, last year or whenever.

Mr Smith: I asked when it took place. I know that it took place.

Mr PERRON: If he has some evidence that he would like to put forward, let him do so. Instead of making snide insinuations that a certain conversation took place, let him put some evidence before us. But, to expect a minister to try to maintain any sort of relationship whatsoever with the public service whilst the Leader of the Opposition has his tape-recorder in the room, which obviously is what he would like to have, is clearly nonsensical.

School Council Regulations

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Some time ago, he undertook to review the school council regulations as they apply to the makeup of those school councils. Has that review taken place and, if it is complete, what revisions will he be making to those regulations?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. Indeed, I have completed the review of the school council regulations. It has been a lengthy exercise. I have spoken to representatives of all school councils and the principals or acting principals of schools. I have spoken also to the Council of Government School Organisations and the Northern Territory Teachers Federation in relation to that review. All points put forward during the course of those discussions and the comments made by members of this Assembly have been taken on board during the formulation of my views. The regulations will be adjusted in due course.

It is interesting to note that, during the course of the review and the discussions, a number of points have been raised that we have been unable to

address as yet. In some Aboriginal communities, for example, there were some situations where the councils did not relate to the natural parents. They wanted huge councils. Two such places were Yirara College and Yirrkala. At Ludmilla Special School, there was concern also because there were insufficient parents actively involved who would be able to make up the mix required in the regulations passed in February.

One point that we will have to address at a later stage is in relation to schools which have a large enrolment of Aboriginal students. This was raised during the course of discussions with various school councils. The representation on the school councils did not reflect the large enrolment of Aboriginal students. I have left the matter with the councils at this time. I hope that, where there is a large component of Aboriginal students at a particular school, it will ask FEPPi to examine the matter and look after the interests of the Aboriginal students at that school. We will be monitoring that aspect as time goes by.

The changes are as follows. Firstly, the regulations provided that the secretary, with the Minister for Education's approval, could nominate a non-voting person to advise and assist the council. The presence of an advisory secretary's nominee on a school council is regarded as superfluous. The principal has power to discharge any role of council which may have been contemplated for the secretary's representative. I have moved therefore to abolish the position on school councils of the secretary's representatives.

The new role for the principal will be spelled out clearly in an amended regulation. The regulation establishing the position of departmental representative will be repealed. The subregulation making a head teacher an ex-officio member of council will be expanded to require him also to inform the council on education matters. I have looked also to strengthening the role of the school's principal in council affairs to ensure that the principal, when directed by the secretary, informs and advises his council of departmental policy.

The regulations also provided that representatives of certain classes of persons could be coopted on to councils. The term 'coopt' has negative connotations and, in the context of school council rules, is inappropriate. The term 'coopt' was also unclear to those who would use the regulation most. To clarify that position, the word 'invite' is to be used.

There will be changes to provisions for MLAs to be elected to councils. The MLA's term may not exceed 2 years. In the past, a fixed 2-year term was set. The new, flexible term allows the council more discretion when it extends an invitation to the MLA in the first instance.

In the past, the regulation provided for the chairpersons of school councils to be members who were (a) parents of children at that school or (b) parents of children at the school and also government school teachers or government school principals elsewhere. All of those could have been chairpersons of a particular council. The head teacher of a government school, for which the council is established, will not now chair a school council meeting other than for the purposes of electing office bearers. Head teachers who are acting head teachers from any government school will be restricted from being appointed as chairpersons of councils.

Finally, the regulations provided that a school council would not have more than one-third of its total elected membership comprised of Northern Territory Teaching Service officers, Department of Education public servants

or full-time employees of government schools. Generally, I found that there is no proven need to limit the numbers of any class of government employee on school councils, other than teachers in a school where a school council is elected. Any ceiling on membership of school councils by other government employees will now be removed, except in exceptional circumstances. Those exceptional circumstances arise when a school council proposes to undertake special functions under section 71C(1)(m) of the Education Act. Such functions relate to a school council selecting staff to perform teaching duties and, in such a case, the one-third ceiling would be extended to limit the number of teachers on the council, both teachers from the school concerned and from other schools.

In the case of the vast majority of councils, those not taking the responsibility for employing teaching staff, the following condition will apply. Of the school council membership, the number who are teachers from within that school will be limited to one-third of the total. That is the situation in most school councils. Where school councils become involved in employing staff to perform teaching duties, the government will limit the number of teaching service members on the council to not more than one-third of the total council membership. I emphasise that it will be entirely up to councils whether or not they become involved in staff selection and, indeed, a number of people to whom I have spoken during the course of this review have expressed reluctance to be involved in that area. I make it clear, however, that the decision on whether or not to be involved will be left to each school council. The government will require school councils which are not involved in that process to limit the number of members who are officers within the meaning of the Teaching Service Act employed at that school to one-third of total council membership. In many cases, councils currently make that provision. Finally, the government will remove any ceiling on the numbers of non-teaching Department of Education employees able to be elected to school councils.

The regulations are being drafted and they will be processed in the normal manner. They will be in place in ample time for the Annual General Meetings of school councils. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those people who have been involved in the review exercise. It has been a lengthy process. When I stated that I would be speaking to representatives of all school councils, I did not realise just how time-consuming that would be. It has been worth while. Many issues have come to light, issues that still have to be addressed by government. I believe the exercise has indicated the government's willingness to look at issues responsibly and take note of the concerns of the public. I hope that school councils will continue to contact me about their concerns and I will ensure that any such concerns are examined in a responsible manner.

#### Alice Springs Sewage Treatment Works

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Is it a fact that a Cabinet discussion paper, dated March 1986, recommended immediate action to rectify health problems created by the Alice Springs sewage treatment works? Secondly, is it a fact that his own department warned, in a confidential Cabinet submission, that the treatment works posed 'a very real risk of an outbreak of mosquito-borne diseases such as epidemic polyarthrititis and Australian encephalitis'? Thirdly, is it a fact that, until recently, the minister has been unable to persuade Cabinet to recognise the risks and to consider courses of action to protect the health and economic well-being of the people of Alice Springs? Finally, in view of

his performance in this matter, how does the minister justify his continued retention of the Health and Community Services portfolio?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the obvious response to the final question is that the party of the member opposite is incapable of winning government and, therefore, he has no hope of ever taking over the portfolio.

The decision on whether the sewage ponds in Alice Springs should be relocated or remain where they are is not in my area of responsibility. Matters relating to that lie with the Deputy Chief Minister. If the honourable member opposite has any questions on that subject, he might like to direct them to that minister.

My department does ensure the monitoring of mosquito numbers and oversights appropriate action in various areas throughout the Northern Territory, and Alice Springs is no exception. The Alice Springs Town Council was advised to treat the swamp area following land and air surveys recently, and aerial spraying was scheduled for Monday 26 September 1988. My department continues to monitor the area and I have no reason for concern at this stage.

#### Political Advertising on Darwin Bus Service Buses

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it true that certain federal politicians have sought to use Darwin Bus Service buses as vehicles for political advertising?

Mr Smith: What a good idea.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I hear the suggestion from the Leader of the Opposition that it is a good idea, and perhaps we can come to that point shortly. The Darwin Bus Service receives a number of representations in relation to different forms of advertising and what should or should not be displayed on our public buses. The bus service has laid down certain criteria to be followed by its advertising agent. We gave the advertising agent as much freedom as was appropriate to seek and place advertisements on the service's buses. As members would be aware, a great variety of those advertising campaigns have helped, in some ways, to brighten the appearance of buses. I refer, for example, to advertisements for Territory Tidy Towns etc.

I was a little surprised to hear that the federal member, Warren Snowdon, and his colleague in the federal parliament, Senator Bob Collins, recently approached the bus service to have some political-type advertising placed on bus service property. One of the very few preclusions that the bus service placed on advertising was in regard to religious and political matter. As the member for Sadadeen indicated, we had no problem even with condom advertising in connection with the AIDS campaign as long as it was presented appropriately. Honourable members would be aware that a most balanced approach was taken by the bus service in that regard. However, some of the suggestions that were put forward by the federal ALP representatives included slogans such as 'Labor at Work'. Can honourable members imagine a slogan 'Labor at Work' and alongside it a coloured condom advertisement relating to the AIDS program? It would be most inappropriate, Mr Speaker.



It is incongruous to suggest for a moment that bus travellers would be encouraged to use bus services by the figure of Hon Warren Snowdon smiling down at them from under his straw hat. We have some difficulty when it comes to encouraging people to use bus services in certain regions and I doubt that the faces of politicians would enhance our prospects, and I say that in a totally bipartisan manner. For example, Mr Speaker, can you imagine standing at the bus stop in Tiwi at 7.30 am looking at a photo of the member for Wanguri smiling in his usual fashion or, in the electorate of the Leader of the Opposition, the passengers regarding the ever-sombre face of their local representative or his form stretched out, reclining, on a bendy-bus. What a way to start the day!

There are good reasons for precluding political and religious advertisements and these exist where there is a chance that sections of the community might be offended by such advertising. Aside from the patronage question, there is the question of vandalism which is of concern to all public transport systems. What is the name of the graffiti outfit? I think it is called 'Bugger Up'. Mr Speaker, imagine that group at work taking on the ALP's other suggested slogan of 'The Winning Team', very shortly to become 'The Whining Team'. Very obviously, that would attract the attention of 'Bugger Up'.

This does not involve only the bus service in Darwin. As the member for Araluen would know, as a result of pressure from him, we have been looking at introducing a viable bus service in Alice Springs. The last time we tried to introduce a bus system in Alice Springs, about 3 years ago, there was very little usage of the service. I would imagine that, with a photograph of the face of the member for MacDonnell on the front or the back of a bus, patronage would deteriorate even further. I think the bus service demonstrated very good taste in declining the offer by the ALP to advertise the faces of its representatives, accompanied by slogans, and I think that it ought to be commended for having such good sense.

#### Identification Parades in Alice Springs

Mr COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Would he, as a matter of urgency, undertake to have installed in the Alice Springs court system a 1-way viewing screen so that victims of crime can identify their assailants from a line-up without being seen themselves?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, procedures are set down regarding identification processes using line-ups and other methods which relate to the laws and rules of evidence. Those procedures are such that they cannot be legislated for. The courtrooms are not places that are used for the investigation of crime and the identification of criminals. The procedures are well documented in respect of how evidence obtained by means of a line-up can be admissible in court cases. I can assure the honourable member that the evidentiary requirements can be carried out at all centres in the Territory. This allows a line-up, under proper circumstances, to be utilised for the purposes of obtaining and presenting evidence.

National Parks Fees

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TOURISM

As there have been conflicting reports regarding park fees to be implemented by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service for Kakadu and Uluru, is he able to clarify the current position?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. There certainly has been some conflict. Last Thursday, while I was attending the Australian Travel Industry Conference, I sought and gained a meeting with the federal Tourism Minister, Senator Graham Richardson. That meeting took place in his room at 11 o'clock on Thursday morning. I was accompanied by my ministerial officer, Alan French. During the course of that meeting, I suggested that 1 of the many problems with park fees at both Uluru and Kakadu National Parks was the way the fees were structured.

It was all very well for the federal minister to say that industry had been advised. I guess industry had been advised because I am informed by Hon Clyde Holding that he wrote a letter in April or May 1987 and meetings were held between representatives of the ANPWS and the tourist industry in relation to the introduction of fees of ANPWS parks in the Northern Territory. I assure members of the House that the industry thought that, if fees were to be introduced, they would be along the lines of the fee already in use at Uluru National Park - the sum of \$1.50.

During the course of the discussion, which obviously centred around the \$10 fee that is proposed for Kakadu National Park, I explained the difficulties that were experienced by coach operators, in particular when they attend the ANPWS headquarters in Kakadu and take a coach load of tourists into the audio-visual centre. The component of the \$10 for the audio-visual is \$2.50. I explained to the minister that the room apparently seats only 30 people. What would happen when 3 or 4 coaches arrived at the same time? Other members of the public who wanted to see this audio-visual would have to sit for an hour and a half before 3 or 4 coaches could be processed through the park headquarters.

I pointed out to the minister that it was quite apparent that a very small percentage of the total visitors to Kakadu National Park wanted to see the audio-visual display. The reason is that the majority of tourists who visit Kakadu are on day trips and, out of an 8- or a 10-hour driving day, they experience only 3 or 4 hours in the park itself. During that short time, they want to see the various delights of the park, not sit down to watch the audio-visual display.

I believe Senator Richardson accepted my comments. Certainly, at that time, he agreed that my argument was quite realistic and that that portion of the fee at least should be dropped. He gave a commitment that, when he returned to Canberra, he would discuss it with his colleagues. He also indicated that he would discuss with his colleagues the problem relating to the introduction dates of the new fees. The Northern Territory government believes that the fees are far too high and that steps must be taken to alleviate problems caused for the tourist industry. Anybody in the tourist industry knows that brochures have already been printed and programs formulated. To change a pricing structure in the international marketplace requires at least 15 months.

Mr Tuxworth: That is the same lead time as the bed tax got.

Mr POOLE: That is right, but the bed tax did get the lead time eventually.

Mr Tuxworth: Tell that to the industry.

Mr POOLE: From an industry point of view, the \$10 fee cannot be absorbed. There are various consumer protection laws, particularly in places such as North America, and in central European countries, such as Germany and France, that prohibit Australian tour operators from changing their pricing structure after people have signed for tours. I think everybody in this House would accept that most overseas visitors to Australia do not simply decide to jump on a plane and come. They purchase their tours well in advance - in some cases, probably 6 to 8 months in advance of the actual trip - and work out exactly what they want to do so that they can achieve maximum value for their dollars. There is no way that a Northern Territory operator, with a coach full of people going into Kakadu National Park after 1 January 1989, when the proposed fee is due to be introduced, could absorb the \$400 or \$500 involved, and that is what it amounts to. To go into the park will cost a coach operator \$400 or \$500, depending on the number of people he has on his coach.

I and my ministerial assistant certainly received the impression that the \$2.50 would be dropped immediately and that the minister would try to talk to his colleagues, review the actual scale of fees and, hopefully, arrange a later introduction date. I was staggered to see an article in the Saturday edition of the NT News which said, basically, that Senator Richardson's office had flatly denied that and described my statement as scurrilous and absolutely wrong. I have written to Senator Richardson asking him to explain the contents of the meeting because I have sat down and discussed everything that was talked about with my ministerial officer and we both agree that the press release that I issued reflected accurately what was said at that meeting.

There are numerous arguments, and I guess I should clear the air because there seems to be some confusion in the minds of the general public as to my attitude and the government's attitude in relation to park fees. I do not think anybody on this side of the House wants to see fees introduced into parks. We believe that parks are for the enjoyment of all people. We do not argue with the imposition of fees at the level of \$1.50. We certainly will argue and will continue to argue about fees of \$10.

It is a fact of life that almost everybody in the Northern Territory, and most certainly the good people of Alice Springs and Darwin, spend a lot of time and trouble visiting those park areas almost every time a relative, a friend or an acquaintance comes to the Northern Territory. They act as unofficial tourist ambassadors for the good of the Territory. It is a very expensive exercise even to drive to Kakadu and Uluru National Parks because of the distances involved. I can imagine the reaction of locals if they have to pay \$10 every time somebody visits and indicates that he would like to see the parks. It will do untold damage to the fishermen who regularly fish in the Kakadu National Park and to the lifestyle of Territorians who use the parks as the recreational facilities that they are. I think it is most unjust.

This government will continue to oppose the introduction of the \$10 fee. I intend to try to pin down Senator Graham Richardson in order to obtain some support. He has been lobbied already by the Australian travel industry and the Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs Regional Tourist Associations. I understand some of the commercial groups, the tour operators themselves, have

written to him. The Chief Minister has written to the Prime Minister. I have written numerous letters and I am sorry to say that, yesterday, I received a copy of a letter from the Hon Clyde Holding that said basically that he is not prepared to review the fee. The only thing he may be prepared to do is look at the introduction date.

I put it to honourable members that, if there is to be any good news in relation to the fees, it will emanate from the federal Territory ALP representatives, because we clearly got that message from Canberra yesterday. They are simply playing politics. Graham Richardson and his colleagues in Canberra are embarrassed by the stupidity of the situation. They will turn around and give us some good news, but there is no way that they will allow this side of the House to advise Territory residents that there is a piece of good news around the corner. It will emanate from our own ALP Senator, our own ALP member of the House of Representatives or from some honourable member on the other side. I think it is disgraceful.

Television Segment on Member for Braitling

Mr TIPILOURA to CHIEF MINISTER

I preface my question by informing the minister that, at a recent meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, this parliament and its members became the butt of a series of deeply embarrassing comments. The comments arose as a result of the appearance on national television of the member for Braitling. I ask the minister what action he will take to counter the unfortunate perception left by the member for Braitling that the members of this parliament are overpaid and underworked, and whether he has counselled the honourable member in relation to any future contact with the national media?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not think that I need to counsel the member for Braitling about being cautious when agreeing to take part in programs with the national media. Indeed, the problem has not rested solely with the member for Braitling of course. There is a message there for all politicians. In watching the program, I was interested to note the tactic adopted by the presenters and producer. It was not the traditional one of interviewing one politician about his affairs and then asking another politician, usually from the opposition ranks, for the counter story. That would not have worked in this case because an opposition member would have had to answer the questions about whether he is overworked and underpaid, whether the travel to and from Darwin is a valid expenditure by the taxpayer, whether his electorate comprises too few constituents and whether a Legislative Assembly of 25 members is far too big for the Northern Territory. Very cunningly, the producer decided not to go to an opposition politician because he might have had some substantiation for some of the argument. What he did was go to the Trades and Labor Council. When one considers that the ploy from the producer's point of view was to inflict maximum damage and make those fellows in the Territory look a bit silly, it was probably a good tactic. I did not think that the person interviewed on behalf of the Trades and Labor Council really did himself or the Territory very much justice either. I felt that he might have had his wits about him a little more.

Those types of activities of national current affairs programs are probably well known to us all. They paint a very distorted picture. From experience, I know that they can sit down with you for hours, in some cases.

They can follow politicians around for days. The upper hand lies with the producer. He can prune out all the reasons, examples and arguments that he wishes and, obviously, present the clips that he wishes. Certainly, it has happened to me, as it has happened to other honourable members. Indeed, at times, they go as far as re-asking a question on tape and then putting the answer in behind.

As politicians, we need to be ever more mindful of the intentions of most of those people who come to the Territory to make programs. In this case, I understand that the segment was supposedly on the Ghan Railway project. Most members in this Assembly and most Territorians who have seen the Ghan Preservation project admire it enormously and believe that the member for Braitling has done an incredible job on behalf of the Northern Territory. In heritage terms, that job will be hailed when it has been completed. It has been hailed already and it has done us a very great service. If the producer had stuck to his undertaking that that was what it was all about - the member for Braitling's role in getting this magnificent project off the ground - I guess it would have come out better than it did.

#### Road Sign for Drovers' Memorial

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

On this morning's ABC radio news, the member for Barkly was quoted as saying that he had written to the minister asking that a road sign be placed on the Stuart Highway near Newcastle Waters to inform motorists of the Drovers' Memorial. I had the privilege to be down in Newcastle Waters for the beginning of the Last Great Cattle Drive and in Longreach for its completion. I must say that I totally agree that Newcastle Waters is an appropriate site at which to develop ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Would the honourable member ask the question?

Mr SETTER: Mr Speaker, what I was leading to is that I would be interested to know what action is being taken to erect such a sign post as the honourable member for Barkly has suggested.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I was delighted to receive a very constructive letter from the member for Barkly and I thank him for drawing that specific project to the department's attention. The Department of Transport and Works is delighted to assist in promoting tourism spots and has done so in the past. Only recently, I drove down the highway and visited many of the spots of interest along the way. I was most impressed with the usefulness of the signs to the great majority of our tourism spots. The signposting of the memorial at Newcastle Waters will be attended to. I am not sure whether it will become as famous as the dog on the tucker box at Gundagai. Only time will tell.

