

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.

19 August 1986

7. Gregory National Park - Lands Acquisition

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS

1. What pieces of land have been acquired for the proposed Gregory National Park?
2. What was the price paid for each piece of land?
3. How was the price for each piece of land determined?

8. Litchfield National Park - Lands Acquisition

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for LANDS

1. What pieces of land have been acquired for the proposed Litchfield National Park?
2. What was the price paid for each piece of land?
3. How was the price for each piece of land determined?

15. Travelling Allowance - Member for Barkly

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What was the total amount of money claimed by and paid to the member for Barkly in travelling allowances for the year 1982-83?
2. In respect of that money, was the member for Barkly directed to pay any amount back to consolidated revenue by the then Chief Minister (the Hon P.A.E. Everingham) or the then Treasurer (the Hon M.B. Perron); if so, what amount was paid into consolidated revenue?
3. Is there documentary evidence as to the amount of money which the member for Barkly was directed to pay back; if so, will the Chief Minister provide a copy of that evidence to the Leader of the Opposition?
4. Has the member for Barkly been required to pay back any amount of travelling allowances claimed in similar circumstances at any stage in subsequent years?

**16. Travelling Allowance Documentation
Member for Barkly**

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Are the following documents for the period 1 January 1980 to date available:

- (a) copies of all travelling allowance forms tendered by the member for Barkly;
- (b) copies of any debt notices raised against the member for Barkly;
- (c) copies of receipts for any repayments of travelling allowance advanced to the member for Barkly;
- (d) copies of any correspondence between former Chief Minister (the Hon P.A.E. Everingham) and the member for Barkly in relation to travelling allowance; and
- (e) copies of any correspondence between former Treasurer (the Hon M.B. Perron) or any other government minister or public servant and the member for Barkly in relation to travelling allowance;

if so, will the Chief Minister provide copies of the documents to the Leader of the Opposition?

**17. Overseas Travel
Former Chief Minister**

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What was the nature of ministerial business conducted on the former Chief Minister's trip to Singapore, via Perth and Kota Kinabalu, between 30 January 1985 and 5 February 1985?
2. Was the former Chief Minister accompanied by his wife as well as Mr Syd Saville and his wife?
3. What was the total cost of this trip, including the cost for those accompanying the former Chief Minister?
4. Was there a direct Darwin-Singapore Qantas flight which departed Darwin on the same afternoon; if so, why did the ministerial party fly to Singapore via Perth and what was the additional cost of the Perth "leg" of the journey?
5. Did the then Northern Territory Development Corporation (NTDC) Chairman (Mr R. McHenry) depart from Darwin on a direct flight to Singapore as a member of the Northern Territory government delegation on the same day as the ministerial party departed Darwin for Singapore via Perth?

6. Was the former Chief Minister (the Hon I.L. Tuxworth) reported in the Northern Territory News on 15 April 1986 to have said that he did not recall the reason the ministerial party travelled via Perth?
7. Is there any documentation stating why the party travelled via Perth; if so, would the Chief Minister make this documentation available to the Leader of the Opposition?
8. Was the then NTDC Chairman (Mr R. McHenry) reported in the Northern Territory News on 15 April 1986 as saying he thought this particular trip to Singapore had been confused with another trip earlier in the year?
9. Did the then Chief Minister take a trip to Singapore earlier in the year; if so, did he fly direct from Darwin or via a southern port?
10. Who was involved in the Northern Territory government delegation and what was the cost of this trip?

18.

**Credit Cards
Legislative Assembly Office-holders
and Public Servants**

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What were the individual total amounts paid by the Northern Territory government for each American Express Corporate Credit Card held by office-holding members of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly and senior public servants for the years from 1980-81 to 1984-85 and for the first six months of the year 1985-86?

19.

**Travelling Allowances 1983-84
Former Chief Minister**

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What was the financial breakdown which would fully account for the \$22 315 in travelling allowances paid to the member for Barkly in the year 1983-84?
2. Is there any supporting documentation; if so, will the Chief Minister provide a copy to the Leader of the Opposition?

**20. Overseas Travelling Allowance
Member for Barkly**

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Is the \$300 shown to have been paid out to the member for Barkly for travelling allowances for overseas trips in 1983-84 (provided to the Leader of the Opposition in a recent answer to Written Question No. 14 - see Question Paper No. 8, dated 18 March 1986) an accurate representation of the facts?

21. American Express - Corporate Credit Cards

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What was the total amount of money expended by the Northern Territory government to cover the cost of purchases by all holders of government-issued American Express Corporate Credit Cards for the following years:

- (a) 1980-81;
- (b) 1981-82;
- (c) 1982-83;
- (d) 1983-84;
- (e) 1984-85; and
- (f) for the first six months of the year 1985-86?

22. American Express - Corporate Credit Cards

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Does American Express have the capacity to provide swift recall of any purchase on a Corporate Credit Card if requested?

23. Overseas Travel - Expenditure

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Did an office-holding member of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly spend approximately \$6000 on one dinner for a small party of guests on an overseas trip?
2. Did this account include the purchase of bottles of champagne at a cost of approximately \$350 each?
3. Has the Chief Minister investigated the matter; if so:
 - (a) has he confirmed the substance of the recent newspaper report; and
 - (b) what action, if any, has the Chief Minister taken?

11 November 1986

29.

**Gas Pipeline
Payments to Aboriginal Land Councils**

Mr PERRON to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. What was the basis on which payments were agreed with Aboriginal Land Councils for the Alice Springs to Darwin gas pipeline corridor to cross Aboriginal land?
2. How many parcels of Aboriginal land does the pipeline cross?
3. What is the distance involved, in total?
4. When is payment to Aboriginals due?
5. What sums of money are involved?

33.

Water Supply - Anningie

Mr EDE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Have the people of Anningie had a sub-standard water supply for many years?
2. Does the government have any plans to improve the water supply at Anningie; if so:
 - (a) what are those plans; and
 - (b) when will they be achieved?

35.

University College - Land and Buildings

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What was the cost to the Northern Territory government of purchasing the land at Lot 1395 Town of Darwin on behalf of the University College of the Northern Territory?
2. Did the Northern Territory government on behalf of the University College of the Northern Territory then enter into negotiations with the developer for the construction of a building on the site of Lot 1395 Town of Darwin; if so:
 - (a) was the developer requested to construct a specific purpose building for use as a library for the University College of the Northern Territory;
 - (b) what was the total cost of the building;
 - (c) what were the extra costs of the additional building specifications necessary for the building to be suitable as a library;

11. What is expected to happen to the buildings on the site of the current University College when the University is relocated to Palmerston?

19 August 1986

4. Inquiry into Freight and Related Costs

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What action has been taken by the government on Part 1 of the Report of the Inquiry into Freight and Related Costs which was tabled on 1 March 1984?
2. What further action is being considered?
3. What action has been taken or is being considered in respect of Part 2 of the report of that inquiry which was tabled on 30 August 1984?

ANSWER

- 1.(a) In March 1985 the Consumer Affairs Branch of Department of Community Development released a brochure titled 'Freight in the Northern Territory'. The brochure is in response to a suggestion contained in Chapter 8 of the report.
- (b) In accordance with recommendation 1.46 of the Report, a 2-direction heavy vehicle checking station has been planned to be located on the Stuart Highway near Katherine, although it will be sited south of the township to avoid the possibility of Katherine being used as a 'rail head' for overweight vehicles. Presently there is approval for the purchase of mobile weighing equipment and the purchase and installation of a static weighbridge although approval of the roadworks and other associated earthworks is a matter for further budgetary consideration.
2. No further action is being considered at this stage.
3. No action has been taken or is being considered in relation to the Supplementary Report.

10. Darwin Institute of Technology - Staffing

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has the government reached any redundancy agreement with staff currently teaching in the Bachelor of Arts course at the Darwin Institute of Technology or does the government propose to negotiate such redundancy agreements; if so, what are the costs of any such redundancy agreements made to date and projected costs of further agreements expected to be made?

ANSWER

The Bachelor of Arts degree at Darwin Institute of Technology, as a result of the introduction of the University College Bachelor of Arts, is to become vocationally oriented, with professional strands being offered in psychology, social welfare and journalism/writing.

The new professional strands will require interdisciplinary foundation studies, particularly studies of Australian Society to prepare students adequately for employment.

These interdisciplinary studies will be taught by staff currently engaged to teach Humanities subjects.

No redundancies are therefore envisaged.

It is the Institute's view that all current staff can participate in one or more of the new programs. Any need for staff development required in response to the redirection of teaching activities will be handled in the normal way through the Professional Experience Program.

**11. Northern Territory University College
Enrolment and Cost**

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What are the preliminary projections for:

- (a) the expected student enrolment at the Northern Territory University College for the commencement of the 1987 academic year; and
- (b) the expected cost per student per year at the University College?

ANSWER

Expected enrolments are about 200. This will result in a cost per student of about \$22 000 per student in the first year. This high cost is to be expected in the first year of operation of such an institution; it will decrease as second and third year subjects are introduced, and as soon as families within the Territory accept that attendance at their own university should be the norm, the numbers entering each year will increase.

It is believed that the cost per student will decline by 1991 to the level of other small universities which also necessarily started with similar high costs per student in their early years of operation.

**12. Northern Territory University College
Use of Darwin Institute of Technology Facilities**

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will the University College use facilities at the Darwin Institute of Technology (DIT); if so -

- (a) which DIT facilities will be used;
- (b) how will this affect existing users of DIT; and
- (c) for how long will DIT facilities be used?

ANSWER

The University College will not be using DIT facilities except that discussions are going on with a view to students and staff at both institutions having access to the library of the other. This should not affect existing users, and such an arrangement would be permanent to allow a rational procurement policy whereby duplication of purchases would be kept to a minimum.

**13. Northern Territory University College
Courses**

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

- 1. What history subjects or units will be offered in the Bachelor of Arts degree at the University College?
- 2. Is there any provision for Northern Territory history in the Arts curriculum for the 1987 academic year?
- 3. Will current part-time students at the Darwin Institute of Technology (DIT) be able to complete their degrees at DIT on a part-time basis?
- 4. Is there a time limit within which part-time students will be required to complete their degrees.
- 5. Will units successfully completed at DIT but which are not offered at the University College receive automatic accreditation at the University College; if not, what provisions, if any, have been made for students who have successfully completed units which are not offered at the University College?
- 6. Will students pursuing Sociology as a major or minor stream in the Bachelor of Arts degree at DIT be able to pursue Sociology as a major or minor stream at the University College; if not, what arrangements does the government propose to accommodate those students wishing to pursue Sociology at the University College?

ANSWER

1. HISTORY SUBJECTS

Present plans are to teach only first year subjects in 1987. These will be:

- (a) Problems of Australian History
- (b) Australian Social History since 1850
- (c) Revolution and Crisis in Modern Asia.

If satisfactory arrangements are concluded to transfer students who have partially completed a BA at DIT, other higher level subjects will also be offered according to the expertise of the lecturers appointed.

- 2. It would not be appropriate to offer a specialised subject such as Northern Territory History to first year students. It is the intention of the College to offer such a unit to third year students, which would mean its introduction in 1989, unless the transfer arrangements mentioned are satisfactorily concluded which would allow an earlier introduction.
- 3. Yes. All current part-time students will be able to complete their degrees at DIT on a part-time basis.
- 4. Yes. While a cut-off period is not yet known the students will have other options, eg transferring to the University College of the Northern Territory or to DIT's new Bachelor of Arts degree.
- 5. Accreditation for BA subjects taken at DIT will be automatic up to a limit of two-thirds of the credit points required for a degree at the University College. This is the normal amount of credit that universities allow for transferees in Arts from another university. (Normally only one year's credit is given to students transferring from a CAE, but the standard of the subjects offered in the DIT BA degree has been assessed as sufficiently high as to enable this concession to be made).
- 6. Sociology is not a subject which is to be offered at the University College. It is my understanding that Sociology will continue to be taught at DIT but this should be confirmed by the Director.

14. **Court Proceedings - Northern Territory
Government**

Mr B. COLLINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Since self-government, in what proceedings has the Northern Territory government been involved before either the High Court or the Federal Court?

ANSWER

In view of the general nature of the question, inquiry was made of the office of the honourable member. I understand that the question is directed towards legal proceedings in relation to Aboriginal Land Claims and this answer is accordingly so confined.

Northern Territory government has been involved in the following proceedings before the High Court or the Federal Court in respect of Aboriginal Land Claims:

1. R v Toohey (Utopia)(1979)

Application by the Attorney-General for Northern Territory dismissed by a majority of High Court

2. R v Toohey (Kenbi)(1980)

Application by Northern Land Council granted by High Court

3.(a) Peko v Toohey (Meneling)(1983)

Application by Peko dismissed by High Court

(a) on the issue of the status of grazing licences the Attorney-General for the Northern Territory intervened on side of Peko.

(b) on the issue of the assessment of detriment the Attorney-General for the Northern Territory supported the respondent Aboriginals.

(b) Re Toohey ex parte Stanton (1983)

Application by Aboriginals dismissed.

4.(a) Re Perron (1984)

Application by Aboriginals dismissed.

(b) Re Kearney ex parte Japanangka (1984)

Application by Aboriginals granted by majority.

(c) Re Kearney ex parte Jularma (1984)

Application by Aboriginals allowed.

(d) Re Kearney ex parte Northern Land Council (1984)

Application by Land Council granted by a majority.

5. Northern Land Council v Administrator (1984)

Land Council's interlocutory application dismissed. Substantive application by Land Council pending.

6. Attorney-General for the Northern Territory v Maurice (Kenbi II and Katherine II)(1985) (Technically four matters but one question).

Application dismissed by Federal Court. Special leave to appeal granted. High Court appeal dismissed by majority.

7. Attorney-General for the Northern Territory v Holding (Roper Bar, Warlmanpa and Kaytej)(1983) (Technically three matters).

Orders Nisi discharged by agreement.

8. Peko v Holding and the Northern Land Council (1985) (Technically two proceedings).

The Attorney-General for the Northern Territory intervened in High Court on side of Peko. Peko's application granted.

9. Northern Land Council v Commonwealth and Ranger (1986) (Technically several actions).

The Attorney-General for the Northern Territory intervened and High Court found in favour of the submission of the Attorney-General. Further hearing pending.

10.(a) Attorney-General for the Northern Territory v Maurice (1986) (Technically two actions).

Application dismissed by Federal Court. Special leave granted. Appeal judgment reserved.

(b) Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority v Maurice (1986) (Technically two actions).

Application by Authority dismissed. The Attorney-General for the Northern Territory argued against Authority.

11. The Attorney-General for the Northern Territory v Holding (1986)

Application (in relation to the Tennant Creek Water Control District) dismissed by a single judge. Appeal pending to Full Federal Court.

12. Mpetyane v Aboriginal Land Commissioner and other technical actions relating to stock routes (1986).

Various applications to the Federal Court following the ruling of Commissioner Maurice that stock routes can not be claimed.

13. Attorney-General for the Northern Territory v Maurice

Applications to Federal Court against the ruling of Commissioner in respect of the Warumungu Land Claim and the Tennant Creek Planning Boundaries.

On occasion two or more actions have been commenced in one case to avoid jurisdictional argument. Such related actions have been described as one matter. The same applies where there are several Aboriginal Land Claims involved but only one substantive question of law. Where a number of matters have been heard at the same time this has been indicated by lower case (a), (b) etc.

24. Cost of Rangers at Yulara

Mr EDE to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

1. What is the estimated total cost of stationing the Conservation Commission Rangers at Yulara for a full year?
2. Is this total cost borne by the Northern Territory government?
3. How many Rangers are employed at Yulara?
4. How much does the Northern Territory government pay out in rent on their behalf and to whom is the rent paid?
5. What parks do they service?

ANSWER

By way of background I advise that although the Conservation Commission has been terminated from the day to day operational responsibilities at Uluru, there are continuing responsibilities throughout the Petermann District which need to be addressed. These responsibilities comprise regional land management issues including fire control, feral animal control and wildlife management, and the provision of services to visitors to Yulara, including the staffing of the Yulara Visitor's Centre. It is therefore appropriate that Yulara become the operations base for these services throughout the district.

The establishment of the Conservation Commission Petermann District proposal based at Yulara, has been considered by Cabinet as part of the Budget and the following advice is provided in relation to your series of questions.

1. The estimated cost of stationing a total of 10 Conservation Commission staff at Yulara for a full year is at \$350 000. This estimate is based upon:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| (a) Salaries and related payments for 10 staff | 250 000 |
| (b) Operational and administrative expenses including employee rental subsidy | 80 000 |
| (c) Capital items (purchase of radio equipment and additional vehicle) | 20 000 |
| | <hr/> |
| TOTAL | \$350 000 |
| | <hr/> |

2. It is envisaged that for the first full year of operation the total cost will be borne by the Northern Territory government. However, there is prospect for a component of the cost to be recovered in time.

The proposed Conservation Commission operations throughout the Petermann District include direct support services to the Yulara Resort. These include:

- (a) Manning the Yulara Visitor's Centre
- (b) Monitor and develop audio-visual display in the Auditorium
- (c) Bush Tucker walks
- (d) Natural History walks
- (e) Spotlight walks
- (f) The Yulara slide show
- (g) The 'Junior Ranger Scheme'
- (h) Participation in induction programs for new resort employees
- (i) Emergency Services

It is from these activities that the Conservation Commission expects to generate partial cost recoveries from 1987/88 and beyond.

Revenue is expected to be generated through the sale of various publications, posters, T-shirts, sun-visors and other items, distributed through the Visitor's Centre and commercial outlets within the resort. Revenue is also

expected to be raised from the various 'walks' proposed, including set fees to be charged for coach and specialist tours throughout the district, such as guided tours to Mt Connor.

It is therefore estimated that cost recoveries of approximately \$40 000 could be expected in 1987/88, with this increasing to \$120 000 in 1988/89 and \$150 000 in 1989/90.

3. It is estimated that a total of 10 staff will be employed for the first full year of operation. This is likely to be 8 Rangers and 2 administrative positions.

4. Housing Rental By-law 54 Allowance

This is the rental contribution paid direct to employees, being the difference between Housing Commission rent or Yulara Corporation rent, and employee contributions determined by the Public Service Commissioner.

This amount varies dependent upon the number of staff employed and the mix of Company and Housing Commission residences occupied at any one time. Current contributions being paid indicate an annual cost of \$15 000.

5. Besides the continuing responsibilities identified throughout the District, the Conservation Commission intends to develop Reserve Management further at Chambers Pillar, Illamurta Springs, Mac Clark Acacia Peuce and the Henbury Meteorite Craters.

26. **Liquor
Revenue, Rehabilitation and Preventative Programs**

Mr EDE to DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

1. What annual income does the Liquor Commission of the Northern Territory generate?
2. How much does the Northern Territory government spend on:
 - (a) rehabilitation programs for alcoholics; and
 - (b) preventative programs in relation to alcohol use?

ANSWER

1. See table following.
2. (a) During the past financial year the NT government, through its Grants-in-Aid program and through services provided by NT Health, allocated the sum of \$518 900 to be spent on rehabilitation programs for alcoholics.

- (b) The amount allocated by the NT government for expenditure during the past financial year for prevention in relation to alcohol use was \$197 500.

The NT Department of Health through the Drug and Alcohol Bureau funds regional drug and alcohol organisations throughout the NT, and part of their function is to offer prevention services. The Drug and Alcohol Bureau as part of its normal activities is also concerned with prevention measures and is assisted in this area by the Department of Health's Health Promotion Unit.

In total the NT government allocated just under \$2m to be spent on a wide variety of drug and alcohol programs during the financial year. Expenditure for the 1986/87 financial year has yet to be finalised as there are a number of programs yet to be fully developed.

WHAT ANNUAL INCOME DOES THE NT LIQUOR COMMISSION GENERATE?

| | 1981/82 | 1982/83 | 1983/84 | 1984/85 | 1985/86 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| LICENCE RENEWAL FEES | 2 231 714 | 2 865 996 | 3 451 953 | 3 986 998 | 7 502 689 |
| NEW LICENCE FEES | 4 000 | 3 000 | 3 400 | 3 400 | 3 200 |
| SPECIAL LICENCE FEES, TRANSFERS | 21 532 | 28 850 | 23 026 | 23 943 | 35 404 |
| SEIZURES UNDER LIQUOR ACT | 8 575 | 8 945 | 14 477 | 34 142 | 59 354 |
| STATUTORY DEPOSITS SECTION 48, REGISTRATION OF WHOLESALERS, APPROPRIATION FORMER YEARS) | 3 008 | 11 535 | 7 286 | 21 383 | 1 960 |
| SALE OF ASSETS | | 14 783 | | | |
| SEMINAR | | 5 200 | | | |
| | 2 268 829 | 2 938 309 | 3 500 142 | 4 069 866 | 7 602 607 |

27. Aboriginal Community Funding

Mr EDE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What amounts were provided for Town Management Public Utilities (TMPU) funding of each Aboriginal community for 1984-85?
2. What amounts were specifically allocated for fuel costs for electricity generation on each Aboriginal community for 1984-85?
3. What amounts were provided for TMPU funding to each community for 1985-86?
4. How much have the amounts of the allocations in 3 above been reduced pursuant to the new policy of 'user pays' for essential services?

ANSWER

1. See Table 1.
2. See Table 2.
3. See Table 1.
4. See Table 2.

TABLE 1

TOWN MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC UTILITIES (TMPU)
FUNDING TO ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

| <u>COMMUNITY</u> | <u>1984-85</u> (\$) | <u>1985-86</u> (\$) |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Darwin Region</u> | | |
| Bagot | 277 958 | 277 523 |
| Belyuen | 225 699 | 218 264 |
| Gunbalanya | 277 729 | 398 823 |
| Gwalwa Daraniki | 117 203 | 98 617 |
| Kardu Numida | 528 221 | 404 822 |
| Maningrida | 299 150 | 371 079 |
| Milikapiti | 275 068 | 231 219 |
| Minjilang | 189 181 | 202 365 |
| Naiyu Nambiyu | 298 757 | 305 686 |
| Nguiu | 454 362 | 455 769 |
| Peppimenarti | 194 845 | 123 009 |
| Pularumpi | 256 961 | 204 406 |
| Warruwi | 227 967 | 186 800 |
| <u>Katherine</u> | | |
| Barunga | 404 452 | 330 082 |
| Beswick | 282 265 | 255 732 |
| Dagaragu | 431 316 | 398 051 |
| Lajamanu | 550 162 | 580 882 |
| Ngukurr | 495 193 | 312 805 |
| <u>East Arnhem</u> | | |
| Angurugu | 724 000 | 695 442 |
| Bickerton | 26 020 | 67 921 |
| Galiwinku | 484 236 | 549 489 |
| Gapuwiyak | 223 945 | 317 193 |
| Milingimbi | 236 464 | 199 949 |
| Numbulwar | 343 584 | 370 345 |
| Ramangining | 185 692 | 179 264 |
| Umbakumba | 310 610 | 256 648 |
| Yirrkalä | 453 727 | 416 876 |

Table 1 (contd)Barkly

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|
| Ali Curung | 499 734 | 408 645 |
| Elliott-Newcastle Waters | 139 179 | 132 082 |
| Lake Nash | 31 529 | 130 662 |
| Warrawula | 380 466 | 129 043 |
| Warramunga Pabula | 31 230 | 76 794 |

Alice Springs

| | | |
|--------------|---------|---------|
| Amoonguna | 213 744 | 187 583 |
| Apatula | 132 185 | 129 817 |
| Areyonga | 161 533 | 145 997 |
| Ikuntji | 181 285 | 110 606 |
| Imanpa | 62 533 | 116 436 |
| Iwupataka | 116 028 | 115 804 |
| Kaltukatjara | 295 541 | 348 671 |
| Ntarria | 370 582 | 363 312 |
| Papunya | 373 070 | 282 432 |
| Santa Teresa | 380 813 | 439 227 |
| Tangentyere | 228 792 | 377 539 |
| Urapuntja | 214 933 | 288 042 |
| Wallungurra | 103 183 | 161 312 |
| Willowra | 69 332 | 158 978 |
| Yuendumu | 307 492 | 483 497 |

TABLE 2

1984-85 FUEL COST ALLOCATION - ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

| <u>COMMUNITY</u> | <u>ALLOCATION</u> (\$) | <u>DEDUCTION</u> (USER PAYS) (\$) | <u>REFUND</u> (\$) |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| <u>Darwin Region</u> | | | |
| Bagot | - | 6 033 | - |
| Belyuen | 79 288 | 14 275 | 2 963 |
| Pularumpi | 136 952 | 24 655 | 5 118 |
| Kardu Numida | 233 200 | 41 910 | 8 700 |
| Milikapiti | 127 200 | 22 905 | 4 755 |
| Naiyu Nambiyu | 102 608 | 18 476 | 3 836 |
| Nguiu | 298 072 | 53 650 | 11 137 |
| Gunbalanya | 206 912 | 37 260 | 7 735 |
| Maningrida | 256 944 | 46 194 | 9 590 |
| Minjilang | 77 592 | 13 972 | 2 901 |
| Peppimenarti | 74 624 | 13 438 | 2 790 |
| Wurruwi | 78 440 | 14 125 | 2 932 |
| <u>East Arnhem</u> | | | |
| Angurugu | - | 42 365 | - |
| Galiwinku | 253 552 | 45 670 | 9 481 |
| Gapuwiyak | 66 144 | 11 910 | 2 472 |
| Milingimbi | 156 880 | 28 260 | 5 867 |
| Numbulwar | 130 168 | 23 440 | 4 866 |
| Ramangining | 84 800 | 15 275 | 3 171 |
| Umbakumba | 132 712 | - | - |
| Yirrkala | - | 39 710 | - |
| Bickerton Island | 12 000 | 1 985 | 412 |
| <u>Katherine</u> | | | |
| Barunga | 170 872 | 29 872 | 6 201 |
| Beswick | 85 648 | 14 973 | 3 108 |
| Dagaragu | 184 016 | 31 259 | 6 489 |
| Lajamanu | 249 312 | 43 077 | 8 943 |
| Ngukurr | 179 776 | 28 764 | 5 971 |

Table 2 (contd)

Alice Springs

| | | | |
|------------------|---------|--------|--------|
| Amoonguna | - | 7 704 | - |
| Apatula | 50 000 | 8 154 | 1 693 |
| Areyonga | 50 000 | 14 825 | 3 078 |
| Kaltukatjara | 56 000 | 9 266 | 1 924 |
| Ikuntji | 30 000 | 6 671 | 1 385 |
| Iwupataka | 18 000 | 3 384 | - |
| Papunya | 145 000 | 27 055 | 5 616 |
| Santa Teresa | 180 000 | 62 018 | 12 875 |
| Willowra | 44 096 | - | - |
| Yuendumu | 208 000 | 44 474 | 9 233 |
| Hermannsburg | 107 500 | 57 771 | 11 993 |
| Urapuntja | 14 400 | - | - |
| Yuelamu | 31 500 | 5 390 | 1 119 |
| Wallace Rockhole | 21 500 | 3 706 | 769 |
| Imanpa | - | 3 706 | 769 |
| Kintore | - | 10 377 | 2 154 |

Barkly

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------|--------|-------|
| Ali Curung | 185 288 | 35 385 | 7 346 |
| Warrawula | - | 1 481 | - |
| Lake Nash | - | 2 929 | 608 |
| Elliott-N.C. Waters | - | 7 706 | - |

\$4 518 996

\$ 975 455

\$180 000

28. Student and Staffing Numbers

Mr EDE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What were the student enrolment numbers:

- (a) utilised in 1986; and
- (b) used in planning for 1987,

on which formulas for staffing numbers are set for the following schools:

- (i) Lajamanu;
- (ii) Yuendumu;
- (iii) Mt Allen;
- (iv) Ali Curung;
- (v) Willowra;
- (vi) Stirling;
- (vi) Utopia;
- (viii) Lake Nash;
- (ix) Areyonga;
- (x) Docker River;
- (xi) Santa Teresa;
- (xii) Kalkaringi;
- (xiii) Beswick;
- (xiv) Iwupataka;
- (xv) Murray Downs;
- (xvi) Napperby;
- (xvii) Ntarria;
- (xviii) Yirrkala;
- (vix) Neutral Junction;
- (xx) Ti Tree;
- (xxi) Ampalatwatja;
- (xxii) Papunya;
- (xxiii) Maryvale;
- (xxiv) Yulara;
- (xxv) Finke;
- (xxvi) Amoonguna;
- (xxvii) Haasts Bluff; and
- (xxvii) Imanpa?