Mr Speaker, I commend the member for Barkly for his constructive approach to the matter and I can assure him that I will continue to respond to such approaches in an appropriate manner. The Pine Creek community has made similar constructive approaches which have resulted in the provision of additional signage to mark local historical sites.

Electorate Office of the Member for Flynn

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I draw the minister's attention to statements in Saturday's NT News by the new member for Flynn regarding his plan to set up an electorate office. With respect, Mr Speaker, I ask him to relate his response to recent court action in New South Wales which led to a sitting member being forced to vacate his seat and recontest his election. Is it proper for a member of this parliament to canvass his electorate for capital and to offer capital gain as an inducement, and will the minister undertake to investigate the statements and activities of the member for Flynn in this matter? Finally, will the minister inform the member and this House of the outcome of that investigation as soon as is practicable?

Mr SPEAKER: I believe that the question relates to an electorate matter and might more properly be directed to myself or the Chief Minister. If the member for Stuart wishes to direct his question to me, I request that he place it on notice.

Mr TUXWORTH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The member for Stuart has raised some important matters in his question and, in fact, those matters have already been referred to you, Sir. As the question relates to the accommodation of a member of this House, it should properly be addressed to you so that you can refer to it. As you have already considered those matters, Mr Speaker, it should not be too difficult for you to give us an appropriate reply.

Mr EDE: Mr Speaker, it is not a simple matter of the accommodation of an honourable member. The problem relates to the offer of shares, with the expectation of capital gain to the people who buy those shares as well as the expectation, through rent proceeds, of profit to electors within the electorate of Flynn. The Criminal Code contains provisions concerning the offering of inducements to electors by members of the Legislative Assembly. A member who breaches those provisions is required to vacate his seat and recontest his election, as happened recently in New South Wales. I believe that this is properly a matter for the Attorney-General who has responsibility for the Criminal Code of the Northern Territory.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. However, if the Attorney-General wishes to respond on the legal aspects of the question, I am prepared to give him the call.

Mr HATTON: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Attorney-General cannot be asked to give a legal opinion in response to a question in this House.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Attorney-General has made it clear that he wants to answer this question if only you would give him an opportunity.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the Attorney-General wish to respond?

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, the question does indeed raise matters of grave concern. I will certainly undertake to investigate the

issues and supply information to this House. In terms of answering the question, it is also relevant to mention that the matters raised come within the ambit of the Corporate Affairs Office which is 1 of my portfolio responsibilities.

Under the scheme proposed by the member for Flynn, people in his electorate could buy shares in a property which would be rented to the Territory government at a guaranteed rate without the issue of a prospectus. The honourable member claims that this is too costly and complicated and that his intentions are honourable, and asks why he cannot proceed to do what he wants to do. I make no comment about the fact that the new member for Flynn has become involved in a scheme designed to milk the public purse, the morality of which is a matter for him and his party. However, I can imagine what the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee would say about it. The legal situation certainly requires investigation. It is a classic case of the details not stacking up, particularly given that the honourable member has asked why a prospectus is necessary for such a scheme.

I certainly think that it is proper for me to examine all the details of this matter and to inform the House regarding the legal situation. In general terms, the provisions of the National Companies and Securities Commission concerning the prospectus issue in relation to public schemes are designed specifically to protect members of the community against schemes which appear to be very inviting but, when put into practice, lose money. Over the years, there have been many instances in which old-age pensioners and hard-working people have invested their meagre savings in schemes - which have been promoted by public figures and which have looked good on the surface - and, at the end of the day, through no fault of their own, those people have lost their money.

The particular scheme that the honourable member has promoted looks good. But what happens in terms of the scheme? You would want to know the cost of the building and projected costs such as repairs and maintenance, water and electricity charges etc. What about the scheme as a guaranteed investment? It would not be true to say that, given our volatile electorates, the boundaries of the Flynn division would remain exactly the same for ever and a day. Every time there is an election, members of this Assembly put their jobs on the line. I appreciate that the member for Flynn, at this stage, probably does not think that he has a hope of losing the next election. We would all like to think that, but the distinct possibility exists. What happens in a couple of years if the member finds that he is no longer the member or that the site of the electorate office is not suited to his needs because it is no longer in his electorate? The government may need to find alternative accommodation for the office of the member.

What happens to the people who put their money in the scheme? They would have to find a new tenant or they would have to sell the property and neither of those courses could possibly guarantee a profit for the investors or even that they would break even. There are no guarantees about real estate prices these days. There is a distinct possibility that those people would suffer a loss. It cannot be forgotten that, while these people are struggling to obtain a return on their original investment, the present member for Flynn might possibly be right out of the equation. He would not be liable for anything. That is one of the main reasons why a prospectus is necessary for a scheme such as that proposed by the member for Flynn. It is not a matter of too much red tape; it is a matter of protecting the public.

There are a few other points that I should make in relation to this issue. Firstly, although shares in such a scheme will be sold to people in the electorate of Flynn, there will be nothing to stop them from moving interstate or overseas or selling their shares to someone else. The original concept of having members of the electorate involved in the scheme could quite quickly fall apart. The cost of setting up the scheme would be thousands of dollars. Given the honourable member's background in small business and accountancy, I am absolutely astonished that he is not aware of the professional fees and costs involved in such a scheme. It is part and parcel of his role as an accountant to be aware of the National Companies and Securities Act and to advise his clients on the accounting practices and standards required under the act and the directions that people need to take when engaging in such schemes. That is the man's professional position. As I say, I was astounded.

I can assure the honourable member that the total cost of setting up such a scheme is certainly a far cry from a takeover bid for BHP, as he erroneously claimed in his newspaper article. I certainly believe that that would cost him well over \$100 000. But, if his ambitions lie in that direction, he is welcome to have a go.

Finally, the member for Flynn's statements regarding the matter seem to indicate that he believes that he should receive special treatment. He says that, because his intentions are honourable, the Corporate Affairs Commissioner 'should waive the rules'. This government believes very strongly that all people should be equal before the law and that applies especially to members of this Assembly who would be proud to set an example to the general public. There is not too much red tape involved in a matter like this. The rules have been laid down under the National Companies and Securities Scheme to afford people throughout Australia the same degree of protection, and this government is certainly committed to upholding that principle. In regard to the legal situation, I most certainly will report to the House details on this matter, as requested by the member for Stuart.



Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

My question relates to the state of the Trade Development Zone and its management under the Deputy Chief Minister's predecessor, the present Chief Minister. Will he ask the Chief Minister whether, whilst overseas earlier this year, he personally approved an ex gratia payment to Mr K.K. Yeung? Will he ask him what sum was involved and also whether he made this payment against the better judgment of the Board of the Trade Development Zone Authority, and will he undertake to report his answers to the House before the end of question time?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, let us get a few facts straight in relation to asking and answering questions in relation to the Trade Development Zone. I have told the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members opposite on many occasions that they are wasting their breath asking me questions which seek information of a commercially-sensitive nature and then expect me to make an instant judgment as to whether such information should be passed to the opposition. Therefore, I ask that any questions that the Leader of the Opposition or any member opposite has about the Trade Development Zone be placed on notice. I will consider whether or not the information should be released. However, if the Leader of the Opposition wants to debate matters relating to the Trade Development Zone, I invite him to begin at any time. If he wants to debate matters relating to the Trade Development Zone, let him move a substantive motion on the Trade Development Zone and I will accommodate him immediately. He can flirt coyly with questions or he can move a substantive motion on this matter right now. It is up to him.

Mr Smith: Wimp.

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

Mr Smith: Mr Speaker, I withdraw.

Northern Territory Open Day at Expo

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, over the last 2 days, the local and southern press have commented briefly on the reaction by visitors to Expo 88 on the Northern Territory Open Day which was held on Sunday 2 October 1988. Did the Northern Territory Open Day meet his expectations and what was the response by the officials and the public who attended?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, honourable members would be aware that, as a major exhibitor at Expo, the Northern Territory was entitled to have what is called a 'state' day. As the honourable member mentioned, our day was last Sunday. I and a few other honourable members had the good fortune to be there and to join with many Territorians, and indeed with many people from all over Australia, in celebrating NT day.

A state day at Expo is a day when many of the activities of Expo focus on a particular state. Unfortunately, I was unable to get down to Expo at any other time during its several months of operation. It was my first visit there and, sadly, it was a very fleeting one. Certainly, it reinforced in my mind the value of the Northern Territory having participated which, as honourable members will be aware, we very nearly did not do. We reviewed our participation in Expo 3 times. I think the matter was raised in Cabinet 3 times over a period of several months and, on each of those occasions, we decided that the Territory was not in a financial position to participate. In the early days, no other state of Australia had agreed to participate either, and Queensland was to be the only state exhibitor. However, as time went by and the organisers of Expo cranked up their pressure on all sorts of people to participate to make it a truly national event, the states began to agree to participate. In the end, the Commonwealth contributed some assistance in order to encourage the Territory, Tasmania and others by offering to pay some of the rental for the space required for exhibits. We were the last to agree to participate.

Honourable members will also be aware that we had received a cut of some \$100m from our expected federal allocations in 1987 and that certainly affected our decision. However, in the end, we agreed to participate, and our team went there 10 weeks before Expo opened to look at the space available. To its great credit, the team designed and constructed in the Northern Territory a very attractive and unique exhibit. It is difficult to compete with an exhibitor such as Queensland, which spent \$12m to \$14m on its magnificent exhibit. When you are trying to compete for some attention in that sort of game, you have to do things differently and that is what the Territory organisers decided to do. The innovative design of our stall and the featuring of Territory wildlife on regular occasions has been enormously successful, to the extent that the number of visitors to our stand each week exceeds the population of Darwin. That certainly is commendable. It is getting the message across to many people.

During NT Day itself, a press conference was held early in the day. The Yothu Yndu dancers were present. This is an Aboriginal dancing group which had returned from Seoul a couple of days previously and they certainly attracted a great deal of attention from the press. Expo holds a press conference at 9 am each day. The authority uses the conference to announce the day's happenings. The active participation of the Aboriginal dancers at the press conference on NT Day certainly made it a unique event. We also had a crocodile and a snake there.

The next event was the unfurling of the flag in the central amphitheatre at Expo. A number of Expo officials made speeches of welcome and I also made a speech. These were followed by performances by the 2 Territory artists Robyn Green and Shane Hewitt which were very well received. During the day, there were fashion parades at our stand featuring clothing designed in the Northern Territory and, throughout the day, animals from the Northern Territory were displayed. It was a delight to see the audience reaction when the Northern Territory girls in their uniforms and other rangers from the Conservation Commission walked through the crowds with those animals inviting audience participation. I am sure many of those people had never been so close to a snake in all their lives. They actually had them wrapped around their necks, willingly of course. I am sure that that memory will stay with them.

A luncheon was hosted for the Northern Territory, and that was standard on state days. The Queenslanders led the push. It is their Expo and they have

organised it absolutely magnificently. They host a lunch for the state whose day it is. All our officials went along to the lunch for the Northern Territory Day and various speeches were made. There was a reception later in the day hosted by the commissioners who own the Australian pavilion and that reception was attended by many people from the states and from other countries which are exhibiting at Expo. Some short speeches were made whilst people wished the Northern Territory well.

The evening was the highlight of it all. There was a major concert, again in the amphitheatre. The concert could only be described as a huge success. Ted Egan was the opening performer. Again, Robyn Green and Shane Hewitt sang songs and there was a young fellow called Chris O'Brien, whom I had not heard of before. He is a young Territorian who, I believe, was raised on either Melville or Bathurst Island and who does some singing and entertaining in Darwin's night spots. My assessment of this young man is that he is so good that we will certainly lose him. He has been offered work interstate already and, whilst I hope he will keep coming back to the Territory, I consider that he has an enormous future in the entertainment industry because he is extremely talented. It is such a shame that, in order to receive the rewards of such talent, you have to leave the Territory.

The Yothu Yndu Dancers again were on stage and were an enormous hit. During the day at our stand, Major Les Hiddins, the Bush Tucker Man, who has been engaged by the Northern Territory government on a consultancy basis, featured throughout the day. He is becoming a national figure these days and we are very pleased to be able to be associated with him.

It was a delight to see so many Territorians who happened to be at Expo participate during the day in the audience. Perhaps some of them organised to be there on that day. There was a whole raft of faces that were certainly familiar to me even though I might not have known all their names. I am sure that they felt very proud on that day.

There are further activities this week featuring the Northern Territory. On Monday, there was an investment seminar at which some 140 business people attended. It was addressed by the Minister for Industries and Development and hosted by officers of the Department of Industries and Development. The Northern Territory Economic Development Strategy was also released to those people in order to interest them in the Northern Territory. Overall, it was an enormous success. I am pleased that we participated in Expo. The money has been well spent and we will have to consider our attitude towards these things in the future despite the sizeable expense.

#### Trade Development Zone

Mr LEO to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Under what section of the act did the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone, Mr Ray McHenry, prohibit contact between the staff of the authority and its board? Does he recognise that such a prohibition is a clear breach of accepted company codes of conduct, and how could members of the board fulfil their obligations under the act while subject to such a prohibition? Has he done anything about that particular direction of the Chairman of the Trade Development Zone Authority? It is my understanding that that direction cannot be allowed to be sustained.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, at the risk of being repetitive, I am quite happy to answer any question on the Trade Development Zone in terms of debate on a substantive motion. The Leader of the Opposition has been travelling the country seeking information. In fact, he made international telephone calls from his office in relation to the Trade Development Zone in recent times. I am quite happy to supply any information at all about the Trade Development Zone in terms of debate on a substantive motion. If it is as big an issue as the Leader of the Opposition wants us to believe - and he has all this information - let him move a substantive motion right now and I will accommodate him immediately. That is the choice that he has. If he wants to move such a motion, that is fine. But, members opposite should not continue asking coy questions in a build-up to a censure motion. Let us have it out right now.

CSIRO Research Station in Katherine

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

Following a visit to the Northern Territory by the Prime Minister's Country Task Force, the Territory federal member, Mr Warren Snowdon, suggested that the CSIRO Research Station in Katherine should be taken over by the Northern Territory government. Is the Northern Territory government considering such action and would the closure of the facility by CSIRO adversely affect the pastoral industry?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the federal government has advised that the CSIRO will be closing its research station in Katherine in December 1990. I understand that it is intended that a small part of the facility will be retained by CSIRO for horticultural and ecological research as an ongoing program in a small way. The balance of the assets are to be sold. The station has been operational in Katherine since the 1940s and, over that period, a great deal of development has been undertaken. It is now recognised as one of the best-equipped of its kind in the tropical world. Research conducted at the farm has been of considerable benefit to primary producers, particularly in relation to the pastoral industry and also tropical grain and horticultural crops.

I was a little surprised, following the Prime Minister's Country Task Force visit to the Northern Territory, that the federal member should make an announcement that he would be recommending to the Prime Minister that the Northern Territory government take over the control of this facility. I would have thought that, having the interests of the Northern Territory at heart and the interests of research into tropical crops for all of Australia and bearing in mind that it is a Commonwealth facility that benefits the states of Queensland and Western Australia as well as the Northern Territory, he would have made representations to the Prime Minister to ensure that the programs would continue and that the facility would not be sold off in a fire sale. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

We have not heard much in support of the facility from the opposition or the opposition spokesman on primary industry. I think that is a matter for some shame on their part, particularly when we consider the loss of jobs that we have heard so much about from the opposition. In that regard, we should also note the transfer of other positions in the Territory by the federal government recently. Telecom, the Department of Social Security and the Department of Administrative Services have transferred personnel interstate.

It would have been some comfort to people in the Northern Territory had the opposition and the federal member encouraged the Prime Minister to maintain the operation of the research facility in Katherine. The facility is of interest and value to the pastoral industry and the tropical crops industry in the northern parts of Australia. I would like to see it continue.

The question of the Northern Territory government taking over the CSIRO Katherine Research Station is a complex one and will require consideration of a range of matters such as our future research needs, possible interest from other research institutions which might care to avail themselves of the facilities that are provided at the station and other matters such as operational costs and the costs of the acquisition of the property itself. Given that the research station will be offered for sale, my department is considering its options. It is, however, far too early to predict any outcome of those considerations.

Sir Edward Pellew Group Land Claim

Mr TUXWORTH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Mr Speaker, for some time the Territory government has maintained a policy of opposing sequential and repetitious claims over land that has already been lost. Can the minister confirm that staff of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority are working cooperatively with staff of the Northern Land Council to prepare a further submission for a land claim over the area that was considered by the Aboriginal Land Commissioner in the Borroloola Land Claim No 1, specifically the Sir Edward Pellew Group? If the minister can confirm that this is so, is he able to say whether the government supports a further land claim over that area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can neither confirm nor deny the details of the operations of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority. Often the authority seems to be in a world of its own and it is very difficult to find out what goes on or who is doing what. On the matter of repetitive land claims, it is most obvious not only to all members of this House but to all members of the Territory community that the present Land Rights Act is deficient in a number of ways. Repetitive land claims exemplify one of the worst aspects of the legislation. When a claim is lodged with the Aboriginal Land Commissioner, efforts are then made to identify traditional claimants to the land so that the commissioner can judge whether those people meet the requirements of the Land Rights Act. He then makes recommendations to the federal minister as to whether or not the land should be granted to the claimants. Unfortunately, if the commissioner recommends that the land not be granted, the act allows the Northern Land Council, the Central Land Council or any other land council to lodge a further claim for the same area of land. If the recommendation is again in the negative, a further claim can be lodged and the whole process can continue ad infinitum. While land is subject to claim, activities such as mining exploration cannot occur on it. Clearly, people will not invest in activity on land which is subject to claim. I am sure that most sensible people would agree that repetitive land claims are an example of something that is terribly wrong with the present Land Rights Act. It does need to be changed, Mr Speaker.

Honourable members are fully aware of continual representations made by this government regarding changes to the Land Rights Act. We have been quite loud and forceful in trying to present arguments to the federal government

about the need for changes, and repetitive claims is one of the problem areas that we have identified. The member for Barkly has stated that there appears to be a possibility of a repeat claim being made over the Sir Edward Pellew Group. I can certainly say that I have no knowledge of any government support for a repeat claim over that area. I will certainly look into whether that claim has been lodged and report to the House on what has occurred. In conclusion, I must point out that the government believes very strongly that the present Land Rights Act is very seriously deficient. The area of repeat claims is a perfect example of a situation where, no matter what the umpire rules, the process can be started again. We can all be old and grey or even dead and gone and that process can still be continuing under the present legislation. I believe that is ridiculous.

#### Moving Walkway at Casuarina Shopping Centre

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

It has been brought to my attention that the moving walkway located at the Casuarina Shopping Centre has caused some injuries to children who have used it. Is he able to confirm that that has occurred and, if so, what action has his department taken, under the auspices of the Work Health Act, to ensure that it does not recur?

#### ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I think honourable members may have seen a television report of an accident that occurred on the moving walkway at Casuarina Shopping Centre. Unfortunately, I did not see that report. I understand that a young child caught a finger in the cones at the bottom of the moving walkway. Following investigation of that particular report, it came to light that there had been 2 other accidents there. Both were of a reasonably minor nature, but were capable of causing quite severe damage.

It is fairly obvious that any piece of moving machinery, such as a moving walkway, presents some dangers. In fact, the moving walkway at Casuarina had been damaged, over a period of time, by shopping trolleys. I am sure that we have all handled those cumbersome monsters at some stage or other and they want to move in all sorts of directions. They have only 2 brakes and, occasionally, when one of those fails, the trolleys wander all over the place. I understand that damage to the walkway had been caused by shopping trolleys hitting the cones along the side and at the base of the walkway. As a result, the sensors were no longer functioning. Normally, a sensor would arrest the walkway at the moment when a foreign body of any sort became caught in the machinery. In fact, that was not happening because of the damage that had been caused.

The Work Health Authority investigated the incident. It discovered that there were problems with the walkway because the sensors were out of order. The cones were damaged and there was too great a gap between the cones and the walkway itself. Those problems have been rectified. However, there is another problem in that young children stop the machinery. There is a stop switch which, if hit, should stop the machinery immediately. Because the kids hit those big switches and turn the machinery off, these have been located near the base of the walkway and are very hard to see. As a result, many people are not aware that those switches exist and, in an emergency, would not know how to halt the machinery. However, there are control switches there. I hope that people will take note of the fact that they can turn that machinery off and avoid any real damage occurring. I understand that it is unlikely

that any major injury will occur if the machinery is halted quickly. Of course, moving walkways can be dangerous wherever they are located. It is incumbent on parents to keep a close watch on children to ensure they are not caught up in moving machinery. The situation is the same with the moving luggage belts at the airport. These are also very dangerous pieces of machinery. Occasionally, you see children playing on the edges of those.

I understand that, in all the incidents at Casuarina, the children were under quite strict supervision by parents at the time but, as those of us with small children know, kids run off at times and do things that may be rather silly, and that could cause quite serious injury. It is important that we are aware that the machinery is dangerous. We should be aware that there are switches that can turn the machinery off. There is to be an educational program to advertise to people that they should supervise their children when they are near that machinery, and to show where the stop buttons are.

Mr Speaker, the Casuarina Shopping Centre is rather like a very large creche and it could be said that some parents deliberately 'lose' their children there while they go shopping. Children can often be seen playing without adequate supervision. I am not saying that any of the cases of injury that have been reported indicate that there was a lack of supervision. The problem is under control. We will keep a close watch on the machinery and we will be establishing an educational program to ensure that such incidents do not happen again.

#### Trade Development Zone

Mr EDE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

I refer him to the Parliamentary Record for 10 August this year when he stated in question time that honourable members would be interested to learn that the governments of Queensland and Western Australia had sought the services and advice of Mr Yeung in their quest for Asian development. Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table documentation from the Western Australian government which shows conclusively that the only connection between Mr K.K. Yeung and the Western Australian government is that he is one of some 300 people who was on a list to receive a pamphlet.

Leave granted.

Mr EDE: Mr Speaker, can the minister explain why he has misled this House by stating that Mr K.K. Yeung had a brief to provide advice to the Western Australian and Queensland governments when we have documentation which will prove conclusively that he was only 1 of some 300 people on a mailing list?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as usual, the member opposite has omitted two-thirds of the facts which relate to South Australia and Queensland, but never mind. Mr Speaker, I repeat to members opposite that, if they wish to debate the Trade Development Zone, which they obviously do not, they should raise the issue by way of a substantive motion. We can debate that now and they can produce any information which they have. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has said that he will create a storm and that all will be revealed. Members opposite have done nothing. I put it to them again. If they want to debate the Trade Development Zone, let them do so by way of substantive motion and let them do so now.

Karama Child-care Centre

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

For some time, I have been pestering the minister about the lack of community facilities in Karama. He promised to provide a child-care centre there. I believe that he is now in a position to advise myself and the House concerning the future of the Karama Child-care Centre.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, you may not be aware of it but today is good news day and my good news is that I am able to get the member for Karama off my back. In all seriousness, I have often said that the most effective people in terms of keeping ministers of this government on their toes and getting things done for the constituencies of the Northern Territory are the backbenchers of the CLP government. This is another classic example of their effectiveness.

I have received very effective representations from the member for Karama for quite some time in relation to the establishment of a child-care centre in his area. There is no doubt that, in the development of that suburb, a number of community services were overlooked. Without going into that issue too far, it is clear that the suburb has a very young population. The member for Karama has been able to illustrate that there is a great need for a child-care centre. In advocating the community's need, he has not approached only myself. He has also approached developers behind the scenes and negotiated for the land that has now been made available for this project. I am very pleased indeed to advise the member for Karama and all honourable members of this House that the contract for the construction of the Karama Child-care Centre was signed yesterday. It will accommodate 20 children at a cost of some \$400 000.

Amex Card Transaction

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TOURISM

I draw his attention to a transaction made by a former senior member of the Tourist Commission involving the purchase of pearls. Has an investigation been conducted and did it reveal that the transaction was conducted on the Amex card of that particular officer and that the Amex account was subsequently paid by the Tourist Commission? Did the investigation indicate that it became necessary for the issue to be raised with the then Chief Minister, Mr Paul Everingham, and was it only after the Chief Minister demanded personally that the senior officer repay the moneys involved, that the account was acquitted? Finally, was the minister the senior officer involved and, as requested at the last sittings, will he reveal to this House the full account of his Amex card transactions?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, members who were present on the last day of the August sittings must recall that the opposition called into question my competence as the Chairman of the Tourist Commission. I suppose I should have expected that to happen because, given the kind of opposition that we suffer in this place, it is obvious that it would try this sort of stunt at some stage.

Mr Smith: It was a simple series of questions.



Mr POOLE: It is typical of the opposition to criticise a member's career prior to his entry into politics if it cannot fault that member's performance as a minister.

Mr Speaker, we have seen how the opposition has indicated consistently its willingness and eagerness to slither into the gutter in search of political points, no matter how low or irrelevant they might be. It is a fact that I have never been questioned by any Chief Minister concerning my personal expenditures on my American Express card. I held no discussions with Paul Everingham, when he was Chief Minister, on the conduct of my American Express account. There was no investigation ordered because there was never any question about anything that I purchased in the course of my travelling, while I was with the Tourist Commission, as to whether I would pay for it or the Tourist Commission would pay for it. If the Tourist Commission paid for it - and it paid for a number of things which were personal purchases while I travelled around - that money was reimbursed by myself. The cost of any such purchase was charged to me by the Tourist Commission at my declaration, not at its declaration. The acquittal of my expense accounts whilst I travelled around the countryside were all perused. There was never any question raised by the Auditor-General or anybody else of the rights or the wrongs of the way I conducted those expenses.

It is no coincidence that these allegations, which were first raised in this House a month ago, were raised at the time of the Flynn by-election. The opposition had had the information for a number of months. The allegations were raised because it was imperative for the opposition to cast slurs and innuendo and to operate a smear campaign against anybody it could on the government benches and it happened to choose me. What bewildered me at the time was that the members opposite were so desperate to create an issue that they would seize on a situation that was over and done with. It was resolved to the complete satisfaction of all people concerned. No wrongdoing was committed by me or even suggested by anybody else. Their attack and their attempt to smear my name was based on the contents of an anonymously delivered manila envelope. Despite my anger at the attack, I guess I can find solace in the words of Sir Robert Menzies who said: 'Never take notice of anonymous letters unless you receive a few thousand on the same subject'.

Mr Speaker, I remain outraged at the opposition's disgraceful attack, outraged by how more than 6 years of solid effort and proven achievement could be described as 'incompetence' so shamelessly. My contempt for them has no bounds. For the benefit of this House, it is necessary to recapitulate the 6 years that I was Chairman of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission and I am pleased to have the opportunity to do so. Let the facts speak for themselves because it was a very satisfying period of accomplishment.

When I stepped off the plane in Alice Springs on 2 January 1980 to assume the chairmanship of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission, it was apparent that much needed to be done and that much could be done. Representatives of my meagre but enthusiastic staff met me and we worked for 59 hours non-stop to prepare a budget urgently. After preparing that budget, I flew to Darwin and argued successfully for a tremendous increase in the amount of money with which I believed the government should have funded the Tourist Commission. It was the first of countless trips that I was to make over the following 6 years, trips undertaken with the sole aim of drumming up business for the Northern Territory tourist industry.

My early travels were to 5 existing bureaus outside the Alice. The staff at those bureaus were excellent but they were too few and were underpaid, and

the premises left much to be desired. The Sydney bureau was stuck away on the 11th floor of a city office block. It had been doing shockingly badly for about a dozen years. I could not even find the Brisbane bureau because it was hidden in a corridor on the 1st floor of a building between 2 shops with a blackboard that said, 'NTGTB Upstairs'. Looking at the sign at the time, I really thought to myself: 'No wonder we are not getting the sales that we should be getting'.

Mr Speaker, I led the team that set about making the bureaus fully professional as a matter of priority. We put the staff in uniform, we computerised the systems, we dressed up the offices and relocated them to more prominent positions as soon as possible. We established sales targets and we awarded incentive prizes to achievers. I visited every bureau personally every 10 weeks to help develop a team spirit which we maintained with daily contact through the telephone and telex networks. We commissioned market researches. We have developed a unique television advertising campaign around a new logo. That brolga in the sun logo is probably better known now than any other Northern Territory symbol except perhaps our own Northern Territory flag.

By the end of the first half year in office, 2 of the Territory's city bureaus had at last written \$1m in business, and we all celebrated because we knew we were on the right track at last. By the end of 1980-81, my first full financial year at the helm ...

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition's questions are still fresh in your mind as I am sure they are still fresh in the honourable minister's mind. The questions were simple and straightforward, and related to a particular transaction. They did not require the minister to give a full cavalcade of his experiences in the Tourist Commission prior to his joining this parliament. I would ask that you rule that his answer, at least in part, relate to the questions.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask the Minister for Tourism to relate his response to the questions.

Mr POOLE: Mr Speaker, it is important to put my answer in the context that I am addressing: the business of the day and the duties that I was performing at the time as Chairman of the Tourist Commission. It is a fact that, in 1980, I was on the road for 176 days and, for the next 4 years, my travel schedule was similar if not greater. I was marketing, promoting, and selling the Territory to whoever would listen and could help. That included travel agents, tour operators, investors, airlines, advertising organisations, media representatives, hotel chains and transport ...

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! You have just asked the honourable minister to relate his answer, at least in part, to the questions. The questions were specific. You have asked the minister to relate his answer to the questions. He is still not relating his answer to the questions and I would ask that you direct him again. Obviously, he is reading from a prepared speech that has absolutely nothing to do with the questions.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Again I ask the minister to relate his answer to the questions. I believe that, at least in part, he has answered some of the Leader of the Opposition's questions and I will allow him to continue.

Mr POOLE: Mr Speaker, I was away from my Alice Springs home and family for about two-thirds of the working days in the 6 years that I was Chairman of

the Tourist Commission. In return for the physical and mental strain that was placed on myself and my family, I was getting results and the runs were piling up on the board. A list of the achievements of the Tourist Commission covers many pages.

Successful marketers all advocate that money be spent, be it on advertising, promotion, publicity and other awareness campaigns, or on personal selling through business travel. Unfortunately, selling means expenses - necessary expenses. Sometimes some of the things that we did in those days raised a few eyebrows around the place. Not every decision that I made as Chairman of the Tourist Commission turned to gold. Nobody is perfect but, on the whole, the calculated commercial risks that I took during those years paid off for the Territory. In that context, in my book, that is what administrative competence is all about. It is about results, the seeking for, attainment of and surpassing of goals. Even our 1984-85 promotional film, which cost much more than it should have, had its bright side. Although the company originally commissioned to make the film did not deliver on part of its contract, eventually we did have the film completed. It is still being shown and it has won many awards - among 23 such honours the Tourist Commission received for its work during my tenure as chairman. Awards are incidental; results are what count.

There was the tourist awareness campaign that we commissioned: 'Tell a tourist where to go'. I can remember arguing as to whether or not that campaign was effective. Mr Speaker, I was still arguing 5 years later. I said to a guy who was screening it: 'Of course, it is effective. If it is not effective, we would not be arguing about it now'. It is this type of commercial administrative decision-making that competence is all about. It is what it means to lead any organisation well. Are members of the opposition seriously trying to tell this Assembly, through the questions they asked in the last sittings and today, that those years that I put in as head of the Tourist Commission did not pay off for all Territorians? The Tourist Commission and I, as its leader, persuaded Royal Brunei to come into Darwin. We convinced Garuda to increase its capacity. We were instrumental, with the ministers of the day, in bringing Singapore Airlines and Thai Services in next year. Again with the support of the ministers, the Tourist Commission persuaded international hotel chains, like 4 Seasons and Sheraton, to establish multiple properties in the Territory. Despite criticism from the members opposite, we were the people to employ an Aboriginal liaison officer, and we actively campaigned to encourage Aboriginal communities to enter into the tourist industry. It was unkind of the honourable member for Arafura to suggest otherwise the other day.

Mr EDE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Mr Speaker, twice you have advised the honourable minister to relate his answer to the questions. He is now talking about statements made by the member for Arafura who did not even ask the questions. Mr Speaker, this response is so ridiculous it is reaching the point of insanity. Would you instruct the honourable minister, in stronger terms, that he will answer the questions?

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I put it to this Assembly that the honourable minister is answering properly and fully the questions that were put to him in this Assembly today. It is no secret to any of us that this is part of an overall attack by the opposition in relation to the competence and propriety of the honourable minister when he was the head of a statutory authority. It relates specifically to expenses and travel by the honourable minister.

I think the minister is doing an excellent job in totally debunking the misinformation and slurs that have been cast on him by members of the opposition, purely for electoral advantage in recent times. They seek to continue it now for some unknown reason, presumably because it is all they can think of doing after botching everything else for the last 2 days. When they are given the full story, they try to distract this Assembly and everybody else, as they often do, by raising crazy points of order. They are frightened to hear the real answers and, once they start hearing the answers they do not like, they start raising points of order. I believe this is a very serious matter and it has been twice before this House. The honourable minister deserves the opportunity to give the answer fully and comprehensively in his own way.

Mr BELL: Mr Speaker, the member for Nightcliff referred to the competence of the former chairman of the Tourist Commission and the present Minister for Tourism. That has not been called into question. Neither the opposition nor this House is interested in a detailed blow-by-blow description of his actions. What we are interested in, and what we are not getting answers on, are the proprieties of his Amex card transactions. The Leader of the Opposition asked very specific questions. The Minister for Tourism has been on his feet for a quarter of an hour and has refused to answer them.

Mr SPEAKER: Again, I ask the minister to relate his answer more closely to the questions. I am aware that, from the minister's point of view, there was a censure motion which raised the competency question at the last sittings. If the minister wants to respond to that, it should more properly be done by way of a personal explanation.

Mr POOLE: Mr Speaker, I still believe it is important to explain my business transactions with the Tourist Commission in the way I am doing and to answer the questions the Leader of the Opposition has raised.

Mr Speaker, there is no question that, in the last 18 months of my tenure as the Chairman of the Tourist Commission, I fell behind in the paperwork which related to the separation of personal expenses and travel expenses, and the general acquitting of my account. Both types of expenses were paid for on the same American Express card, in accordance with the system in force at the time. At no time was there any suggestion from the Auditor-General, or anybody else for that matter, that I was not reconciling my expenses satisfactorily, even if sometimes tardily. There were some unavoidable delays and I was continually reimbursing the commission for personal expenses which it paid along with my travel expenses. That came about simply because, when many of my accounts came in, I was not even in Alice Springs. I was not using the system for my own benefit in any way. At the time, it was the only possible way to operate. There has never been the slightest suggestion that I was receiving any sort of benefit through the system, a system which was later changed.

Mr Speaker, if I had not been living out of a suitcase, I would have had the luxury of sufficient time to properly rationalise the extensive paperwork needed to document my expenses on my journeys. Because I relied on innumerable events which had occurred months before, I was unable always to identify legitimate claims. The penalty was that I had to pay for them because the policy of the Tourist Commission was that, if you did not have a receipt for an amount over \$10, you had no reasonable and supportable evidence to make a claim. Even in this job, there are numerous, out-of-pocket expenses which are inevitable. However, there was always much more important work to be done. Like many others in my position, I got on with the job and cut my losses.

The commission had a staff of 140 people and they also had more pressing issues to address. Personally, I had many more pressing issues to address than asking commission staff for their help to look after my expenses. Inevitably, there was always another business engagement somewhere which could not be put off to enable me to find time to do paperwork. In the end, I paid for all the so-called personal expenses. I have no conscience about it because I had resigned as chairman of the commission to enter politics and I wanted to wipe the slate clean as quickly as possible.

I returned from a 30-day overseas trip on 12 March 1986 and, 2 days later, I was called to Darwin for 3 days. Then I returned to Alice Springs and applied for preselection. I was interviewed on 25 March and, 2 days later, was accepted as the CLP candidate for the seat of Araluen. I immediately walked into the Tourist Commission and I resigned on the morning of 1 April 1986. I then undertook an election campaign and was elected to the Assembly on 19 April. At the end of June, I reached a total reconciliation with the commission for my remaining expenses, most of which had come in from overseas in April and May. I repeat that this reconciliation met all the very stringent requirements of the Auditor-General who issued an unqualified acquittal.

I am now a minister of the Crown and, as every member of this Assembly is aware, my job as a minister is to help frame and implement government policies and not to administer any expense account finances except my own, which I acquit fastidiously. As I proved as Chairman of the Tourist Commission, I am more than competent in the handling of an overall budget allocation. In fact, I believe my record was outstanding for someone who was involved so personally in the success or otherwise of the commission's work. Remember, Mr Speaker, that we have gone from 200 000 visitors to 1 million visitors in the time that I have been involved with the Tourist Commission and this government. Anybody can look at my business track record to find results that indicate far more than mere competence.

Mr Speaker, let the honourable members opposite produce any member with a track record of competence and a record of commercial success on behalf of his fellow Territorians equal to mine. Let them show to me anyone who has sacrificed so much of his personal life to guide an industry's growth from nowhere to become the second biggest and fastest-growing industry in the Northern Territory. If there is such a man, only that man, if he exists, has a right to cast stones at me. I repeat that I have never been questioned by the Chief Minister of the day with regard to any of my personal American Express expenses, and I have no conscience about them whatsoever.

Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Why did the previous minister, now the Chief Minister, promise the board of the Trade Development Zone Authority at its May meeting that there would be a full inquiry into the authority's operations and why, on the very next day, did he change his mind and inform the board that the inquiry would be confined only to marketing aspects? Further, did he promise to provide the board with the terms of the inquiry within 1 week? If so, why did that not happen?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thought that the Chief Minister spoke about marketing and incentives rather than just marketing. I am not sure whether the Leader of the Opposition is quoting from board papers but I thought the inquiry was to cover more than simply marketing. A number of issues, including consultancies, were to be investigated by the consultant. I will take the question on notice. I will find out to what minutes the Leader of the Opposition is referring when he says that the inquiry was to be directed solely towards marketing.

Trade Development Zone

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES AND DEVELOPMENT

The Leader of the Opposition has made a great deal of play about an apparent discrepancy between a pay-out figure to the Trade Development Zone's Hong Kong consultant, Mr K.K. Yeung, quoted in a reply to a question on notice, and the figure quoted by the honourable minister in the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill. Can the honourable minister explain the apparent discrepancy and can he set the record straight?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can set the record straight and I thank the honourable member for providing the opportunity for me to do so. Regrettably, it is my duty to inform honourable members that the Leader of the Opposition has got it wrong again. If he had had his wits about him last night, he would have realised that I was giving him more than a passing hint about the likely outcome of his concerns. There is no discrepancy. There is also no inaccuracy in the figures I have quoted to the House in relation to payments concerning Trade Development Zone consultants. The answers are simple and can be simply demonstrated. An appropriate analogy may concern a person who asked the price of 1 apple and 2 oranges and then separately asked the price of 2 apples and 1 orange and received a different answer. The misguided purchaser then squeals loudly that the vendor has misled him on the price of fruit because he received 2 different answers.

What happened was that the Leader of the Opposition received precisely the right answers to the several specific questions that he asked. It is his problem if he cannot manage to ask the right questions. This is just another example of his fundamental lack of knowledge of the basic tenets of accounting practices, the difference between financial years, how to read quarterly statements and how to understand the system of government. The list goes on. In other words, he has demonstrated once again that he cannot add up.

Let me explain in simple terms the cause of his confusion. In respect of my answer to written question No 61, I said: 'Moneys paid to Mr K.K. Yeung since 1985 in conjunction with his activities on behalf of the Trade Development Zone total \$624 127. The specific components of this amount are not appropriate for release as public information and are a matter between K.K. Yeung and the TDZA'. That is a correct answer to the question which was: 'What is the total amount of money paid to Mr K.K. Yeung as a retainer, contact fee, the letter of intent stage, start up fee at establishment in the zone, and reimbursement of expenses in promoting the zone since his engagement as the prime consultant?' Mr Speaker, you will note that the question had 4 specific components: the total amount paid to Mr Yeung in respect of his activities as they relate to those 4 specific components is \$624 127, which is the answer I gave. Had he asked for an amount which comprised other components, for example, retainers for subconsultants and their expenses, some of which were paid through Mr Yeung, he would have received a different answer again. I repeat, however, that I will not disclose to him the specific amounts relating to those components as that is commercially-confidential and private information.