ANSWER

Set out below are the figures used for the provision of staffing in 1986 at the following schools:

| <u>SCHOOL</u> | <u>PRE</u> | <u>PRIMARY</u> | <u>PP</u> |
|------------------|------------|----------------|-----------|
| Lajamanu | 20 | 118 | 11 |
| Yuendumu | 32 | 106 | 26 |
| Mt Allen | | 14 | |
| Ali Curung | 11 | 75 | 18 |
| Willowra | | 52 | |
| Stirling | | 35 | |
| Utopia | | 52 | |
| Lake Nash | | 38 | 10 |
| Areyonga | | 23 | |
| Docker River | | 45 | |
| Santa Teresa | | Non-government | |
| Kalkaringi | 19 | 97 | |
| Beswick | 5 | 55 | |
| Iwupataka | | 17 | |
| Murray Downs | | 18 | |
| Napperby | | 43 | |
| Ntarria | 19 | 83 | |
| Yirrkala | 14 | 196 | 61 |
| Neutral Junction | | 19 | |
| Ti Tree | 13 | 85 | |
| Ampalatwatja | | 49 | |
| Papunya | 11 | 59 | 12 |
| Maryvale | | 14 | |
| Yulara | 12 | 56 | |
| Finke | | 33 | |
| Amoonguna | | 31 | |
| Haasts Bluff | | 24 | |
| Imanpa | | 33 | |

Staffing is based on adjusted attendance estimated for August (the mean figure for the year). Account is taken of the previous two year's attendance trends so that special circumstances and known factors do not disadvantage the school.

Departmental projections for 1987 are currently being compiled.

11 November 1986

30. NTPS - Leave without pay

Mr PERRON to CHIEF MINISTER

1. How many Northern Territory public servants are on leave without pay?
2. How many Northern Territory public servants are on leave and work full time as union officials?
3. In respect to public servants on leave without pay working for unions, does the government receive payment from those unions to cover the employers' component of superannuation and accrued long service leave entitlements?
4. Is there a limit to the time which a public servant can have as leave without pay?

ANSWER

1. (i) As at 15 September 1986, there were 440 public servants on unpaid leave of a period exceeding one week. This figure includes those on Leave Without Pay, unpaid Maternity Leave, unpaid Parental Leave, unpaid Study Leave and unpaid Sick Leave, plus any absent without leave.
(ii) I can not advise figures relating to leave without pay only, as specific records of that are not kept.
2. There are five public servants on leave who work full-time as Union officials. There are also three members of the Teaching Service and one police officer on leave without pay for this purpose.
3. (i) As the period of leave without pay does not count as service in calculating long service leave credits, no recovery of the value of long service leave is required.
(ii) The employee can only continue contributions to the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme if the Union/Association pays the employer contribution. In such cases, the public service collects the employer contributions and transfers them to the Scheme.

Four of the public servants on leave without pay have continued to contribute and the employer contributions are being recovered. The same applies to the three Teaching Service employees.
4. There are limits on the period of leave without pay, which vary depending upon the reason for the leave.

Delegates could sometimes decide to approve leave outside those limits in individual cases. Some examples of the limits are -

Leave Without Pay for Recreation Purposes: depends upon the employee's length of service (less than one year - no leave without pay; up to three years - three months; up to five years - six months; over five years - twelve months)

Leave Without Pay for Compassionate Purposes: no limit

Leave Without Pay to Engage in Outside Employment: the limit is generally either twelve months or three years, depending upon the type of employment (Union duties are normally subject to the three year limit).

31. Carpentaria Pty Ltd

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

1. Did the principals of Carpentaria Pty Ltd provide the former Chief Minister (the Hon I.L. Tuxworth) with a loan of \$9443 to repay travel allowance?
2. What are the requirements under the Companies Act for companies to report obligations to the Registrar of Companies?
3. Does the loan constitute trading; if so, is the declaration that the company did not trade a false declaration?
4. If the money was borrowed, why was it not recorded as a debt incurred by the company?
5. If the money comes from assets and or income of the company why does it not show up in the returns?
6. If the money comes from income, how can it be a non-trading company, as declared?

ANSWER

1. I have no knowledge of such an alleged loan, although I am aware of unsubstantiated allegations made by the Member for Arafura in the Legislative Assembly on 27 August 1986.
2. The provision in the Companies Act, which applied to annual returns relating to annual general meetings of companies required to be held on or before 30 June 1986, concerning requirements of companies to report obligations to the former Registrar of Companies, varied according to the type of company.

In the case of a company having a share capital, for example, the annual return was to contain the particulars referred to in Part I of the Eighth Schedule and be accompanied by such copies of documents as were required to be included in the return in accordance with Part II of that Schedule and such of the certificates and other particulars prescribed in that Part as were applicable to the company (Section 158(1)). The return was to be in accordance with the form set out in Part II of the Eighth Schedule (section 158(2)). The return was to include a copy of all accounts laid before the company at its annual general meeting, namely a profit and loss account, balance sheet and group accounts if any (section 162 and Part II of the Eighth Schedule).

Section 159 provided for the requirements in relation to the annual return by a company not having a share capital.

In the case of an exempt proprietary company, the annual return could include an auditor's statement in lieu of a copy of the accounts (section 159A and 165B and Part II of the Eighth Schedule). A company was an exempt proprietary company if none of its shares were deemed to be owned by a public company and no member was a public company (section 5).

As a result of commencement in the Territory of the national companies and securities legislation on 1 July 1986, the provision of the Companies (Northern Territory) Code are applicable to annual returns relating to annual general meetings required to be held on or after that date. Transitional provisions are included in the Companies (Application of Laws) Act.

3, 4, 5 and 6.

See answer to Part 1. I draw your attention to Standing Order 112.

32. Waste Disposal Facility

Mr EDE to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

1. What are the five sites, apart from Tennant Creek, which are under consideration as sites for the construction of the waste disposal facility?
2. What are the details of the environmental studies performed on all sites?

ANSWER

1. In a preliminary evaluation of the proposal to support the establishment of an intractable waste incinerator in the Northern Territory, a search was undertaken for the available

information on site selection criteria. Two difficulties emerge in regard to this analysis. The first is that site selection criteria are not readily available as is the case in more common forms of industrial activity, and secondly, in the Northern Territory a great deal of site specific information is not available.

Officers therefore resorted to breaking the Northern Territory down into five regions, namely:

- (1) Darwin;
- (2) Katherine;
- (3) Tennant Creek;
- (4) Bowen Plains (to the north of Alice Springs); and
- (5) Alice Springs.

These regions are not meant to reflect any more than broad, climatic and geological zones in the Northern Territory.

On the basis of site selection criteria prepared by consultants, Neilsen and Associates, there is a prima facie case which favoured the Tennant Creek region as the preferred are for locating the facility.

The region is in a dry climatic zone and possesses a stable geology and favourable water-table characteristics. Its remoteness in one sense is in its favour, and in another, it increases the cost and difficulty of transportation.

Within the Tennant Creek region the local distribution of infrastructure indicates that a site such as that in the Warrego area would be favoured. However, this natural advantage can easily be offset by technical or micro-climatic disadvantages. The selection therefore of a site at the micro level will only be possible once a firm proposal and technology have been put forward and sites evaluated within the context of that proposal.

2. The regional assessments have included a consideration of very broad environmental and other exclusionary criteria as noted above. The site selection question has been addressed with a broad brush and does not reflect the detailed assessment of environmental impact required to satisfy normal EIS requirements.

The execution of environmental analysis of alternative sites and the selection of an ultimately favoured site will be a very costly exercise which will only proceed in conjunction with a full scale feasibility study. The project at this stage is a long way from the preparation of such environmental assessments.

A review has been undertaken and a great deal of information including technical specification, project appraisals, transport and incineration regulation and safety standards and reports concerning similar facilities and their performance standards has been brought together. A general overview document is currently under preparation. In the meantime, the source documents have been distributed widely in the Tennant Creek community and are available generally to the public.

**34. Student Assistance - University College
and the Darwin Institute of Technology**

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many (a) full-time and (b) part-time students were enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts course at the Darwin Institute of Technology in 1985 and 1986?
2. Of these, how many full-time students received TEAS allowances?
3. What is the expected number of full-time students who would, ordinarily, be eligible to receive TEAS at the University College?
4. What financial provisions has the Northern Territory government made for these students?
5. What is the Northern Territory government's budget allocation for the 1987 academic year for full-time University College students?

ANSWER

1. The following statistics are provided for students in the Bachelor of Arts Course for the years 1985 and 1986:

| <u>Enrolments</u> | <u>1985</u> | <u>1986</u> |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Full-time | 48 | 54 |
| Part-time | 141 | 135 |

2. Students Receiving TEAS allowance 46 24
Information on TEAS has been provided by the Commonwealth Department of Education.
3. Based on an expected number of between 200-500 enrolments of students from the Territory, and judging by the experience of the Darwin Institute of Technology, between 100-125 students would normally expect to be eligible to receive TEAS.
4. It is clearly unjust for the students of the University College to be penalised simply because of the Commonwealth government's stance. The Commonwealth recognises that the

students will be entitled to apply for Commonwealth Student Allowances but will only pay these allowances if the College is sited at the Darwin Institute of Technology. This proposition is totally lacking in logic.

5. The University College of the Northern Territory's Budget, which includes establishment costs, is not allocated in terms of full-time and part-time students, it is allocated in terms of the number of staff, the types of equipment and other services needed to provide the courses which the government in consultation with the University of Queensland, have decided are the minimum acceptable to provide an adequate array of subjects in Art, Science and first year Law. The budget for 1987 is approximately \$6m.

36. NTEC - Compensation to Chairman

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

Was compensation paid by the Northern Territory government to sacked Northern Territory Electricity Commission chief, Mr John Armstrong; if so, what were the circumstances of the payment and how much was involved?

ANSWER

The terms and condition of the settlement for Mr John Armstrong were negotiated by the Crown Solicitor on behalf of the Northern Territory Electricity Commission.

There was clear understanding with Mr Armstrong that the amount and terms of the settlement were to remain strictly confidential.

37. Trade Development Zone - Overseas participants

Mr EDE to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

1. How many overseas organisations and/or individuals have entered into binding commitments to the Trade Development Zone?
2. What is the nature of the industry of each organisation or individual?

ANSWER

1. 14 investors, including one Australian company, have signed Letters of Intent to establish industries in the Trade Development Zone.
2. These industries include knitted and woven garments; cotton briefs, educational toys and nylon luggage; video cassette tapes; LCD watches, analogue quartz watches, mechanical

watches, travelling alarm clocks; jewellery; bed sheets and similar products; confectionery; plastic utensils and other plastic products; sanitary napkins; high quality quartz and mechanical watches; canned food products; PE and PP bags; electric hot water heaters; refrigeration and associated equipment.

3. All organisations are required to submit firm Business Plans and then sign lease and license agreements to either rent Trade Development Zone buildings or construct their own facilities for progressive establishment in the Trade Development Zone from 1987.

This represents investment in the Trade Development Zone in the order of A\$6m.

**38. Destination Australia Marketing/Abington
Payment and Profit**

Mr EDE to TREASURER

1. How much has been paid by the company Destination Australia Marketing (NT) by Abington Pty Limited?
- 2 Has Abington Pty Limited profited in any way by its involvement with Destination Australia Marketing (NT)?

ANSWER

1. Abington Pty Ltd has changed its name to Investnorth Management Pty Ltd.

Destination Australia Marketing (NT) manages a business known as NT Territory Holidays for Investnorth Management Pty Ltd.

The Management agreement is on standard commercial terms, including a fee related to the value of new holiday packages sold. Since 1 January 1986, approximately \$227 000 has been paid to Destination Australia Marketing (NT) by Investnorth Management Pty Ltd under this agreement.

Pending the build-up of cash flows within NT Territory Holidays, Investnorth Management Pty Ltd is substantially funding the initial costs of this business by way of contributions from the hotels upon which the marketing is concentrated. The position of those hotels is, in turn, to be neutralised by a parallel reduction in the promotional expenditure of their respective operators.

By this means, there is a reorientation from general 'image' marketing to specific target selling. The operator, say a Sheraton, reduces its general marketing expenditure and such reduction flows through to an equivalent improvement in gross profit going to the owner. The owner's capacity to

contribute to the coordinated direct marketing effort is thereby established.

2. Investnorth Management Pty Ltd owns the business concerned and is solely entitled to profit earned. Any such profit will be assessed at the end of its accounting year.

39. Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Projects

Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Which projects in the Northern Territory are funded under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) in each of the following programs:
 - (a) the Youth Supported Accommodation Program (YSAP);
 - (b) the Women's Emergency Services Program (WESP); and
 - (c) the General Supported Accommodation Program (GSAP)?
2. What is the cost of each program?

ANSWER

See following attachment.

NORTHERN TERRITORY
SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Question 1: Funded Projects By Sub-Program at July 1986

1986/87 Budgets

Youth Supported Accommodation Program (YSAP)

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| YWCA - Casey House, Darwin | 153 781 |
| - Halfway House, Darwin | 9 570 |
| - Oakley House, Darwin | 36 501 |

Women's Emergency Services Program (WESP)

| | |
|--|---------|
| Dawn House, Darwin | 210 123 |
| Women's Community House, Alice Springs | 189 274 |
| Salvation Army: | |
| - Catherine House, Darwin | 85 142 |
| - Women's Crisis Centre, Katherine | 128 782 |

General Supported Accommodation Program (GSAP)

| | |
|--|---------|
| Coalition of low income earners, Darwin | 10 185 |
| A New Start Towards Independence, Darwin | 74 502 |
| Crisis Accommodation in Gove, Nhulunbuy | 22 266 |
| Anglican Parish, Tennant Creek | 601 |
| Uniting Church, Tennant Creek | 11 838 |
| Salvation Army: | |
| - Sunrise Homeless Persons, Darwin | 75 809 |
| - Sunrise Halfway House, Darwin | 22 679 |
| - Welfare Centre, Darwin | 36 825 |
| - Red Shield Hostel, Alice Springs | 82 619 |
| St Vincent de Paul | |
| - Ozanam House, Darwin | 110 155 |
| - Giles Street Shelter, Katherine | 20 658 |
| - Bakhita Centre, Darwin | 75 419 |

Total \$1 356 729

Question 2: Cost of Each Sub-Program at July 1986

| | |
|--|---------|
| Youth Supported Accommodation Program (YSAP) | 199 852 |
| Women's Emergency Services Program (WESP) | 613 321 |
| General Supported Accommodation Program (GSAP) | 546 556 |

Total \$1 356 729

**41. Installation of Electricity Meters
at Aboriginal Communities**

Mr BELL to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. How many meters were installed at:

- (a) Amoonguna;
- (b) Finke;
- (c) Docker river; and
- (d) Santa Teresa

under contract NQ 608 notified at page 17 of the Northern Territory Government Gazette No. G24, dated 18 June 1986?

2. What was the cost of purchase of each meter?

3. Who was the supplier of the meters?

4. What was the schedule of rates?

ANSWER

1. The number of electricity meters installed were as follows:

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| (a) Amoonguna | 50 |
| (b) Finke | 42 |
| (c) Docker River | 56 |
| (d) Santa Teresa | 118 |

2. The cost of each meter was \$47.

3. The meters were supplied direct to the Commission by Email and then to the installation contractor by NTEC.

4. The Schedule of Rates differs for each of the communities in question.

The following sheets, one for each community, give values and locations for all meter installations as installed by the contractor. Values on these schedules are for installation and miscellaneous materials only.

Meter boxes and meters were provided to the contractor from Commission stores.

Costs for these materials are not included in the figures shown in the schedules.

Also attached is Schedule 'A', (which can be viewed in the Clerk's Office), a Schedule of types which indicates the type of installations referred to in the above community sheets. Those installations not showing a type number are variations which were assessed individually on site.

METER INSTALLATIONS AT AMOONGUNA

| TYPE OF INSTALLATION | NO. OF INSTALLATION | | INSTALLATION LOCATION |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------|--|
| | | \$ | |
| 1a | 9 x 180 | = 1620 | Houses 2,3,16,17,18, 19, Toilet Block, Toilet adj. HA1, Managers House. |
| 1a + Vari | 6 x 195 | = 1170 | Block of flats, flat 1,2,3,4,5 & Laundry. |
| 1a + Vari | 2 x 263.50 | = 527 | Houses 75 & 87. |
| 3a | 11 x 140 | = 1540 | Houses 21,22, Toilet 55/25D, 61,62,63,64, 65, Houses 74,88,89. |
| 6b 3phase | 1 x 100 | = 100 | Workshop. |
| 8a | 1 x 90 | = 90 | Shed. |
| 8b 3phase | 1 x 355 | = 355 | Community Hall. |
| 9a 1phase | 2 x 140 | = 280 | Houses HA1, HA2. |
| 9b 3phase | 4 x 75 | = 300 | Pensioners Quarters, Sewerage Plant, Health Centre, H.A. Workshop. |
| 11a 1phase | 1 x 250 | = 250 | |
| TOTAL | 38 | 6232 | |
| | === | ==== | |

METER INSTALLATIONS AT FINKE

| TYPE OF INSTALLATION | NO. OF INSTALLATION | | | INSTALLATION LOCATION |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---|--------------|--|
| | | | \$ | |
| Variation | 1 x 390 | = | 390 | Finke Hotel 3phase. |
| Variation | 10 x 225 | = | 2250 | Houses 4,11,13A,15,16, 31,32,33. Advisors, 1 Toilet and block. |
| Variation | 1 x 235 | = | 235 | 3phase Bore. |
| Variation | 1 x 450 | = | 450 | 3phase Bore. |
| Variation | 1 x 265 | = | 265 | Community Store 3phase. |
| 7a + Vari | 1 x 245 | = | 245 | Bore Keepers House 1phase. |
| Variation | 1 x 230 | = | 230 | Telecom Repeater Station. |
| Variation | 12 x 205 | = | 2460 | Houses 6,8,9,12,13,14, 17,18,23,38,39 & Police Station. |
| 3a | 3 x 150 | = | 450 | Houses 35,36,37. |
| 8b | 1 x 110 | = | 110 | Bore. |
| TOTAL | 32 === | | 7085 ==== | |

METER INSTALLATIONS AT DOCKER RIVER

| TYPE OF INSTALLATION | NO. OF INSTALLATION | | INSTALLATION LOCATION |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | \$ | |
| 3a | 16 x 190 | = 3040 | Houses 1,2,3,4,5,7,22, 27,28,29,30,31 Community Office, Women's Centre, Council Outstations, Phone Room. |
| Variation | 1 x 425 | = 425 | Garage. |
| Variation | 1 x 185 | = 185 | House 8. |
| Variation | 1 x 185 | = 185 | Council Office. |
| Variation | 1 x 225 | = 225 | House 26. |
| 6b + Vari | 1 x 420 | = 420 | Water Treatment Pump 2. |
| Variation | 1 x 560 | = 560 | School House. |
| Variation | 2 x 880 | = 1760 | School & Essential Services House. |
| 3a + Vari | 12 x 245 | = 2940 | Houses 6,10,15,16,17, 18,19,22,23,24,25,33. |
| 6b | 4 x 150 | = 600 | ES0 Carport, Water Treatment Pump 1. Bore 1, Bore 2. |
| | <u>40</u> === | <u>10 340</u> ===== | |

METER INSTALLATIONS AT SANTA TERESA

| TYPE OF INSTALLATION | NO. OF INSTALLATION | | INSTALLATION LOCATION |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------|---|
| | | \$ | |
| 1a | 8 x 145 | = 1160 | Houses 192,307,308,318 324,325,326,237. |
| 1a + Vari | 3 x 185 | = 555 | Houses 112,132. |
| 3a | 34 x 145 | = 4930 | Houses 102,106,126,127, 128,129,130,136,139,140, 141,142,143,144,145,146, 147,201,202,211,212,213, 306,309,310,311,312,314, 315,316,321,323,338,339. |
| 3a + Vari | 3 x 175 | = 525 | Houses 196,81 & School Shed. |
| 8a | 1 x 95 | = 95 | Cattle Shed 80. |
| 8b | 1 x 105 | = 105 | 3phase Art Room 82. |
| Variation | 1 x 317 | = 317 | House 133. |
| Variation | 1 x 217.50 | = 217.50 | House 119. |
| Variation | 1 x 329 | = 329 | Building 205 Flats 1 & 2. |
| Variation | 1 x 145 | = 145 | Building 203 Flats 1 & 2. |
| Variation | 1 x 357 | = 357 | Building 207 Flats 1 & 2. |
| Variation | 1 x 364 | = 364 | Building 190 Flats 1 & 2. |
| Variation | 1 x 300 | = 300 | House 191. |
| Variation | 1 x 217.50 | = 217.50 | House 193. |
| Variation | 2 x 375 | = 750 | Houses 194,195. |
| Variation | 1 x 280 | = 280 | House 197. |
| | 61 | 10 647 | |
| | === | ===== | |

METER INSTALLATIONS AT SANTA TERESA

| TYPE OF INSTALLATION | NO. OF INSTALLATION | | INSTALLATION LOCATION |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| | | \$ | |
| | 61 | 10 647 | |
| Variation | 1 x 315 | = 315 | House 198. |
| Variation | 1 x 362 | = 362 | House 199. |
| Variation | 1 x 450 | = 450 | House 200. |
| Variation | 1 x 294 | = 294 | House 189. |
| Variation | 1 x 145 | = 145 | House 94. |
| Variation | 1 x 182.50 | = 182.50 | Church 83. |
| Variation | 1 x 200 | = 200 | Cool Room 84. |
| Variation | 1 x 240 | = 240 | Woodwork Room 85. |
| Variation | 1 x 320 | = 320 | Recreation & Film Rm.86. |
| Variation | 1 x 225 | = 225 | Church Home 87. |
| Variation | 1 x 202.50 | = 202.50 | Telecom Repeater 98. |
| Variation | 1 x 245 | = 245 | House 322. |
| Variation | 4 x 170 | = 680 | Houses 180,302,303,305. |
| Variation | 1 x 527 | = 527 | 4 Flats B Block & Public Power. |
| Variation | 1 x 764.60 | = 764.60 | 6 Flats A Block & Public Power. |
| Variation | 1 x 888.60 | = 888.60 | 6 Flats C Block & Public Power. |
| Variation | 1 x 455 | = 455 | 4 Flats D Block. |
| | 81 | 17 143.20 | |
| | === | ===== | |

Funding of University College

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Recently, the Leader of the Opposition claimed that the federal government would fund the University College if it were built at the Darwin Institute of Technology and that the government was wasting \$12m of taxpayers' money on the old Darwin Hospital site. This allegation is of concern to me, and I ask whether it is true.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I agree with the member that the Leader of the Opposition's allegation is a cause for concern. However, it is not the allegation itself that concerns me. Rather, it is the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition which gives me cause for alarm. On 26 October, in his Sunday Territorian column, the Leader of the Opposition wrote:

The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission has indicated that it will recommend that the federal government provide funds for the establishment of the University College at the DIT. It has ruled out funding for the old hospital site. The Hatton government is prepared to sink at least \$12m of our taxes into the old Darwin Hospital site, knowing that it will forgo this money from the Commonwealth.

That is a lie, Mr Speaker, and the Leader of the Opposition knew it was a lie when he wrote it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The minister will withdraw those unparliamentary words.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw that entire sentence.

The comments made by the Leader of the Opposition in his column were entirely untrue, and he knew that when he wrote it. He knows very well that the federal government offered only to fund the Darwin Institute of Technology for a total of 20 students a year to study a very limited number of university subjects. That was it. There would be no money for added facilities or extra administrative staff, just for 20 extra students a year.

The suggestion that the Territory government could have saved \$12m by going out to the Darwin Institute of Technology is an absolute fallacy. The Leader of the Opposition knows this, and I find it absolutely appalling that he should knowingly attempt to mislead the public in this manner. That conduct is totally inexcusable and is not befitting of a member of this Assembly. It is obviously too much to expect that the Leader of the Opposition will have the guts to retract publicly his misleading and mischievous statement about the University College. It cannot be expected that he will understand why the Territory needs a university, because he is so busy sucking up to his mates in Canberra. However, in the hope that he will begin to see sense, I would like him to consider the following facts.

Firstly, there have already been 180 formal applications for admission to the University College. More than 120 of those are from Darwin students and a further 27 from elsewhere in the Northern Territory. Applications do not close until the end of the month, but already 150 Territory students have indicated that they want to receive a university education in the Territory.

The Leader of the Opposition claims that the government is being unreasonable but I would like to see him explain to 130 students that they cannot attend university in the Territory because the federal government has allowed only 20 places. I do not think too many of those students or their families would think very much of that explanation. It is time that members opposite stopped being apologists for their colleagues and mates in Canberra and started to think and act like Territorians. If they are not prepared to act in the interests of Territorians, they should get out of this Assembly immediately so that people who are concerned about the rights of Territorians can represent them here.

In this year alone, we have 500 students at interstate universities and institutes of advanced education. At present, 500 Territory students are undertaking tertiary education outside the Territory but, despite this, the number of Territorians ...

Mr Ede: Do they all come back?