Let us turn now to the questions and the answers which gave him heartburn last night. Again, the questions put to me were specific and were as follows: 'What amounts were paid in 1987-88 to K.K. Yeung as a retainer, commission on letters of intent, travel, seminars, subconsultancies, commission in respect of enterprises, actual establishment in the zone and others, showing separately all advances?' Again, I gave the correct answer which was that, the total of those components during 1987-88 was \$572 000. I do not intend to break that down into those components either, Mr Speaker. The message must be getting through to the Leader of the Opposition by now.

To cap it all off, and to demonstrate the ineptitude of the Leader of the Opposition, he went back to the answer that I gave him to his second question last night and totally confused the financial years in respect of the information that I provided to him. He sought to establish the respective amounts relating to interstate and overseas marketing activities of the zone. His specific question was: 'How much of the marketing incentives and assistance is for overseas activity and how much for interstate activity?' The question was loosely constructed and further demonstrated a lack of appreciation of the zone's activities. It should be obvious that any incentives provided relate to prospective zone operator activities in the Northern Territory and therefore cannot be related to overseas or interstate activities. Given that his question did not relate to Territory operations, my response was that the budget calculation had been based on allocations of \$800 000 for overseas and \$260 000 for interstate activities. My use of the word 'calculation' made it clear that I was referring to 1988-89 budget figures, which was the whole focus of the debate, and not actual expenditure in respect of 1987-88. He failed to appreciate this, however, and immediately tried to reconcile the 1988-89 figures with the amount of \$572 000 for 1987-88, which I gave in response to question No 3. He became hopelessly confused, and the level of debate reached a new low.

Further confusion developed when the Leader of the Opposition went diving for the Parliamentary Record to throw in a figure generated in debate in 1986. Again, we ended up with apples and oranges. He did not realise that the figures which he attempted to quote with authority from his previous debate were, in fact, estimates of future expenditure rather than summaries of actual expenditure. He should have realised it because his own question in the 1986 debate asked what amount of money had been set aside in the 1986-87 budget as a retainer for Mr K.K. Yeung. In other words, what was estimated would be spent rather than what was actually spent.

Let us summarise this mass of confusion, Mr Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition has employed a series of figures to attempt to show that false information has been supplied by the government, but his figures derive from different fruit stalls and do not relate to any financial logic. He has entangled himself in a web of his own making. In short, all the answers he received were correct but he was unable to relate those correct answers to what he thought were his questions.

That foreshadows the level of accuracy that he will be bringing to the debate on the Trade Development Zone that he has loudly promised. Nevertheless, I repeat the challenge that I issued to him during question time yesterday, and perhaps, in the ensuing 24 hours, he has had time to get his act into gear. I repeat that, if he wants to put forward a substantive motion, I am ready and willing to accommodate him and we will debate the matter right here and now. He did not feel up to it yesterday but perhaps today his biorhythm charts are in better shape and he feels he is in a lucky mood. The Leader of the Opposition has pumped himself up about the big trouble he intends to stir up in relation to the Trade Development Zone. He was unable to act when the crunch point came yesterday. Maybe he will take the plunge today.

#### Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Mr Speaker, given that confusing tangle of statistics provided by the minister, I rise to seek clarification. Did he say that the figure of \$572 000 that he talked about and we talked about last night was a prospective figure for the 1988-89 financial year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it was a written question. It was 1987-88.

Mr Smith: Thank you.

Mr COULTER: That is the question that you asked.

Mr Smith: Five minutes ago, you said it was 1988-89.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, I gave the correct answer that the total of these components during 1987-88 was \$572 000.

Again, we have an example of his confusion. He is doing it very well. He has had good press every day this week and, if I were him, I would not bring on a censure motion either. I would keep dribbling out this nonsense, creating this confusion and destroying the reputation of the Trade Development Zone. He does not have the intestinal fortitude to stand up and be counted in a debate so that we can see exactly what sort of substance he has. Once again, I challenge the members opposite to come up with a substantive motion on the Trade Development Zone because, if they do not, I will not be rising to answer their questions any further.



### Fire at Alice Springs Abattoir

Mr PALMER to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I ask this question on behalf of yourself. Can he advise if the government has taken any action in relation to the recent conflagration that occurred at the Alice Springs abattoir complex?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I inform the Assembly that I have asked the Department of Industries and Development, the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries and the Department of Lands and Housing in Alice Springs to hold a meeting with the operators and owners of the Alice Springs abattoir with a view to giving the government a report on their problems and their intentions in order to determine what role the government may have to play in this unfortunate matter.

### Film North Contract

Mr FLOREANI to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

It is my understanding that the Northern Territory government has employed a Darwin firm to produce a video covering the Masters Games in Alice Springs in October. I believe the name of the Darwin company is Film North. I ask the minister the following questions. On what basis was Film North chosen to produce the video? Was it by public tender or otherwise? Why were local film producers not asked to tender for the production of the video? If the video tender was not put out for public tender, what other contracts have been given to Film North in the last 2 years without going to tender? Does Film North have any favoured position with the Territory government that precludes work given to it by the government from going to public tender?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer to the last question is no. I will endeavour to obtain the details that the honourable member requires before the completion of proceedings today.

### Education Problems

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for EDUCATION

The minister has gone on record several times appealing to communities to support the government in its efforts to provide education. I think the first problems arose at Imanpa. More recently, there have been reports of problems at Belyuen and at the new Katherine High School. Can the minister advise whether these problems have been resolved and what level of support has been shown by the communities concerned?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. There has been a good deal of community support at Imanpa and Belyuen in terms of dealing with problems. Honourable members will recall the very unfortunate circumstances that arose at the Imanpa school where teachers felt threatened and were removed from the school. There was a period when there was disquiet between the community and the Department of Education. We tried to consult

with that community to resolve the issues and I am very pleased to inform the House that those matters have been resolved and that there is now a teacher at Imanpa. I want to point out that, if the community had got its act together and discussed the issue with the department in the early stages, I believe the issue would have been resolved very quickly. I am very pleased to see that the community has now made the effort to get its school up and running so that its children can be educated.

In this context, I point out to honourable members that the subject of incentives for teachers in isolated areas has been widely discussed. Indeed, in my address to the Northern Territory Teachers Federation earlier this week, I put forward a proposal for a zonal system which will improve the rate of retention of teaching staff and provide more stability in services to bush schools through the use of contracts and bonuses to encourage the retention of experienced teachers in those areas. The members for Barkly and Stuart have both raised their concerns about the situation of isolated teachers and the government is addressing the issues.

With community support, we have resolved the problem at Belyuen. It is unfortunate that the school had to close as a result of the community council withdrawing the permit of the school's head teacher. That sort of action is really not necessary. If the community had discussed the issue with the department in the first instance, the problem could have been resolved more quickly. The situation was the subject of a report in yesterday's NT News and I am very pleased to say that the school will be open for business on Monday. The principal of the school, Mr Bill Turner, will remain. Areas of responsibility for the community council, school council and school will be clearly defined, set down in writing and agreed to. Departmental officers and the parent group liaison officer from the Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations will visit to assist the community in defining roles and structures.

The Belyuen Council representatives want to commence planning for the 1989-91 triennium with strategies relating to: firstly, the upgrading of the second-year phase of the Remote Area Teacher Education program; secondly, the placement of Aboriginal people in specific jobs within the school complex to undertake training on site whilst upgrading their qualifications; and, thirdly, investigation of the possibility of a position of an Aboriginal principal-in-training. The Department of Education has agreed to assess students at the school and to have discussions with the council concerning the various grade levels at the school. These are the sort of issues that are being talked about and discussed. If, in the first instance, the community had contacted the department about its concerns with what was being experienced there, I am sure the matter could have been resolved. I am very pleased to see that that community feeling and support is there in both those cases.

The final issue referred to by the honourable member concerned the Katherine High School. I was very disappointed to hear that Katherine High School was vandalised last Monday. The school was broken into and paint was sprayed across one of the classrooms. Fortunately, the damage was not as great as it was originally thought to be. There was no disruption and there will not be any disruption to schooling. Again, it is a wonderful community facility which cost the taxpayer \$12m. It is a pity that idiots in some communities act in the way that has occurred in Katherine.

I ask the community at Katherine, and the community in any town in the Northern Territory that has schools and public facilities, to keep their eyes

open for any suspicious activities and report them immediately to the police because we cannot allow the development in the Northern Territory of the situation that has existed in several of the states where considerable vandalism has occurred. We have wonderful facilities and we must keep them that way. I am very pleased to say that, in many cases, the communities are showing commitment to the education of their children. I ask the people in Katherine to keep their eyes open for any suspicious activities at the new school. I ask that the same care be taken to protect all schools in communities throughout the Territory.

#### Trade Development Zone

Mr LEO to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

I draw his attention to the Trade Development Zone Act regarding the frequency of board meetings. The act states that the interval between one meeting and the next should not exceed 45 days unless otherwise approved by the minister. When did the government become aware that the Chairman of the TDZA, Mr Ray McHenry, had told board members that there would be only 4 meetings in 1988? Did the minister authorise that decision? If so, when did the minister authorise that decision and what were the minister's reasons for authorising that decision?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, once again, if anybody has anything to add to any part of the debate on the Trade Development Zone, let him get up and say it. The opposition is creating this storm by asking a few questions here and there. They were approved. They were all approved. It has ministerial approval.

Mr Smith: By whom, when, where?

Mr COULTER: Let us stand up and have the debate. Let us make it a substantive debate.

Mr Smith: If you would answer the question, we might not need a debate.

Mr COULTER: It is nice to sit there smugly with arms folded and head back, Mr Speaker. Why won't the Leader of the Opposition rise to censure the government or bring this matter on as the subject of a discussion of a matter of public importance? If he moved for a substantive debate, he could draw it all out. The opposition will not do that. Members of the opposition will not do that because they have nothing to contribute. They rely on rumour and innuendo. They are using guerilla warfare. They are trying to sabotage the Trade Development Zone and they have no idea of the damage that they are doing. Mr Speaker, this is Yulara revisited.

In 5 years time, they will be ashamed of themselves. Their actions now will be noted in my black book along with their actions in relation to the pipeline. Yesterday, they said that they had never knocked the pipeline. I pointed out to honourable members opposite that Senator Bob Collins had said that it was a ludicrous idea and that the then member in the House of Representatives, Mr Reeves, said: 'We will have to re-examine the funding from Canberra if we go gas-powered instead of coal fired'.

The Trade Development Zone will be another millstone around their necks. They will rue the day that they knocked the Trade Development Zone. They have no idea of the damage that they are doing internationally to this very

worthwhile development in the Northern Territory which will be the saving grace for considerable manufacturing potential that could not have been realised in the Northern Territory without it. It is a shame that we have this 'Yulara Revisited' attitude from the opposition benches.

It will come back to haunt them. It will be another chapter in my black book which demonstrates that they have consistently knocked any development. It is all right for them. The member for Nhulunbuy can retire to Queensland with his \$200 000 pension. We are looking for jobs for Territorians, and 100 of them are being advertised for the Trade Development Zone at the moment. It is all right for the Leader of the Opposition with his \$200 000 pension due and payable to him. He is quite comfortable. We are interested in future Territorians and providing meaningful full-time employment. That is what I am committed to, Mr Speaker, and they will not stop me.

#### Northern Territory University

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer him to the proposed new Northern Territory University. I note that the Darwin Institute of Technology is currently issuing degrees. Will the degrees conferred at the new university continue to be University of Queensland degrees, will they be Northern Territory University degrees, will there be a continuation of DIT degrees or will there be a rationalisation of the degrees or some mixture or transitional process for the degrees? Can the minister advise on what steps are being taken to protect and enhance the integrity of degrees that will be issued by the new university?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, initially degrees will be issued by both the University of Queensland and the Northern Territory University. There is still a long way to go in terms of the actual courses which will be provided at the new university. There will be a transition period, during which courses at both the DIT and the University College of the Northern Territory will be taken into account.

Honourable members will be aware that we have an agreement with the University of Queensland in relation to degrees. That agreement extends until 1991. The reason for involving the University of Queensland with the University College related to credibility, as we have often pointed out to members opposite and the Commonwealth. We do not want our university to be a second-rate university; it must have credibility. The degrees issued in conjunction with the University of Queensland will continue to be issued until the agreement is completed. I have indicated that I would like the agreement to be extended because of the continuing need for credibility.

In the future, the issues will be the province of the Northern Territory University Council which will set up its own procedures involving faculty and academic boards. The decisions will be made by the Northern Territory University Council and, at some stage, the University of Queensland will disappear from the scene. The degrees will then be issued solely by the Northern Territory University. For the time being, degrees offered at the new Northern Territory University will be from both Queensland and the Northern Territory. If it is found that courses being taught at the new Northern Territory University are similar to those at the University of Queensland, students could have the choice of either a Queensland or Northern Territory degree. That is not to say, for example, that there would be 2 arts degrees.

It would mean that, if they were similar, students would have a choice. There is still a long way to go, Mr Speaker. We are developing a university which will have credibility and the best way to do that is to retain the Queensland connection during the early stages.

#### Amex Card Transaction

Mr EDE to MINISTER for TOURISM

Mr Speaker, having had an opportunity to study the minister's lengthy reply to yesterday's questions on the subject of an Amex card transaction regarding pearls, I note that 2 central questions remain unanswered. I repeat the first question. Did he use his Amex card to pay for approximately \$2000 worth of pearls? Secondly, what period elapsed before he repaid the Tourist Commission for that expenditure?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, here we go again. I do not believe that I have repeatedly to answer questions about my previous employment. I repeat what I said yesterday and what I said previously in this House when the opposition moved a want of confidence motion. My accounts were properly audited and acquitted by the Auditor-General. If the opposition has questions about my role as Minister for Tourism or my responsibilities for the Racing, Gaming and Liquor Commission, I am happy to answer them. I will take on notice any other questions relating to my previous employment.

#### Karama Child-care Centre

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Can he advise of the circumstances surrounding the recent signing of a contract for the construction of a child-care centre in Karama?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, actually I was expecting a question from the shadow spokesman for my portfolio on this subject this morning. Once again, he seems to have been short of the mark.

Mr Bell interjecting.

Mr DALE: Mr Speaker, that comment is indicative of the mentality of the honourable member opposite and of the standard of his contribution to this Assembly and to the constituency of the Northern Territory generally.

The contract for the construction of the Karama Child-care Centre was signed this week with a company called Interconstructions Pty Ltd. The value of the total contract, including land, was \$403 850. The centre will have 20 places. Karama was chosen as the site for this child-care centre as a result of an assessment by a combined Northern Territory and Commonwealth government planning committee which indicated that a need existed in the area, particularly for a service catering to children under 3 years of age.

The criteria for selection of site locations are agreed to on the basis of a Commonwealth and state formula. The site selection was made because there was no appropriately zoned land available other than rezoning open park land in Karama. If anybody is familiar with the suburb of Karama, he will know

that there is not too much to spare as far as open parkland is concerned. The developers offered land in an appropriate location, and their offer to supply the land and construct was agreed on. The site was agreed on by both the Northern Territory and Commonwealth ministers on the advice of both of their departments.

In the May economic statement of 1987, the Commonwealth reduced the total NT allocation of the number of places for child care. We were faced with only 41 remaining places and priority was given to needs Karama and Tennant Creek. The Northern Territory and Commonwealth ministers agreed to split those remaining places 21 to Tennant Creek and 20 to Karama.

Why is it to be undertaken by a private developer? A great deal of credit must go to the member for Karama. His hopes were almost forlorn of ever obtaining a much-needed child-care centre constructed in Karama. He went out and spread the word around his electorate that we needed some cooperation from the landowners there. The company that I mentioned came forward and offered a land and building proposal appropriately located in the Karama area. The site was then agreed to by the Commonwealth minister. The Commonwealth was fully aware of all of the negotiations at each stage. The developer and architect have previous experience from developing successful proposals for other child-care centres in the Northern Territory, particularly at Humpty Doo and Malak. The agreement was prepared by the Department of Law.

Mr Speaker, in relation to the cost of the building, I am sure that to all honourable members and people out in the Northern Territory community, the cost of \$403 000, including the land, for a 20-place child-care centre seems to be quite outrageous. I agree, but the fact is that that is what it costs. Let me cite some prices relative to the cost per place in a facility. The Dripstone Child-care Centre on land belonging to the Darwin Institute of Technology cost \$9744 per place. That was constructed by the Department of Transport and Works.

Mr Smith: It is a long way away from \$20 000.

Mr Dondas: That is not the land.

Mr DALE: No, that is right.

The Moulden Child-care Centre cost \$13 875 per place. That is for 32 placements and was constructed by the Department of Transport and Works. The Katherine East Child-care Centre cost \$11 950 for 40 placements and that was constructed by the Department of Transport and Works. The Karama centre is \$16 191 for 20 placements. That is an increase on those previous prices that I quoted. The others were completed more than 18 months ago. There has been an increase in costs since then. However, the Karama facility has another cost factor because it caters for babies under 2 years of age. Therefore nursery, laundering, air-conditioning, plumbing costs etc are a major increase in the cost factor for that particular facility. By the way, the Commonwealth's contribution is a fixed amount per place, according to the formula that I mentioned, at \$4450 per place. Under the joint agreement, the Northern Territory is required to commit the balance of funds needed to complete the facility.

The Northern Territory government had a commitment to many young families living in Karama and the fulfilment of the commitment is and was a priority. The Commonwealth agreed with every step that we took in finally arriving at the signing of the contract for the completion of this facility for the

parents of young children in the Karama area. I hope that puts to rest any of the scurrilous innuendo that oozes out of the honourable members opposite. The actions of this government are implemented with the best interests of the people of the Northern Territory in mind. We had to go to great lengths - and I must confess, in some circumstances during these negotiations, great pains - to come up finally with a much-needed facility in Karama that was agreed with by the Commonwealth government in Karama. Now the people of Karama can enjoy that facility.

#### Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

There is one simple way, Mr Speaker, that the minister can lay to rest the confusion that he has managed to create about the total amount of money paid to Mr K.K. Yeung. What is the total amount of money that has been paid to Mr K.K. Yeung, either personally or through his company or in any other way, since his appointment as a consultant for the Trade Development Zone?

ANSWER

Now we are getting somewhere, Mr Speaker. He has found out what he really wanted to ask. It took him a long time. Because of the sensitivity of this matter and because of the confusion, and to ensure that I have the wording of his question absolutely correct, I will take that on notice and supply him with that information. However, I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for finally coming to grips with what he really wants to ask. That has been a very interesting exercise for him. In future, let us hope he makes his questions as precise as were the answers given in the Assembly last night. He accused me of misleading the Assembly, of making deliberate distortions and was called to order a couple of times for calling me a liar. Finally, he has come to grips with what he really wants to ask. It is a momentous day for this parliament. The penny has finally dropped, and I am thankful for that.

#### Road Safety Council

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I understand that the Road Safety Council is taking some new initiatives in respect of road safety problems in the various Territory centres. Can he outline those new initiatives that will be taken by the Road Safety Council?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am delighted to answer the question from the member for Casuarina who has always taken a very genuine interest in road safety matters. Darwinites will be pleased to hear that a Regional Road Safety Council for the Darwin area has been formed, the last throughout the Northern Territory to be formed. Until now, matters pertaining to the Darwin area have been handled by the Northern Territory Committee of the Road Safety Council on behalf of the local community whereas all other centres - Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Jabiru and Nhulunbuy - have had their own road safety committees which are able to interpret on-the-ground matters of concern to the local community such as dangerous intersections, requirements for traffic control devices, traffic lights, stop signs etc. They also assist the Road Safety Council in delivering its programs to the local community in the form that is the most effective.