Mr MANZIE: That is a brilliant interjection from the man who purports to be the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. One of the problems is that they do not all come back. They get settled down south and we lose young Territorians. We lose people who are undertaking university education elsewhere because they cannot get it here, but berkhead over there ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister is sailing very close to the wind. He will withdraw that last remark.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw that remark.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has great difficulty in getting this little bit of information through his head. He does not want to know about it and he closes his mind to it. However, 500 Territorians are interstate receiving tertiary education. Despite this, the number of Territory Year 12 students who go on to university is less than 33% of the national average. That is an alarming situation. I am beginning to wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition is trying to reduce that figure even further. He has the hide to criticise the Territory government for spending \$6m to refurbish the old Darwin Hospital, but he knows it would cost more to build a free-standing University College at the Darwin Institute of Technology. He is aware that the DIT is already stretched to its limit and can barely cope with its present load and that the federal government has been forced to cave in recently and allocate \$7.7m for an administration block to cater for the present student load. To cater for the present load, the federal government is to spend \$7.7m and yet the Leader of the Opposition says that the university should go there!

He knows that the hospital site has enough room for expansion, at very little extra cost, for many years to come, and that it is right next door to residential accommodation. He knows that the University College of the Northern Territory is going to be a success. He is running scared because he can suddenly see that something is happening and that people are behind it. Students are behind it. He realised suddenly that his stand on the University College has left him in a most embarrassing position. He will be revealed as a man who has done his best to act against the interests of Territorians.

The members of the Territory government recognise that we have a clear duty to provide the best for young Territorians, and that is what we are doing with the University College. It makes me extremely angry to see someone like the Leader of the Opposition stoop to using students as political

cannon-fodder. That is what he is doing and it is nothing less than despicable. He would do himself and the Territory a great deal of good if he went to Canberra and asked his mates why Territory students should not be treated as other Australians are. Why doesn't he demand to know why Territorians are not considered good enough to be allowed a university education and why they are not deemed fit to receive allowances such as TEAS? I would like to know why, because I cannot understand it. The only reasons I can see for it are vile political ones. It is despicable.

In the Sunday Territorian, the Leader of the Opposition went on to offer to take a lie detector test. That would be a good idea; we would find out whether he has actually done anything to help the Territory's bid for a university. We might find out why he found it necessary to mislead the public on the issue or if he considered himself to be a Territory politician or just some kind of Canberra clone. I bet his good mates, Bob Collins and Ted Robertson, would like to ask him a few questions, probably about Senate preselection.

Mr Speaker, you can rest assured that the Leader of the Opposition has got it wrong again. I am very pleased to be able to say in this Assembly that the federal opposition spokesman on education, Hon Peter Shack, has stated quite clearly and concisely that a federal coalition government would fund TEAS for Territory students at the University College. It would recognise the University College and fund it as such. At least there is some light at the end of the tunnel because we know that eventually the coalition will take over as the federal government of this country and then young Territorians will be treated as Australians and not as members of a foreign country as those people over there, members of the Australian Labor Party, would have it.

Carpentaria Pty Ltd

Mr EDE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

I refer him to my question on the last day of the last sittings and the question I placed on notice on this subject. Is he in a position to advise the Assembly why the \$9443 loan by the CLP front company, Carpentaria Pty Ltd, to pay the member for Barkly's travel allowance debts, does not appear in the return lodged with the Registrar of Companies and, considering that the loan constitutes trading, why the company has been allowed to continue to operate with non-trading status?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, due to the complexity of the provisions concerning annual returns and accounts under the old Companies Act and the Companies (Northern Territory) Code, I ask that any questions relating to Carpentaria be put on notice.

I would like to say that, at this stage, there is absolutely no evidence whatsoever of any false or misleading information or omissions in breach of the Companies Act in regard to any action by, or the returns of, Carpentaria Pty Ltd.

Meat Inspection Service

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Given his stated intention that the Commonwealth is to take over the meat inspection service in the Northern Territory, can he assure me that Department of Primary Industry inspectors will carry out their role in accordance with the Territory's wishes and that another Mudginberri-type issue will not occur in the future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I can well understand the concerns of the member for Koolpinyah who has written to me on this matter. A reply is on its way to her. The transfer of the domestic meat inspection service to the federal meat inspection body has been on the books for quite some time. At the time of the Mudginberri dispute, it was delayed because of fears that, if federal meat inspection were extended to our domestic abattoirs, it might cause chaos in the Territory meat industry. At least the domestic meat inspection was able to continue and we were able to kill in domestic abattoirs.

That prompted a series of discussions and resulted in agreement between the federal Meat Inspection Service and the Territory government that, if a strike were in place in a domestic facility, on a letter from our Administrator to the Secretary of the federal Meat Inspection Service, we could send in our own inspectors and kill for the local market. That is how we are managing the domestic meat inspection service now, and that is what we did during the Mudginberri dispute when it was necessary to put in our own veterinarians and stock inspectors to do the work. Of course, our people are well qualified to do that. In fact, in many cases they are more highly qualified than the federal meat inspectors. When this is in place, some of our inspectors will go across to the federal Meat Inspection Service, on a better deal than that enjoyed by federal persons currently, because of their qualifications.

There has been some concern about whether we can override the federal Meat Inspection Service and put our own people in. The Department of Law is looking at that and we hope to have an opinion in the very near future. If that is forthcoming, we should be able to put the federal Meat Inspection Service into place in Territory domestic abattoirs in the very near future. Training of our personnel in the meat inspection trade will be provided and that will be an ongoing process within the present facilities. Only 1 of the present domestic abattoirs, a small facility in Arnhem Land, will continue to be inspected by our own people.

As I said, I am aware of the concern expressed by some people at the possibility that we may see all our abattoirs out of action because of a strike in the federal Meat Inspection Service area. However, should that occur, I believe that the rules and guidelines that have been laid down will be able to overcome that and we will be able to put our own inspectors into domestic abattoirs so that killing for the domestic market can continue.

Annaburroo Buffalo

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LANDS

How was the government able to lose a herd of prime buffalo from Annaburroo Station, and can press reports be confirmed that the value of the

lost herd was some \$300 000? Was this a direct loss to Territory taxpayers or is any or all of this stock recoverable?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have a detailed response to the member's question. It is necessary to go into some of the history of the purchase of Annaburroo Station, and the situation in relation to the alleged missing cattle.

Mr Speaker, you would be aware that, earlier this year or late last year, the Assembly was informed that the Northern Territory government purchased Annaburroo for several purposes. One was to develop tourism infrastructure between Darwin and Kakadu. A second was to provide some infrastructure for the development of buffalo blocks and a third was to set land aside for the Conservation Commission. A committee of officers of the departments involved was put together to advise the government on the likely outcome. During that period, the Northern Territory Development Corporation purchased the block known as Annaburroo Station and, since then, the area known as the Bark Hut Inn has been sold. An area has been identified for the Conservation Commission and areas have been set aside for future sale as buffalo blocks.

In December 1985, Annaburroo Station was purchased with an estimated 2450 head of stock of which 1150 were estimated to be in the eradication component of the BTEC program. The NTDC did not undertake a muster or survey of the stock at the time. It was well known that the stock were in poor to fair condition, not of the best quality, and with a history of relatively high levels of tuberculosis and poor BTEC progress. At purchase, there was no muster and no guarantee was given as to numbers and the classification of livestock. \$167 000 was apportioned to the value of the livestock, plant and equipment. Accordingly, about \$150 000 was a realistic value of the livestock at commencement.

On 14 July, the Chief Minister announced that land control and management undertaken by the Northern Territory Development Corporation would be handled by the Department of Lands in future. On 19 July, the Department of Lands inspected the property and surveyed the stock, and estimated that 1050 were on the property under the BTEC program. On 12 August 1986, the Department of Lands became the managing agent of Annaburroo as part of the transfer of functions from the Northern Territory Development Corporation. On 19 August, the Departments of Primary Production and Lands held wide-ranging discussions on the future management program for Annaburroo including, in general terms, responsibility for mustering the property. These plans were approved by the Northern Territory Development Corporation on 21 August.

During the first half of August, NTDC advertised for expressions of interest to purchase Annaburroo. The advertisement contained the estimate of 2450 head of mixed stock. On 2 September, the applications were handed to the Department of Lands for investigation. Several applications were received but a successful bid had not been announced. That delay was due to uncertainty about changes in the status of the BTEC program, stock numbers, valuations, legal encumbrances on the property and the business credentials of some of the applicants.

In late August, 9 neighbours and contractors were invited to quote for mustering Annaburroo and 5 written quotations were received. On 29 August, Mr Donald Hoar was advised that he would be awarded the contract. Specific instructions concerning testing and retention of stock were confirmed in writing on 24 September 1986. I have a copy of that letter and I will read it

for the member's information. It is addressed to Mr Donald Hoar concerning contract muster on Annaburroo:

- (1) Please ensure that the maximum number of buffalo mustered from the buffalo paddock are tested and returned to the same paddock. These are to include females to 5 years, males to 2 years, weaner buffalo.
- (2) Buffalo from bush area, Mt Goyder paddock. Females to 4 years and weaner buffalo to be tested and put in buffalo paddock.
- (3) White buffalo, of which there are at least 3 in the Donkey Hill paddock and one in the Mt Goyder paddock, are to go to the yards at Annaburroo roadhouse.
- (4) No more young buffalo from Marrakai Station are required. Test these into buffalo paddock please.
- (5) When mustering jointly for Terry Baldwin and Annaburroo, please include the conservation reserve north of the Arnhem Highway and west of the Mary River. These stock to be turned off with Annaburroo brand NFT.

Mr Hoar was given specific instructions on what he had to do under the contract.

My ministerial colleague received some information, through the Cattlemen's Council and the buffalo industry, that there were rumours that some funny things were going on at Annaburroo. He wrote a minute to me and I responded to him on 17 September advising him of progress to that date. On 29 September, 49 weaners from old destocked feral cows were tested and 6% TB was detected at post mortems. There were 3 animals with lesions. A further 1320 mixed stock were yarded and turned off to abattoirs before the end of October for 1.3% TB lesions.

With respect to the yarding of previously tested and tagged stock, the contractor advised that he was instructed to take all stock from the yards for slaughter because of the high reaction percentage, and he did that. The mobs were in separate yards and the test results of 1 should not have affected the fate of others. It is unclear who gave the authorisation to the contractor and in what circumstances or if, indeed, any authorisation was given. These circumstances are the subject of a police investigation. It is not expected that this investigation will be concluded until at least the end of November, at which stage it will be known whether criminal charges can be made or whether further inquiries should occur under the Public Service Act.

The contractor advised that he had trucked a total of 1339 mixed stock and turned 220 back into the paddocks. He estimates that more than 550 stock remain unmustered on the property. Thus, it is estimated that about 800 stock remain on the property. This has not been confirmed, but these numbers indicate that a shortfall of 300 to 400 mixed stock between numbers estimated at purchase and those later advertised for resale without any check muster or survey. This matter is being investigated by the police also.

The claim about \$250 000 worth of valuable breeding stock is not right. It has to be refuted. For one thing, various people who have been involved in the muster assert that very little work had been done with the stock in the last few years. Secondly, the government will receive 30% of the value of

stock turned off. The muster revealed that there was not a substantial domesticated, tested breeding herd and that, in fact, there were no more than 200 to 300 such breeders.

People who know the Annaburroo area and the surrounding countryside would realise that, since NTDC first took over, there have been a few problems. Fences have been down and stock have wandered from one end of the property to the other. Accusations about shenanigans involving fraud concerning government funds are certainly not correct. When I found out, on 23 October, that there were some funny things going on, I consulted with the acting Secretary of the Department of Lands. We decided that the matter should be put into the hands of the police. We did not refer it to the Stock Squad because its powers are limited. We decided to place it into the hands of the Fraud Squad which has a greater range of investigatory powers. That is where it is at at the moment.

When I came into the Assembly today, I had it in mind to ask that any questions on this subject be placed on notice because the matter is under investigation by the police. However, because of the adverse publicity and the way a particular journalist with the NT News has been reporting this topic - saying that something is wrong, somebody has to be held responsible, and let's go and hang the cattle duffer - I decided to answer today. I do not believe that it is correct to point the finger and accuse people. That is why I would prefer to wait until such time as the Fraud Squad comes back with its report so that the government can decide on further action.

Annaburroo Buffalo

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LANDS

I have a supplementary question. I would appreciate it if the minister could provide the answer now. Did the vendor or the purchaser of Annaburroo Station estimate that the number of stock on the property, and included in the sale price, was 2500?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand that, at the time, the Baldwin family had indicated that to be the number of stock on the property. It was difficult to give a correct estimate because of the season. I believe, and I would not like to stand on the record in relation to this, that we obtained a valuation from the Valuer-General of the approximate number of cattle on the property before NTDC purchased it.

Traffic in Vanderlin Drive

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Given the increased traffic on Vanderlin Drive in the northern suburbs of Darwin and the inherent increased danger to motorists and pedestrians, what works are proposed by his department to improve the traffic flow, particularly in the vicinity of the Hibiscus Shopping Centre?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the department plans to commence duplication of traffic lanes on Vanderlin Drive early next financial year. That work will extend from Lee Point Road to Patterson Street, a distance of some 2.2 km. The new facility will provide 2 through lanes in each carriageway with left turn slip lanes and sheltered right lanes approaching intersections. The intersections at Lee Point Road, Leanyer Drive and Patterson Street will be upgraded substantially as part of the work which is estimated to cost some \$1.65m. I believe that the use of side lanes will make driving considerably safer for the motoring public.

Disappearance of Norman Lawson

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

In the light of confusing press reports that police have concluded their investigation into the disappearance of Norman Lawson, what is the current status of police inquiries?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would be happy to give a report, although 'happy' is probably the wrong terminology. It has been quite a difficult and tragic situation. Norman Lawson is a 16 year-old boy who went missing in the region of the South Alligator whilst in the company of a number of people on the morning of Wednesday 22 October this year. A number of allegations and suggestions have been made in the media and there is considerable confusion about what occurred to young Norman on that day. The matter is still subject to extensive investigation simply because no one is quite sure what happened.

From the information I have been able to obtain from discussions and briefings with the police, it appears that, early in the morning of that day, Norman went fishing with a throw net at a nearby billabong or river. He was barefoot and dressed in shorts and a T-shirt and carried the throw net. He was seen to come back at about 6.30 am or 7 am, after which he proceeded up the road away from the camp without any change of clothing and still carrying the throw net. After that, he literally vanished. It was assumed that he had gone fishing in another of the billabongs in the area. There are several billabongs in the vicinity. I will read the police report:

He was last seen by 2 of the party who, although still in their swags, were awake. The other 2 were told of his disappearance after they awoke about 8 am. It was not until about 2 hours after he was last seen that the group commenced the search.

I understand that the other people thought he had gone fishing.

Searches on foot were then conducted each side of the river downstream for a distance of 0.75 km to 1 km and upstream on the western bank for the same distance. As well, Potter and Wayne drove along the roads back to the Bark Hut and Coinda as well as around the surrounding billabongs. No trace was found of the boy. They remained at the camp until 4 pm to 5 pm, after which they travelled into Coinda. Mr Potter alleges he told a ranger, Mr Peter Sullivan, about the missing boy. Mr Sullivan was at the hotel drinking at the time and Potter alleges Sullivan said he would alert other rangers. Sullivan denies he was told about the boy but admitted he did speak to Potter.

Potter and Wayne remained at Patonga that night and travelled to Jabiru with the other couple and an Aboriginal person the following day. Potter negotiated the sale of the boy's rifle to the Aboriginal for \$80 because he was short of money. He left the couple at Jabiru and returned to Patonga that afternoon, staying there until some time on Friday, when he and Wayne left to travel to Pine Creek camping en route that night and arriving Saturday morning. Wayne was arrested that afternoon and Potter went on to Katherine.

With another lady, I might say.

Wayne returned to Darwin and Potter was located by Wave Hill police on the road near Delamere Station on the following Monday, 27 October.

Other property belonging to the boy had been packed up by his companions and, with the exception of the rifle, was located in Potter's vehicle. The vehicle has been examined by crime scene examiners and is to be further examined. The rifle has been recovered from the person who purchased it and is also being examined. Information has been received from local Aboriginals (Patonga), that a large crocodile has been located in a large lake upstream from the camp, and in the direction the boy was apparently heading. Efforts are being made to capture it.

Information was received from Mataranka police this date that 2 persons, after viewing the photograph of the boy on television on Monday 3 November, believed that they sighted him at Mataranka with another youth about 29 October. These people are being interviewed further to attempt to obtain more particulars of the sighting. It is far from conclusive that it was the missing boy.

At the present time, there is no preferred theory as to what happened to the boy. Several scenarios are possible, and 1 is that he has met with foul play. However, there is no evidence to support the proposition that he was done any harm by any of his camping companions. Investigations are continuing and all information that comes to hand is being pursued.

Masters Games in Alice Springs

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for YOUTH, SPORT and RECREATION

What impact did the Masters Games have on Alice Springs, and what was its relevance to sport and tourism in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am very pleased indeed to report on the wonderful success of the inaugural Australian Games for Masters in Alice Springs. That success was ensured by the tremendous amount of organisation behind the games, despite the fact that we had a relatively short lead time. The games concept came into being some 12 months ago and, given that the authority for us to go ahead was not granted until about October or November last year, it was no mean task to get sponsors into place and to inform the various sporting organisations throughout Australia what the games were about.

I must confess that, in late July and early August this year, as minister responsible I was quite nervous about the low number of nominations we had for

the games. However, I am very pleased to report that, finally, 1007 competitors registered. 92 entries were received for additional sports and another 300 people participated in the fun run, giving us a total participation of about 1500 people. That was quite a remarkable achievement with the very short lead time that we had.

I would like to congratulate the organisers. Dawn Fraser played a magnificent role in bringing the games together. Organisations such as CREST and the sports medicine people put in a tremendous effort. A number of these people gave their services voluntarily and contributed an enormous amount to the games themselves. The contribution of private sponsors such as Honda Australia was quite significant. In various forms - cash, products, advertising, air fares and ground support - in excess of \$180 000 was contributed. Despite hiccups and nervousness on our part, the expected government underwriting figure of \$150 000 towards the games was below budget and we stayed within that figure.

The impact on the Northern Territory from the games has been enormous. It does not take a Rhodes Scholar to work out the dollars spent by the 1500 competitors and the support people who came with them, as well as their relatives and friends. Many dollars were spent in the central Australian area during the 10 days or so that they were there. There was tremendous media coverage, particularly through the print media, and some of the southern television stations were wise enough to take coverage of the various events. It was very pleasing to see people of all ages, from a 25-year-old swimming competitor to a competitor who was 86 years of age, participating in the 21 sports.

The Northern Territory can be very proud indeed of holding the inaugural Masters Games. This innovation in sport is growing rapidly and I am very pleased to say that already I have Cabinet approval to host the 1988 games to be held in central Australia again. I will be going to Melbourne at the end of these sittings to confirm this with the Confederation of Australian Sport.

I do not know whether or not it is proper for me to announce in these sittings that Honda Australia has been awarded the National Sporting Sponsorship Award by the Confederation of Australian Sport for its contribution towards the inaugural Masters Games held in central Australia. That is a feat that we ought to be very proud of because it took a company of the magnitude of Honda, in its wisdom and foresight, to see that these games, and the initiative shown by the Northern Territory government and the people of the Northern Territory in their contribution towards sport, was significant enough for the company to want to be involved. I think that is great.

I believe that the General Manager, Mr Suzuki, will be flying to Melbourne to have discussions with me in early December. Despite the fact that this company is losing millions of dollars a month at the moment because of the various taxes that the federal government has imposed, I anticipate that we can still encourage it to be involved in the Australian Masters Games to be held in Alice Springs in 1988.

Rural Industry in Alice Springs Region

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Given the success of horticulture in the Top End, are there any plans to diversify rural industry in the Alice Springs region or will the emphasis remain with the pastoral industry?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question of horticultural research in central Australia is, no doubt, of great interest to yourself.

Mr Bell: There isn't much in Braitling.

Mr McCARTHY: But he gets round a bit more than some people down there do.

Horticultural research for central Australia is broadening. Recently, I went to have a look at the Territory's grape farm at Pine Hill, which is progressing very well. It has been established by 3 farmers from the Mildura Menindee areas of Victoria and New South Wales in an attempt to obtain an early market for their grapes. They moved from Mildura to Menindee to get a couple of weeks ahead with grape production and, by moving to Pine Hill, they pick up a further 3 or 4 weeks and can get a much earlier market for their products.

Considerable research is being done into grape production in the Ti Tree area. I know the member for Sadadeen has an interest in that area and is one of the 4 people who are involved in grape production in the Ti Tree area.

Research is being conducted into date farming and we are looking at the potential of the Deep Well district. A water search is in progress to prove up water for horticulture in the Deep Well area and we expect that we will be able to bring about 400 ha into production in that area in the near future. Whilst I was at the research farm in Alice Springs, I saw a very nice crop of asparagus which is doing very well in the Centre. There is room for stone fruits as well and research is under way in respect of that. I am told that they would grow quite well in the Deep Well area.

Pastoral research will probably continue as the major rural industry in the centre of Australia. I do not think that horticulture will overtake it for a while. However, the Territory government is putting a great deal of effort into extending the horticultural potential for central Australia and will continue to do so and improve it year by year.

Roadside Inns

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TOURISM

Last night's NT News carried the headline: 'Hanrahan Raps Roadside Inns'. My extensive rural electorate contains many such premises and I ask which roadside inns in my electorate are 'inadequate or unsatisfactory', to use his own words?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, when I have finalised the recommendations of the Roadside Inn Review Committee which have been reviewed recently by the Tourist Advisory Council, which is representative of every tourist promotion association that exists in the Territory and which ratified the original recommendations in that report, I will be taking them to Cabinet with a suggestion for a course of action and then make the document public. At that time, I will be more than happy to make the report available to the member for MacDonnell.

I must reiterate that it is no secret that, early in the new year, the Northern Territory Tourist Commission will be embarking on a major campaign

aimed at the motorist. We have found that the sealing of the south road requires massive promotion. Planning is almost finalised and the promotion will be done in conjunction with the South Australian Department of Tourism. It is also no secret that many of the facilities along various major routes into the Territory would not be considered adequate anywhere else in Australia to meet the normal demands of the motoring tourist. It is the intention of the government to address those deficiencies in a very reasonable and practical way so that tourists coming into the Territory can receive the services that they expect anywhere else.

Pine Gap

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

In view of the constant misinformation emanating from the peace groups in the Alice Springs region, can he advise me what sort of defence contingency plans are in place for Pine Gap near Alice Springs?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question even though it is rather difficult to give an answer to it. Firstly, civil defence arrangements of this nature are a Commonwealth responsibility. In respect of civil disasters, civil defence is handled by the states. However, those associated with military or wartime matters are the responsibility of the Commonwealth using the civil defence infrastructure in the states. The situation has been a matter of concern for some years now, and the states and the Northern Territory have been pressing the Commonwealth to issue some clear guidelines and directions so that proper civil defence arrangements can be put in place.

At a civil defence symposium held in October of this year, the closing address was delivered by Hon Kim Beazley, Minister for Defence. The minister commented that his department had been developing a report on civil defence measures for the protection of communities located near joint defence facilities. If this report is translated into action, the Northern Territory will be able to develop some relevant civil defence contingency plans in cooperation with the federal government. The process of developing those contingency plans has been frustrated by the Commonwealth's failure to develop appropriate plans. I look forward to Minister Beazley following through and putting those into place so that we can do our bit to have this matter settled properly and finally.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Carpentaria Pty Ltd

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, earlier I was asked a question by the member for Stuart regarding Carpentaria Pty Ltd. I wish to advise that I now know that written question No 31 was sent to me regarding the matter. I have supplied a written answer and forwarded it to the member for Stuart. Clearly, it has not arrived at his office yet. He is probably wondering what is in the envelope, as a result of recent events. However, I undertake to obtain a copy of that written answer and I will provide it to the honourable member tomorrow.

Review of Tendering and Purchasing Procedures

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

What stage has been reached in the review of purchasing and tendering procedures that he announced earlier this year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, during 1985 and 1986, a move taking place nationally was causing some concern in the Northern Territory, particularly to the business community. There was pressure to remove local financial preference arrangements throughout Australia. As part of that move, the Industry and Technology Ministers Conference held in November 1985 put forward some proposals to establish industrial supplies offices. The member for Wagaman represented the minister at that conference and, following discussions with the minister, issued a press release stating that the Northern Territory government would be moving to participate in the implementation of an industrial capacity service in the Northern Territory.

During early 1985, there was continuing concern about purchasing and tendering procedures in the Northern Territory, and the ability for Northern Territory businesses to maximise their share of government contracts. This subject was near and dear to my heart for many years in my previous occupation with the Confederation of Industry and Commerce. I had made considerable representation to the government of the day seeking improvement in purchasing and tendering procedures.

When I had the opportunity as Chief Minister, I moved immediately to institute a proper and thorough investigation of all purchasing and tendering practices in the Northern Territory in order to develop systems which would maximise the opportunity for local businesses to gain the advantage of earning the Northern Territory government's dollar and to create spin-off effects throughout the Northern Territory economy, including job creation. To that end, the review committee was formed. It comprised the Secretary of the Department of Business, Technology and Communications, the Executive Director of the Master Builders Association, the Executive Director of the Confederation of Industry and Commerce and 1 of the consultants with the Northern Trade and Marketing Services Bureau, Nortrade.

That group has been meeting quite consistently. It has circulated more than 1000 questionnaires, conducted interviews with interested parties in regional centres, held discussions with officers from the government's major spending departments and advertised for and received written submissions from the general public and industry generally. I set a 3-month deadline for the first report and that period has now expired. A number of Cabinet submissions have been put through the system to commence the implementation of a series of procedures that will change the nature of purchasing and tendering significantly and remove some of the red tape and delays that limit the capacity of local business to participate, particularly in government contract work. We are equally conscious of the need to ensure that our local business suppliers and contractors are given the best opportunity to participate in work in the primary industry areas. It is most important to ensure that the people who make purchasing or tendering decisions are aware of what is available locally.

As a result of this total review, the government has now adopted 2 recommendations. First, we have set in place a strategy on government

purchasing and tendering procedures which will lead to a total review over the next 6 weeks of all of our purchasing and tendering details and administrative arrangements. The process is established, has been approved by Cabinet and is under way. It will involve the formation of an industrial supplies office. The government will fund a joint venture company of the Confederation of Industry and Commerce and the Master Builders Association. A joint venture company, called Territory Exhibitions Pty Ltd, is in operation already. It is the company which runs Northern Territory Expo. It has been in operation for some time and provides a vehicle for the operations of an industrial supplies office.