The committees on the ground deal with issues locally. They talk to the local councils or to Department of Transport and Works officers to try to resolve issues promptly and appropriately at the local level. That is really quite important and most effective. The committees help take much of the load off the Road Safety Council. Not only was a need to localise safety issues identified but the work of the Road Safety Council was becoming quite burdensome. At the moment, I think the Road Safety Council has some 9 or 10 full-time employees and they are extremely busy putting together programs.

Many of the recent programs relate to Aboriginal communities. I am sure honourable members opposite will be pleased to know that an advertising campaign is being finalised. Aboriginal communities have been involved in the preparation of programs to deliver appropriate messages about road safety to their communities. We are having a great deal of difficulty in a number of areas which relate to driving on remote roads, gravel roads etc. Of course, for many Aboriginal communities, the only method of transport is in utilities. There is an ever-increasing need for care to be taken. Another area of concern, as I have mentioned in this House before, has been for Aboriginal people visiting the larger towns where they are confronted with traffic situations that they are not used to in their own communities.

A series of programs are being developed, both in cassette form and for TV distribution through Imparja and the ABC. The cassettes will go to those communities that still do not have access to television. In addition, the Road Safety Council runs the important school programs very effectively and the regional councils have a very important role to play there as well. I am sure honourable members would agree that the displays that the Road Safety Council puts on at each of the annual shows in the Territory is of a high standard and they are extremely effective. They are able to get the message across. Much of that work is done by the local regional councils.

As I mentioned, it is important to ensure that policy matters and matters of concern that are raised at the local level are fed back through the NT Road Safety Council so that others are able to share in that localised knowledge. Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. I am sure that Darwinites will take advantage of this new regional committee and will raise issues such as the standard of some of the local council roundabouts, for example, the one at Crisp Street in Rapid Creek. Although the committee has been in existence only some 2 weeks, already it has identified a considerable number of issues that it can address. An example is the danger caused where trees obscure vision at intersections. Some of those issues may sound fairly trivial but, in reality, can lead to fatal accidents as easily as more major hazards. I would implore all honourable members to encourage their constituents to take advantage of this new regional committee to provide meaningful input into ensuring that our roads remain safe for our citizens.

#### Amex Card Expenses of Minister for Tourism

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TOURISM

I refer him to his statement in this House yesterday when he said: 'It is a fact that I have never been questioned by any Chief Minister concerning my personal expenditures on my American Express card'. I draw the attention of the honourable minister to a comment made by the then Chief Minister, the member for Nightcliff, in this House in August this year: 'I happened to become the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory. At that time, the Auditor-General made me aware of concerns associated with unacquitted expenses and the discussions that were occurring with the Tourist Commission itself.



It is true'. Is it a fact that the then Chief Minister said that, after being alerted by the Auditor-General about those unacquitted expenses, he had discussions with the Minister for Tourism about the matter, and how does the minister reconcile his answer yesterday with the comments of the member for Nightcliff?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am thinking about the dates. I do not remember any such discussion with any Chief Minister at that time. I would think that what the honourable member is referring to occurred after I had left the Tourist Commission.

Mr Smith: So you had discussions with a Chief Minister which you denied yesterday?

Mr BELL: A supplementary question, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

#### State Square Project Finance

Mr COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Would he confirm for me, if he can, a matter raised in discussion with the member for Nightcliff yesterday relating to the State Square project, namely that the right to borrow money for that project is actually tied into the project and, if we do not borrow it for that project, we cannot borrow it for any other? If that is true, would he confirm that that direction came from the federal Treasurer, Mr Keating? Further, is he aware, as most of us are that, Mr Keating and Mr Anderson, the proposer of that project, are known to be very good friends?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, to clarify the situation in regard to the Territory's Australian Loans Council borrowing limits, as honourable members know, the federal government itself puts forward the Territory's bid each year to the Australian Loans Council for a global borrowing limit. The Territory, not being a state, is not a member of the Loans Council and, in this situation, that is significant. What the Territory does is submit to the federal Treasurer each year - and this has been done since self-government - a list of proposals that it would like to fund under loan borrowings. Almost invariably, the list is reduced somewhat in much the same way as the states' bids for global borrowings are usually not completely satisfied. The Northern Territory's bid goes forward to the Loans Council - we are supposed to be an equal partner but it does not quite work out that way - along with proposals from the Commonwealth's statutory bodies such as Qantas. Our bid is lumped in amongst those.

An amount is approved which, in a technical sense, is the Northern Territory's global limit and technically can be used on any loan program activities that the Northern Territory government desires. However, with a project such as the Channel Island Power Station which would be constructed over a period of years, that global borrowing is not permitted up-front. Only the component that we believe we will use in the first year can be applied. There is an understanding that, in subsequent years, the project will be funded to its completion.

In this context, the Northern Territory government put forward the State Square project to the federal government and it was approved by the federal government as part of the Northern Territory's bid. It is a project of some \$100m, as I have indicated to the media, for which we require loan funds. In the Northern Territory's global borrowings for this year, we have a figure of \$20m in loan borrowing capacity. If we do not use it, we can carry it over to next year.

I say that because I have already indicated to members that the currently proposed program with the State Square project is for the developer to finance the construction phase. In that case, we will not require our \$20m borrowing to be drawn down this year. It will carry over and be added to the 2 or 3 years following through on that program. Notwithstanding all that, in a technical sense, the Territory government has the ability to say that it has changed its mind and will spend this year's \$20m on something else. Of course, it will not do our future relationship with the federal government the world of good.

#### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

What position is adopted by the Northern Territory government in regard to the proposal by the federal government to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is a most important matter and I hope honourable members are generally following the developments with ATSIC because it will be very much in the news in future years if it is established. It reminds me a little of the early days of the Lands Rights Act where parliamentarians were doing things with no idea how it would all turn out. I believe that the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission under the present bill is really an attempt to establish another government within Australia, a government that will cross state borders. I am sure that, if members care to pick up that legislation and study it carefully, they will come to a similar conclusion.

The Northern Territory government recognises that the Commonwealth has a special constitutional responsibility to the Aboriginal people of Australia and that it is the right of the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to organise the delivery of services to the Aboriginal people of Australia. However, the Territory government opposes the proposed commission in its current form. For the benefit of the Assembly, I will outline a couple of the reasons for this opposition.

Despite the extensive consultation program conducted by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, there remains widespread concern amongst Aboriginal communities and organisations. As recently as Tuesday this week, my office received representations from the Pmara Jutunta community expressing its dismay at the proposed zone regional council boundaries. I was intrigued by a recent media report that a group of south-east Queensland Aboriginals had resolved to reject the commission proposal as if it were somehow a right-wing plot. That goes to show the level of confusion in the community as to what it really means.

The support of urban-based Aboriginal groups does not translate automatically into universal acceptance by all Aboriginal people, particularly Aboriginal Territorians. Despite representations by the former Chief Minister and the Minister for Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government to both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, there has been no government-to-government consultation on this proposal. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs undertook, at the Australian Aboriginal Affairs Council meeting of 4 December 1987 in Perth, to consult with state and Territory governments and the wider community. As I said, this has not been done.

All parties in the field of Aboriginal affairs, the Commonwealth government, the Northern Territory government and Aboriginal organisations share a common objective: the improvement of the well-being of Aboriginal Territorians. It is notable that most of the advances in Aboriginal development have been achieved through consultation that has resulted in a bipartisan position on particular issues and objectives. The most recent example of this is the agreement between the Commonwealth and Territory governments to jointly fund the town camp and housing infrastructure program.

Mr Speaker, I remind members opposite of a statement made by the former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon Clyde Holding, when addressing the Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice on 16 March 1985, on the need for support from the majority of Australians:

It is essential to remember that, if national land rights legislation or any other legislation designed to create rights for the Aboriginal people of this nation is to be enduring and successful, it must have the support of the majority of Australians. It cannot ignore the rights, aspirations or concerns of the majority of Australians.

The legislation to establish this commission has been prepared ignoring the rights, aspirations and concerns of the majority of Australians. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission legislation contains a preamble. What does the preamble purport to do as a matter of law? The preamble purports to be the acknowledgement of prior ownership of Australia by Aboriginal people which was extinguished in 1788. However, a preamble is to be treated with respect as it contains the parliament's reasons for passing the act and it expresses the opinion which the parliament holds. The far-reaching implications of this legislative action ought to have been the subject of consultation with all of the people of Australia and their democratically-elected governments.

The Northern Territory government is deeply concerned that the proposed commission has the potential to interpose on valuable and cooperative arrangements already established between the government and the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory. This is particularly so in relation to the Territory government's innovative and successful form of local government, specifically aimed at small remote communities, the majority of which are comprised of Aboriginal Territorians. I am sure that the Minister for Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government will advise the Assembly of the less-than-satisfactory response received from the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on the likely impact of ATSIC on the community government scheme.

Finally, the proposed commission has the potential to divert and channel funds made available currently by the Commonwealth to the states and the Northern Territory and to determine distribution among states and territories and among Aboriginal communities. I am sure that is exactly what it is intended to do. That issue ought to have been subject to intense deliberation

by individual governments. The position of the land councils, that the proposals should be implemented immediately and that the deficiencies that they have identified can be corrected after the legislation is law, is outrageous. Mr Yunupingu may agree to give a blanket endorsement to the bill but he has no charter to endorse it on behalf of other Territorians. The interests of all parties, particularly those of the Aboriginal citizens of the Territory, would be better served if the Commonwealth devoted its resources to a re-examination and reorganisation of its functional responsibilities and to enhancing systems of financial distribution to strengthen the position of the Northern Territory government, which is in the best position to program for the satisfaction of Aboriginal needs.

The Commonwealth bill has been available only since 24 August and more and more questions unfold daily. The Northern Territory government will be forcibly expressing its position and concerns again to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Prime Minister, as it did to the Senate select committee on 22 September. We have finally obtained a copy of a map of ATSIC zones. Sadly, we had to obtain this from sources other than the federal government. The map seems to indicate that 1 of the 2 zones covering the Northern Territory extends well into Western Australia and South Australia. The zones would probably contain 40 000 Aborigines, 30 000 within the Territory and about 10 000 in Western Australia and South Australia. With 2 zones, the Northern Territory has 2 commissioners on the body running ATSIC. Tasmania, which claims 6500 Aborigines, has 1 representative. That is just one example which shows that this organisation is not in the interests of the Aborigines in the Northern Territory and should not proceed in its current form.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

Electorate Office of Member for Flynn

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, I rise to provide answers to 2 questions which have been asked in these sittings. The member for Stuart asked me to investigate a scheme promoted by the member for Flynn and to inform the House of the outcome of my investigation. On reflection, it is not appropriate for me to decide whether or not there has been a breach of the criminal law. Any response I could give would be on the basis of hearsay only. Further, I am not aware of any complaint that has been made or that any undue influence has been brought to bear. If there were such a complaint, it would be a matter for investigation by the police. Speculation or further comment by me could serve no purpose and I do not intend to become involved in hypothetical exercises.

For the benefit of honourable members, I will read the relevant sections of the Criminal Code. Section 88 says:

Any person who -

- (a) gives, confers or procures, or promises or offers to give or confer or to procure or attempt to procure, to, upon or for any person any property or benefit of any kind on account of anything already done or omitted to be done, or to be afterwards done or omitted to be done, by an elector at an election in the capacity of an elector or in order to induce any person to endeavour to procure the return of any person at an election, or the vote of any elector at an election;

- (b) being an elector, asks, receives or obtains, or agrees or attempts to receive or obtain, any property or benefit of any kind for himself or any other person on account of anything already done or omitted to be done, or to be afterwards done or omitted to be done, by him at an election in the capacity of an elector;
- (c) asks, receives or obtains, or agrees or attempts to receive or obtain, any property or benefit of any kind for himself or any other person on account of a promise made by him or any other person to endeavour to procure the return of any person at an election, or the vote of any person at an election; or
- (d) advances or pays any money to or for the benefit of any other person with the intent that such money shall be applied for any of the purposes mentioned in paragraph (a), (b) or (c), or in discharge or repayment of money wholly or in part applied for any such purpose,

is guilty of a crime and is liable to imprisonment for 3 years.

Section 89(1) says:

Any person convicted of any of the crimes defined by section 87 or 88 with respect to an election of the Legislative Assembly becomes incapable for 3 years from the date of the conviction of voting in any such election or holding any judicial office and, if he holds any such office, the office is vacated.

Section 89(2) says:

He also becomes incapable for the like period of being elected to or sitting in the Legislative Assembly; and, if at the time of the conviction he is a member of it, his seat is vacated.

Mr Speaker, it is obvious that care should be taken by all honourable members or those standing for election to bear in mind these provisions of the Criminal Code. They are sensible and fair provisions. In the light of recent decisions in other jurisdictions and noting the incidence of electoral challenges in the Northern Territory, it is obvious that there is an increasing scrutiny of the conduct of candidates for election. Accordingly, it is appropriate that I give a word of warning to all honourable members and potential candidates. If they have innovative schemes, they should ensure that they receive legal advice in relation to the provisions of the code or, for that matter, the Electoral Act and the Self-Government Act. The Northern Territory cannot afford the cost of unnecessary elections.

I would suggest that the member for Flynn make himself fully conversant with the provisions of the National Companies and Securities Code, sections 53 and 54, and sections 99 and 104 of the Companies Code. I wish him well in obtaining an office in his electorate. Some of my colleagues in the House, namely the Minister for Labour, Administrative Services and Local Government and the member for Ludmilla have had difficulty in obtaining office accommodation and have been forced to utilise demountables.

Mrs Padgham-Purich: I used to use a caravan.

Mr MANZIE: The member for Koolpinyah was forced to use a caravan.

I do not wish to discourage the honourable member from being innovative but I indicate that he should research carefully any steps that he intends to take to ensure that they are proper and legal.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
Sir Edward Pellew Group Land Claim

Mr MANZIE (Lands and Housing): Mr Speaker, there was a question from the member for Barkly regarding the Sir Edward Pellew Group. He asked if I could confirm that a claim has been made over the area and, if so, whether I am able to say whether the government supports a further land claim over the area.

Mr Tuxworth: And were you aware that your staff are supporting the claim?

Mr MANZIE: Again, Mr Speaker, whether the staff of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority are my staff or not seems to be unclear. The court has thought otherwise in certain circumstances, as the honourable member for Barkly is fully aware. However, we will sort that problem out with the introduction of legislation in the near future.

The new land claim was lodged with the Aboriginal Land Commissioner on 5 September 1988. Originally, the area was claimed as part of the Borroloola Land Claim No 1. In 1977, Justice Toohey heard that claim and he recommended no grant. A second claim was made and then a third which were lodged on 24 January and 5 March 1979 respectively. Neither of those claims has been heard. On 8 February, the Town of Pellew site was proposed and that included the South-west Island. I can assure honourable members that, with the developments occurring in the McArthur River area, we will certainly be opposing aspects of these land claims because the present Land Rights Act is such that it causes many problems for all members of the Territory community. My wish is that the federal Land Rights Act will be changed so that we do not have to go through the process to protect the rights of all Territorians and we can all operate with peace and with goodwill.

Mr Speaker, returning to the staff, I think I pointed out quite clearly that the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority - and the member for Barkly sits there and makes facetious remarks ...

Mr Tuxworth: I am not being facetious.

Mr MANZIE: He knows how it all began. He was the one that the Director of the Sacred Sites Protection Authority made a fool out of. I think that he ought to be ashamed to raise the matter in this House. Certainly, he did not look too good the last time he tried to.

Mr COULTER (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the question paper. I remind honourable members that, when the 10 minutes following question time is used to respond to interjections and becomes involved in the provision of additional information, that prolongs the time. If we have a little more discipline, we can proceed through question time more quickly. I will have more to say about that at a later date.

Audit of K.K. Yeung's Business Dealings  
with the NT Government

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for INDUSTRIES and DEVELOPMENT

Last Thursday in this House, he stated he had commissioned an audit for Mr K.K. Yeung's business dealings with the Northern Territory. Will he now table the letter setting out the terms and conditions of the audit that he commissioned?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can probably answer that question to the satisfaction of the Leader of the Opposition if I offer the following explanation regarding the audit. The Leader of the Opposition has failed once again to understand the audit and what it shows. The audit examines only retainer and supervisory fees received by K.K. Yeung Management Consultants for the period 13 May 1986 to 13 September 1988. It is unreasonable and downright foolish to compare such figures with the total payment to consultants since 1985. The audit figure does not include fees and expenses incurred under the first agreement in 1985-1986 or retainer fees for subconsultants and expenses for all consultants under the subsequent agreements.

Perhaps it would be helpful to the Leader of the Opposition if I were to provide some background on the audit report. The first audit was conducted in May this year by direction of the TDZ Authority to confirm claims by K.K. Yeung Management Consultants of time cost losses. The audit was sought to examine the time costs and determine if a loss in fact had been incurred. It was not intended to examine all consultancy payments. The second audit - the one that I tabled here last week - was commissioned by myself on the same basis. Principally, it was to provide independent authority and to check claims made in the first audit, which was done by a certified public accountant who could be claimed to have links with K.K. Yeung Management Consultants. In other words, I sought the second audit to allay any concerns that might be raised about the veracity of the first audit. It does not pretend to be an audit of the Trade Development Zone Authority payments to Asian consultants and it is only the Leader of the Opposition who pretends that it does. We already know what the authority has paid to Mr K.K. Yeung Management Consultants and it is the figure that I stated in the House last week.

Mr Speaker, whilst I am on my feet, I wonder if I may answer the 39 questions which the Leader of the Opposition put to me last week. I hear 'No' from the members of the opposition but I get the nod from the Leader of the Opposition. Once again he is asserting his authority over his band of 6. I propose to answer the so-called 39 questions asked about the Trade Development Zone last week. However, I do so with some concern because of the potential to cause damage to the reputation of the Northern Territory government and its commercial dealings with the Asian business community. My concern is that Asian business people will be reluctant to do business with the Territory because of the perceived likelihood that their business will become a matter of public record. However, there appears to be a widespread perception in the Territory, sponsored by the opposition, that the government has something to hide or to cover up in its marketing and promotional activities relating to the Trade Development Zone. I answer these questions therefore to dispel that perception because there is nothing to hide and no cause for concern in relation to the government's activities. Mr Speaker, I will read each question and then supply an answer.

Question 1: Who located K.K. Yeung Management Company in the first instance? Mr K.K. Yeung Management Consultants Ltd was located by the Northern Territory Development Corporation after consultation with Asian business people.

Question 2: Who recommended him to the Trade Development Zone Authority? The question needs correcting, Mr Speaker. It was not an individual that was recommended, but a company of consultants. Mr Yeung's company was recommended to the Board of the Northern Territory Development Corporation by its Chairman, Mr Ray McHenry, and a former minister, Mr Nick Dondas, after they had interviewed the principal of the company. The NTDC Board formally approved the appointment of the consultant company.

Question 3: Who drew up the initial contract with K.K. Yeung and with whose authority? The original contract was drawn up by the Northern Territory Development Corporation on the authority of the NTDC Board.

Question 4: What were the conditions of his contract? The conditions of the original contract have been disclosed previously in the Legislative Assembly. For the record, however, they were as follows. The original contract was for a period of 12 months with fees of \$A3000 per month plus expenses. In addition, success fees were payable on the signing of letters of intent to establish an industry in the zone on the following scale: up to \$A1m - 2%; from \$A1 to \$A5m - 1.25%; and over \$A5m - 1%. The areas covered were Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

Question 5: What models were used to frame it? The basis of the original contract was formed from information obtained from government and private-sector enterprises, particularly in regard to retainer and success fee arrangements.

Question 6: How long was Mr K.K. Yeung contracted to the authority before the board was informed? The question is meaningless, Mr Speaker. The original agreement was approved on 13 May 1985 and the Trade Development Zone Authority Board did not exist until 25 September 1985. At its first meeting on that date, board members noted the agreement.

Question 7: Did the board express reservations about the contract conditions from the outset? No board member expressed any reservation about the original contract conditions or the subsequent contract. In fact, at the meeting of 17 and 18 April 1986, the board members stated, and I quote: '... the need to ensure the ongoing attraction of investment to the zone from South-east Asian region. Members agreed that, in order to ensure the above objective and adequately remunerate the consultant, the agreement should be placed on a fully commercial footing'.

Question 8: If it did, what were those reservations? As I said, no such reservations were expressed about the original contract or the subsequent contract.

Question 9: What actions did the chairman or the minister take to address those concerns or reservations? Mr Speaker, I have to keep taking these questions at face value, and I have to repeat that no concerns or reservations were expressed about the contract the Leader of the Opposition specifically refers to. Therefore, no action was necessary.

Question 10: What were Mr Yeung's reimbursed expenses for the years 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88? I presume the question refers to K.K. Yeung



Management Consultants and, therefore, not only Mr Yeung but all his staff and all the subconsultants. Mr Yeung himself, as an individual, of course was not reimbursed for any expenses at all, and any payments received were as the principal of the company and acting for the company. I should also explain that the term 'expenses' means payments made by any of the consultants for seminars, travel, accommodation, hospitality or any other function not covered by retainers and fees - in other words, tasks on the TDZA's behalf for which they could justify reimbursement. The total reimbursed figure for the years mentioned was \$306 544. For all South-east Asian regions, that is, reimbursements that are included in the total government payment to Asian consultants, the figure for the years mentioned was \$495 485.

Question 11: How were those expenses audited before being paid, and by whom were they audited? The TDZ Authority's internal accounts procedures cover processing of all payments. These, of course, are subject to audit each financial year by an independent auditor appointed by the Auditor-General.

Question 12: What were the reimbursed expenses of the following board members, Mr Col Fuller, Mr Laurie Jones, Mr Tony Richards, Mr Bob Matthewson, Mr Ray McHenry? Reimbursements from 25 September 1985 to June 1988, a period of almost 3 years, for the board as a whole, was \$122 205. Mr McHenry, as chairman, carried most of the weight of those reimbursements because it was he who travelled most to Asia and to other world regions for and on behalf of the board to meet contacts discovered by consultants and to conduct the business of the zone. Clearly, it was Mr McHenry's charter to handle negotiations personally, and his reimbursements reflect that. He acted as agent for the board and the zone.

Question 13: How were those expenses audited and by whom? Expenses were paid subject to supporting documentation as is covered under the TDZ Authority's procedures. The authority is subject to external audit each financial year by an independent auditor appointed by the Auditor-General.

Question 14: What amounts were paid to Mr K.K. Yeung for retainers, commissions, letters of intent, travel, seminars, subconsultancies, commissions in respect of enterprises established in the zone and any other activities? Mr Speaker, I do not want the Leader of the Opposition to become confused, as he did last week. Therefore, I will presume he means how much was paid to K.K. Yeung Management Consultants in total since the company was engaged as principal Asian consultant and which covered payments to subconsultants in Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, Malaysia and China. I will also presume he means K.K. Yeung, the individual. Of course, the answer is \$1 439 573, as I stated to the House last week.

Question 15: What were those amounts in each of the financial years 1985-86, 1986-87 and 1987-88? In each of the financial years, the amounts were as follows: in 1985-86 - \$325 071; in 1986-87 - \$431 342; and, in 1987-88 - \$683 161.

Question 16: How many days in each year was Mr McHenry involved in overseas travel? The chairman spent the following number of days overseas. In 1986, 63 days; in 1987, 51; and, in 1988 to 30 June, 69 days.

Question 17: How many of those trips in each year involved a visit to Mr K.K. Yeung? Mr Speaker, the question is poorly worded. I can supply an answer to a question asking how many of those trips involved a visit to Hong Kong: 4 in 1986, 4 in 1987 and 3 in 1988. Of course, those Hong Kong visits may not actually have involved a personal visit to Mr Yeung. He might have

been away from Hong Kong at the time, and it might be that Mr McHenry visited members of K.K. Yeung Management Consultants' staff. It might also be that Mr McHenry saw Mr Yeung or members of the consultancy staff in places other than Hong Kong. Indeed, one would expect that he did because it was the job of the consultants to advise the zone and its chairman.

Question 18: How many trips overseas were undertaken by other members of the board in the same period? Trips by other board members were as follows: in 1986, 2 by Mr Bob Matthewson and 1 by Mr Lawrie Jones and, in 1987, 1 by Mr Tony Richards.

Question 19: How many trips were undertaken by staff members? The answer is as follows: 1986 - 8; 1987 - nil; and 1988 - 7.

Question 20: On how many trips did a minister accompany or meet with Mr McHenry overseas? The answer is on 5 occasions.

Question 21: Which ministers and when? The answer is: Hon Ray Hanrahan in September 1986; Hon Nick Dondas, representing the responsible minister Hon Marshall Perron, in August 1987; Hon Marshall Perron in February 1988; Hon Marshall Perron in May 1988; and myself in September 1988.

Question 22: When was the first variation of Mr K.K. Yeung's contract approved and by whom was it approved? The contract for Mr K.K. Yeung Management Consultants was revised and approved on 17 April 1986 by the TDZA Board which comprised Mr Ray McHenry, Mr Bob Matthewson, Mr Rick Allert, Mr Laurie Jones and Mr Tony Richards.

Question 23: What subsequent variations, including ex gratia payments, impresses and advances on fees and retainers, were approved and by whom? I will answer this in conjunction with question 24.

Question 24: What were the amounts involved in each case? Subsequent variations are as follows. In June 1986, the board approved an increase in retainer fees for the Taiwan consultant from \$2000 to \$3000 per month. The board also approved an additional payment of \$45 000 to K.K. Yeung Management Consultants to cover demonstrated losses during the period of the first consultancy. At its meeting on 7 and 8 April 1987, the board agreed to increase the Taiwan and Singapore-Malaysia subconsultants' retainer by \$2000 per month. In December 1987, the chairman approved an advance of retainer fees for 3 months totalling \$40 000. This was fully acquitted and board members were advised at the March 1988 meeting. Also in December 1987, the retainer for the Taiwan consultant was increased by \$1000. This was endorsed by the board. In January 1988, the retainer for the Thailand consultant was increased by \$2000 and this was also endorsed by the board.

At its March 1988 meeting, the board considered a paper for renewal of contracts for K.K. Yeung Management Consultants and asked that other options be canvassed. The minister did not support those options and, after consultation with the board and K.K. Yeung Management Consultants, and then Cabinet, he determined a formula along existing lines in preference to those options posed by a majority of the board. In May 1988, board members endorsed the proposal by the minister to enter into an interim agreement with K.K. Yeung Management Consultants on a month-to-month basis, subject to negotiations by the minister and the chairman during a visit later that month. As a result of those negotiations, a new agreement was entered into for a period of 6 months, expiring on 13 November 1988. This agreement is due to be reviewed following receipt of the final report at the end of October by the

independent consultant studying the zone's marketing and promotional activities, Mr Fergus Simpson. Cabinet agreed that an advance of \$120 000 be paid to K.K. Yeung Management Consultants against success fees which would accrue in the near future.

Question 25: What investigations, audits or other inquiries preceded those payments? Normal internal procedures were applied, together with detailed investigations of time cost losses.

Question 26: Were the payments approved by the board before or after the event? Details of this question were supplied in the answers to questions 23 and 24.

Question 27: Which of those payments were rejected by the board but subsequently approved by the minister? K.K. Yeung Management Consultants put in a claim at the May 1988 board meeting for a payment based on the company's interpretation of its contractual entitlements. This was not supported by the board nor was it supported by the minister.

Question 28: Which minister approved payments which were rejected by the board? No payments were rejected by the board and then approved by the minister.

Question 29: When did Mr McHenry direct his fellow board members not to speak to staff members of the Trade Development Zone Authority and vice versa, and why did he do it? At the March 1988 board meeting, the chairman requested that, in future, all communications between board members and staff be directed through him. I am informed that this followed an incident in which some board members sought to hold secret and clandestine meetings and communications with staff with the proviso that the chairman or the deputy chairman was not told.

Question 30: Did he consult the minister before issuing this directive and did the minister approve? It was the chairman's prerogative to take such a course and it did not need ministerial approval.

Question 31: When did Mr McHenry direct that the authority's fax machine be moved into his office? The authority's fax machine was not moved into his office. However, an additional machine was installed for the use of the chairman and it is located for his convenience outside his main office.

Question 32: When did he direct that all staff correspondence be routed past his desk? On 24 August 1988, he requested that all incoming mail be directed to him in the first instance so that he could be kept informed on matters of importance and to update him on matters that might have occurred while he was out of Darwin.

Question 33: What were the reasons for those most unusual decisions? I do not see anything particularly unusual about them. As I understand it, and I stress that we are descending into administrative arrangements that hardly seem worth the attention of this Assembly, the main motivation was an office structure which would allow his senior executive assistants to fax copies of important correspondence to him when he was out of Darwin.

Question 34: When was the decision taken to terminate the board membership of Mr Col Fuller, Mr Tony Richards and Mr Laurie Jones? Strictly speaking, the correct answer is 'never'. However, I will explain the circumstances. In June, Cabinet decided to restructure the TDZA Board and to

reduce its membership from 5 to 3. The primary reason for this was that it was considered necessary to use the talents of local people. Mr Laurie Jones was based in Sydney and Mr Tony Richards had moved his business from Alice Springs to Brisbane and, in any case, he was away for most of 1988 on an overseas holiday. Board membership was not terminated but the memberships of Mr Jones and Mr Richards were not renewed. Nor was the membership of Mr Col Fuller terminated. He resigned because his departmental responsibilities had changed. The new member on the board is the Darwin businessman, Mr Haig Arthur, who will join Mr McHenry and Mr Bob Matthewson. The new board has met already.

Question 35: Did Mr McHenry recommend that their memberships be terminated? No, he did not. As I explained in the previous answer, no memberships were in fact terminated.

Question 36: Why had their skills become redundant? As I explained previously, Cabinet took the decision to replace interstate board members with local members. All the major policy decisions required local business expertise, including attracting potential overseas investors to Darwin.

Question 37: Does the government intend to review Mr McHenry's contract, and when does it expire? It would be highly inappropriate to answer such a question and completely and utterly unfair to the public servant involved. I could just as well ask the Leader of the Opposition when the contract of his economic advisor expires and whether he intended to renew it, or whether the manager of the ABC intended to review Claire Martin's contract. The Leader of the Opposition goes beyond reasonable bounds with such a question, and he knows it.

Question 38: Can the minister explain the reasons for the Trade Development Zone Authority's non-compliance with the clause in its act that specifies that the interval between meetings be not greater than 45 days? There was no non-compliance. The act provides for a responsible minister to approve any extension of the period between meetings, and this approval has been properly obtained in all cases.

Question 39: Will the minister advise what are the terms of reference for the commission of Mr Fergus Simpson to investigate the operations of the Trade Development Zone Authority and when they were approved by the board? The board did not commission the review. It was endorsed by Cabinet and the appointment of Mr Fergus Simpson was on behalf of the Northern Territory government, not the TDZA. Board members were informed of this decision and the letter of appointment was provided to them for noting at the board meeting on 26 September 1988. I will read into Hansard the terms of reference under which Mr Simpson is operating. These are as follows:

TERM

The review is to commence immediately with the final report to be completed by 31 October 1988.

AREA

The areas to be reviewed will include Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The report should take into account the following factors: (a) industries suitable for establishment in the Trade Development Zone and target markets; (b) a review of the Trade Development Zone Authority's marketing strategies and marketing programs as they relate to Asia and Australia; (c) a review of the use of consultants or appropriate alternatives; (d) a review of the adequacy or otherwise of incentives and assistance packages able to be offered by the Trade Development Zone Authority.

Mr Speaker, I have completed my answers to the questions put to me by the Leader of the Opposition. I have answered those questions in the most fitting way and I have provided a veritable mountain of information. I trust that the Assembly will not now witness another 39 questions to be followed by another 39 questions, ad nauseam and ad infinitum. There is a limit to this process and I think it has been reached. A further barrage of questions will go beyond any call of obligation and could be regarded as mischief-making for the sake of it. I repeat what I have been saying since the start of these sittings. The opposition has not alleged any impropriety nor has it put forward any evidence that could give cause for real concern. All it has done is to put questions and, without further substance, there is a definite limit to that blatant political tactic.

If I cannot persuade the Leader of the Opposition to let these matters rest and to let the Trade Development Zone get on with the job that it is supposed to be doing, let me put it to him that he should stop the grandstanding. If he has allegations of impropriety, let him make them. He has not done so yet. If he has another list of questions, let him put them on the question paper so that I can properly consider them and address whether or not they should be answered. This charade should not continue, Mr Speaker. Enough is enough.

Installation of Roundabout on Daly Street

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I congratulate the minister's department in regard to the roundabout that has been installed recently at the intersection of Vanderlin Drive and Lee Point Road. Will he undertake to have discussions with his Roads Division and engineers of the Darwin City Council in relation to the possibility of installing a roundabout at the intersection of Daly Street and Smith Street, an intersection believed by some to be very dangerous?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would certainly be more than pleased to take that matter forward on behalf of the member for Casuarina and the member for Port Darwin. I am familiar with that intersection which is extremely dangerous. As the honourable member said, the new roundabout at the intersection of Vanderlin Drive and Lee Point Road has proved to quite effective. Line marking was completed last week and I trust that people are now becoming used to the manoeuvres required to use the roundabout. Some of the earlier expressions of public concern reflected a lack of familiarity with the usage of roundabouts and that will be solved with the passage of time.

The Department of Transport and Works has already cooperated with the Darwin City Council in relation to a roundabout which is to be installed at

the intersection of Dick Ward Drive and Progress Drive, following representation by the member for Nightcliff. In fact, \$150 000 has been provided to the council and I understand that, whilst it has taken a little time for the council to put together its documentation for the project, it is to be completed before Christmas.

While we are talking about city traffic problems, I should mention the intersection of Mitchell Street and Knuckey Street where there are 4 stop signs. That situation is very confusing to drivers. I have put it to the council that it might like to address that specific problem. In conjunction with the State Square project, the government is encouraging the council to assist in a review of the total traffic and parking requirements at this end of town. Maybe we can solve some other problems at the same time. When I say that we are 'encouraging the council', I recognise that the council has a legitimate role to play in traffic management within the Darwin CBD. The government is more than willing to provide some additional resources to assist the council in preparing a document which will help us provide appropriate traffic arrangements at this end of town, particularly with the forthcoming construction of a new Supreme Court building.

#### Tourist Commission's Petty Cash Accounts

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TOURISM

What steps have been taken to investigate the alleged abuse of petty cash accounts in the Tourist Commission's Darwin and Alice Springs offices by the former Chairman of the commission?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of any alleged petty cash account abuses. If the honourable member cares to ask specific questions, I will be happy to answer them.

#### Environmental Impact of Darwin Airport Construction Work

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer him to a recent newsletter issued by the member for Millner. By way of explanation, I happen to reside in that electorate and I was somewhat surprised to find, in that newsletter, a request by the member for Millner asking people in the electorate to contact the Environment Centre about some concerns that it was expressing about possible run-off from the Darwin Airport construction into Freshwater and Rapid Creeks. Is the minister aware of concerns about possible run-off from the airport construction and, if so, has that matter been properly addressed? Has he been approached by the Leader of the Opposition or any of his staff to ascertain whether there is any factual basis to the allegations by the Environment Centre as expressed in that newsletter?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in answer to the latter part of the question, I have not been approached by the Leader of the Opposition recently nor during that period when the Territory government was lobbying for the opportunity to construct this much-needed facility. I too am a little surprised that the honourable

member has seen fit to pander to the Environment Centre over this non-issue. Since 1983, the development of the Darwin Airport has been addressed time and time again in this House. Planning and issues relating to environmental impact assessment for the area have been continually highlighted in this House.

A very thorough and very comprehensive environmental impact statement and assessment of run-off into Freshwater Creek/Rapid Creek were undertaken as part of the federal government's planning. In 1983, Cameron McNamara completed a very comprehensive study for the airport in regard to run-off and the impact on the creek in particular. As a result of that, monitoring of the creek was undertaken to provide an appropriate database to identify specific points for water sampling in the long term so that effects, if any, on the creek could be quite positively and accurately assessed. Monitoring continued well into 1985. By that time, the federal government put the chop on the construction that had begun on the site of the terminal. Perhaps that lapse of almost 4 years has confused the Leader of the Opposition and he has forgotten all the intense environmental assessment work that was done in those early days.

There is a monitoring team in place and the baseline information is there. The team and the committee to assess the effects within the catchment area is in place. The chairmanship of that committee rests with the Conservation Commission, and quite correctly so. It was established in 1983 and is ready and available when the project is continued. The Environment Centre did not need to stick its bib into this matter. All it needed to do was to check with either the Territory government or with the federal government to ensure that the appropriate arrangements were in place. That is all that was required. Nevertheless, it runs through the community trying to create an impression that the right thing is not being done and is not likely to be done. Probably the only highlight of the press release is that the Environment Centre has now moved to a shop in Cavenagh Street called the Green Turtle. Honourable members would recall that it used to reside in an arcade off the Mall in a shop that was known commonly as the Black Cockroach.

Mr Speaker, it is most irresponsible of the member for Millner to be stirring up strife and using his newsletter to pander to the Environment Centre. It is ludicrous and a waste of time.

#### Silversulphadiazine

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recently, I wrote to every member of this Assembly in relation to the drug silversulphadiazine, which is used in the treatment of ulcers and burns, and its availability. Does the minister have an answer for me?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I received some correspondence from the honourable member. That correspondence is now with my department. It will advise me in the near future and I will then advise the honourable member.

Today Show

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for TOURISM

Television 9 Network this week is featuring the Northern Territory on the highly-rated Today Show. How did the visit come about and what was the cost involved?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. The Today Show is aired by about 125 television stations and translators to an audience of many millions. This week, George Negus, Elizabeth Hayes and the Today's Show production team are broadcasting from the Northern Territory every day from 7 am to 9 am Eastern Standard Time. They were in Jabiru and were still there this morning. They were at Yellow Waters and Obiri yesterday and will be there today. Tomorrow, they will move to Bathurst Island and to Uluru National Park on Thursday. On Friday, they will broadcast from Bond Springs Station.

The producers approached the Northern Territory Tourist Commission some months ago about their plans and asked for some financial assistance in meeting the high satellite costs to undertake these sorts of broadcasts. The satellite costs involved are \$60 000. The Department of Industries and Development contributed \$20 000, the Department of Primary Production and Fisheries gave \$10 000 and the balance of \$30 000 was provided by the commission from its marketing budget. I believe that this money has been exceptionally well spent. The commercial value of this exposure certainly would be very difficult to estimate but the resulting publicity of course would be measured in many millions of dollars. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Today team on the scope and the quality of the production which I think everybody in this House would agree has been first class.

BTEC Destocking Statistics

Mr EDE to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Is he aware that officers of his department have refused to give pastoralists in the Katherine region a simple breakdown of BTEC destocking statistics? Is he also aware that the reason provided is that the figures for destocking, as opposed to the figures for compensation, are 'red-hot'? Is that why he still refuses to conduct a full audit of the BTEC campaign?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in response to the honourable member, it seems that we will have another ongoing saga from the members opposite and that they will continue to cast aspersions on people in primary industry and in my department. I am not aware of the further allegations that the honourable member has just made.

Honourable members will recall that, in this Assembly last week, we debated a purported matter of public importance raised by the Leader of the Opposition on the subject of BTEC. In the course of that debate, the member for Stuart put forward a number of scurrilous allegations based, it would seem, on hearsay. They cast doubts on the credibility of employees of my department, pastoralists and, by association, almost anyone working in the



pastoral industry or servicing it. Hansard will show that the government had no difficulty in proving that the opposition's claims had no substance. We had no difficulty because we deal only with facts, not innuendo, hearsay and gossip.