Mr B. Collins: Another win for the Labor Party.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I knew the honourable member for Arafura had to jump at that. If the member for Arafura had listened carefully, he would know that I commenced my answer by making the point that this particular proposal was first suggested by the government in November 1985 - 3 months before the Labor Party even opened its mouth on the subject.

Mr B. Collins: Rubbish!

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, we know that the opposition members' Labor mates told them what was going on during the ministerial conference and they thought they would try to jump on the bandwagon. We recognised that, but we let them have their run for the year and make a lot of noise about it while we did the work to put it in place. All they said was that we needed an industrial supplies office. The fact is that an industrial supplies office, by itself, is not sufficient. It needs to be part of a total package of arrangements that addresses the whole issue of purchasing and tendering and the manufacturers and suppliers directory which is already in place. This government is doing that and, over the next 6 months, a series of initiatives will be announced as we tackle every aspect of purchasing and tendering. I appreciate that the opposition is somewhat chagrined by the fact that we have done this.

Mr Smith: We are elated in fact.

Mr Leo: We need some decent management in the Territory.

Mr HATTON: I really appreciate that, and I thank the member for Nhulunbuy for his compliment.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I would remind honourable members that question time is being broadcast and, in the past, there have been many comments about the noisy interjections which prevent listeners hearing both the questions and the replies.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, this is the first of a series of initiatives that will be announced. A matter will go before Cabinet this week dealing with the issue of the establishment of a single tendering board. Flowing from that will be a series of decisions relating to arrangements in respect of pre-qualification and preselection of tenders, the limits within which a matter needs to go to tender, delegations to departments, review and coordination of purchasing and tendering, and the standardisation of procedures through government departments and authorities to simplify procedures for private industry in tendering so that different authorities are

not using different procedures, different arrangements or different methods of forming contracts. This is a significant initiative and I congratulate review committee on its work. It has been a very difficult and complex task to resolve a difficulty that has been baffling government for many years. That group was faced with considerable pressure to do a job quickly, perhaps too quickly, simply to have a decision made. It had the courage to stand by its approach of dealing with the matter comprehensively. It is a fact of life that, if a job is done properly to start with, solutions are arrived at more quickly. To all those people who have been criticising this government for indecision or slowness in completing processes, I say that it is far better to do the job properly than merely to do the job quickly.

Government Tenders

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

I congratulate the government on picking up the industrial supplies office idea. The timing is exquisite. Is it normal policy for the government to notify tenderers merely by telex that they have been awarded a government contract?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand that the circumstances of notification can be varied. From time to time, formal written notification can be supplied to successful tenderers or they may be notified by telex.

School Buses

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the current situation regarding the changeover from the use of government buses to the use of private buses on some school bus runs, particularly as it affects the Darwin rural area and the attendance at private schools in Darwin of children from the rural area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is now well known that the government intends to amalgamate the public transport system with the private transport system in some feeder areas, especially in the northern suburbs. In the past, we have had a school bus service to take children to school and an almost parallel public transport system. In about June or July of this year, it was decided to amalgamate these services in the interest of better efficiency and economy.

The dedicated school bus service in Darwin will be abolished from January 1987. At that time, the Darwin Bus Service will make transport available to all members of the public, including school children, on existing or amended Darwin Bus Service routes. School children will be able to travel to and from school by public transport although those students travelling to schools some distance from their homes may have to change buses at interchanges located at Darwin, Casuarina and Palmerston. Public transport service frequency will improve. During peak periods, there will be a service every 15 minutes on many routes. The rationalisation of a service combining the Darwin Bus Service and contract buses in the Darwin urban area will save the government money and allow for an improvement in the frequency of service. Savings will be in the order of \$750 000 in the first year.

Safety issues are being examined on a school-by-school basis. Potential problems are being identified and bus routes and bus stops are being planned to eliminate any potential danger points. This aspect will be monitored in 1987 as the new system is introduced. Liaison has already commenced with the schools. Representatives of the Darwin Bus Service are speaking with school councils, again on a school-by-school basis. Problems such as pedestrian congestion at bus stops are being addressed. Some minor staggering of the starting and finishing times of schools by 5 to 10 minutes will greatly assist in easing any congestion and the assistance of the school councils is being sought in that regard. A school bus telephone hot line will be established and a brochure informing the residents of the Darwin urban and rural areas of the changes has been prepared and will be distributed to 20 000 households.

In relation to the rural area, the integration of school bus runs will occur at the start of the school year and school children will be required to use a schedule modified to suit overall needs. However, dedicated buses will continue to service schools and children in the rural area although routes will be modified to be more cost effective. Children in the rural area, who wish to travel to high schools and private schools in Darwin, will be able to travel in dedicated buses to Palmerston and transfer to the normal Darwin Bus Service for transport to their particular school. Account is being taken of the needs and requirements of school children, including safety issues, during the current review of Darwin bus routes and timetables.

Darwin Bus Service officers are liaising with all schools concerned in this exercise and, when details are finalised, they will be sent to schools and parents. In addition, officers of the Department of Transport and Works and the Darwin Bus Service are meeting regularly on a weekly basis for briefings and are trying to identify potential problems that may occur early in the school year. I have asked the bus service officers to consider implementation of the new runs by the middle of January 1987 so that we can see how the routes and timetables work out before the commencement of the school year. That is something that we are concerned about.

We expect the new system to run smoothly, but wish to anticipate any problems that might arise. For the information of honourable members, in the past it has been the practice to try to cater for the needs of every person within the community. In some instances, a bus has taken 1 child to school. The cost to the taxpayer of such an exercise is very onerous. We shall monitor the situation very carefully. Hopefully, before school breaks up this year, most schools will be notified of the intended schedules and routes.

Aerial Medical Service

Mr SMITH to TREASURER

On whose authority was a telex sent to Skywest on 23 October this year accepting its tender for the aero-medical service? Secondly, was a senior public servant instructed to ring Skywest on 24 October to inform it not to take any action on the basis of the telex sent the previous day and, if so, who instructed the public servant to take that action?

Mr HANRAHAN (Leader of Government Business): A point of order, Mr Speaker! The government considers that the question put by the Leader of the Opposition concerns a matter which is sub judice. I request a ruling.

Mr SMITH (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, this Assembly has a legitimate right to demand information on the procedures that this government has used in any matter, particularly one as controversial as the Skywest contract. You will be aware that the injunction proposed by 1 of the parties involved in the tender process concerns a very specific aspect of the tender documents, not the procedures followed by the government in assessing the tender. My questions are directed at the procedures adopted by the government in assessing the tenders. They are not directed at the content of the tenders which is the subject of the injunction brought by 1 of the companies involved.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arafura): Mr Speaker, there is no standing order relating to the question of sub judice. It is a parliamentary convention which is always overridden in the case of a matter that is in the public interest.

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, standing order 1, General Rule, says: 'In all particular cases not provided for hereinafter ... resort shall be had to the practice of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia'. Pettifer is explicit in pointing out that the discretion is entirely yours, Mr Speaker. The sub judice convention is covered on pages 464 and 465. It is rather disappointing, when the members opposite are fully aware of the convention ...

Mr B. Collins: Tell that to the member for Barkly.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Arafura was heard in silence and will cease interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: The opposition's behaviour is rather disappointing, given that it is fully aware of the parliamentary convention. I think it is worth reminding members of the Assembly of the convention. I will quote from Pettifer:

The practice of the House of Representatives is as follows: application of the sub judice rule is subject always to the discretion of the Chair and the right of the House to legislate on any matter; matters awaiting or under adjudication in all courts exercising criminal jurisdiction shall not be referred to in motions, debates or questions from the moment a charge is made; matters awaiting or under adjudication in the civil court should not be referred to in motions, debates or questions from the time the case is set down for trial or otherwise brought before the court, not from the time the writ is issued.

Mr Speaker, the matter referred to is presently the subject of civil litigation. It would be entirely inappropriate for that matter to be discussed in this Assembly until such time as the proceedings in the civil court are finalised. This convention is something which parliament imposes upon itself voluntarily, and for good reason. It is most important that justice is not only seen to be done but is able to be done, and that courts be allowed to function without pressure from any legislative group anywhere.

Mr HANRAHAN: Mr Speaker, in case the opposition is under any misconception, I would like to add that it is not the policy of the government to withhold information or to refuse to debate issues. We are quite happy to do that in the proper circumstances. However, we have raised this point of order because of the seriousness with which we view the conventions of this Assembly.

Mr SPEAKER: I have noted the point of order raised by the Leader of Government Business. In view of the uncertainty concerning the interpretation of Article 9 of the Bill of Rights, especially in the light of its interpretation by some courts, and in view of the fact that the matter is before the courts, on this occasion I will not permit the question.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I move dissent from your ruling.

Mr SPEAKER: Is there a seconder for the motion? There is a seconder.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I will not detain the Assembly for very long. Mr Speaker, it is important, when quoting from Pettifer, not to do so selectively. I would make it clear to you, Mr Speaker, that that is the reason why I have moved dissent from your ruling. It simply gives me the opportunity to point that out to the Attorney-General. I would like to quote a little more fulsomely from Pettifer on the question of sub judice. I quote from the opening paragraph, and my memory is not deficient on this subject. It refers specifically to the House of Representatives:

Having no standing order specifically related to sub judice matters, the House has been guided by its own practice and that of the House of Commons as declared by resolutions of that House in 1963 and 1972.

Mr Speaker I do not wish to transgress standing orders by anticipating debate on a matter that is on the Notice Paper. All honourable members know that there is a motion which I think will probably be supported. Given what has happened this morning, I think it will certainly be supported. It is a motion to refer the whole question of sub judice practice in this Assembly to our Standing Orders Committee for consideration and perhaps resolution of this subject.

Obviously, the convention was originated in order to prevent parliament using its privilege to exert influence, particularly on juries. Mr Speaker, you would recall that, in the Mudginberri debate, there was the question of material being introduced into the Assembly that was the subject of litigation in the courts. As I said at that time, and I assert again, that was not a contravention of the sub judice rule of this parliament because the convention related specifically to jury cases. Judges of courts are not deemed to be such wilting flowers that they would be influenced in making their deliberations by what members of parliament may or may not say in the House.

Mr Speaker, one overriding consideration always transcends the question of whether matters should be raised in debate, and that is whether the matter is indisputably in the public interest. That goes to the heart of the most important distinction that exists between the parliament and the judiciary. Some honourable members, who are members of the statehood committee, would know that that matter came up for discussion recently at a meeting of that committee which was held to determine what will or will not go into the constitution of the state of the Northern Territory. Indeed, it is a matter that is the subject of much topical debate at the moment.

Mr Speaker, being a conservative and a traditionalist, as I unblushingly am, I have no hesitation in asserting that I adhere very strongly to the traditional view that, at all times, parliament is supreme to the courts. I think that view is important because, rightly or wrongly, in a democratic society it is the elected members of the society who run that society. As has been said recently by judges from the bench of the Northern Territory Supreme Court - and I was there when it was said - democracy may not be a brilliant

form of government but one does not have to travel too far from our shores to see it demonstrated that, with all its deficiencies, it is streets ahead of various other systems that exist around the world.

As a result, I am firmly of the view that the privilege of parliament to debate matters - and we do not debate so very often in the Legislative Assembly - is one that should be preserved scrupulously. That is why I have moved dissent from your ruling. These are the last sittings of 1986. It is obvious that, if we are to be prevented from discussing in the Assembly a matter which is of topical, direct and controversial interest to the people of the Northern Territory, we must resist. We cannot have this Assembly muzzled by a completely arbitrary application of the sub judice convention when we seek information from responsible ministers.

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable member is giving his opinion in relation to rulings that you may make, Mr Speaker, instead of discussing his point of order.

Mr B. COLLINS: That is exactly what a dissent ruling is about.

Mr MANZIE: I believe it is entirely inappropriate.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, in dissenting from your ruling, of course I will have to make some criticism of it.

Mr Speaker, this parliament only sits between 20 and 23 days a year and, as I said before I was so rudely interrupted, these are the last sittings for 1986. We will not sit again until February or March 1987. It appears we are to be muzzled by the government hiding behind the sub judice convention, which is most convenient for it. It does not want to answer any questions on this controversial matter. We all know that the responsible minister has been firmly muzzled by the government.

In terms of justification for the arbitrary application of the sub judice rule, it was extraordinary indeed that the minister who mucked the business up in the first place made a public statement that he would not be making public statements because the matter was sub judice. That occurred the day after his Chief Minister made a specific public statement berating the Tender Board, the public service and everyone except the responsible minister.

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The member for Arafura is entering into debate on matters concerning the particular situation that is before the courts. He should not be utilising a debate on a motion of dissent to discuss the substance of the matter in question. His comments are not relevant to the reason for dissent and should not be allowed because the matters are sub judice.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I would remind the member for Arafura that he should speak in general terms, and not specifically about the matter before the courts.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I recognise that these specious points of order are being called in order to waste time.

Mr Palmer: Are you coming back after lunch today, Bob?

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, I always allow interjections to proceed on matters of importance before the Legislative Assembly because it is a great opportunity to give the frontbenchers and, indeed, backbenchers an opportunity to make fools of themselves as often as they like. They continue to do so. They may think that this matter is a big joke, but I think it is a matter of definite public importance that answers should be given, particularly by the responsible minister, the Minister for Health, as to how this mess arose in the first place. This is so because, judging from very disturbing comments that have been printed in the newspaper that members of the Tender Board may not have been aware - to quote NT News - that 'there was a 45% subsidy being offered in respect of 1 of those tenders, which could have saved ...'

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The member for Arafura is straying from the subject again and getting into matters of detail regarding a case that is before the courts. Again, it is not a matter that he is supposed to be discussing at the moment. In fact, that matter is sub judice.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, may I address the point of order?

Whether or not a matter which is sub judice can be discussed depends on whether the convention is transcended by the matter being one which is in the public interest. In respect of this matter, I am talking about a potential saving to taxpayers of \$1m. That is definitely in the public interest. I am addressing myself directly to the conventions of parliament.

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: Are you raising a point of order on the point of order?

Mr MANZIE: I am indeed, Mr Speaker. The member for Arafura is again bringing forward details concerning certain matters that may be before the courts. He is making specific suggestions and using specific figures, and I believe that it is entirely inappropriate. I am rather disappointed that he believes he is being some sort of superstar because he is quite transparent in his feeble attempts to use this Assembly for cheap political point-scoring in relation to important matters. The appropriate course of action is set out in Pettifer.

Mr SPEAKER: There is a point of order. I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to the dissent motion and to general comments only in relation to that matter.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, it is a matter of complete and critical public interest whether the Northern Territory has potentially lost \$1m of taxpayers' money.

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Yet again, the honourable member is giving his opinion on a matter which may be before the court. It has no relevance whatsoever to the motion of dissent from your ruling. He is seeking to detail his opinions on particular matters which will be before the court. It has absolutely no place in this debate.

Mr B. COLLINS: You are just being disruptive, Daryl, and I will move a point of order on you in a minute.

Mr LEO (Nhulunbuy): Mr Speaker, this continuous campaign by the Attorney-General is simply designed to stop debate on dissent from your ruling as to whether or not a question should be permitted in this Assembly. All the

propositions put by the member for Arafura so far have been very widely publicised and the figures have been quoted in the newspapers. How the member for Arafura can influence a jury more than the newspapers can - particularly, as the people who take an interest in the proceedings of this Assembly would be far fewer than the people who read the NT News - is beyond my understanding. The point of order is spurious and is designed only to stop debate on this dissent motion.

Mr HANRAHAN: Mr Speaker, obviously the government does not support the motion of dissent moved by the member for Arafura. As he has said himself, interpretation of the convention is not a question here, but what is a matter of interpretation is his view. He has said that he supports the traditional view of the precedence of public interest over the matter before the courts. The government has been accused by the members opposite of seeking to muzzle debate. Mr Speaker, we stand by the ruling of the Chair on this issue.

Mr B. Collins: You are only addressing yourself to the point of order.

Mr HANRAHAN: That is correct. We support the ruling of the Chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Is the Leader of Government Business speaking to the motion or to the point of order?

Mr HANRAHAN: I am just making some general remarks.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Ede: You are making fools of yourselves.

Mr HANRAHAN: Not at all.

Mr HATTON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, I do not wish to prolong this debate, but an motion of dissent from a ruling of the Chair is quite a serious matter and I think ...

Mr B. Collins: Speak to the point of order or sit down!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I believe that the member for Arafura has raised what he believes is a matter of public interest. I believe also that he has made his point concerning his dissent from my ruling. Therefore, I would direct that any further remarks that he makes should not refer specifically to issues which are before the courts.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, may I quote from page 465 of Pettifer?

Mr SPEAKER: Is the honourable member speaking to the dissent motion?

Mr B. COLLINS: I am speaking to it directly, in terms of your discretion, Mr Speaker. I refer to the discretion of the Chair in respect of matters that may be sub judice. I commend this passage from Pettifer to members opposite and suggest that they might like to read it a little more carefully than they did prior to question time this morning:

The discretion exercised by the Chair must be considered against the background of the inherent right and duty of the House, under the Westminster system, to debate any matter considered to be in the

public interest. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right without which members would not be able to carry out their duties. Members must be able to speak the truth without hope of favour or fear of retribution. Imposed on this freedom is the voluntary restraint of the sub judice convention; a procedure devised for the simple purpose of ensuring that proceedings before a court are not prejudiced by comment in the House ... It recognises that the courts are the proper place to judge alleged breaches of the law.

Mr Speaker, this is a matter of some moment in Australia. Currently, debates in our parliaments, particularly that in the state of Queensland, are being prevented by the continual use of the sub judice rule to deter parliaments from doing what they are supposed to do and that is to debate matters of public interest without fear or favour. I believe that this is indisputably a matter of public interest. It is a matter on which the Chief Minister has made publicly the most trenchant and pointed comments in the newspapers, almost on a daily basis, while court proceedings were initiated. In fact, the Chief Minister made statements on the subject prior to the Minister for Health making his first statement that he would make no further statements because the matter was sub judice.

Mr Speaker, indisputably this matter is in the public interest. I contend that the use of the sub judice convention this morning is nothing more than a ploy by the government to attempt to gag debate on this question in this Assembly, during its last sittings in 1986, in the hope that, by the time we assemble in March 1987, this will be a dead issue. I believe that your ruling should be dissented from and that ministers should be responsible for rather more than picking up their pay cheques once a fortnight. They should be required to answer questions in this Assembly on the hard issues to which they obviously do not want to address themselves.

Mr HATTON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, for the benefit of the record of this Assembly, it is important that we complete the quotation that the member for Arafura referred to. I followed him word for word through the quotation up to the point where it ceased. I will pick up the last sentence:

Imposed on this freedom is the voluntary restraint of the sub judice convention; a procedure devised for the simple purpose of ensuring that proceedings before a court are not prejudiced by comment in the House ...

and these words were not included:

... which might influence a jury or prejudice the position of parties and witnesses.

The quotation continued:

It recognises that the courts are the proper place to judge alleged breaches of the law. It is a restraint born out of respect by Parliament for the judicial arm of government, democratic respect for the rule of law and the proper upholding of the law by fair trial proceedings.

In 1977, Speaker Snedden stated: 'The question of the sub judice rule is difficult. Essentially, it remains in the discretion of the presiding officer. Last year, I made a statement in which I expanded on the interpretation of the sub judice rule which I would adopt. I

was determined that this national parliament would not silence itself on issues which would be quite competent for people to speak about outside the parliament. On the other hand, I was anxious that there should be no prejudice whatever to persons faced with criminal action. Prejudice can also occur in cases of civil action, but I was not prepared to allow a mere issue of a writ to stop discussion by the national parliament on the issue.

Therefore, I adopt a practice that it would not be until a matter was set down for trial that I would regard the sub judice rule as having arisen and necessarily stifle speeches in the parliament. There is a stricter application in the matter of criminal proceedings'.

Mr Speaker, this matter has been set down for trial on 15 December.

Mr SMITH (Opposition Leader): Mr Speaker, as the member for Arafura has said, and he is probably the person in this Assembly best placed to say it, we on this side of the Assembly have an enormous respect for the conventions of parliament, the relationship between this parliament and the judiciary, and the need to ensure that, when matters are before the court, actions taken in this parliament do not in any way interfere with the justice that may be given in the courts.

However, as the member for Arafura said, in the public interest, parliament has a right to consider matters of importance within those constraints. It cannot be denied that there is an enormous amount of public interest in this matter. There is grave concern at the prospect that things have gone wrong in the letting of this contract. It is a legitimate expectation of the public of the Northern Territory that this matter will be pursued in this parliament. It is a shame that the government is hiding behind the sub judice convention on this particular matter when it does not apply to it.

Mr Speaker, I want to take you back to the questions I asked, because they are extremely relevant. I asked on whose authority the telex was sent to Skywest on 23 October and whether a senior public servant was instructed to ring Skywest on 24 October and inform Skywest not to take any action on the basis of the telex sent the previous day.

Mr Speaker, the basis of the injunction served by Air North on the government is that it concerns matters that it believes were considered outside the specifications and ...

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable member is discussing what he considers to be the subject of a court case. Obviously, the particular subjects under litigation will cover the whole broad spectrum of the matters. Any opinions and discussion regarding any areas relating to those matters must be considered in the context that they may be sub judice and therefore subject to your ruling.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arafura): Mr Speaker, in addressing the point of order, the member for Millner was doing exactly what he should be doing and demonstrating that the questions asked are not impinged upon at all by the sub judice ruling because they are not about the matters at issue in court. Those questions seek answers from the relevant ministers on matters of fact.

Mr SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition was entering into specifics on a matter which is before the court.

Mr SMITH: Mr Speaker, all I can say is that you make it very difficult. The fact remains that the questions I put today do not in any way go to the matters raised in the injunction.

Mr Speaker, the argument is presented to you on 2 levels. The first is that there is a sufficient amount of public interest in this matter to necessitate debate on it in this Assembly at this time. People in the Northern Territory have a legitimate concern about the way this matter has been handled, and this is the appropriate place for it to be discussed. As the member for Arafura said, if it cannot be discussed here, it will not be discussed in any public forum until March next year or later. The second point I make is that the questions were designed carefully so that they did not go to the matters raised in the injunction. Mr Speaker, you have not taken those 2 grounds into consideration in your ruling, and that is why we, on this side of the Assembly, have moved a dissent motion.

Mr FINCH (Wagaman): Mr Speaker, the members of the opposition have moved this motion of dissent from your ruling principally on the basis that the matters referred to in the questions are of significant public interest. Mr Speaker, I put it to you that there is no question of public concern. No person is being disadvantaged either financially or personally. In fact, appropriate arrangements have been made to continue under the system that was in place before the contract that is in question was let out for tender and, as a result, the public continues to receive adequate and appropriate service with no financial disadvantage to individuals. I submit that the matter is not of significant public interest at all.

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, in speaking to the dissent motion moved by the member for Arafura, I think it is abominable that this Assembly has been used for a point-scoring exercise. Those people over there amaze me. I presume that the whole community is listening to them. Their contempt for legal procedures in this country is absolutely appalling. Their laughter at, and derision of, practices which have grown up over many hundreds of years is despicable.

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker!.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Arafura has raised a point of order on the point of order.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, the honourable minister said that all members of the opposition had complete contempt for the judicial processes of this country. That is an offensive personal reflection on members on this side of the Assembly, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order raised by the member for Arafura, and ask the Attorney-General to withdraw those unparliamentary words.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the remarks, but I would like to say that the behaviour of the members opposite reflects what would appear to be contempt for the judicial processes of this country.

Mr LEO: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Attorney-General is demonstrating that he would never make a lawyer. Mr Speaker, you asked the Attorney-General to withdraw certain remarks that reflected on the character of members of the opposition. Those remarks should have been withdrawn unreservedly and without further comment, but the Attorney-General sought to continue his remarks.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable Attorney-General will withdraw his remarks unreservedly and without debate.

Mr MANZIE: I withdraw my remarks unreservedly and I will not enter into any further debate on that matter.

Mr Speaker, I would like to point out that standing orders are very specific. The member for Arafura was on the committee that drew them up. Standing order 1, which appears in chapter 1 on page 1 says:

In all particular cases not provided for hereinafter, or by sessional or other orders or practice of the Assembly, resort shall be had to the practice of the House of Representatives of the parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia in force for the time being, which shall be followed as far as it can be applied.

Mr Speaker, that is very specific. The federal House of Representatives has clear and concise practices that it puts into effect in relation to sub judice matters. A number of bits and pieces have been quoted from Pettifer on the subject. The member for Arafura has quoted selectively, and the Chief Minister pointed out that the quotation was not complete. I will go over it again. It says:

It is a restraint born out of respect by parliament for the judicial arm of government, a democratic respect for the rule of law and the proper upholding of the law by fair trial proceeding.

In other words, the parliament has a voluntary respect for the judicial arm. Any suggestion that actions by government members have been taken to prevent certain matters being debated is ridiculous. The fact of the matter is that parliamentary convention says that it is not fair and proper to discuss matters which are before the courts. This matter has not been decided by members of the government; it has been brought down from the House of Commons, from parliamentary practice in England - the Westminster system. It is a practice that is followed by the House of Representatives. It is nothing to do with us. It is parliamentary convention and the right and proper thing to do. The suggestion by members opposite that we are trying to engage in some sort of tactic to prevent public debate is absolutely ridiculous. It reflects badly on us, and I am sure the listening community realises it is an attempt to score cheap political points. The facts of the matter are quite clear. You have a responsibility, Mr Speaker, to make a ruling, and that ruling should be based on precedent as laid down by Pettifer.

The member for Arafura raised the matter of writs. Pettifer quite clearly points out that, in the case of a civil matter, it is an essential provision that the rule should not apply 'from the time a writ is issued' as many months can intervene between the issue of the writ and the actual court proceedings. The proceedings have started, and the Assembly has made allowance for that fact.

One of the grounds of the case presently before the courts is that of natural justice. This involves extremely broad parameters and any matter that the opposition raises, through questions or otherwise, may influence the case or the particular circumstances surrounding it. It must come within realms which impinge upon natural justice and therefore relate to the matter which is sub judice.

I will repeat that I am very disappointed that the members opposite not only want to flout parliamentary convention, but wish to imply that the government is using a convention of this parliament as a means of protecting itself. All we are doing is upholding a parliamentary convention which has been handed down through generations from the House of Commons and the Westminster system to this parliament. It is imperative that we maintain that tradition and those parliamentary practices.

Mr B. COLLINS (Arafura): Mr Speaker, it is interesting to listen to these sudden advocates of the Westminster system who knew nothing about it at 5 minutes to 10 o'clock this morning.

In closing this debate, I will refer to the substance of the dissent motion and the most important of the established conventions. I wish also to refer to a report of the Select Committee on the Procedure of the House of Commons which I quoted in this Assembly on a previous occasion in respect of matters involved in the Mudginberri dispute. For the benefit of honourable members, I will reiterate the key section in terms of the operations of this parliament and the sub judice rule:

The discretion exercised by the Chair must be considered against the background of the inherent right and duty of the House, under the Westminster system, to debate any matter considered to be in the public interest. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right without which members would not be able to carry out their duties.

I know this is the second time that I have read that out in respect of matters before a court, but I am prepared to bet money that this matter will not be heard before a jury. The matter is an extremely unusual event in civil litigation in the Northern Territory. I think, from memory, that we only provide for a jury of 4 people in civil cases, and then only in certain circumstances. I could be wrong about that. However, it is highly unlikely that the matter will be heard before a jury. That is relevant to the convention. The Select Committee on the Procedures of the House of Commons put the following view as to what is implied by the word 'prejudice', as applied to an action of a court. I will quote again:

In using the word 'prejudice', your committee intends the word to cover the possible effect on the members of the court, the jury, the witnesses and the parties to any action. The minds of magistrates, assessors, members of a jury and witnesses might be influenced by reading in the newspapers comments made in the House prejudicial to the accused in a criminal case or any of the parties involved in a civil action.

All the opposition asks, and we are by Westminster tradition entitled to receive it from ministers in question time, is the truth. It is incumbent upon ministers in this Assembly and, in my view, it is pre-eminent among the Westminster traditions of parliament that, when statements are made by responsible ministers - and some of them would not know the meaning of the word - in question time in the Assembly, then those ministers stand or fall by their own words. Questions are permitted in this Assembly only on matters of information. They may not relate to opinions of ministers, personal assertions or reflections, views on the issues in legal cases or - as we have seen with some members - predictions as to the likely outcome of court actions, but simply matters of fact. Ministers are expected to tell the truth about these matters. I hardly see how, in response to a number of very carefully phrased questions on matters of fact relating to ministerial

responsibilities in a matter currently before the courts, there can be any prejudice involved.

If specific truthful answers were given by ministers in this Assembly, I assume the same answers would be given in court. I hope that they would coincide. I would imagine that answers on matters of

Mr Dale: In other words, it is sub judice. Is that right? Is that what you are saying?

Mr B. COLLINS: Logical answers have never been your major suit, Don. I would go back into your box.

Mr Dale: They are not your major suit.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, the question of the right of free speech and the privilege of parliament are the key issues here, along with the requirement for ministers of the Northern Territory government to give truthful and accurate answers in question time. What we are seeing this morning is a pathetic attempt by the government to stifle free speech and the privilege of parliament.

Mr MANZIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The member for Arafura implied that ministers of this government answer questions untruthfully in this Assembly.

Mr B. Collins: I did not say that at all, Mr Speaker. I said the reverse.

Mr MANZIE: I would ask that the comment be withdrawn.

Mr B. Collins: What comment? I did not say it. I said the reverse.

Mr SPEAKER: Would the Attorney-General repeat the comment that he believes to be offensive?

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, the member for Arafura implied that ministers do not give truthful answers to questions asked in this Assembly, and I would ask that that implication be withdrawn.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, in fact I said exactly reverse. What I was saying is that the Westminster tradition demands that ministers, when answering questions in the Assembly, do so accurately and truthfully. I was pointing out that, since that tradition is recognised and applied in this Assembly, the answers ministers give here on matters of fact would be in no way different from the answers they would give to the same questions in court.

I will simply say, in conclusion, that - not to put too fine a point on it - I am disappointed that we will now have to wait something like 4 months, when this is likely to be a very dead issue, before this rarely-used Assembly can be used again for the purpose for which it was created.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 6

Mr Bell
Mr B. Collins
Mr Ede
Mr Lanhupuy
Mr Leo
Mr Smith

Noes 18

Mr D.W. Collins
Mr Coulter
Mr Dale
Mr Dondas
Mr Finch
Mr Firmin
Mr Hanrahan
Mr Harris
Mr Hatton
Mr McCarthy
Mr Manzie
Mrs Padgham-Purich
Mr Palmer
Mr Perron
Mr Poole
Mr Setter
Mr Steele
Mr Tuxworth

Mr SPEAKER: The question is resolved in the negative.

Government Contracts

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

What principles have been laid down by his government for the award of tenders by departmental officers and, specifically, is it a fact that a departmental officer is unable to lawfully bind the Territory to a contract without the written approval of the relevant minister?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has asked for a legal opinion which I am not prepared to give in response to a question without notice. I ask that he place the question on notice.

Moonlighting in the Public Service

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

What action has he taken in relation to officers of the department who may experience a conflict of interest between their official duties and outside activities?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I think the member for Koolpinyah is referring to a specific case which surfaced soon after I took over the portfolio of primary production. When it first came to my notice that some officers of the Department of Primary Production were involved in certain outside activities, my first reaction was to require that they give them up. I wrote to those officers and told them that they should be out of that business by a specific date some 2 months later. Both officers were involved in the grafting of plant stock, 1 in mangoes and 1 in rambutan.

At the same time, I wrote to the Horticultural Association and the Nurserymen's Association indicating the actions that I had taken and asking for their opinion as to whether those officers were fulfilling a need for those organisations. I received a response, initially by telex, indicating that, if I were to take away the right of those 2 people to operate in that area, I would be doing a disservice to the horticultural and nursery industries. I sought from them advice on a means by which these officers could continue to graft tree stock while retaining their positions within the department. They came up with a proposal which fitted the criteria. I then allowed the officers to continue to graft mangoes and rambutans respectively.

A couple of growers have had a problem with that and have been fairly vocal in their criticism of my allowing the officers to continue in that industry. This was discussed at length at a Horticultural Association meeting that I attended. When a vote was taken on the issue, it was in favour of these 2 people continuing to work in that area. The vote was 35 to 7.

There are problems, of which I am mindful, when officers of a department work in an industry which may appear to result in a conflict of interest. It is something that I would be very reluctant to see continue. However, if honourable members have had any involvement with the rural industries, they would know that officers of the Department of Primary Production have been in the forefront of the establishment of some industries. This has been because, in many cases, no experts have been available here to supply the industry.

Many of the nurserymen in the Northern Territory started from within the department and later branched out on their own.

We see this type of situation arising here. Nobody else in the Northern Territory is able to do the job that these people are doing. The industry requires grafted stock and it is obtaining some of it from these 2 people. Much of it is purchased from interstate. The majority of people involved in the industry have indicated that these people should be permitted to continue in that industry. I will certainly keep an eye on the matter but I would be reluctant to cease the operations of those people when they are supporting a fledgling industry. The Horticultural Association is quite clear on the matter and I am happy to accept its advice. If, at times, people wish to make allegations of dishonesty in this area, I would be grateful for the information so that it can be placed before the appropriate authorities.

Sealing of South Road

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the current status of construction on the sealing of the south road between Port Augusta and Alice Springs?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this topic will be of great interest to you because you have been involved with it since the beginning. After Christmas, between 12 km and 23 km will remain to be sealed. The completion of this road will bring important economic benefits to central and northern Australia. It took almost 20 years for the Western Australian and Commonwealth governments to seal the road between Kalgoorlie and Iron Knob.

As more and more Australians begin to reach retirement age in the next 10 or 15 years, it will be important to have good road systems into and within the Northern Territory, particularly as air fares become more and more expensive. I was told the other day that the return economy air fare from Darwin to Adelaide is in the order of \$800. It is cheaper to go to Singapore from Adelaide than it is to fly to Darwin. The road networks that are being put in place will be very important to the development of our tourist industry.

Government Contracts

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he confirm that the regulations under which the General Tender Board operates provides that a departmental officer is unable to lawfully bind the Territory to a contract without the written approval of the relevant minister?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not in a position to confirm that, but I will have the answer before the end of question time.

Alice Springs Hospital

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

He is aware that the resources of the Alice Springs Hospital have been stretched to the limit in recent days because of a sudden influx of petrol sniffers, most of whom have come from South Australia. Are there any contingency plans in case further pressure occurs so that centralian Territorians in need of hospitalisation can be guaranteed a bed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, last week, there was an influx of persons affected through sniffing petrol. At one stage, 15% of those in Alice Springs Hospital were in there as a result of sniffing petrol. I had departmental officers contact officers in South Australia and Western Australia to ensure that they would assist if there were a further influx of patients into Alice Springs Hospital and it was denying access to the hospital for Territorians.

I have an assurance that both South Australia and Western Australia are very much aware of the situation that exists in the Northern Territory, particularly where we are taking patients from South Australia. I should remind the honourable member that 6% of the general patients in Alice Springs hospital are South Australian residents and 23% of the medivacs that occur in the southern region involve South Australian residents. In consequence, the South Australian authorities are very much aware of the situation. They have guaranteed that they will come to the fore if an emergency arises. Further discussions on the whole issue of petrol sniffing are to take place on 28 November in Alice Springs.

Tax on Driving Holidays

Mr PERRON to TREASURER

Can he confirm the accuracy or otherwise of the statement attributed to Senator Robertson on yesterday's ABC News concerning the tax payable by employees who take driving holidays in lieu of air fares.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will keep my answer quiet but I will not keep it too short because I believe the question should be answered in the depth that it requires.

Members would all be aware that the federal government has embarked on a campaign to put some sugar on the bitter pill of FBT to enable Australians to swallow it. Part of that strategy was to establish a hot line system throughout Australia so that people could ring up and get precise and detailed information about the FBT and there would be no confusion. Everybody would be able to understand what good things the fringe benefits tax was promoting and what it was doing for all Australians. Of course, the hot line number for the Northern Territory was that of the office of Senator Ted Robertson. Honourable members would remember that, after the legislation was passed, he said on radio that he did not really understand it and he did not know too much about it. All of a sudden, he has been promoted. He is now the whiz-kid who understands the fringe benefits tax, and we should all ring him if we have any problems.

Yesterday, Australia's laziest politician ...

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The minister may not cast a reflection on a member in another place.

Mr COULTER: Mr Speaker, one of the Northern Territory's representatives in the Senate, the ALP representative in the Senate ...

Mr Ede: He does not represent the ALP. He represents the Territory.

Mr COULTER: Even ALP members are leaving him in droves. I do not know where he is getting votes for his Senate nomination. No doubt he is getting them somehow.

This man on the hot line, who is going to get rid of confusion, has made a statement about airline entitlements which people may convert to cash. An ABC news bulletin quoted him as saying that 'employees need not pay income tax if they transfer their airline entitlement to cash'. This follows reports about a Department of Taxation ruling that employees who took cash instead of air fares - the so-called 'drive out' option - would have this amount added to their gross income and be taxed accordingly. This is in line with the fringe benefits tax under which the employer is taxed 50% of the value of air fares or other benefits given to employees. However, Senator Robertson says that 'employees taking driving holidays can avoid paying the extra income tax by providing a signed document to the Taxation Department simply stating that they did not spend the cash benefit on the holiday'.

Apparently this expert, this man on the other end of the hot line, has already worked out ways, and is advising Territorians, on how to avoid paying the fringe benefits tax. He has come a long way in 3 months. He has moved from not understanding the tax to understanding the loopholes by which it can be avoided. He says that, if the benefit is received as cash, it will still be considered a fringe benefit and the employer will pay the fringe benefits tax as if an air fare has been provided.

We got in touch with the Taxation Office about Senator Robertson's statement on the ABC News of 12 November, and this is a further indictment of him, his federal cohorts and the ridiculous impost on Australia that is commonly known as the fringe benefits tax. After I heard this on the radio, I checked again yesterday morning with the local head of the Australian Taxation Office. I find that personal income tax is payable by employees on receipt of a cash benefit in lieu of air fare entitlement.

Mr Speaker, just how much more do we have to take from this representative of the Labor Party or of Territorians? This man has been put in charge of the hot line for the Northern Territory by the Treasurer, Mr Keating, to resolve any doubts in the minds of Territorians, any misapprehensions that they may have, about the fringe benefits tax yet he goes on radio and disseminates information that is incorrect. When will the federal government get its act together? How can the man in the street possibly know where he stands in terms of liability if even the man on the other end of the information hot line does not know? It is just not on. Be he a representative of the Labor Party - which it has denied - or a representative of Territorians, it is not good enough to have a man in his position making false and misleading statements which cause concern to all Territorians.

Moonlighting in the Public Service

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer to statements made by him and given prominence in the local newspaper to the effect that he will cut out moonlighting in the public service. How can those statements be reconciled with the answer given by his Minister for Primary Production to a question put by the member for Koolpinyah this morning, that he has given his approval for this practice in his department on the basis that a meeting of people involved in the industry had given its majority approval? Will all public servants be able to engage in moonlighting if they can obtain majority approval from media people involved in their industry?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question reflects a problem that arises when people take literally terminology used in the media when interpreting statements that are made. I am not being critical of members of the media when I say that, Mr Speaker. They have a job to do and they are prepared to put their interpretation on the statements of any person, politician or otherwise, who makes public comments. That is part of their job.

For some time, it has been stipulated in the regulations to the Public Service Act that outside employment shall not be engaged in without specific approval. The point that I made, and which I stand by, is that outside employment should not be engaged in, under any circumstances, where there is a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest. That is not a new policy. It is laid down in the public service determinations and regulations. I reiterated and reinforced that policy. It is appropriate that public servants, who in the performance of their duties are in positions of public trust, should not be placed in situations where they could be engaged in activities outside their public service employment where they could be accused of being, or may be, involved in something that could lead to a conflict of interest with their duties in the public service. In such circumstances, quite clearly those public servants need to make a decision as to whether they wish to continue with those outside activities or with the public service.

I understand that, when this particular matter came to the attention of the minister, he instructed the persons concerned in accordance with that policy. Subsequently, specific representations were made to the minister by the Northern Territory Horticultural Association asking that those people be allowed to continue to carry out that practice. No pressure was exerted by the government. On the contrary, pressure was applied from within the industry because those people provided a service that was not otherwise available and that was of great value to the industry. On that basis, the minister authorised the continuation of that activity. That is not in conflict with the statements that I made nor in contravention of the regulations and determinations of the Northern Territory Public Service.

Moonlighting in the Public Service

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

What position will he take where the stock or the item is something which has been produced by involved officers of a department in the course of their duties within the public service, and which they then make available for sale?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that would be what is known in private industry as 'doing foreigners on the job'. It is a practice that should not and would not be condoned by our government. To spare the member the pain of standing up and asking another question, I have been advised quite strenuously that that is not the circumstance in respect of the officers of the Department of Primary Production.

Trade Development Zone

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

Given the high priority that the Northern Territory government places on the Trade Development Zone and its potential for the Territory's economy, what effect would the draft report by the Industries Assistance Commission have on the zone if it were to be adopted by the federal government?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I confirm the honourable member's comment that the government places a high priority on the success of the Trade Development Zone Authority. Certainly, it does. Honourable members would be aware that, recently, there has been publicity about the IAC report to the federal government and on the the Trade Development Zone Authority. I will take this opportunity to clarify the situation for honourable members.

The report recommends that concessions be made available in 3 specific areas: manufactured in bond, by law for export and the drawback of duty. The IAC report is, in fact, a draft report which is due to be presented to the federal government by 17 January 1987. The Northern Territory government made considerable submissions to this IAC inquiry, arguing for a general increase in the customs concessions allowed to exporters and a simplification of the administrative procedures associated with the export concessions. We argued for a strengthening of the Trade Development Zone concept and the granting of 150% taxation concessions to manufacturing industries in Australia, including those in trade development zones, and that the taxation concessions would provide real incentives for manufacturers and would complement the 150% concessions available for industry, research and development. Concessions for other schemes were also encouraged in Northern Territory submissions to the inquiry, particularly in the area of the Export Marketing Development Grants Scheme.

The draft report released by the IAC on 23 October discussed 3 options. They were: (1) to terminate the existing export concessions; (2) to retain the existing concessions with some administration reform; or (3) to broaden the scope of the concessions. Unfortunately, the IAC has proposed the adoption of the first option as its preferred course of action; that is, to terminate the existing export concessions.

The report also discusses trade development zones in what, I am advised, is a very superficial way. It concludes that the future development of trade development zones should not be encouraged by incentives. That was not very encouraging news for the Northern Territory government. The report contains many weaknesses and apparent misconceptions about export concessions and trade development zones. It relies heavily on an argument that the depreciation of the Australian dollar should, in itself, act as an inducement along with other forms of assistance - which it has not nominated - as the primary source of support to manufacture for export.

I understand that many authoritative commentators, including the Commonwealth's own Bureau of Industry Economics, dispute the conclusions about the value of the depreciation of the Australian dollar. The most glaring criticism of the report is its inconsistency with federal government initiatives and policies to encourage export and its national export drive. Adoption of the report's recommendation by the federal government would remove a significant feature of the Trade Development Zone although a marketable package would remain for many classes of industry.

I would like to advise members of the way that the Northern Territory government is responding to the draft report. There are 2 directions. First, it is necessary to explain the significance of the report to investors and its relevance to federal government policy. At the same time, it is necessary to highlight the continuing assistance available through our own incentive package, and the other positive benefits of the Trade Development Zone, including its location close to South-east Asian markets. Discussions on the report and its implications for government policy are to commence with certain major Trade Development Zone investors to assess their current position in relation to establishing within the zone. The Northern Territory government will make a formal submission to the IAC public hearings in December highlighting the inconsistencies and weaknesses of the report and arguing that the IAC's preferred option is neither valid nor appropriate.

We have approached the federal government, highlighting the inconsistency between the recommendation and the federal government's commitment to export promotion. I have written to Senator Button, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce and to Mr Dawkins, the Minister for Trade, requesting a meeting with them to discuss the effects the recommendation would have on current investors and our marketing programs, particularly if the deliberation process is protracted. Officials of the Trade Development Zone Authority will reinforce my position with the relevant departments in Canberra to ensure that the bureaucracy is aware of this government's concerns regarding the report.

We will also be discussing our concerns with all states, particularly the governments of Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland, who have either expressed an intention or have received an expression of interest to develop similar trade development zones in their states. We will be seeking to ensure that these governments also express to the federal government their concerns about the likely effects on the Australian manufacturing industry generally if this recommendation is adopted. Pending decisions by the Commonwealth government on the report, the Trade Development Zone's marketing program will emphasise the advantages which will continue to apply to manufacture in the Trade Development Zone in Darwin.

It is of critical importance that our efforts encourage early consideration of this report by the federal government, when it is received next year, and that it deal with it as quickly as possible. I think it just a little strange that the only Trade Development Zone in Australia that is established and almost operational happens to be in the Northern Territory. The only people really affected and disadvantaged in a major way by the IAC's report happen to be in the poor old Northern Territory. I know there have been some encouraging signs that other states will follow the direction of the Northern Territory with the future establishment of trade development zones. That is why we are moving as fast as possible to ensure that we have their support.

I have written also to the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory outlining guidelines and requesting him to write forthwith to the Prime

Minister, and I understand that the Chief Minister will have that letter before him in the very near future. I would like to emphasise that, because we have our consultants based in Asia where the majority of the investors are coming from, we have been able to commence immediate negotiations with the operators who are due to start moving into the zone this month in order to be operational early in the new year. One really wonders at the effect of this report because it creates uncertainty about whether those operators will be prepared to establish in the zone and manufacture under existing incentives which are available to export-orientated manufacturers for a period of only 5 years. The problem is that the IAC is suggesting effectively that the export incentives be phased out over a period of 5 years.

Obviously, this government will be seeking to approach the federal government in the most urgent manner to ask for early consideration of this report. I appeal to the Leader of the Opposition to avail himself of a full briefing on the IAC report and to join with the Northern Territory government in imploring his federal counterparts to consider the report early and to remove the cloud over the future of the zone so that we can get on with leading the way for the export-orientated revival of Australia's manufacturing industry.

Mosquito Control at Leanyer Swamp

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for HEALTH

What success or otherwise was achieved by the recent spraying of BTI larvicide at Leanyer Swamp?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Leanyer for his question. I know that he and his constituents have a great deal of interest in the problem of mosquitoes. I can inform the member that the spraying has been a success. Normally, to indicate whether a spraying has been successful or not, something like 100 catches of larvae are required. I understand that catches in the traps already greatly exceed 100. There are 5 traps distributed throughout the area. There are 3 major areas: Holmes Jungle, Ricketts Creek and Leanyer Swamp itself. On the ratings that I have just mentioned, it appears that there has been considerable success.

Agreement with Strehlow Foundation

Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I refer the honourable minister to his press release of 21 October in which he announced Cabinet endorsement of the in principle agreement reached between representatives of the Strehlow Foundation and the Northern Territory government. On what basis will the minister apprise members of the opposition of the terms of that agreement?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question is rather timely because, this evening and tomorrow morning, final negotiations will take place in Adelaide. When the conditions are completed and the documents are signed, I will be incredibly proud to announce the details.

Office of Equal Opportunity

Mr STEELE to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the significance of moving the Office of Equal Opportunity from the Department of the Chief Minister to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, with respect to the Office of Equal Opportunity, our government is committed to the course of ensuring that there is no discrimination in employment, particularly in the public sector. To ensure that that can be carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible, it is my view that the appropriate location for the Office of Equal Opportunity should be within the Office of the Public Service Commissioner. The Office of the Public Service Commissioner combines the industrial relations functions in the public sector and the activities or responsibilities that the government engages in in relation to the private sector. Under the Self-Government Act, we do not have a specific industrial relations power. The logical place for employment matters should be with the Office of the Public Service Commissioner. This will give an opportunity for greater coordination of the activities of that office, our employment practices and the application of our policy of equal opportunity.

The systems within the Office of the Public Service Commissioner have been developed quite extensively and are continuing to develop, particularly with the upgrading of the computerised data base system known as Interpers. This provides very detailed information to the Office of the Public Service Commissioner on trends and flows in employment and promotional activities within the Northern Territory Public Service. That system is 90% in place and is in the process of being completed. Combined with the personnel, employment and industrial relations functions within the Office of the Public Service Commissioner, it will provide a better base on which EOO functions can be carried out within the public sector.

As the Office of the Public Service Commissioner also has a role in the private sector, that office will be in a far better position to provide advice and guidance to the private sector to encourage it also to engage in equal employment opportunity practices. This will not reduce nor limit the role of the Office of Equal Opportunity. In fact, all the functions that were being carried out by that office within the Department of the Chief Minister will continue to be carried out by that unit when it is located within the Office of the Public Service Commissioner. The move will strengthen its role in so far as the employment side of that function is concerned. We recognise that more attention will be paid to other applications of equal opportunity, including the provision of services throughout the Northern Territory. It is available to assist companies in the private sector which wish to develop equal opportunity approaches in management and provides advice on structural matters associated with buildings and access that often, unreasonably and unfortunately, limit opportunities for disabled people.

Fruit Fly

Mr LEO to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

My question relates to public and industry concern in South Australia and the Northern Territory relating to the discovery of fruit fly larvae in

mangoes from the Northern Territory on sale in South Australia. What action does the Department of Primary Production intend to take to protect the multi-million dollar mango export industry?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this matter is very much in the news at the moment. In the NT News yesterday, there were 2 items related to fruit fly. One indicated that maggots had been found in mangoes on the South Australian market, and a letter to the editor spoke about our fruit fly being an Indonesian fruit fly. I point out that maggots found in the fruit in South Australia in the last few days were a native species and not Mediterranean fruit fly. There are a number of native fruit fly species in the Northern Territory which, until very recently, have not affected fruits that are not native to the Northern Territory. In the past, the most common of the Territory fruit flies affected Territory fruit only. That particular fruit fly is very closely related to the Queensland fruit fly; it is very difficult to tell them apart.

Mr Dale: You would be able to tell by its Indonesian accent.

Mr McCARTHY: You probably could.

We do not have a positive identification of the fruit fly that was found in mangoes in South Australia but certainly it was a native fruit fly. The authorities in South Australia have acted very reasonably in this matter because they have not banned the export of mangoes from the Northern Territory to South Australia. All they have done is to ban exports through a particular distributor. That will not affect the many people who are not using that distributor. For many fruits, South Australia will accept EDB treatment only, which involves a category 7 poison. It is a fairly dangerous poison and only 1 facility in the Northern Territory will handle it: our quarantine area in Darwin. That sort of treatment is not available anywhere else in the Northern Territory. The dipping of fruits is far more common, but South Australia is the only state in Australia that does not accept that form of treatment. It insists on fumigation treatment with EDB.

I have been informed that this particular incident will speed up legislation that is before the South Australian parliament, aimed at preventing Northern Territory fruit fly from entering that state. Once the legislation is passed, all produce identified as coming from fruit fly infected areas will be banned from South Australia unless it can be shown to have been treated with EDB prior to shipment.

Mr Smith: That does not answer the question.

Mr McCARTHY: I will get around to it, Terry. There is plenty of time.

Currently, research is being carried out in the Ti Tree area in the hope that that area may be free from fruit fly. We know that the whole of the Top End and Alice Springs has infestations of Territory fruit fly. Fruit such as mango, zucchini and capsicum will probably be able to be treated successfully, but other very important crops that we export to South Australia, such as tomato, jackfruit and carambola, are a problem because they cannot be fumigated. As I said, South Australia does not accept the dipping treatment. It is the only state that does not. We are working to see if it will change its attitude.

Mr Leo: Why don't you set up more EDB plants?

Mr McCARTHY: If required, we intend to expand our EDB facilities but, unfortunately, we may not be able to get that in place quickly. We can expand the Darwin facility fairly quickly but, because it is a dangerous poison, wherever we set up a treatment plant, we have to train people in its use.

The Northern Territory is moving very quickly in horticultural research. Work undertaken by our entomology unit at Berrimah is concerned mainly with horticulture and fruit fly. It will take about 2 years to determine whether the Territory fruit fly can be treated effectively by the same methods as are used for the Queensland variety. Currently, the states, particularly South Australia, will not accept that the Territory fly can be treated in the same way as Queensland fruit fly is. As I said, with our present resources, it will take about 2 years to prove that because it will be necessary to undertake 100 000 tests and that involves a quite significant workload.

I can appreciate that South Australia is very worried about this, as we are, because a \$10m industry is dependent upon the effective treatment of fruit fly. Certainly, we are taking it seriously and doing everything in our power to ensure that we have the procedures in place to be able to continue exporting our fruits interstate.

Fruit Fly

Mr LEO to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Have additional funds been sought to hasten the research program and development to meet fumigation and quarantine requirements that may be placed on Territory exporters of mangoes?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as my colleagues in Cabinet would confirm, I argue fairly strongly for extra funds for all sorts of things and research into horticulture is certainly one of them. We are planning to expand our laboratory areas at Berrimah. Hopefully, this extension will be in place within the next year or 2. The laboratory facilities are inadequate, but that situation will be resolved shortly. We are working very quickly on the planning of a new laboratory facility there. I am constantly aware of the fact that we need extra funds for research. However, like everyone else, I have to work within the constraints of the Northern Territory's budget.