Mr Speaker, the honourable member continued this unfounded attack in an interview on the After 8 ABC program last Friday and the reporter, Tony Walker, introduced the segment by reiterating 2 of the so-called rorts that the member for Stuart claims to have unearthed. He spoke of a sackful of ears and trucking stock across the border. He then asked the honourable member what proof he had that the so-called rorts actually had occurred. No doubt, honourable members and people in the pastoral industry would have been impressed by his response. His answer to the question was: 'I did not raise them as things of proof. I raised them as issues which, if you go to any pastoralist around the central Australian region and, I dare say, in the Top End, you will find people will tell you stories that they have heard of allegations of rorts in BTEC'. He did not raise them as things of proof, but that did not stop the honourable member from casting aspersions on people in my department or people in the industry. He had no proof, but tales from people who have heard stories about allegations.

The honourable member was then asked about a Commonwealth review of the Territory's handling of BTEC. He replied in terms of a review, expressed in 1984-85 by the Commonwealth minister, Mr Kerin, which was disparaging to say the least. What he failed to mention was the independent review commissioned by the Commonwealth in 1986. That review found the Territory's management to be an example worth holding up for the states to follow. The Territory's program was recommended to the states as one which they should use as an example.

Mr Ede: Stop the program.

Mr REED: Mr Speaker, the honourable member opposite continues with his unfounded allegations.

There is no question that the honourable member was not aware of the 1986 review. It was discussed in this very House last Friday. Nevertheless, the honourable member ...

Mr Ede: It was last Thursday.

Mr REED: Last Thursday, yes.

The honourable member has relied on his very selective and convenient memory palpably to mislead the public. But this is not the end of it, Mr Speaker. When asked who was participating in the rorts, he used a very broad brush indeed. He gave us: 'Only a minority of pastoralists, but a reasonable number nevertheless, and some trucking companies or small-time operators'. Thus, everyone in the trucking industry is included under this cloud of suspicion that the member for Stuart has cast. Finally, and this really sticks in my craw, people in the actual BTEC program itself are included. By way of elaboration, he said: 'It may have been stock inspectors'. Thus, all of the stock inspectors are under a shadow of doubt and suspicion that has been cast over them without a scrap of evidence.

The honourable member continued: 'It was probably some departmental staff anyway or else it would have been uncovered a lot earlier'. What would have been uncovered? The fact that there are people in the rural area who know

someone, who heard from somebody else that the bloke on the next lease had a mate who was ripping off the system? There was no evidence, Mr Speaker.

What is the real situation? The real situation is that we have a campaign that is held in high regard by the Commonwealth government. We have a campaign that is supported by the industry and, indeed, that is substantially funded by it. We have achieved this through a great deal of hard work, with departmental staff and industry working together. What do the staff get for their efforts, Mr Speaker? They are labelled as being corrupt by a self-deluded opposition which will not accept the truth no matter how carefully it is explained to them. It is not only myself who has explained it to them; it is the industry as well.

To say that the departmental staff engaged in BTEC are furious over the member for Stuart's claims is a major understatement. It is more on their behalf than my own that I demand - not ask, but demand - that the member for Stuart provide the information we have requested continually so that the government can investigate his so-called rorts. The honourable member has a moral obligation to substantiate his claims or to apologise in order that the credibility of those people working in the pastoral industry or in my department can be restored. I can assure him that his information will be treated with the utmost confidence and referred to the police for investigation.

I am not aware that any allegations that he has made have any basis in fact whatever. If he cannot substantiate those allegations, and he has admitted that he has no proof, he must apologise publicly to the government, the staff of my department, the pastoral industry and the transport industry. Not to do so imposes on the civil rights of all those people. This government holds dear the concept of justice. We cannot and do not condemn the accused on hearsay evidence, unlike the opposition. Certainly, we have heard stories about BTEC but, without proof, they are simply that: stories. Mr Speaker, I call on the member for Stuart to substantiate his allegations. Let him give us something that can be investigated and cease casting aspersions and making baseless accusations. Such actions must be investigated if they have occurred. If he has the evidence, we will ensure that that is done. However, his disgusting and unfounded allegations must be withdrawn if he cannot substantiate them, and he must lift the cloud of suspicion that he has cast so unfairly on members of my department and people working in the pastoral industry.

#### Crocodiles

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

I refer the minister to statements made on television last night regarding the need to remove large crocodiles from populated areas and to establish more crocodile farms in the Top End. Could he advise the House of the current position regarding the removal of problem crocodiles and the establishment of new holding facilities?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I must admit that I was disappointed to hear the member for Barkly's comments about crocodiles yesterday. They certainly displayed his ignorance, not only regarding what the government is doing generally but also about what is happening in his own electorate. The member should be well aware that, as part of its management strategy for crocodiles, the government

conducts a public safety program which includes the removal of nuisance crocodiles from populated areas.

If the honourable member kept in touch with his constituents in the Gulf area, he would be aware also that the Conservation Commission is discussing proposals with people in Borroloola and other centres, as well as places like Nhulunbuy, to establish crocodile holding facilities. It is intended that these facilities will be used in public education and in the tourist industry, as well as providing breeding stock for the Territory's expanding crocodile industry. As Dr Grahame Webb said on television last night, such developments do not come about overnight. However, the process is already under way and I believe that the member for Barkly knew that when he made his public comments.

The program which deals with problem crocodiles concentrates on the major population centres of Darwin, Gove and the Borroloola stretch of the McArthur River. It also operates on call at public centres throughout the Territory's coastal regions. For example, this year, the commission has been talking to the Tiwi community and the central Arnhem Land communities of Milingimbi and Maningrida. The member for Arnhem and the member for Arafura would be aware of these discussions the aim of which is to keep crocodiles from becoming a direct threat to normal community activities. It is significant that, in our discussions with these communities, people have been very concerned that we do not go back to the Rambo-style slaughter which the member for Barkly now seems to be advocating.

The member's comments appear to have been generated by a recent case where a young man was taken by a crocodile in the Cato River area. We are all aware of the unfortunate circumstances of that case and everyone in this House has sympathy with the family of the person involved. However, the member's comments are even more dubious in the context of that case. It is unfortunate that he is so cynical that he is prepared to use a tragic incident to score cheap political points. The Aboriginal people in the area where the tragedy occurred, for whom the crocodile has particular traditional significance, have specifically asked the Conservation Commission not to interfere with the crocodile which killed the young man unless it is required either for police forensic purposes or to establish that what is reported to have occurred, did in fact occur.

It is important and appropriate that, where traditional lifestyles of people are involved, the relevant authorities heed those people's feelings. Conservation Commission rangers are not going to rush in with guns or traps against the wishes of the people who reside in the area. The fact that we have consulted with the Aboriginal people and respected their wishes makes a mockery of the member for Barkly's suggestions that we should be measuring crocodiles and shooting any which are more than 12 feet long. It is a fact that the crocodiles which inhabit our waters are extremely dangerous. It is also a fact that, even if we could shoot or remove every large crocodile that is seen, there would still be danger. That is because there is no way anyone can guarantee that the coastal waters in northern Australia will ever be totally free of crocodiles.

The honourable member commented about negative impacts on tourism. In an economic sense, we are fortunate that the presence of crocodiles aids the tourist industry rather than detracts from it. With the continuing high level of publicity that follows crocodile attacks, it cannot be said that any tourist entering the Territory is unaware that the danger exists. Indeed, it is a rather macabre irony that such attacks probably draw more people to the Territory than the expensive advertising campaigns that the Tourist Commission

quite ably carries out throughout the country and overseas. If honourable members doubt that as a proposition, they should consider which stories about Territory affairs are run in the southern media. We are all aware of the stories of crocodile attacks or of a crocodile walking across a road. People in south-eastern Australia are under the impression that we have crocodiles in our backyards and that it is dangerous to take a bath unless we have someone standing guard.

The lesson to be learned is that, provided we are aware of the very real risks associated with crocodiles, we can still enjoy and profit from the crocodiles themselves and the landscape that is their habitat. We all agree that it is important that the crocodile as a species be protected and allowed to inhabit open areas of the Territory. As the member for Arafura pointed out, they have been around for a great deal of time. They were here before we came and, obviously, they will be around for much longer. As Grahame Webb has said, the only way to ensure the survival of the crocodile is to ensure it has economic value. The crocodile industry in the Territory is developing at the moment. The value of crocodiles can be seen with the number of people who visit the crocodile farm. The value of their hides for export is becoming known to Territorians and is providing jobs and income. The value of the meat as a delicacy is also becoming well known. I believe \$29 a kilogram is the price of crocodile meat on the market.

We have a program for the removal of problem crocodiles. It removes them as effectively as shooting does. The crocodiles are becoming a valuable resource. In the very near future, crocodile farming will probably rival the pastoral industry as a source of income.

ANSWER TO QUESTION  
Film North

Mr DALE (Health and Community Services): Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to respond to questions asked last week by the member for Flynn. The honourable member asked on what basis Film North was chosen to produce a video and whether it was by public tender or otherwise. My answer is that Film North was chosen to produce the video on evidence of past productions, its availability to perform the task at the time required and the competitive quotation submitted. Public tenders were not invited. The Treasury regulations and directions exempt certain classes of expenditure from the public tender process. This exemption certainly applies to advertising agents and the media. The process followed was that expressions of interest were sought from a number of Territory companies and those interested were invited to submit written quotations.

The honourable member asked why local film producers were not asked to tender for the production of the video. Local film producers were asked to submit expressions of interest. They were not involved in any tender process for the reasons I have mentioned. Expressions of interest were sought from 6 Territory companies: NTD Channel 8, FCB Territory Advertising Services, Iloura Productions, Film North, True North and Imparja TV from Alice Springs. Only 3 companies expressed interest and subsequently submitted quotes.

He asked also if the video tender was not put out for public tender what other contracts had been given to Film North in the last 2 years without going to tender. The Department of Health and Community Services has not previously entered into any contract with Film North. He asked if Film North has any favoured position with the Territory government which precludes work given to it by the government from going to public tender, and I answered that question last week.

Mr Speaker, the details of this particular contract are interesting. The finished product is to include a 15-minute, high-class commercial television tape, a 60-second commercial tape and a 30-second commercial tape to be used in public relations advertising for the proposed 1990 Masters Games. I remind honourable members that, on my recent trip, I was able to succeed in finalising a further \$200 000 of sponsorship for the 1990 Masters Games from Honda Australia. In addition, the film will act as an historic record of the 1988 Masters Games.

Negotiations have taken place through Film North to feature the Masters Games through Sky Channel, Wide World of Sports, Good Morning Australia, and 10 Network News. Channel 10 CNN American Cable Network Television will broadcast the opening of the ceremony through 65 countries to 300 million viewers. I think that vindicates the work that this Northern Territory government is doing for the promotion of the Northern Territory through sport.

TIO Involvement with Hungerford Refrigeration

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

Mr Speaker, the TIO Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 1988 refers to 'an abnormal write-off of \$1.48m in respect of a venture capital investment in a local manufacturing company ...'. Obviously, that is Hungerford Refrigeration. I have a couple of questions arising out of that. How is it that such a write-off is necessary given the oft-repeated claim that the TIO investment had been secured to the extent of some \$500 000? In other words, that the TIO had a first claim over payments arising out of the Hungerford Refrigeration collapse.

Secondly, I understand that amounts owing to local creditors by the same manufacturing company totalled about \$460 000 and, on 17 May, the then Treasurer said in this House: 'TIO has assured me that it will look closely at those in hardship, particularly those who have consistently supported the company in the past'. What efforts has TIO made on behalf of the local creditors to reimburse them for the \$460 000 or thereabouts that they have lost?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have information before me to enable me to answer the honourable member's questions at this time. It is unfortunate that perhaps he did not ask them on one of the earlier days in the sittings. I could certainly seek the information that he has requested and make it available to him, but I am sure he will ...

Mr Smith: Today? It is not hard for you to find out.

Mr PERRON: I will endeavour to seek the information during the course of the day.

Tanami Highway

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I understand this particular matter is of great interest to the member for Braitling who is often seen out in this area. What steps are being taken to upgrade the Tanami Highway?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can assure honourable members that quite significant steps are being taken and have been taken to ensure that the Tanami Highway remains accessible to the ever-growing traffic in that region.

Mr Smith: You did not even know where it was until my colleague spoke to you about it.

Mr FINCH: The Leader of the Opposition has drawn my attention to the matter raised by the member for Stuart who referred not to the Tanami Highway but the Tanami to Lajamanu road. The day before, he seriously suggested the bitumen sealing of the road between Tanami and Lajamanu. Maybe the honourable member is suffering from memory lapse again. I draw to his attention the fact that the road between Lajamanu and Tanami - perhaps he has not been out there for some time, and I doubt that he has - quite often has zero traffic during

the day. It may have 10 vehicles in any one day. The road is some 250 km and 100 km of that is a formed road of a reasonable standard between Supplejack and Tanami. The other 150 km is flat-bladed, as one would expect. I find it absolutely astounding that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition could seriously suggest to this House that this government ought to be appropriating what would probably be in the order of \$40m.

I draw the honourable member's attention to Hansard because, quite clearly, he is suffering another memory lapse. This government grades that road twice a year or whenever is required to keep it open for local traffic. It is very important traffic. In fact, his constituents are the principal users of that road.

The question asked by the member for Jingili, and a matter pursued by yourself with great interest, Mr Speaker, related to the Tanami Highway itself. The government has allocated approximately \$550 000 in this current financial year for resurfacing and upgrading of the principal problem sections of that road. That work will be completed before Christmas. Another \$1.5m has been identified for expenditure next year on a forward capital works program, subject to budgetary constraints. The goldmine has generated a considerable amount of heavy traffic in addition to the normal local traffic. In addition, we are continuing regular ongoing maintenance. We are upgrading the road regularly, and that is a major task given that that section of road is some 500 km long and that there are difficulties in some areas with gravel quality and the supply of water. However, the government is applying a significant amount of its limited resources to ensuring that the road remains open. A separate amount of \$700 000 has been allocated for the maintenance and installation of 5 new water bores which obviously will have some additional benefits out in that region.

Mr Speaker, this government is allocating priorities in its road system appropriately, unlike the member for Stuart with his harebrained \$40m schemes to service traffic of up to 10 vehicles per day.

#### Supreme Court Case Load

Mr COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Can he confirm a story that I have heard which is that the Supreme Court has no backlog of cases?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have some difficulty in understanding the question. However, I can inform the honourable member in simple terms that there always is a slight backlog because the Supreme Court does not sit continuously. I can also assure honourable members that the backlog in Territory Supreme Court matters extends over a few months only. That is far ahead of the situation in any of the states. In some areas of Australia, people have to wait up to 5 and sometimes 7 years to have charges which have been laid against them or litigation which has been commenced against them dealt with by courts of law. All members would agree that that is an entirely unsatisfactory situation.

I can assure honourable members that this government has always ensured that we have sufficient funding, judges and court space available so that any backlog that may occur in our legal system is manageable. We will continue to plan ahead to ensure that we have adequate space and staff in order that Territorians do not face the situation that other Australians face. If they

are involved in litigation or if charges are laid against them, the matters will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible so that judgment is made and punishment exacted or innocence proclaimed and those people are able to go about their normal business. We are proud of our record in that regard and will continue to ensure that that will remain the case.

'Towards the 90s Volume 2'

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer him to the document that was released recently called 'Towards the 90s Volume 2', a discussion document on the future direction of education. That document was open for public discussion until the end of September. In the process of announcing that, the honourable minister said that there would be a sixth information paper to accompany that document. I understand that paper has not yet been made available. As the month of September has passed, firstly, when will the paper be available and, secondly, is he prepared to enable the process of public discussion and consultation over this document to proceed for a further period to enable full consideration of all the matters covered, particularly given the delay in the issuing of some of those information brochures?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it amazes me that members of the opposition always seem to climb into me when I am trying to make information available to them so that they can talk about these issues.

Mr Ede: He is on your side!

Mr HARRIS: No, that is all right. He asked a question and I am quite happy to respond.

Mr Speaker, members would be aware that 'Towards the 90s Volume 2' was developed as a result of the original discussion document, 'Towards the 90s'. At the time of my statement, I believed that the issue of excellence would have been discussed by the Board of Studies. Unfortunately, that was not the case and, in fact, the Board of Studies will be considering the issue of excellence during November. That information will come to me, as the minister, and will still be part of the process of taking into account the community's discussion on this whole issue. In the meantime, so that the debate can continue, I am having a paper prepared on the issue of excellence which will be made available to honourable members and all school councils during the course of the next week. The paper will be widely distributed to allow for comment to be made.

As a result of the delay in presenting that information paper, it is not my intention to have the matter debated during the course of these sittings. I will ensure that it is debated during the course of the November sittings which are approximately 4 weeks away. That will give all members the opportunity to take part in this very important debate. It is obvious that comment on the issue of excellence could have been made without the papers. The papers were provided as part of the 'Towards the 90s' document to assist debate on the issues that were raised in that document. I am quite happy to extend the time for consultation to ensure that people have the opportunity to comment on the 'Towards the 90s' document if they have not already done so. A number of people did request additional time which I am quite happy to give them.



Mr Collins interjecting.

Mr HARRIS: I can tell the member for Sadadeen that I am very interested in members' views. Members have already commented on the original 'Towards the 90s' document and they will have the opportunity to comment on volume 2. I do not want to cut short that opportunity.

It is interesting to note at this stage that very little comment has come back from some school communities. I believe that most of them have been waiting for the discussion document to be issued. It is also interesting to note that COGSO, whose policy previously favoured external assessment, has changed its policy on that issue. It is interesting that that change was made at a time when there was still a week to go before the expiry of the time COGSO had allowed for receipt of submissions from school parent groups. The change in policy surprises me because I believe that many people in the community favour external assessment. The matter should have been discussed in detail and I believe that many parents would like to know why COGSO has changed its policy before reaching the end of its consultation period. I believe that parents who are concerned about excellence should make their views known to COGSO because we need to know what the community's views are. There is no doubt in my mind or in the government's mind that industry and the community are asking for a means of assessing what level students have attained during their schooling. The government believes that external assessment is an appropriate way of achieving what many people in the community are demanding.

I apologise to honourable members in relation to this matter. I am not trying to put off the debate. I want comments on the issues that have been raised in 'Towards the 90s Volume 2'. I inform the House that there will be a paper on excellence available during the coming week. That will be distributed and the debate on 'Towards the 90s Volume 2' will occur during the course of the November sittings.

#### Payments to Contractors

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware that Territory business people are waiting up to 120 days for payment for work done at Tipperary Station? Will he ensure that this practice is not carried over to contractors and subcontractors engaged in the State Square project? Will he undertake to ensure that contract terms for the project stipulate that payment will be made within a set period?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, without commenting on the affairs of a private company in the Northern Territory, I can assure the honourable member that the Territory government has a real interest in the commercial practices of companies with which it will have direct agreements. That is about all I can say at present. I hope that assurance satisfies him.

#### Drivers' Licences for Defence Personnel

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I have a considerable number of defence force personnel in my electorate. I understand a proposal was put to the Minister for Transport and Works recently about a special driver's licence scheme for those people. I ask him

whether any decision has been made on that scheme and, if so, what is the outcome?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, at the last meeting of state and Commonwealth ministers, there was universal agreement on a system of providing defence personnel with the ability to retain their pre-existing licences from the state within which they gained them, subject to a number of matters. The concern was that defence people often moved from location to location at very short notice and for very short periods of time. The Registrar of Motor Vehicles already has the power to grant dispensation to drivers who have a legitimate reason not to be obliged to replace their interstate licences with Territory licences.

That will be done on the basis of the Department of Defence advising the Motor Vehicle Registry of personnel and their families. When licences become due for renewal, they will be obliged to renew within the Northern Territory. We trust that many of those defence people will stay longer than a short period. The federal government has been concerned about morale in the defence forces. As a result of the recent Military Tattoo, an awareness is growing among the Australian public in relation to the role of the defence forces. While this may be a very small token gesture, the federal government needs to be looking at conditions of service that are affecting morale within the defence forces. This small gesture will help a little.