Spaceport Program

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

In recent media reports, he made statements about the possibility of the Northern Territory taking part in a spaceport program. Could he provide further details on this project?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is definitely an update version of the old theme 'up, up, and away'. One thing that surprised me when we announced the move by the Territory to investigate the establishment of a spaceport facility was that I expected - on past performance - that the cries from members opposite would be those of derision and ridicule.. However, I am pleased to say that we have not heard a word from them which seems to indicate that they take the investigation into the project as seriously as does the government.

Mr Speaker, it is important to note that recent events in the launching of satellites ...

Mr Smith: TAB, ISA, TIO.

Mr Leo: Territory Lottery.

Mr Smith: Marshall Perron rubbished that too. He said it would never make any money.

Mr Leo: The gas pipeline.

Mr Smith: Oh, the gas pipeline.

Mr HANRAHAN: Oh, yes. I might add, Mr Speaker, that it is clear how easily some people forget statements made in the Assembly on the previous day.

However, what is of importance is that recent changes in technology, in particular advances in space technology and the shift in emphasis from the United States to other countries, has opened the doors for some enterprising countries to take advantage of what could well be a very beneficial development in future years.

Japan is coming to the fore as a major leader in space technology. There are indications from both Japan and China that, at some time in the future, they will be seeking, and are investigating at the moment, the establishment of an offshore launching facility. The matter has been reported in the press. Considerable moves have been made by the Queensland government to investigate the establishment and feasibility of a spaceport at Cape York.

We have been corresponding with a scientist who, almost 20 years ago, was involved in the setting up of Woomera and investigation into the establishment of space launching facilities in a remote area of South Australia. A considerable part of that initial report and feasibility study involved sites in remote parts of Australia, in particular the Northern Territory. Mainly for political reasons, the Northern Territory was not considered as 1 of the prime locations for such a facility. However, past research and information indicate that the Territory has many advantages and, as a result, we have entered into correspondence with overseas interests on the subject. We have established a working party which is meeting on a regular and urgent basis to establish relevant criteria to determine whether there is a market for a spaceport. I have indicated that interest has been expressed by the Japanese and Chinese governments.

We need to establish whether there is a suitable site within the Northern Territory for the development of a spaceport. A spaceport requires certain criteria to work to its advantage. I am happy to report that initial investigations have shown nothing to the detriment of various sites in the Northern Territory for consideration for the establishment of a spaceport. The working party is considering whether it is necessary to move to employ an outside consultancy to help us develop the final stages of the feasibility report. These moves are very positive and anybody who has any doubt about the future of our space technology and, I might add, the industries that would attach to any development of a spaceport, should be left in no doubt that it would be a billion dollar project. The moves made by Queensland are indicative of the seriousness with which the government should treat this proposal. Australia, in particular, has much to offer those countries that are leading the way in space technology, particularly in the development of a

spaceport. To that end, the Northern Territory has not been left behind and is making moves that will see the Territory competing with any other interest in Australia for the development of a spaceport, particularly if countries such as China and Japan require the development of an offshore facility.

I could speak at great length about the industries that would attach to the development of a spaceport. The introduction of new technology to the Northern Territory would go a long way towards putting the Northern Territory on the world map. However, in the initial stages, we are working to establish the need for such a facility and the suitability of the Territory for it. The Northern Territory is taking a very responsible step and I welcome the support the opposition has expressed by its silence.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Government Contracts

Mr HATTON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition put 2 questions to me earlier. I asked that the first be placed on notice. The honourable member then provided an alternative version, deleting reference to any legal opinion. I congratulate both the Treasury and the Department of Law for their very prompt response in providing the details required. An answer has been supplied by Treasury and has been cleared by the Department of Law.

The Northern Territory Treasury has delegated powers to enter into a contract on behalf of the Northern Territory government. This power has been delegated, in writing, by each Northern Territory government minister under section 7 of the Contracts Act conferring powers and functions imposed on each minister by section 5 of that act. Such a delegated officer may accept a tender offer provided that the General Tender Board has approved the entering into of a contract with that tenderer.

Palmerston Recreational Complex

Mr PERRON to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When is work expected to commence on the Palmerston recreational complex?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this topic was discussed quite extensively during the course of the budget debate when members opposite alleged that no money had been appropriated for it in this financial year. As I pointed out in the third-reading debate on the Appropriation Bill, some \$800 000 has been set aside in the allocations made to the Department of Lands which represent a one-off payment for the development of the Palmerston recreational centre comprising a swimming pool and associated complex. I understand that work will commence in the next couple of days to clear the land and to set aside an area for a car park. At the moment, the car park location for the complex has not been authorised fully by the Palmerston Town Planning Authority but I understand that that will occur in the next 24 to 48 hours. The developer has been given an undertaking in principle that the car park area will be sufficient for the complex. That is one reason why work has not commenced. It is very unlikely that the developer will start to excavate the hole for the swimming pool because of the wet season. However, work will start on the car park and associated groundwork within the next 24 to 48 hours.

Mustering on Annaburroo Station

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LANDS

Why was stock mustered on Annaburroo Station at the time when the government was selling the property, who authorised the musters and when did they begin and end? Why were no instructions given to Donald Hoar about mustering of cattle on Annaburroo Station when he was awarded the mustering contract in August this year? Have cattle been mustered and, if so, where are the proceeds, if any?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as I said in reply to a question last week, I was reluctant to provide information because an investigation was being carried out by the Fraud Squad. I have some information in relation to the questions asked which will not affect that particular investigation.

First, I will explain why instructions were not issued to Don Hoar until 9 days after the musters took place. A senior pastoral officer attended all musters and drafting up to and including 27 September. The instruction for 24 September was specific to the paddock tag 'domestic buffalo'. Up until that time, the muster had not dealt with any domesticated buffalo but had been confined to feral buffalo and cattle. Early instructions had been issued verbally and on site, based on his on-ground assessment and with the objective of retaining maximum possible numbers of usable stock. As he was due to undertake pre-scheduled inspections for perpetual lease conversions in the Victoria River district, instructions were written to his replacement and also to confirm what stock had to be retained.

The instructions dealt with buffalo only, because all cattle had been mustered prior to 24 September. Only 120 had been retained and the balance turned off. Approximately 400 cattle were mustered and only 200 of the

400 tagged cattle were found. About 200 tagged cattle were missing. 200 were mixed, cleanskin cattle. 120 of the better class cattle were retained and the balance sent to the abattoirs on the same basis as the buffalo. I understand that the government was to retain 30% of receipts with the remaining 70% going to the contractor.

Mr Speaker, I was asked also why no tenders were received. Although no tenders were received, the department contacted people in close proximity to Annaburroo who had expertise and experience. It received 9 verbal and 5 written quotes. Mr Hoar's quote was accepted and, at this stage, I feel that he has carried out his instructions. He was given a letter on 24 September saying that we needed to retain a certain number of buffalo for breeding purposes. This is where the problem started because, as we have learned in the last couple of weeks, we are unable to find those breeders. Whether they went to the abattoir or not is under investigation.

Kakadu Video

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Is he aware of claims by the member for Arafura that the video produced by the Northern Territory government in support of its submission to the World Heritage Committee is a deception in that at least part of it was filmed within the Kapalga experimental area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the only person who is being deceived in this case is the member for Arafura. It is true that the helicopter used to collect evidence for the Territory government's submission to the World Heritage Committee in Paris flew over Kapalga, but it is quite untrue to say that buffalo were filmed there. There is just no way the Kapalga area was filmed as part of the government's evidence.

During the filming, there were many sightings of buffalo, some sightings of horses and evidence of damage by other introduced species. Mr Speaker, I can assure you that the video which has been prepared to support our submission is of the stage 2 area and contains only material that can be used to verify our claims that the Kakadu stage 2 area is largely second-grade national park. It is inescapable that the Commonwealth government and the ANPWS are being deceptive in this case. The outstanding values of Kakadu are being degraded by the proposal to put stage 2 on the World Heritage List. Certainly, parts of stage 2 are worthy of that sort of protection, but they are very limited.

I think it is quite a joke that the member for Arafura has raised this issue. It indicates that the people - experts in their fields - who went out there to look at the damage that had been done in Kakadu were taking film of caged or yarded animals. That is ridiculous. He knows it, we know it and the people out there know it. In fact, there are very large numbers of buffalo within Kakadu stage 2. The figure could possibly be put as high as 12 000 head there, and there is degradation that has been caused by infestations of weeds, such as mimosa, which are not being managed adequately by the ANPWS. The member for Arafura should go out there himself and have a look. He cannot do it on foot because it is impossible to get out to some of those areas on foot. If he went there by helicopter, he would see the extensive damage that is being done by infestations of weeds, feral buffalo, pigs and horses. I think he should be ashamed of himself.

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I seek your leave under standing order 57 to make a personal explanation.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member can seek leave at the end of question time to make a personal explanation.

Mr B. COLLINS: Mr Speaker, the standing order is quite specific. I can do so at any time, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I would remind the honourable member that it is a general practice to make a personal explanation at the appropriate time.

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, while the Treasurer is overseas in Paris in order to speak to the UNESCO group, I would ask that members direct questions relating to his areas of responsibility to me. Further, I would ask that, if possible, members give notice of such questions in order that I may provide the information they seek as quickly and concisely as they would wish.

Kakadu Video

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What was the total cost of the video mentioned a few moments ago, is it true that the format in which that video was prepared was not compatible with the French video system and had to be re-dubbed and, if so, how much extra public money was involved in that process? Will he confirm that he will honour the commitment that I received from his office yesterday that he has decided that I will be allowed to view this video on Friday of this week?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, a number of questions are involved here. I cannot give a specific answer to all of them now. I can advise that the charges by the production organisation for the video were \$600 per day and filming took place over a period of 2 days. I do not have the final figures but I have asked for those to be made available to me when the final costings are determined. The video was not intended to be a very high quality TV video. It was produced for private showing to the members of the World Heritage Committee at UNESCO. We anticipated the cost of production of the video to be in the order of \$2000 to \$3000. I will have to wait for the final details before I can give the honourable member a more accurate answer.

In respect of the necessity for re-dubbing for French television, quite frankly that is the first I have heard of that suggestion. I will have the information checked and, if it is true, advise the honourable member accordingly.

Mr Speaker, the honourable member asked 3 questions at once. Could he remind me what his third question was?

Mr B. COLLINS: It is the easiest one of all. Mr Speaker, I received advice yesterday from the Chief Minister's office that I would be able to view the video at the end of this week. Can he confirm that that commitment will be honoured?

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I will go further than that and extend the invitation to view the video on Friday of this week to all members of the opposition.

Mr Speaker, whilst I am on my feet and on the subject of this video, there were allegations in yesterday's NT News, and I understand that the member for Arafura made some allegations this morning on radio suggesting that filming for the video took place over a CSIRO buffalo experimental area.

Mr B. Collins: That is not true.

Mr HATTON: If that is not true, I am pleased to hear it. This has been a matter of some moment to us. Quite clearly, the intention was to show Kakadu stage 2, not some CSIRO experiment. Subsequently, I have had it confirmed that filming did not take place anywhere in the vicinity of the CSIRO area. It is a shame that the people who made these allegations did not check with the film makers. From reading the newspaper article yesterday, it appeared that somebody saw a helicopter flying over a particular area on Saturday morning. Someone suggested that the helicopter contained Harry Butler and therefore assumed that filming was taking place in that particular location. The Department of the Chief Minister is in the process of preparing maps showing exactly which areas were filmed. I will be quite happy to make those available to members of the Assembly to remove any doubts whatsoever about the location of filming.

Waiting Periods for Housing

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for HOUSING

A letter from something called the Territory Party appeared in the weekend press which referred to increases in the waiting period for allocation of Housing Commission houses from 6 weeks to 6 months. Also, the letter castigated the government for allocating facilities for pensioner drop-in centres. What is the situation with regard to those matters?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, members would be aware that this government places tremendous emphasis on the need to care for aged people in the Territory. Palmerston is no different from any other centre. I read that letter and was a little concerned at the inference that the Housing Commission was putting people out of houses whilst there was a waiting time of 6 months. The letter was directed to the Minister for Lands. The waiting time for houses in the Palmerston area is around 6 months which is very good. Members would be aware of the long periods that people wait for houses elsewhere in Australia. In some cases, people wait for many years.

In Palmerston, we have provided an interim facility for the Council on the Ageing. I refer to a day drop-in centre to service the aged in that community. It is extremely well used. I remind honourable members that the Commonwealth is responsible for funding for the aged and the Council on the Ageing is hoping that funds will be made available for a specific and permanent facility for the aged in that area.

The record of this government in relation to assistance for aged people cannot be questioned and that fact has been supported by members of the opposition as well. The inference in the letter that we were putting people out of homes is nonsense. We have a short waiting time in comparison with other places and we will continue to look after our aged people. Aged people in many communities need assistance. We have provided an interim facility to cater for immediate needs, and I emphasise that it is well used. Over 50 people use that particular facility. This government will continue to make such places available.

Air fare Assistance to Tertiary Students

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will there be any changes to the air fare assistance available for tertiary students in the Territory when the University College opens next year? In particular, will Alice Springs students be disadvantaged as was claimed by the Labor Party's preselected candidate for Araluen on the ABC news this morning?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is a most important question. It is a pity that members of the opposition do not consider education important enough for them to listen to what is occurring. They would prefer to disseminate misinformation throughout the community. It is an important question which was raised, quite rightly, by the member for Stuart during the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill. The member for Stuart was concerned that students from centres outside Darwin should not be disadvantaged by changes to the air fare assistance scheme when the University College is operational next year. The changes to the Territory government's assistance scheme are aimed solely at encouraging students to study in the Territory, and not at disadvantaging students in centres outside Darwin.

I did not have the full details in front of me last week but, after consultation, I was able to assure the member for Stuart that the existing system of assistance for travel by students in the Territory would remain in force when the University College opened. Actually, that provoked a remark from the member for Stuart along the lines of 'Oh dear, there goes my press release for tomorrow'. I was quite keen to ensure that Territory students enrolled in recognised courses of study in tertiary institutions in Territory centres other than their place of residence would be able to continue to claim up to 3 return air fares.

I think all members are aware that it is a most generous scheme. It is quite distressing that the Labor Party's candidate for Araluen, Alderman Shanahan, should be misleading the public in such a manner. I was able to let the member for Stuart know last week that Alice Springs students would not be disadvantaged ...

Mr Ede: I understood that the plan was abolished.

Mr MANZIE: Mr Speaker, I heard the member for Stuart contradict me there. I would be quite interested to know whether he would like to explain to the Assembly whether or not I advised him ...

Mr Ede: When?

Mr MANZIE: ... that changes would be made. Possibly, the member's memory is a little bit amiss but I am sure he will not tell untruths when relating our conversation. I explained it to him and he made a comment along the lines that there went his press release for the next day. I am sure that, if he casts his mind back, he will remember the details of that conversation. I think it a pity that the Darwin office of the ABC saw fit to run this story. Its Alice Springs office made contact with me on Friday regarding the matter, and we were able to explain the situation there.

Mr Speaker, the changes that I spoke about last week were to the interstate scheme and will see the number of return air fares available to students reduced from 3 to 2. Students who are presently enrolled interstate will still receive air fares even if they are undertaking a course which will not be covered by the scheme next year. Those students presently involved will not be disadvantaged. Those students throughout the Territory who will be undertaking tertiary studies will still receive the assistance that is granted presently, which is by far the most generous in Australia. It is a reflection of the seriousness and importance that the CLP government in the Territory places on the education of young Territorians.

I find it appalling that a statement was made on the radio that a so-called candidate selected by the opposition heard a government announcement. The Labor Party is having problems with its preselection procedures. We have heard about the reluctant fisherman who decided that he could not throw in his lot with the opposition because he woke up to the facts of what it was all about. Now it has a candidate in Alice Springs who has problems with her imagination. She imagines she hears announcements by the government that are not actually made. I am sure that the member for Stuart will put her right next time he is in his office, because I believe that the lady is working out of the honourable member's office at present, as she was when she made her bid for election to the town council and when she made her original bid for Araluen. As we know, that latter effort was entirely unsuccessful. I rely on the member for Stuart to have a word with this learner in Alice Springs and put her right on the ways of protocol. I think some advice on the merit of being truthful would probably be a good way to start.

Uluru Board of Management

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

I draw attention to the expertise of the member for Araluen in the tourist industry and his previous occupation as Chairman of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission and ask when the Northern Territory government or the Chief Minister will appoint the member for Araluen to the Uluru Board of Management?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I cannot say when we are likely to appoint the member for Araluen to the Uluru-Katatjuta National Park Board of Management - and that is no reflection at all on the member for Araluen.

I welcome this question because it gives me the perfect opportunity to make an announcement. At a Cabinet meeting yesterday, it was resolved that the Northern Territory government write to the federal government nominating for appointment to the Uluru-Katatjuta National Park Board of Management the Minister for Conservation and the Minister for Tourism or their nominees. Mr Speaker, you will know that the Northern Territory government ...

Mr Bell: There is only 1 position.

Mr HATTON: ... disagreed with the politicisation of a board of management, and particularly with members of parliament ...

Mr Bell: It was you blokes who did that.

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

Mr HATTON: We propose that appointees to boards of management of national parks should be people with particular skills and expertise for that rather than politicians. Of course, that view was not accepted by the federal government, along with many other worthwhile suggestions that have emanated from the Northern Territory government over several years.

Mr Speaker, given that the federal government requires that a member of the Legislative Assembly be appointed rather than some other person, we are nominating 2 people. Those nominations are being put to the federal government. I might note that the nominees are the Northern Territory counterparts of the 2 federal government ministers or their nominees who are appointed to the Uluru-Katatjuta National Park Board of Management.

Since January this year, it has been the government's view - and we have advised the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment, Mr Cohen, of it - that we would be prepared to make a nomination to the board of that park, but we wish to have proper and reasonable management arrangements sorted out. As we all know, in the process gone through in May of this year, it could not be said that proper management arrangements for the park had been sorted out. It is a fact that the federal government did what we had always believed that it intended to do and removed the Conservation Commission from the day-to-day management of the park. I might say that it achieved this with the active support of the member for MacDonnell who voted in favour of the resolution that removed the Conservation Commission from the park and sold out his own constituents. In May this year, the Northern Territory Conservation Commission was instructed to leave the park and the ANPWS took over its functions.

We will continue to work for the return of this park to the Northern Territory Conservation Commission but, given the events that have occurred and the fact that it is a Northern Territory park, it is appropriate that there be 2 Territory representatives on the board as counterparts to the federal intruders who are sitting on it. We will be sending those nominations ...

Mr Bell: Hang on. The Northern Territory is still Australian, fella.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I must respond to that interjection. The member for MacDonnell is perfectly correct. The Northern Territory is part of Australia. It is a terrible shame that the federal government does not recognise the constituent rights of the elected government of the Northern Territory. That it had the active support of a member of this Assembly in removing a Northern Territory authority from the management of a Northern Territory park is a travesty, and the member for MacDonnell ought to hang his head in shame. I know his constituents at Yulara have very little respect for him as a consequence of the actions he took in May of this year, particularly those who happened to work for the Northern Territory Conservation Commission. We accept that the Northern Territory is part of Australia, and we feel we should be treated on the same basis as the rest of Australia. Even the Great Barrier Reef National Park, which is an ANPWS park and is 50% funded by the ANPWS, is managed by the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service. It is not managed by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. That is the fundamental core of the dispute at Uluru, and it always has been.

Mr Bell: Nonsense.

Mr HATTON: I know the opposition would prefer to shrink away from it, but that is the fact.

Mr Bell: You ought to be writing history, Steve.

Mr HATTON: The member for MacDonnell ought to talk to his leader because his leader is of the view that Territorians should decide who manages parks in the Northern Territory even if he may believe that it would be appropriate under some circumstances for them to decide that the ANPWS should manage a park.

We will participate on the board. We will work to protect the interests of the Northern Territory community and we will contribute actively to ensure that the park is managed properly both for conservation and tourism purposes as one of the world's great tourist attractions.

Australian Law Reform Commission Report

Mr FIRMIN to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Has the Department of Law received the report of the Australian Law Reform Commission entitled the 'Recognition of Aboriginal Customary Law' and, if so, what action has been taken in relation it?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the government has received a copy of the report and it is investigating which aspects of the report should be implemented in the Territory. The Department of Law is coordinating a working party which is made up of officers from several government departments with the aim of submitting a report to government early in the new year. The commission's report is a rather substantial document which took some 10 years to prepare. It runs to over 900 pages. The recommendations are quite extensive and many of them are already in place in the Northern Territory. For example, the recognition of tribal marriages and provision for fostering, adoption and welfare of Aboriginal children are already in force here. I do not expect that all of the commission's recommendations will be acceptable to the Northern Territory. However, many of the recommendations which are not already operating here, certainly deserve further consideration.

Annual Financial Statements

Mr SMITH to ACTING TREASURER

Why has the preparation of the annual financial statements been delayed to the extent that the Auditor-General has had to issue a separate report on the statements? Since this is the first occasion since self-government that a delay in the preparation of these statements has prevented simultaneous release of them with the Auditor-General's report, when will the audited financial statements be available and what steps are being taken to ensure that this does not occur again?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. Obviously, I am not in a position to be able to give details off the top of my head. I know that the Auditor-General's report will be the subject of debate later in these sittings and I am sure that all those matters will be covered at that

time. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition will participate in that debate. However, I undertake to obtain the information and provide it either during question time today or tomorrow or at any other time that the member may wish.

Mr Smith: It certainly will not be in the bar, I can tell you that.

Mr MANZIE: Obviously, I cannot be expected to have that information.

Mr Smith: Of course you can. You have known about it for a week. You are supposed to be the acting Treasurer.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I remind all honourable members that all remarks should be addressed through the Chair.

Mr MANZIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The behaviour of members opposite certainly has deteriorated somewhat, but I am sure that it will improve in time, with your good guidance, Mr Speaker.

As I said, I do not think anybody could expect me to have that information in my head. I will obtain it at the earliest opportunity and provide it to the Leader of the Opposition.

Employment Prospects for School Leavers.

Mr STEELE to CHIEF MINISTER

What employment prospects are there for Northern Territory school leavers next year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I believe the employment prospects of Northern Territory school leavers this year will be as good as they have been in previous years, and that is excellent. I ask members to note that, when I announced reductions that would have to occur within the Northern Territory Public Service this year as a consequence of budgetary restrictions, I made the specific point that we would not be removing the school leaver program. I am pleased to confirm that the school leaver program in the Northern Territory Public Service will continue this year.

The school leaver employment program is conducted across the NTPS to encourage and facilitate the employment of young adults in the Territory. Aboriginal people, regardless of age, are also eligible. Departments and authorities have responsibility for implementing the program. The program has been in operation now for some 4 years and includes apprenticeships and traineeships, base-grade employment opportunities, vacation employment for local tertiary students and placement by NT government scholarship holders.

Mr Speaker, preferential treatment is given to young school leavers seeking base-grade employment, other than in the keyboard operator or administrative class A1 areas. Those areas are embraced by the Australian Traineeship System. In 1987, the Australian Traineeship System will replace the NTPS school leaver employment program for those classifications. It may be of interest to members to know that, as of 31 March 1986, 235 base-grade school leaver employees, 64 apprentices and 44 trainees had been placed. In the 1986-87 financial year, a further 289 positions are planned in the school leaver program and 50 positions have been targeted for Aboriginal development.

The present NTPS school leaver employment initiatives, which will continue to support these growth figures, are base-grade entry placements. This involves preferential recruitment of school leavers to all NTPS base-grade vacancies between December and February, and initiatives where trainee and apprenticeship opportunities are offered by the NTPS to school leavers in varying numbers each year. The NTPS makes vacation work available over the Christmas and New Year period to local full-time tertiary students who are studying either in the Northern Territory or interstate. In addition, there is the scholarship initiative whereby NT government finance and administration scholarships are offered to NT matriculants to assist them with full-time studies towards a degree at the Darwin Institute of Technology. The NT Teaching Service offered 43 scholarships in 1986 and it will continue to offer new scholarships for study interstate and at the Darwin Institute of Technology, primarily for education courses.

The Northern Territory Government Scholarship Scheme is in its fourth year and, since its inception, has increased in popularity with secondary school leavers and, in some cases, mature-age students. During the first year, 20 scholarships were offered and 11 were granted. This scheme was introduced to replace the Finance Officer in Training Scheme. In 1984, 30 scholarships were offered and taken up. In 1985, another 28 were granted and in 1986 50 were offered. With wastage and failures, the current number of scholarship holders has dropped to 57 and, of these, 14 are due to complete the third year in 1986. A further 50 scholarships will be offered for the 1987 school year for study at the DIT and the University College of the Northern Territory.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Kakadu Video

Mr HATTON: Whilst I am on my feet, I will take the opportunity to provide the information the member for Arafura asked for earlier in respect of the video of Kakadu stage 2. The member asked about the cost of re-dubbing the tapes to a format suitable for presentation in France because, apparently, the French TV cannot handle VHS or BETA. It will not be done in the French language. It will be a copy from 1 tape format to another. We anticipate the cost to be in the order of about \$50.

Trade Development Zone

Mr EDE to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

On Thursday evening, I requested details of the feasibility study conducted prior to the commencement of the Trade Development Zone. Who conducted the feasibility study and at what cost and will he undertake to provide us, this week, with details including budgets, the cost-benefit analysis, sensitivity testing, details of variations above the CPI and any other relevant and pertinent facts regarding the original feasibility study and variations since?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, most of the question is utter rubbish. I went through the financial details of the Trade Development Zone last Thursday evening during the budget debate. Let me assure the member that the development phase of the Trade Development Zone was the subject of some 5 Cabinet submissions, all relating to reports that were conducted into the feasibility of the zone. The cost-benefit analysis etc is not relevant to the establishment of the zone. In fact, it was supported by the comments of the member for Milner when the

legislation was introduced into this Assembly. The decision to establish the zone was taken on the basis of attracting industry and manufacture to the Territory that would not normally be able to establish here, and to create a base from which employment would grow. The zone shows every indication of achieving those 2 aims.

How it is intended to operate the zone is a matter for honourable members to familiarise themselves with. I would suggest that they take up the offer, which I made in writing, to avail themselves of a full and comprehensive briefing relating to every detail regarding the establishment and the ongoing operation of the zone. We have made no secret of the fact that incentives apply. If we were to do a cost-benefit analysis on them, I am afraid it would not look too good, and the member for Stuart is aware of that.

The government has taken a responsible and far-sighted decision to establish and encourage industry and manufacturing in the Territory and to create jobs. We have not attempted to make a secret of the fact that we have expended up to \$13m establishing the zone. A significant amount of that is for infrastructure such as roads, water and sewerage. It is also for the establishment of 4 factories plus office buildings. As I advised members opposite last Thursday night, it is intended that the incentives to manufacturers to enter this zone will mainly be phased out after 3 years. I advised members opposite that it has been the policy of the board to make those incentives quite large for the first manufacturers entering into the zone. They will be phased out, and the incentives available to the first manufacturers established in the zone will certainly not be available to later manufacturers who come in.

The government stands by its decision. We took a decision to expend a considerable amount of money to establish the zone in order to encourage manufacturing industries which would not normally have come here. Incentives were offered to help create jobs. I think the zone is one of the greatest initiatives of this government. The questions of the member for Stuart have been answered fully and he is doing himself a disservice by not availing himself of the opportunity to receive a full and comprehensive briefing.

Trade Development Zone

Mr EDE to MINISTER for BUSINESS, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr Speaker, the minister made no attempt whatsoever to answer the question that I put to him. I asked who conducted the feasibility study. He has not given an answer. I asked if he would supply us with details of the feasibility study. He has not answered that either. I ask him once again.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is putting the same question.

Road to Undoolya Subdivision

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

What progress has been made towards the second connecting road to the Undoolya subdivision - the one through the Sadadeen Valley - being cleared with the Sacred Sites Protection Authority and surveyed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I understand that an officer of the Planning Branch of the Roads Division will be in Alice Springs on 21 November to confirm the preferred alignment of the corridor. I understand that, once this is done, official clearance can be sought from the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Protection Authority. Until such time as this officer has had a chance to meet with the Alice Springs Town Council, it will be very difficult for me to provide any further information to the member. However, 21 November is not too far away and, as soon as I have a report, I will provide more detail to him.

Buffalo in Kakadu

Mr SETTER to CHIEF MINISTER

An article in yesterday's NT News claimed that there is no clapped-out buffalo country in Kakadu and that there are no buffalo there except for a few stragglers. Can he confirm or deny these allegations?

ANSWER

I must advise the honourable member that I have not gone out and counted the buffalo physically myself. I doubt whether any member in this Assembly has done that, including the member who represents that area. I can advise that reports by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service indicate that there are some 12 000 head of buffalo in Kakadu stage 2, which is hardly just a few stragglers.

Just under 12 months ago, when I happened to be Minister for Primary Production and Conservation, I remember that the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service decided that it needed to clean up the buffalo in Kakadu once and for all. It ordered a massive shoot-out of buffalo in Kakadu. Quite a large number of animals were shot at that time, on the basis that the ANPWS was sick and tired of employing hunters and having the animals rounded up and processed through the abattoir. Of course, it would be totally improper to suggest that the ANPWS's action may have been a means of undermining the potential viability of the Mudginberri abattoir. I would not want to suggest that for a moment.

I happened to be flying over the area in early February this year. Already a number of buffalo were wandering through the park simply because it is not fenced. The buffalo roam over the area. Cleaning it out on 1 day gives no guarantee that buffalo will stay out for a significant period, and that will continue to be the case until the total feral herd is cleaned up or put behind wire or until Kakadu National Park is fenced, as has been suggested on many occasions. Because the area is so vast, the cost of erecting a fence would be astronomical. However, without full fencing, it is not practicable to keep the buffalo out.

Mr B. Collins: Have you seen what buffalo do to fences?

Mr HATTON: I shall not even attempt to respond to that inane interjection, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, the fact is that there are significant numbers of buffalo in Kakadu. This will continue to be the case while the BTEC program proceeds to convert the buffalo herd from a feral herd into a domesticated herd behind wire. There is no doubt that the area continues to be degraded because of the presence of buffalo in the park.

Cuts to Community Assistance Program

Mr LEO to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What areas in the Department of Community Development's Community Assistance Program are to be cut so that the targeted reduction of approximately \$600 000 in inflation-adjusted terms can be met?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the real figure is \$16 000. I can assure the member that I do not have at my fingertips the details of how that \$16 000 is to be saved. However, I will endeavour to answer the question in specific detail later in these sittings.

Palmerston Swimming Pool

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Last week's Hansard records the minister as saying that the \$800 000 for the Palmerston swimming pool was to come out of the Treasurer's Advance. Can he confirm or deny the accuracy of that statement? Secondly, in the same statement the minister reported that the Department of Lands would make a request to Treasury for the \$800 000 in the near future. When is it expected that the Department of Lands will make the request for the \$800 000 to be paid to the developer? Thirdly, can he assure the Assembly that a firm and final site for the swimming pool has been fixed?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thought I had covered that topic fully in reply to a previous question this morning. During some 2 hours in the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill, devoted to 1 aspect of the operations of the Department of Transport and Works and the allocations to the Department of Lands, the Leader of the Opposition asked about this figure of \$800 000. He said that the amount of \$800 000 for the swimming pool did not appear anywhere in the budget papers. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition supported that statement by way of interjection.

Mr Ede: You felt worried, didn't you?

Mr DONDAS: Mr Speaker, as you know, I had several hundred pages of briefing notes.

Mr Ede: It is your portfolio. It is all too much for you.

Mr DONDAS: I took the view that the question that was asked by the Leader of the Opposition was, at least, a fair one. The point he made was that he could not find it in the budget papers because it was not there. I advise that it appears quite clearly on page 16 of the explanatory notes on allocations under the Appropriation Bill to the Department of Lands where it is stated that: 'The increase represents a one-off payment for the development of the Palmerston Recreational Centre'. Mr Speaker, in the third reading of the bill, I pointed out to members opposite that many developments are taking place at Palmerston and that the Palmerston Recreational Centre is actually the swimming pool complex.

If the Leader of the Opposition turns to that explanation on page 16, he will find the \$800 000 appears there. If it had not been there, because we were waiting for negotiations on another project to be finalised with the developers, then provision would have been made for it in the Treasurer's Advance. It was clearly on the government record that we would build that swimming pool.

There may have been some confusion by the media with regard to the site because I was asked why the swimming pool was not yet under construction even though it was supposed to be available for use early next year. The answer given to that question during the committee stage was that the developer had been negotiating with the government for a site for a major development in that area. No doubt the developer was using the swimming pool development as a lever to obtain a better site for that major development. I offered to supply the Leader of the Opposition with the name of the organisation that was interested in undertaking a large development. I had no intention of making an announcement in the Assembly because discussions were still continuing on the development. The magnitude of the development is something that the government wants in the Palmerston area. In fact, it will be very good for the residents of Palmerston.

As I have said this morning, work is to commence at Palmerston on clearing the land, setting the car park site aside, because it is contingent on the development proceeding ...

Mr Smith: Have you got a site for the swimming pool?

Mr DONDAS: Actually, work is to start today. I did not say that this morning, Mr Speaker. I said it would start within 48 hours, in case the Leader of the Opposition jumped in his car at lunch time, went out to Palmerston to see if any work was occurring, and then stood up in the adjournment to say that the minister had misled the Assembly. I have no intention of misleading the Assembly and hold to my answer that work will start on the Palmerston swimming pool within the next 48 hours.

ANSWER TO QUESTION Annual Financial Statements

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, I would like to provide information in relation to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition earlier this morning. He became quite upset because I did not have the answer available at that time. I advised him I would obtain the information and I will provide that now.

The question related to the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statements and delays that were mentioned in the Report of the Auditor-General. I have been advised that the delay in the production of the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statements for 1985-86 was due mainly to a delay in completing the bank reconciliation. Remedial steps to check bank statements and complete bank reconciliations on a monthly basis have been introduced to ensure that such delays do not occur in the future.

I would like to provide some comment on the Report of the Auditor-General in relation to paragraph 3.8.13 which refers to bank reconciliations. The bank reconciliation system provided in the SI, the new computer package, was found to be defective for government purposes and an interim program had to be introduced. The reports produced by the system could not be used readily in the reconciliation process and considerable time and effort was needed to

check these reports. The lack of a checking system added problems to that reconciliation process.

Mr Speaker, I have been advised that Treasury recognised the seriousness of the situation, and staff from elsewhere in the department were allocated to complete the bank reconciliations. In early August, when all the checking was complete and the balance was considerably reduced, agreement was reached with the Auditor-General to close the books off at 30 June. Procedures for checking reports and recruitment of staff to appropriate levels are now in place and I have been advised that this will certainly avoid a similar situation occurring in the future. As well, a preliminary review of the setup has been completed with a view to further improving its operations and proper controls have been put in place to ensure the accuracy of published quarterly financial statements. Apparently, the statement published for the quarter ending 30 June has a number of presentational errors. Those steps have been taken because these were printer's errors. In future, statements will be made up from photo typeset from original Treasury documents.

I would like to advise that the final drafts of the statements were given to the Auditor-General this morning. As soon as those are cleared by the Auditor-General, they will be presented. I hope that that provides the Leader of the Opposition with the information he requested and I hope that he will be rather more patient next time. I would ask that I be given some notice of such questions because I would like to provide information as soon as possible to all members of the Assembly.

ANSWER TO QUESTION Kakadu Video

Mr HATTON (Chief Minister): Mr Speaker, in discussing Kakadu stage 2 this morning, I commented on allegations concerning the video going to UNESCO from the Northern Territory government. I have had more detailed information.

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! Is the Chief Minister seeking leave to answer a question or is he making a statement?

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order if a minister has additional information in response to a question asked.

Mr HATTON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to provide more detailed information. I have a map, which I am happy to make available to the member for Arafura, which shows the areas where the filming occurred: near the mouth of the South Alligator River, in the vicinity of the mouth of the Wildman River, towards the north-western corner of the proposed Kakadu stage 2 and west of the border store in Kakadu.

To explain the mystery of the helicopter seen flying over the CSIRO area, I am advised that the film crew went out early on Saturday morning to do some filming before breakfast. They flew over that area on their return to Cooina in order to have breakfast. They were not filming at the time. It is a shame that people do not check their facts before they make allegations in the newspapers and cause confusion.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr B. COLLINS (Arafura)(by leave): Mr Speaker, on the question of the video, my position was both misrepresented and misquoted this morning by 3 government members. In fact, that has just been done for a fourth time by the Chief Minister, and it is necessary to correct the record.

The member for Koolpinyah claimed this morning that I had stated as a matter of fact that the government's video was a fraud and misrepresented the position put to UNESCO. Obviously, because I have not viewed the video, I could make no such statement. I am not sure how far I can go to try to assist the government in a bipartisan fashion. Not only did I ring a government adviser yesterday morning - and I have no doubt that adviser will confirm this - to request, for the fourth time, a viewing of the video so the matter could be resolved, but I also advised the government adviser that it was my belief that there was, prima facie, a serious error in the video which, because of my familiarity with the region, I would be able to correct instantly were that to be the case. I asked for that information to be sent to the Chief Minister to assist in making sure that, in fact, the video did not contain any inaccuracies. How far one is supposed to go in laying one's cards on the table rather than scoring political points, I do not know.

The Chief Minister then said that, in order to obtain information about this film, I should have approached the film makers. Could I point out to the Chief Minister that that would have been a highly improper action for me to take considering that the product was privy to the people who owned it - the Northern Territory government. It would have been improper for me to have made an approach to the film makers requesting that they breach confidentiality, and even more improper for them to have acceded to such a request.

The Minister for Conservation claimed that I had said that 'the film was shot of caged or yarded buffalo'. No such absurd statement was made by myself or even mentioned by the interviewer. I would point out to the Minister for Conservation that the area concerned, Kapalga, involves hundreds of square kilometres of country, not cages or yards.

Could I suggest, with respect, to the Chief Minister that a very easy way to resolve this position completely would be to abandon the absurd secrecy surrounding this video and show it today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr HATTON (Chief Minister)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I am certain that Hansard will reveal that the member for Arafura refuted, by way of interjection, the fact that he had made statements concerning Kakadu stage 2 during the answer to an initial question on this matter. I retracted my suggestion so far as that was concerned and my comments beyond that point were directed specifically to statements in the NT News in respect of CSIRO. I must apologise to the member for Arafura because I was unable to get back to him yesterday. I was delayed by a Cabinet meeting and other business. He advised that he wished to check some facts, but I heard of that only late yesterday afternoon. I was not in contact with my staff because I was out doing work.

Mr Speaker, I accept the statements by the member for Arafura in relation to his suggestions on the film. I assumed that that related to the article in the NT News yesterday. I made the effort yesterday evening to check the accuracy or otherwise of the allegations that appeared in the press. Those statements were inaccurate and I am quite happy to show this map to the honourable member.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr DONDAS (Lands)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I wish to correct a statement made during the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill. The Leader of the Opposition asked a question about a pre-commitment given by the Northern Territory government in relation to a city development. In my response, I referred to 4000 ft² when I should have referred to 4000 m².

Settlement with Dr Madden

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer to a statement in the press release issued jointly by the Chief Minister and Dr Richard Madden yesterday: 'The Chief Minister said the terms of Dr Madden's release would not be disclosed'. Will the Chief Minister confirm that it was at his insistence that secrecy clauses were inserted in the agreement with Dr Madden and that Dr Madden, being an accountable public servant to the last, wanted full details of the settlement to be made publicly available?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there is an agreement in the settlement with Dr Madden. There will be no further comment in respect of that matter and I intend to maintain that stance.

Kakadu Video

Mr PALMER to CHIEF MINISTER

Yesterday, the member for Arafura accused the Chief Minister of misleading parliament over the Kakadu video that is to be shown in Paris as part of the Territory's submission to the World Heritage Committee. Can the Chief Minister now clarify whether or not that video misleads by showing only those buffalo that are under scientific investigation in the CSIRO's Kapalga research area?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, a number of charges were levelled against myself in the Assembly last night that I had misled this Assembly, albeit unwittingly. I might say that the member for Arafura stressed that he thought I had misled the Assembly out of 'ignorance of the facts'. In any respect, that is a fairly denigrating statement to make about any minister, let alone the Chief Minister.

I would like to clarify a few points because yesterday the member for Arafura went to great pains, not only in this Assembly but also in the media, to paint a picture showing that the Northern Territory government ordered the production of a video which, fundamentally, contained footage of buffalo in the CSIRO Kapalga research area. He made the specific comment, by way of an interjection which was reported in Hansard, that the Kapalga area went right through to the coast.

Mr B. Collins: I did not say that either. I said the research herd went through to the coast, which it does.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I am not going to enter into cross-Chamber debate, no matter how much the member for Arafura wants me to do so. Only last week, the member for Arafura stood up here and delivered a lecture, like some school teacher, about decorum in the Assembly. I would ask that the member for Arafura follow his own advice and not engage in cross-Chamber debate when an answer is being given to a question asked in the Assembly.

Mr Speaker, I have been assured by people involved in the production of the video that no shots of buffalo were filmed over the CSIRO Kapalga research

area. Members may have heard an interview on radio this morning with a member of the film crew which made the video. For the benefit of those members who did not, Mr David Fidler said:

We did overfly Kapalga but shots of buffalo and degradation that are used on the completed video certainly did not come from that area. Mr Collins has very definite concern about the number of buffalo that Harry Butler has said exist in the park. As a person who flies over the park frequently, I am certainly aware that buffalo are there in extensive numbers and I think that, if Mr Collins was to fly from Jabiru in any direction whatsoever, he would find quite a lot of buffalo. Now particularly, I would mention an area where he was, only a week ago, with the Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke, and that is, of course, on the Magela flood plains. On the Magela flood plains, on the day we were shooting, there were, in fact, 2 other helicopters out there that were mustering buffalo on the plains because of the great numbers there in which they do exist.

Mr Speaker, that statement by Mr Fidler should be enough to assure the member for Arafura of his error in claiming that the film is a fraud because it includes shots of buffalo taken inside a buffalo research facility. If even that is not enough to convince the honourable member, I would point out to him that a map submitted by CSIRO to the Senate Standing Committee on National Resources in September 1986 puts his error beyond any doubt.

Honourable members may recall an extravagant interjection by the member for Arafura during yesterday's proceedings claiming that the CSIRO area extended all the way northward to the sea. I note that subsequent media reports recorded this claim faithfully. The CSIRO map discloses that the boundary of the area is, in fact, somewhere between 15 km and 20 km from the sea.

Mr B. Collins: I said Mount Hooper, in fact, which is correct.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, in response to that interjection, in his statement to this Assembly during yesterday's adjournment debate, the member for Arafura mentioned Mount Hooper. In my response during the adjournment, I said that I was not aware of exactly where the boundary was. The honourable member said it went right through to the coast. I confirmed that myself, and he said, 'Yes, that is right'. Mr Speaker, everybody in this Chamber was convinced by the words of the member for Arafura, in whose electorate Kakadu exists, that the Kapalga research area extended right through to the coast.

Mr B. Collins: The buffalo go right through to the coast.

Mr HATTON: Quite deliberately and clearly, in our view, the member for Arafura left this Assembly ...

Mr B. Collins: I am glad you said it is in your view.

Mr HATTON: The member left this Assembly and the media with the impression that the Kapalga research area went right through to the sea.

Mr B. Collins: It does.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, that is not what the map shows. I will refer to it. I have it with me.

Mr B. Collins: Thanks, Steve. You got it right.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Chief Minister will resume his seat. I have been quite tolerant with the member for Arafura. The Chief Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, in this particular report, dated Friday 3 October 1986, there is a map on page 1911 which depicts the boundaries of the Kapalga research area as marked by CSIRO. They are quite clearly south of the coast. I raise this point, not to argue that there are no buffalo north of that boundary, but to tell the member for Arafura emphatically that what I said in the Assembly was that we filmed north of the Kapalga research location. I was not with the film crew, nor was the member for Arafura, but the people who were there say they did not film in that particular location.

The member for Arafura is misrepresenting the facts about this whole filming exercise. I say that he is in the process of launching a Senate preselection campaign. He is showing us that he can support his federal colleagues and really stand up for Canberra in the Northern Territory by defending what Professor Ovington, Mr Cohen, Mr Hawke and the others are trying to do. He is employing his usual tactic of picking on a small incident, whether it be accurate or not and, with his brilliant wit and eloquence, blowing that out to huge proportions to give the impression that the only filming that took place at Kakadu occurred over Kapalga. The member for Arafura knows that that is not true. We know that it is not true. Last night, the member for Arafura left the community with the impression that the filming of buffalo occurred primarily in that area. That has been refuted, quite successfully in my view, by the people who actually did the filming.

Mr Speaker, in respect of the Kakadu area, so far as the Territory government is concerned the issue extends far beyond the number of buffalo there and even further beyond who owns them. I am content to accept Professor Ovington's estimate that, in December 1985, there were some 12 000 buffalo present in Kakadu stage 2. Certainly, recent visual evidence gives no indication that those numbers have decreased. Most members will agree that success by the Commonwealth in obtaining World Heritage listing of Kakadu stage 2 would make a mockery of the world environment movement and debase the United Nation's commitment to the environment. During his recent visit to Kakadu, the Prime Minister has shown that he is a greenie of expedience and that, mistakenly, the environmental vote is being seen by him and his minders as a key to the electoral prospects of the federal government.

We all know that the member for Arafura is desperate to disassociate himself from the electoral disaster facing the ALP in the Territory ...

Mr SMITH: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Chief Minister was asked a fairly specific question and I believe that he has given a full answer to that question. At present, he is certainly not in any way addressing the question that he was asked.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I take the point that members opposite are embarrassed about having their shortcomings exposed in such way. I will leave that because I know the Northern Territory electorate understands quite clearly the game the opposition is playing in its deliberate attempt to try to undermine the Northern Territory's case to UNESCO by throwing confusion and doubt over the evidence that we are taking to Paris.

The member for Arafura has been misleading the community of the Northern Territory in a deliberate attempt to undermine that case. Far from that video being something that will embarrass the Northern Territory, it will embarrass the federal government, and we hope desperately that UNESCO will adopt the correct procedures and not simply accept the Australian federal government's word on this area. We hope the UNESCO World Heritage Committee will defer the declaration of this area and carry out a proper and independent investigation to determine whether or not it should be included on the World Heritage List.

That is the basis of the Northern Territory government's case. We do not resile from our view that it does not meet the standard and we have said that repeatedly. In any event, the matter should be fully and properly examined by the world body. If, as a result of independent and thorough investigation, to which we are given a right to contribute as the Australian government will, it is its view that the area should be listed, that would be accepted. We object to the brinkmanship that is occurring over this area and the avoidance by the federal government of procedures established within Australia by the federal government. We object to the federal government trying to talk UNESCO into avoiding its procedures in the determination of declaration of World Heritage areas. That is the basis of our case.

The arguments and obfuscation pushed before the Northern Territory and Australian communities by the member for Arafura are designed quite clearly to undermine our case before we even get to Paris, and to back up the work of the Australian government in the multi-media campaign it has been conducting in Europe for a fortnight. It is doing nothing to support the cause of the Northern Territory or the proper consideration of this issue. The actions of the member for Arafura in this process are reprehensible. Yet again, we see an example of people from that side of the Assembly who have federal ambitions. To support those ambitions, they have decided suddenly that they must become allies of Canberra against the Northern Territory's interests and against proper procedures.

Crocodile Attacks

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Could he explain the claim made yesterday in The Australian that there have been 4 suspected crocodile attacks in the Territory in the past 3 months?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would very much like to refute the claims made in The Australian yesterday that there had been 4 crocodile attacks in the Northern Territory during the last 3 months. That article by Errol Simper indicated that the police now suspect that Norman Lawson was taken by a crocodile, and we know that that is untrue. My office was in contact yesterday with the police department and it indicated that there was no evidence to indicate that a crocodile had taken the boy. The article went on to say that a Mr MacLeod and a Mr Werrett were taken by crocodiles at Borroloola on the same day. In fact, if he had bothered to check his facts he would have discovered that that was 1 and the same person. The man had changed his name by deed poll. It indicated also that a fishing trawler captain had been taken by a crocodile in the Gulf area whereas we all know that he drowned and was not taken by a crocodile or attacked by a shark, as was inferred at the time.

It is inaccurate reports such as that, in the national press and occasionally in our local press, that put the plans and work of the commission in respect of the conservation of crocodile numbers in jeopardy. They create fear in the minds of people about the numbers and the voracity of crocodiles in northern waters. There is no way in the world that the people enumerated by Mr Simper in his article were taken by crocodiles.

There have been 4 reported crocodile attacks in the Northern Territory in the last 3 years. One such report concerned a body which was found inside a crocodile which would indicate perhaps that the man was taken by a crocodile, but we have no evidence to indicate whether he was alive or dead when taken. It is quite possible that he was dead when taken, and a crocodile cannot be blamed for taking a piece of something which happens to be floating in the water. I would like to think that, in the future, reporters - especially people of Mr Simper's recognised ability - would actually check their facts before putting that sort of information into the national press. His article was quite wrong on a whole range of points and it would be remiss of me if I did not refute it.

Kakadu Video

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

My question relates to an answer the Chief Minister gave during question time when he stated that no filming of any kind was conducted in the CSIRO research area. Was the map that he tabled in this Assembly yesterday for the use of members, which was marked with the areas where filming took place, correct or incorrect?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that map is certainly not plotted and surveyed to show where filming took place. I want to make that point clear. I asked for a map showing the areas where filming occurred. Members would be aware, having seen that map, that there are circles in various locations around the coastline. That follows from the advice that I received from the people who actually filmed. I quoted Mr David Fidler on that matter. Mr Fidler was a member of the film crew and I quoted from a radio interview broadcast this morning during which it was stated that the final film did not include any buffalo from within that area. I am advised also by those involved that no film was shot further than 15 km from the coast, particularly in that general area, and that none of the final film included any buffalo from that particular region.

Government Contracts

Mr PERRON to CHIEF MINISTER

On a previous occasion, he advised this Assembly that the government was considering changes to the government's tendering and purchasing procedures. Has there been any recent action in this regard?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in answer to a question last week, I advised that the Northern Territory government had decided to establish an Industrial Supplies Office. I indicated that further submissions were to come to Cabinet flowing from the review of purchasing and tendering procedures. This week, Cabinet resolved, as a result of a submission from the Tender Review Committee, in particular,

that that there will be changes made to the tendering procedures of government, specifically to ensure that, as far as is physically possible, the purchasing procedures will enable local tenderers to obtain as much business as possible.

As members are well aware, there is no capacity now to provide local preference in the form of percentage advantages providing a price 5% or 10% higher, or any similar arrangement, as a result of agreements throughout Australia on that matter. However, the government will change the tendering procedure to involve a single tender board. That tender board will have responsibility for all tendering. At present, there are 2 boards: the Capital Works Tender Board and the General Tender Board. From now on, there will be a single tender board which will be chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Business, Technology and Communications. It will have senior representation from the Department of Transport and Works, Treasury and a major purchasing department. In addition, the Executive Officer from the Industrial Supplies Office will be a member of the tender board, thereby providing representation of private enterprise on the government tender board, without locking into any particular sectional interest group. That will ensure that local business considerations are taken into account properly.

The Financial Administration and Audit Act provides that, up to \$10 000, departments can decide whether to go to tender or use some other mechanism to purchase. That will be amended to \$50 000 to give far more flexibility and to enable the departments to facilitate and expedite the purchase of materials. It will reduce substantially the cumbersome work that will be required by our Tender Board. That will not prevent departments from using tendering procedures in that process, but it will remove a significant amount of red tape and unnecessary delays in relation to purchasing procedures. The government will be introducing pre-qualification of certain tenders. It is anticipated that contracts will be upwards of \$250 000. For tenders in the order of \$4m to \$5m and more, a preselection process will be introduced.

Other significant changes in the operation of the Tender Board are indicated in the review. Significantly, the tender boards have never come into operation until the tenders have been completed and submitted. This has caused many of the concerns within the business community. With the new procedures, the Tender Board will be involved far earlier with the dissemination of information, consultation with departments as to which would go to pre-qualification, open tendering or preselection, and also with the terminology of tender documentation to ensure that there are no ambiguities or wrong practices that may adversely affect the local business community. Information on tendering, tender documentation, design lists and other aspects will be made available to the local business community far earlier so that it can plan ahead.

The Tender Board will carry out a monitoring role of purchases made below \$50 000 to ensure that the purchasing practices are being carried out properly and that no trends develop within particular departments or authorities which may be inappropriate or contrary to the interest of supporting the local business community.

The Tender Board will be a far more pro-active board than has been the case in the past. It will be involved far more directly and earlier in the development of tendering and purchasing to maximise the capacity of the local business community to support it. This will be done with the full support of the private sector which has been involved in this review. It will reduce the red tape substantially. It will provide for the standardisation of purchasing

and tendering procedures which will remove much of the confusion that is currently experienced by the private sector in relation to government purchasing and tendering. Overall, it should provide a realistic and effective vehicle for far more local involvement in government business in the Northern Territory. In addition to the establishment of the Industrial Supplies Office is the development of a comprehensive approach to enable business in the Northern Territory to maximise its capacity to get business out of the government dollar which has been our objective for some time.