Department of Labour and Administrative Services - Corporate Plan

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

Why has the Department of Labour and Administrative Services employed the consultants Network Australia basically to tell the department what its job is? Could he also tell the House the cost of this consultancy work?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is not unusual for a department, particularly a new department that has not previously drawn all of its functions into a cohesive mode, to establish a corporate plan. In fact, any department that did not establish a corporate plan would be regarded as somewhat remiss. The Department of Labour and Administrative Services was formed last year and it was not until November last year that the Office of Local Government was brought into the department. As a consequence, I sought and obtained funds through the budget process for a corporate plan to be put into place.

I will obtain information on the cost for the honourable member and let him know during the course of these sittings. I am very pleased with the work that Network Australia did. There was input from every person in the department to ensure that the corporate plan that we put in place would reflect both the directions of government and the needs of people of the Northern Territory. The corporate plan is a very good one. It will provide the means by which this department can provide the services that it is intended to provide in a better and more effective way. We do not often have people who can coordinate a corporate plan working within departments. It is a one-off job although it will need to be monitored throughout the life of the department and improved as time goes on. The directions have now been set and I believe they will be extremely effective in the delivery of services in the Northern Territory by the department.

Pioneer Walk-in Theatre

Mr DONDAS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

During last night's adjournment debate, the member for Stuart referred to the Pioneer Walk-in Theatre in Alice Springs. He indicated that the Minister for Lands and Housing was not acting in accordance with some instructions in regard to the demolition of that facade. Can the minister advise whether this is correct?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Labor Party's appalling conduct offers another example of its approach which is to seek publicity at any cost. The cost incurred by the member for Stuart, the member for MacDonnell, the Leader of the Opposition, Di Shanahan and, to some extent, the member for Flynn, has been the total misleading of the public. Members of the opposition are not interested in finding out the facts. They never are. They like to open their mouths ...

Mr Ede: You are not interested in debate. If you were, you would make a statement.

Mr MANZIE: They will not even listen to the answers to questions because they are worried that a little information may inhibit their role of totally misinforming the community. Mr Speaker, I shall not be daunted. I have been waiting for one of them to ask me a question on this matter during the entire sittings but they have not done so. One wonders whether they knew what the answer might be.

Mr Ede interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I would again remind all honourable members that this part of the proceedings is being broadcast and continuing interjections are disruptive to the general public who are trying to listen to both the questions and the answers.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, it is obvious that members opposite feel that, if they make a lot of noise, the community will fail to hear the facts.

There is in fact no application to demolish the Pioneer Walk-in Theatre. That has not stopped members opposite telling the public that there is and that I should make a decision on it. It is a bit like the Leader of the Opposition telling me that he would like to demolish the member for MacDonnell's house in Alice Springs and asking me for permission to do that. No matter how attractive such a proposition might be to me or to the Leader of the Opposition, I could not make such a decision without the consent of the owner who certainly would have a great deal to say about it. He might even prove that he could count to 4 as a result. Mr Speaker, I digress.

The owners have said very clearly that they do not want to demolish the Pioneer Walk-in Theatre. I will describe some of the background to the current situation. First of all, we had a situation where the owner of the property wished to sell or dispose of the property and 2 separate people wished to purchase it. One person believed he had reached an understanding with the owner to purchase the property without any building on it. The other believed he had reached an understanding with the owner to purchase the property with the building in situ. Both persons believed that they had reached this arrangement with the owner before the other and, as a result of

disagreement, caveats were issued on behalf of both parties. One said: 'You agreed to sell this to me and you cannot sell it to anyone else. You must sell it to me and you must clear the block before you do so'. The other one said: 'You made an agreement to sell it to me and you agreed to leave the building on it'.

It is not the role of a minister of the Crown to become involved in a private commercial wrangle even though the opposition would lead the community to believe that the government has such a role. That may be appropriate in the socialist concept of things because, as we all know, socialists believe that the government should interfere in all business and private enterprises and in the daily lives of ordinary people. On this side of the House, we do not believe that concept. That is fine. It is a philosophical difference that we have, but the community should be aware that members opposite believe government should interfere with private enterprise and the ability of private persons to carry on their daily lives.

Obviously, 1 party involved in this disagreement did very well through engaging the assistance of the opposition and that was the party which wished to purchase the block with the building on it. The member for Flynn was sucked in and became involved in backing 1 particular party in this commercial undertaking. Meanwhile, the opposition continued with scare tactics: the building will be demolished and what will the minister do about it? Clearly, the minister had no role. As a result of the whole situation, the State Bank of South Australia took possession of the land and is now the owner. The State Bank of South Australia was the mortgagee and it is now the mortgagee in possession of the property. I do not know how much the contributions made by the opposition and possibly the member for Flynn led to a situation where the owner of the property had the property removed by the bank which, as I said, is now mortgagee in possession. We will never know the extent to which the involvement of members opposite contributed to that situation that a private company has found itself in. However, one can imagine.

The present owner, the bank, has written a letter which states that it would oppose any demolition of the improvements - that is, the building on the site. Obviously, that is something that will be an ongoing issue because I believe that the building is to be auctioned and the new owners will have to work out what they will do with it.

It is extremely important that we are aware of 1 factor. I have spoken to the National Trust regarding the heritage value of the property and I have read a report that was prepared by an architect, a Mr Dermoudy. The building itself has not been listed by the National Trust. An application was made in 1984 and the National Trust decided that the building had insufficient heritage value to be listed. Another application was made in 1986. Again, after a great deal of discussion and investigation, it was decided that the building did not have sufficient value that could be established for it to be listed.

The National Trust did ask that some investigation to be carried out into the background of the building. As a result, Mr Dermoudy produced a report. That report says a number of nice things about the warm feelings people have about the building. Again, there is no recommendation to list the property as a building of heritage value. There is quite a strong recommendation that the projection box of the theatre be retained because it is a unique example in the Northern Territory of an outdoor projection box. The report points out that it was actually built in 1985. However, it is an example of something that is unique.

The opposition has led the community to believe that the building is listed with the National Trust. It is not. I find the opposition's behaviour in relation to this matter to be disappointing. The report by Mr Dermoudy points out that, although some people have quite warm feelings about the building, it has been altered and rebuilt in such a way that it can no longer be listed as a structure which has heritage value.

Mr Bell: That is nonsense, Daryl.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the honourable members says it is nonsense. He knows that it is not listed. I find it appalling that the member for MacDonnell is prepared deliberately to misinform the community about an important matter. It is important because matters of heritage value ...

Mr BELL: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Even the Attorney-General would be well aware that to say that my motive for making particular statements is to deliberately misinform the Northern Territory community is a reflection which is beyond the bounds of standing orders.

Mr SPEAKER: There is a point of order. The minister should not reflect on the motives of any honourable member.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I apologise for reflecting on the motives of the honourable member. I will just lay out the facts. The honourable member did misinform the community. I do not know what his motives might have been and I will not reflect on them. He misinformed the community by creating an atmosphere which led people to believe that the Pioneer Walk-in Theatre was listed on the National Trust Register as a building that had heritage value. That is patently untrue. This is a very serious matter because buildings which have heritage value should be protected and should be respected in the community. However, if the inference is that we should protect every building that people like the look of or value because their brother or uncle or mother might have slept in or sat in it at some stage, the whole concept of protecting our heritage falls down. I certainly would not like to see that happen and I am sure that other Territorians would not like to see that.

Mr Bell interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: The member for MacDonnell cannot help himself. When he has the wood put on him, he squirms around in an effort to avoid the facts. If he wants to put his hand in the air and make public statements, he has to wear the consequences. The Walk-in Theatre is the subject of a purely commercial disagreement and the concept that it has been listed is false.

Mr Speaker, I urge honourable members to obtain a copy of Mr Dermoudy's report to see exactly what the Walk-in Theatre is, to appreciate its history, and to be assured that the building has been extensively photographed. Measurements have been taken and plans have been made but, at this time, the building is under no threat and the matter is at a stage where neither I nor any other member of the government has a right to become involved. I would certainly appreciate a little more honesty from members opposite regarding matters that occur in our community.

Capricorn Productions - Contract with Tourist Commission

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TOURISM

I remind the minister of his statement last week that the film production company Capricorn Productions had failed to complete its \$800 000 contract with the Tourist Commission. Is it a fact that contract funds were used by Capricorn Productions to purchase a mobile production unit worth \$120 000 to \$200 000? Is it also a fact that that unit was only used once or twice before being sold, with the company retaining the proceeds? What action did the minister take at that time and what action has he taken since to recover those public funds?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware that a unit was purchased by the film production company that went bankrupt. I am not aware of how the unit was disposed of or what action was taken to recover the moneys. I will certainly find out and advise the Leader of the Opposition.

Beautification of Darwin Central Business District

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TOURISM

Over the last couple of months, the minister has been involved in discussions with the Darwin City Council, the Darwin Regional Tourist Promotion Association and others in respect to the beautification of the central business district of Darwin. Can he outline what stage those proposals have reached and when further action is likely to occur?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, a number of projects have been discussed during the past few months in terms of creating an atmosphere that will appeal to tourists in the Northern Territory generally and Darwin in particular. I understand that the Tourist Commission and the Darwin Regional Tourist Promotion Association have been working very closely together over the past 6 weeks or so and have come up with a concept which they have advised me about, which would create the right sort of atmosphere to enable Darwin to become a tourist precinct. For many years, the tourist industry has regarded Darwin as purely a dormitory, a place where visitors can put their heads down for the night before moving on to spend time in Kakadu or Katherine or departing for South-east Asia. As a result, Darwin has been seen as a place where tourists would only spend a night or two.

Obviously, there have been developments over the past few years, such as the casino, that have encouraged people to stay a little longer. There are a number of local tourist attractions such as the fish feeding, the museum etc. However, I do not think that the city itself has developed to the extent that it should have. It is quite interesting to see that private enterprise has played its rightful role. I was approached some months ago by a group of business people who were interested in putting together a project which I think they titled 'The image of Darwin' or, in my terms, 'The Greening of Darwin'. I believe that there is a great opportunity apart from the development of buildings and attractions. The whole area could be made to reflect a city of unique character in northern Australia and become a really tropical city.

There is no reason why we should not plant 10 000 coconut palms along the foreshore of Darwin to give it a truly tropical atmosphere. There is no reason why we should not look at redesigning the Mall and have outdoor tables and facilities for people to watch the world go by and fix the problems of the nation. We could create a downtown shopping precinct that would take advantage of duty free facilities etc. Those discussions have continued with officers from the Darwin City Council, the Tourist Commission and the Regional Tourist Promotion Association. These have now reached the stage whereby we feel we can put something positive to the Darwin City Circle Traders and all involved can work towards making Darwin a unique tourist destination in its own right and create a very positive retail atmosphere for the city business district. This would encourage further employment and, of course, put a little wealth back into the community, particularly the business community of Darwin.

#### Medical Practitioner for Groote Eylandt

Mr LANHUPUY to MINISTER for HEALTH

I would remind the honourable minister that last month he issued a press release stating that he would negotiate with the Groote Eylandt Mining Company about the placement of a general practitioner on the island. What progress has his department made in respect of that?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am disappointed to have to inform the House that those negotiations bore no fruit whatsoever. I express extreme disappointment that the mining company adopted that attitude. However, my department is now negotiating directly with several general practitioners and, hopefully, we will be able to entice one to take up a residency there shortly.

#### Apprenticeship Scheme

Mr HATTON to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Does the government intend to continue funding the joint Housing Commission and Master Builders Association apprenticeship scheme which has been operating so successfully in the Alice Springs area in recent years?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am very happy to inform the honourable member that Cabinet has approved the extension of the scheme for another 4 years. As you would be aware, Mr Speaker, the joint scheme has been operating in Alice Springs since 1983 and it has been running very successfully. The initial program allowed for 10 apprentices to be employed to construct up to 5 dwellings each year from the Housing Commission's construction program. Over the years, the total number of apprentices who can be employed under the scheme has risen. There are now 12 apprentices in various years of their training employed through it. As apprentices leave the scheme, either by choice or on completion of their apprenticeships, they are replaced by new first-year apprentices. Additional funding has been committed to allow for the new intake of apprentices. A total of \$260 000 will be spent over the next 5 financial years to allow that scheme to continue.

The scheme is jointly operated by the Housing Commission and the Master Builders Association. One of its main features is the requirement that

apprentices be hired out to contractors or subcontractors working in the Alice Springs construction industry. I suppose you could call it a 'dial an apprentice' scheme but it works very well. The demand from both contractors and subcontractors was so great in the first 4 years of the scheme that the Housing Commission's commitment regarding use of the apprentices related to only 2 or 3 houses a year in that early period.

Unfortunately, we are all aware of the downturn in building activity in the past few years which has brought higher rates, negative gearing being removed etc. I think the federal Labor government is now realising that this has caused tremendous problems in our entire community. However, that activity has decreased but the scheme is designed to be very flexible. It can continue successfully through differing economic circumstances by moving into the commission area.

To date, 11 houses have been completed and we have a twelfth nearly completed. We are still working on a thirteenth which has just started. Since the scheme began, 10 apprentices have completed their entire apprenticeship. The scheme is very good in that the apprentices gain experience right across the whole spectrum of the building industry and, when they have finished their indentures, they are widely skilled in all aspects of their trades. The scheme also gives them the ability to experience work in various private enterprise companies. It provides them with vast experience.

It provides employment for Alice Springs school-leavers in the local building industry. It is a very economical method of training apprentices in an industry which has its ups and downs and in which contractors predominate. It is training Territory tradesmen in the Territory for the Territory. The scheme certainly has been very successful since its inception and, as a government, we are very proud to be able to continue our commitment to it and, through it, to training Territorians for the Territory.

#### Berry Springs Wildlife Park

Mr TUXWORTH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

When will the Berry Springs Wildlife Park be open permanently to the public and what form of management option will be put in place? Will the Conservation Commission assume all the management authority for that area or will it call on the expertise of the members of the general public so that a comprehensive board of community members can be established to oversee the management of the new zoo?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it will be opened permanently next year around March or April. As a government, we have not entirely worked out exactly how the management of the premises will be done. I envisage that there will be some sort of board with some public and community input. When the government finalises where we are going on that, I will provide that information to this House.

I will take this opportunity to express again my support for the Berry Springs zoo concept and to remind honourable members of the absolutely magnificent job being done by Conservation Commission officers and contractors on the development of what will be one of the greatest assets in the Top End. It will be an asset not only for tourism, but for all members of our community. As the honourable member for Koolpinyah would be fully aware, it is something that we will all be proud of. When the final options regarding



management are settled on by this government, I will be very pleased to inform all members of this House.

#### Buffalo Industry Development Scheme

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and FISHERIES

Some months ago, he announced a \$1.9m buffalo industry development scheme. How many applications have been made under that scheme?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Karama for his question. He is correct in stating that \$1.9m was provided by this government for a buffalo industry development scheme to establish and provide direct and immediate assistance to primary producers of domesticated buffalo, to stimulate the long-term retention and build up of buffalo breeder numbers, to improve buffalo control and domestication, and to improve buffalo herd productivity. The scheme provides for incentive development grants, to a maximum of \$100 000 per property or producer, to be made available to selective applicants to assist in the implementation of agreed buffalo development plans. The assistance will be provided initially in the form of a loan, with the ability to be written off on the satisfactory progress of implementation of the respective plans.

Applicants were required to register expressions of interest, in the first instance, by 30 June. Some 70 registrations were received. The processing of these expressions of interest then called for applicants to submit development programs by 30 September. I am advised that 45 such applications have been completed at this stage. Assistance was provided, where necessary, for consultants in the preparation of programs.

Assessment of the applications and programs is now well advanced, with technical assessments being undertaken by the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries and financial assessments by the Department of Industries and Development. It is expected that the first group of applications will be approved within the next week or so in order that programs can commence. Applications will continue to be processed as quickly as possible with approvals being given on a progressive basis over the next month.

The scheme seeks to provide financial assistance to buffalo domestication producers to increase the retention of buffalo breeders and to assist with property improvements. I believe that the buffalo industry has a very bright future and improved management, disease-free herds and breeding programs which will improve blood lines and the quality of stock, will enhance opportunities for the industry and provide access to additional markets. On the subject of additional markets, it is interesting to note that the New Zealand market has just been opened up to Northern Territory buffalo. Whilst the New Zealand Department of Agriculture is slightly more advanced in its BTEC program than we are, nonetheless it is quite satisfied with our progress and is confident of our ability to provide disease-free stock. This is a clear indication of the benefits that are deriving to industry from BTEC and the benefits that will result from this buffalo development scheme.

I am keen to see the \$1.9m allocated to industry for this program working to the benefit of the industry and the Northern Territory. Progressive release will ensure that this occurs at the earliest opportunity and will allow anyone who is successful in gaining a loan to further develop the buffalo industry.

Community Facilities in Karama

Mr BELL to MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

I refer the minister to his refusal last week to put out to tender the construction of the Karama Child-care Centre. Can he confirm that his statements, in addition to referring to the Karama Child-care Centre, also refer to a proposed development of a community centre and a youth drop-in facility on adjacent blocks in Karama? To adumbrate for the Minister for Health and Community Services, he will recall his refusal to put out to tender the proposal for Joondanna Investments to construct the Karama Child-care Centre. Does the construction of the child-care centre include, in addition, a youth drop-in centre and a community centre?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the construction of the Karama Child-care Centre has nothing to do with any other project.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission 729  
 Advertising -  
     Darwin Bus Service buses 695  
     Channel 8 Darwin \*681  
 Alice Springs -  
     abattoir, fire 720  
     identification parades 696  
     Pioneer Walk-in Theatre 754  
     sewage treatment works 694  
 Apprenticeship Scheme 758  
 Berry Springs Wildlife Park 759  
 BTEC destocking statistics 743  
 Buffalo industry development scheme 760  
 Capricorn Productions, contract with Tourist Commission 757  
 Casuarina Shopping Centre, moving walkway 709  
 Criminal Code, convictions under and sentences \*685  
 Crocodiles 745  
 CSIRO Research Station, Katherine 707  
 Darwin -  
     Airport construction, environmental impact 741  
     beautification of CBD 757  
     Bus Service, political advertisements 695  
     Daly Street roundabout 740  
     Private Hospital \*684  
 Department of Labour and Administrative Services, corporate plan 753  
 Drivers' licences for defence personnel 752  
 Drivers' memorial, road sign 700  
 Ear infections, school treatment campaigns \*686  
 Education problems 720  
 Expo, Northern Territory Open Day 704  
 Film North contract 720, 747  
 Freedom of Information Act, applications \*681, \*682, \*683  
 Giles House, staffing \*681  
 Grootte Eylandt, general practitioner 758  
 Hungerford Refrigeration Pty Ltd, TIO involvement \*683, 749  
 Identification parades, Alice Springs court system 696  
 Karama -  
     Child-care Centre 711, 724  
     community facilities 761  
 Kormilda College, government expenditure \*687  
 Member for  
     Braitling, television segment 699  
     Flynn, electorate office 701, 731  
 Minister for Tourism -  
     Amex card 711, 724, 727  
     helicopter charters \*681  
 National parks, fees 697  
 Northern Territory -  
     Expo Open Day 704  
     government leasing of premises \*686  
     University 723  
 Pioneer Walk-in Theatre 754  
 Registration of interstate vehicles 691  
 Road Safety Council 726  
 School Council Regulations 692  
 Self-government, 10th anniversary celebrations \*684  
 Silversulphadiazine 742  
 Sir Edward Pellew Group Land Claim 708, 733

State Square project -

  finance 728

  payments to contractors 752

Supreme Court case load 750

Tanami Highway 749

TIO involvement with Hungerford Refrigeration \*683, 749

Today Show 743

Tourist Commission -

  contract with Capricorn Productions 757

  petty cash accounts 741

'Towards the 90s Volume 2' 751

Trade Development Zone \*688, 691, 692, 704, 706, 710, 717, 719, 722, 726

Yeung, K.K. audit of business dealings with NT government 734