I must commend the work of the review committee. Its work is not yet finished. It will proceed towards the implementation of this procedure by the drafting of administrative arrangements. The first change will occur in March 1987 when the Capital Works Tender Board functions will move across into this new single Tender Board. Between now and March, all the administrative arrangements will be established and, between March and the end of June, other departmental operations and authority operations will be phased into the purview of the single Tender Board. NTEC is the only exception to that.

Because of the particular nature of NTEC and its contracts, it has been decided that it should not be part of the single Tender Board arrangement. However, the Executive Officer for the Industrial Supplies Office will participate in the tendering and tender assessment processes of NTEC to ensure private enterprise input and that the interests of the local business community are taken into account properly in the development of tender documentation and in the assessment of tenders. By this means, it is hoped to avoid the problems that we are experiencing at present.

Kakadu Video

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

As recorded in yesterday's Hansard, the Chief Minister said in response to a question: 'I have a map which I am happy to make available to the member for Arafura which shows the area where the filming occurred'. He then went on to list 4 areas and the relevant 1 at the moment is near the mouth of the South Alligator River. Yesterday, the Chief Minister used this map as a basis for saying that the member for Arafura had his facts wrong. Is this map accurate or does the Chief Minister, in response to the statements that he has made this morning, wish to withdraw this and substitute a more accurate map?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, looking across the floor of the Chamber, I notice that that map has a large red slab across it which I presume has been marked on top. As I have said repeatedly, that map shows the areas where the filming occurred. No right-minded or logical person could avoid the clear view that that map was intended to show that filming occurred in the north-western parts of stage 2, in the northern parts of stage 2, in the north-eastern parts of stage 2 of Kakadu and all along the coastal areas. That map shows that quite clearly. It is a photocopy of a map of Kakadu National Park with circles marked in biro around the locations where film was taken. I have said time and again, that there is no accurate pinpointing of where any particular shot was taken.

Mr Smith: It is a pretty misleading map, then.

Mr HATTON: It is not misleading. It gives a clear indication that the filming occurred across the spectrum of the north coast of Kakadu stage 2, in the coastal zones, and it was intended to show the levels of degradation and

the status of the park. The film itself contains wide and expansive shots taken from a helicopter showing the extensive size and the broad nature of the environment of Kakadu. Specific details, such as paperbark forest destruction as a consequence of salt intrusion, the effects of buffalo, the effects of pigs and the effects of wild horses, are all part of the general picture of degradation in that area.

I am not saying, and we have never said, that that degradation is irreversible. We are simply saying that what is there is there. It does not seem to me at all unreasonable that we should try to show people, who will be making a very important decision, the country they are talking about. That is all we have been trying to do with that video. It is backed up with comprehensive written submissions which go into far more detail than the film does. The film is a support to the written documentation in order to provide some visual evidence of the area.

No right-minded person would try to take the particular line of obfuscation that, because this map has broad circles showing the general areas where filming occurred, it is somehow misleading. The only misleading occurrences in this Assembly were the allegations and imputations, repeated in the media, that the bulk of the filming occurred in the Kapalga area where the CSIRO research station is located. I refute the statement that the film is fundamentally about that area. It covers a wide area of Kakadu. That is the fact of the matter, and I state it on the basis of information given directly to me by the people who made the film and to the comments made by those people in the media this morning.

Isolated Patients Travel Accommodation Assistance Scheme

Mr STEELE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Recently there has been publicity concerning the cessation of the Commonwealth Isolated Patients Travel Accommodation Assistance Scheme. What are the details of the replacement scheme which will serve the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. As he stated, the Isolated Patients Travel Accommodation Assistance Scheme will be phased out at the end of this year and a new scheme will be introduced at the beginning of next year. The Department of Health has been developing a new scheme for some time. It is to be called the Patients Assistance Travel Scheme - the PAT Scheme. I will be giving more detail about it in the near future. The new scheme will take into account the requirements of all Territorians. The previous scheme was quite a complicated one and there were many complaints about it.

The Commonwealth has agreed to fund the new scheme on the basis of its funding for IPTAAS this year, which is \$2.470m. That funding will be indexed. However, the indexation is for identified health grants. We are concerned that, if our population continues to increase at its current rate and our growth remains the highest in Australia, we must anticipate that in future the federal government's grant will not be sufficient to cover the needs of isolated patients' travel. That is an issue I am taking up with the Commonwealth Minister for Health, Mr Blewett. However, details of the Patients' Assistance Travel Scheme will be made available soon.

Alligator River Land Claim

Mr FINCH to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

What action is the Northern Territory government taking in relation to the delivery of title to the Alligator River Stage 2 land claim area to the Jabiluka Aboriginal Land Trust by the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is an absolutely disgraceful action by the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Once again, he has displayed his total contempt for Territorians. I have never seen a better example of why the Territory should become a state. It is absolutely unbelievable that a federal minister would stoop to sneaking into Darwin, without any consultation or prior warning, to hand over this title in some kind of secret ceremony. This kind of behaviour is not just an insult to the Territory government but to all Territorians, black and white. I note that the member for Arafura is having a bit of a laugh and a chuckle.

Mr B. Collins: I never said anything.

Mr MANZIE: Obviously, he thinks it is a joke. He believes that the Commonwealth should have the right to come in and do this sort of thing. I am totally appalled by his attitude.

I can assure honourable members that the Northern Territory government will take immediate action against this handover. Officers of the Department of Law are now in Sydney. They will file documents in the Federal Court this morning, seeking to have Mr Holding's decision overturned under the Administrative Decisions Judicial Review Act. As part of this action, we shall also be seeking an order to restrain the Registrar-General from proceeding further with the registration of titles in relation to the land. Our counsel in this case is Sir Maurice Byers QC and, if he is available this afternoon or tomorrow morning, we will seek also an interlocutory injunction to prevent any further action by the federal government in this matter.

I repeat that it is a disgraceful action by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and it displays utter contempt for all Territorians. I am appalled at his behaviour, and I believe the editorial in the Northern Territory News last night aptly described the actions of the minister. I commend the reading of that editorial to all Territorians, especially the member for Arafura who may get an idea of how Territorians feel about this most disgraceful action.

Government Contracts

Mr BELL to CHIEF MINISTER

I refer him to his answer to a previous question about the government's review of the tendering process and to an article in last night's Northern Territory News entitled, 'Government Told to Act on Bankruptcies'. Will the government's review of the tendering process ensure that undischarged bankrupts are screened out of the tendering process?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I think that is quite a reasonable question...

Mr Bell: 10 out of 10 for that one? Thanks!

Mr HATTON: Yes, I give the member for MacDonnell full credit for that question. I understand the procedure is supposed to exclude those persons now. I will raise that matter specifically with the Purchasing and Tendering Review Committee to ensure that it is addressed properly.

Barramundi Aquaculture

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for PORTS and FISHERIES

What is the current situation regarding development of barramundi aquaculture in the Northern Territory?

Mr Smith: With a short answer.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, although the honourable Leader of the Opposition interjects, 'With a short answer', I think the barramundi aquaculture scene is one of the most exciting prospects that the fishery has faced for many years, mainly because the market already exists for barramundi. When one considers that the Australian community imports anywhere between 700 t to 1000 t of barramundi a year from Thailand, it is certainly something that we should - if you will excuse the pun - be getting our teeth into. More importantly, barramundi farming has been practised extensively in several countries to the north of us, particularly Thailand and Taiwan.

Honourable members would be aware that, earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Taiwan and Thailand to inspect at first hand the capacity and the capability of the Northern Territory to provide a barramundi aquacultural operation. In September of this year, we were very fortunate that an international workshop was conducted in Darwin, and about 9 countries were represented: Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Papua New Guinea and Tahiti. The workshop concentrated on barramundi aquaculture through the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research. We were very lucky that we were able to muster these experts within the Darwin area. It occurred just at the time when I made the announcement that we would develop barramundi aquaculture in the Territory and, of course, it was very important to obtain expertise.

I really cannot understand the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition. He is sitting there smirking and shaking his head around as if this is not an important topic.

Mr Smith: It is very important. Why don't you make a statement on it instead of using question time?

Mr DONDAS: Ports and fisheries is an area that needs to be nurtured and the Leader of the Opposition would remember that the Northern Territory government went to a great deal of expense to employ the consultant, Erik Norgaard, to give it proper direction as far as the fishery was concerned. We are all aware that Eric Norgaard provided the government with 4 reports, which stated that onshore facilities would be required, amongst other things, in order to increase our fishery, which is worth about \$20m a year to us at the moment, to anywhere between \$60m to \$100m a year. That will have a tremendous impact on our fisheries.

With the recent announcement of the agreement with the Commonwealth on the closure of the Gulf of Carpentaria from 1 December, which affects the Territory's prawning industry, we need to develop alternative products to export from the Northern Territory. When one considers that Australia imports something like 80% of its fish requirements, then we should get into that market.

As I intended to say before the Leader of the Opposition interjected, we have been able to obtain the services of a Mr Cheuh from Taiwan Fisheries. His expertise is well known in the aquacultural scene throughout the world. In fact, as I understand it, Mr Cheuh is considered to be one of the fathers of aquaculture in Taiwan. Honourable members would be aware that we have had some problems with our prawning and shrimp aquaculture, mainly because the feedstock has to be imported from Taiwan. The fall of the Australian dollar has made the viability of those projects very marginal. More importantly, given the amount of trash fish within the region and the cheapness at which trash fish can be landed in Darwin, the barramundi aquaculture project will be very successful.

When I visited Taiwan, I was given an undertaking that the technology would be given to us through Kao-hsiung and the Kailis Fisheries Group. That is the most important thing. If we cannot obtain the technology, we will not succeed. To some extent, barramundi aquaculture is succeeding in Queensland. However, I believe that, if the people in Queensland who have charge of that project had had experience from Taiwan from the beginning, their operation would be much better than it is. We are very lucky that we are able to negotiate with the Kaohsiung Fishing Boat Commercial Guild and the Kailis Group, a joint arrangement with the Northern Territory government through its Ports and Fisheries Department, to establish a barramundi aquaculture operation.

I have made some public announcements about the first stage, which is a pilot project. We hope to have that in place this year. We will use some of the facilities within the port. Model ponds are being constructed in Perth now to develop some of the breeding stock that we hope to be able to catch in our northern waters some time in December. It becomes exciting when you realise that there are 2 types of aquaculture - pond aquaculture and cage aquaculture. Cage aquaculture is used predominantly in Thailand. It is used in river systems. Mr Speaker, think of the river systems that we have in the Northern Territory and those which are close to our Aboriginal communities. It is quite feasible to sell fish at the fingerling stage to those communities which can then put them into the cage operations which are very cheap to put together. Preliminary estimates show that it is possible to enter cage aquaculture production for less than \$10 000, with the capacity to produce about 2000 t a year. That has tremendous significance. In an Aboriginal community where the tidal waters are right, the people would be able to catch their own trash fish and feed the fingerlings to a size of 750 g at which stage they would be easy to market in restaurants in the southern capitals. That is why I think it is fantastic.

As far as pond culture is concerned, that can be carried out on land. We could process the fish and send chilled barramundi to the southern capitals within 7 hours of the fish being taken from the water. Everybody, not only in Australia but overseas, is crying out for chilled fish products. The present method of obtaining barramundi is to catch it at sea, fillet, process and freeze it and eventually send it south. However, with pond aquaculture, we would be able to take out 500 kg or 1000 kg on request, process and chill it, and have it on a plane for the Melbourne and Sydney markets. I believe we would not be able to keep up with the demand.

The other exciting aspect of using fingerlings relates to complaints from amateur fishermen about pressures on our river systems. They are at loggerheads with the professional barramundi fishermen, arguing that some of our river systems have been fished out. Once we can get into production of fingerlings, we will be able to restock the river systems. The main problem is that, when the fingerlings are released into the rivers, the predators get stuck into them and they do not survive.

Even more importantly, we will be able to stock our billabongs. Every tourist who comes to the Northern Territory wants to catch a barramundi, but it is hard. Even the locals who go out year after year trying to catch a barramundi are unsuccessful. If we could restock our billabong system and reserve them purely for amateurs and tourists, that would have a tremendous impact.

What will be the fate of the professional barramundi fisherman? Over the last 5 years, we have had a buy-back scheme, which has cost the Department of Ports and Fisheries a considerable amount, to try to reduce the level of effort in the barramundi industry. In 1981 or 1982, I understand that more than 100 barramundi licences were being used. That was too many for the viability of the industry. At the moment, I understand there are only about 45 barramundi licences in operation and it remains the intention of the government to further reduce that level of effort.

If aquaculture is successful, it will have a tremendous impact on the barramundi and shrimp industries. Shrimp aquaculture is struggling at the moment. The trash fish that is landed on shore will be processed in a stockfeed plant and the by-products can be used as fertiliser. This will provide cheap stockfeed for our piggeries and for the shrimp aquaculture project.

Mr Speaker, I hope that I have been able to give the member for Ludmilla a clear idea of where we are going with barramundi aquaculture. Early in December, I hope to be able to visit Western Australia to see the pilot project that is being assembled now by the Kailis Group. There is a piece of land in our port area which is not being used at the moment. It has a nice big shed on it which will give us the capacity to breed, both inside and outside. I understand that Mono Pumps have offered to provide, free of charge, the necessary equipment to bring the water up from the harbour into the ponds.

Mr Ede: This is a ministerial statement.

Mr DONDAS: Obviously, they are not interested, Mr Speaker, but they will not deter me.

This will be one of the most exciting projects that the Northern Territory has seen and, more importantly, it will not cost an arm and a leg to develop it.

Details of Compensation to Public Servants

Mr EDE to CHIEF MINISTER

Given his refusal to reply to a question I placed on notice requesting details of the compensation paid to Mr John Armstrong following his wrongful dismissal from NTEC, and his refusal today to provide this Assembly with details of compensation paid to Dr Madden following his dismissal, would he

advise if it is now the policy of this government to bind public servants to secrecy as to details of amounts received where those details could cause embarrassment and, if so, how does he reconcile that policy with this Assembly's right and obligation to ensure accountability of expenditure on behalf of Northern Territory taxpayers?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, we do not have a specific policy of binding people to secrecy and I refute the imputation of improper practice implicit in the question.

Mr Smith: Why then did you insist on the secrecy provisions?

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I know the ALP likes to adopt an attitude combining the big-brother and the tall-poppy syndromes. It likes to attack everybody and stick its nose into every individual's private affairs. Is it of any relevance or benefit to this Assembly that we provide a list showing every public servant that ...

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HATTON: Like other individuals in this society, public servants are entitled to their privacy. The arrangements between individual public servants and their employer in so far as their remunerations or matters dealing directly with their own personal association with government are concerned should not necessarily be the subject of public debate. We are not prepared to enter into a general program to expose every small detail of every arrangement with every public servant. We respect the privacy of public servants and we do not subscribe to the tall-poppy syndrome and the sort of ghoulish interest displayed by members opposite in whatever is happening in relation to private employment arrangements of individual public servants.

Mr Smith: It did not worry Dr Madden. Why does it worry you?

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, as I was going to say, it would be about as relevant as revealing the names and details of every government home loan made to individual public servants in the Northern Territory. We will not engage in that practice ...

Mr Bell: Some of those would be interesting.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have been very tolerant towards the member for MacDonnell. The Chief Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, Dr Madden and the government have agreed that there will be no further comment on the matter and that is where it will rest.

Taminmin High School

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he give me information of the future of the Taminmin High School in relation to year levels being retained, particularly with reference to the school farm?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I believe this question relates to whether Taminmin High School will be a junior high school or a senior secondary college under the changes that we are implementing at the moment. There has been considerable rumour and innuendo in the rural area regarding what will occur with Taminmin. Unfortunately, a rumour has been circulating that Taminmin will be a junior high school next year. That has no basis in fact. Next year and the following year, Taminmin will continue as at present. I would ask anyone who has any comment to make in relation to what will occur at Taminmin to contact my office or the Department of Education before they give advice or write articles in newspapers because that only creates trauma for parents and the students concerned.

The students and staff at Taminmin should be extremely proud of the farm and the agricultural program. Part of the curriculum is devoted to agricultural pursuits. The keenness of the staff and students is demonstrated by the fact that teachers are attending at the school at 6 am in order to harvest zucchini crops and other vegetables. That is indicative of the enthusiasm of people in the rural area. Also, I believe many students are applying what they learn and putting it into practice on their rural blocks. The member for Koolpinyah has spoken highly of what is occurring at Taminmin School and the fact that the students put into practice at home what they have learned at school.

This demonstrates what is happening through our education system. Young people are being prepared for the time when they leave school so that they will be able to obtain employment and pursue occupations that will be of benefit to the Territory. What is occurring at Taminmin is probably indicative of what is occurring throughout the Territory, and that quite a deal of enthusiasm is demonstrated both by students and staff towards the education process.

Aboriginal Employment in Northern Territory Public Service

Mr STEELE to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the Northern Territory government doing to raise the level of Aboriginal employment in the Northern Territory Public Service?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as honourable members will be aware, the Northern Territory government has had a policy target in place for some time to increase the proportion of Aboriginal employment to 20% of the public service by the year 1990. That program is continuing quite successfully. An Aboriginal Development Branch was established in the Office of the Public Service Commissioner in January 1984 as part of the program to implement this in an effective way. Members may be interested to know the programs that have been put in place to provide vehicles to give Aboriginal people, not only employment, but effective employment and promotional opportunities through the Northern Territory Public Service.

For example, there is a work-based schools program aimed at developing and improving basic work skills such as interviewing, communication etc. This program has motivated participants so successfully that many of them have enrolled to undertake other courses in their own time. In addition, career development and counselling is available. It is aimed at personal development to increase the promotional possibilities of Aboriginal employees. Recruitment activities in the Northern Territory Public Service are being marketed in Aboriginal communities to encourage Aboriginals to apply for employment and traineeships in the NTPS.

Finally, the Aboriginal Development Branch has developed and implemented the unique group intake program for NEASA trainees. This program began in April 1986 and has created considerable interest nationally, and for one fundamental reason: because it is working. The program is an excellent example of Northern Territory and Commonwealth cooperation. In this sense, we have developed this program in a very innovative and effective way. Whilst the program is funded by the Commonwealth, the Northern Territory provides staff and facilities for that trainee course. Credit for the effectiveness of this program must go to the Aboriginal Development Branch of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner which designed, introduced and is coordinating this adult intake scheme. The design has overcome one of the major pitfalls experienced in the priority 1 scheme in that this trainee program is actually linked with permanent employment.

Those programs are working effectively and demonstrate clearly the Northern Territory government's commitment to its objective of achieving 20% Aboriginal employment in the public service, not simply in a temporary or superficial manner, but to provide real employment of, and participation by, Aboriginal people in real jobs in the Northern Territory Public Service. It is proceeding quite well and will be reinforced and promoted further by the recent relocation of the Office for Equal Opportunity within the Office of the Public Service Commissioner.

Harry Giese Centre

Mr LEO to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware that, on 13 November this year, the Harry Giese Centre was forced to write to parents of children of 6 years and younger, who had used the centre for respite care, informing them that it could no longer provide that service because of a lack of funding, and what steps will he take to ensure that these children and their parents will continue to receive respite services?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I was not aware that such a letter had been sent to parents but I know the problems that the Harry Giese Centre has had with the provision of respite care over a number of years. In fact, I was already involved in this area when I was an alderman on the Darwin City Council.

A few weeks ago, I sat down with the manager and president of the Harry Giese Centre and discussed a number of problems that the centre has. A major problem is that the centre has not had a 5-year plan in place to meet the needs of handicapped people over recent times. Sad to say, no such plan has been in place. On that day, we discussed the fact that they had received information from the federal government that some \$45 000 was to be made available to the centre for extensions to its building, but such an extension would have resulted in a piecemeal or patchwork job on the facilities that it has there. To assist the centre, I made approaches to the Minister for Health and asked that a top echelon committee of public servants be formed to assist the people of the Harry Giese Centre to put together a program through which it could use effectively the relatively small amount of money from the federal government.

It seems that the opposition looks at services like respite care as though there can be some quick solution, as it does a number of issues that I have mentioned in these sittings. There is no quick solution to the problems associated with respite care even as there is no quick solution to certain problems in other areas. This government has been looking at that particular matter for quite some time and it has in place services that are second to none in Australia. This is a problem for all Australians and it exists throughout Australia. The Territory is no exception. We are not isolated in this. We have no magic wand in the Northern Territory even as governments throughout Australia have no magic wand with which to cope with this particular problem.

I am very much aware of the problems that the Harry Giese Centre has experienced and I have been for a number of years. I am aware also of the problems that exist for parents of some children at the Henbury Avenue Special School. I am fully informed on those problems and am liaising with the Minister for Health in relation to them. We are taking steps to alleviate the problems. This opposition simply will not accept the fact that there is no simple, flick-of-the-finger solution to this. We are addressing it in a very responsible way, and I am sure that the people at the Harry Giese Centre and the parents of handicapped children, the people who really need some assistance in terms of respite care, are aware that we share their frustration. They know that we are working to a system but that, despite their frustrations, there is no quick solution.

World Heritage Listing of Kakadu National Park

Mr FIRMIN to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

What progress has occurred on the Territory government's legal action to prevent stage 2 of Kakadu National Park from being placed on the World Heritage List?

Mr B. Collins: One would have thought that was sub judice.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney-General will be heard in silence.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, on Tuesday, the Territory government succeeded in obtaining an order nisi against 2 federal ministers, the Minister for the Environment and the federal Attorney-General, and that was formalised yesterday. The order nisi means the federal government must now show cause why writs of prohibition should not be issued to prevent any further action to have Kakadu stage 2 placed on the World Heritage List. The hearing will begin in the Federal Court in Sydney today and the Territory government will be arguing its case alongside Peko-Wallsend which has taken similar action. The Northern Territory Solicitor General, Mr Brian Martin QC, will handle the Territory government's case.

Government Purchases on Vendor's Estimate of Value

Mr LEO to ACTING TREASURER

Can he advise whether or not it is standard government practice to purchase items of property on the basis of the vendor's estimate of the number of items and their value?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question is so broad that it would be impossible for the Treasurer himself to answer it off the top of his head. As I am answering in an acting capacity, I would ask the honourable member to show some courtesy towards other members of the Assembly, as I suggested a couple of days ago, and give some forewarning of questions. In that way, I shall be able to provide detailed information to members. Clearly, the purpose of question time is to obtain accurate information, not to test the memories of acting ministers. I am sure that other members would like detailed answers. I will undertake to obtain that information and supply it to the honourable member for Nhulunbuy at the earliest opportunity.

Government Purchases on Vendor's Estimate of Value

Mr LEO to ACTING TREASURER

Mr Speaker, I have a supplementary question. If it is not standard practice for the government to purchase items of property on the vendor's estimate of the number of items of property and their value, why was that practice followed and only the vendor's estimate of the value of the property and the number of items on the property obtained in the purchase of Annaburroo?

Mr HATTON: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable member is asking a supplementary question about an answer that has not been given.

Mr Ede: We are used to not getting answers.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. Collins: That is the weirdest point of order that I have ever heard.

Mr Ede: They have not answered the question. Does that mean it is sub judice?

Mr SPEAKER: I would remind the honourable member for Nhulunbuy that that would be regarded as a completely new question.

Fringe Benefits Tax

Mr D.W. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What are the consequences for Territorians of a recent change in the fringe benefits tax, particularly in regard to those public servants who convert their air fares into cash in order to travel interstate by vehicle?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will be happy to answer the honourable member. Over the last week or so, there has been some confusion on this, as there has been with most aspects of this crazy and iniquitous tax. For example, if a public servant receives an air fare to proceed on leave, which he is entitled to under the determinations governing his employment, the employer - in this example the Northern Territory government - is required to pay this iniquitous fringe benefits tax on the value of that fare. The Northern Territory government has a legal obligation to pay air fares for public servants every 2 years. Apparently, one of Mr Hawke's or Mr Keating's famous 'unintended consequences' has arisen whereby, if an employee decides to convert that air fare into money and travel in his own vehicle interstate, that employee will have to pay that tax. In fact, nobody should have to pay tax on that air fare. Payment of air fares is a legal obligation imposed by a federal jurisdiction, the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. It is an unavoidable cost; it is not a discretionary cost on the employer, as are most of the fringe benefits tax liabilities that are winding Australia down quite dramatically as they suck more of the money that could be invested in Australia into the avaricious pockets of the federal government to be wasted on commissions of the future and such.

This iniquitous tax has created a number of anomalies. This matter is of some concern to the community. When this latest issue was raised, the Taxation Commissioner had to say that it was an unintended consequence and advised that the employee would not be taxed for travelling by vehicle. Unfortunately, the consequence of that is that every taxpayer in the Northern Territory now has to bear the burden of this tax. It is about time the federal government woke up to the fact that this is not a fringe benefits tax; it is a 'farewell Bob' tax, and the sooner that happens the better.

We know that, when the federal opposition gets back into power, this tax will end up in the rubbish bin where it should be. The sooner that happens, the better it will be for Australia. When it happens, funds can be put into

the hands of the private sector for investment which will create real jobs instead of money going to fund the socialist experiments of this federal government and being burnt up by the employment of more public servants to administer the collection of more and more taxes. That is how Australia is being driven down the gurgler by the federal government.

Water Charges for Housing Commission Tenants

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for HOUSING

Given the confusion surrounding recent changes to the water and sewerage rates and billing system and given that there is now no basic water charge as such, can he allay fears held by a number of Housing Commission tenants that they will now be required to meet all water charges?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, although details of the revised administrative arrangements have not been finalised, I can assure the member for Leanyer that Housing Commission tenants, whether resident in detached dwellings or flats, will not be required to pay the total water charges billed to the Housing Commission by the Water Division of the Department of Transport and Works. A paper that is before me at present will finalise those particular arrangements. In particular, that paper addresses the issue of the level on which the basic water charges will be calculated. Whilst arrangements have not been finalised, I can assure Housing Commission tenants that there will be very little change to their water charges in the future.

Mustering Contract on Oolloo Grazing Licence

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

This concerns a matter for which he was the minister responsible at the time, and it is not unrelated to the Annaburroo question. Is it true that a right was given to Mr John Harrower for a flat fee of \$60 000 to muster, and dispose of as he saw fit, cattle from the Oolloo Grazing Licence and associated areas, and that, at the time, cattle numbers were estimated at 1200? Is it true that, so far, Mr Harrower has mustered off that block in excess of 3000 and approaching 4000 head of cattle with an estimated 2000 remaining, and has already processed cattle worth in excess of \$400 000 through the meatworks for his \$60 000? If that is true, who in the government was responsible in the first place for allowing Mr Harrower - and this is no criticism of him - for his \$60 000 to obtain in excess of \$400 000 worth of cattle which were public property? What measures were taken by the department and by the minister then responsible, who is now the Chief Minister, to conduct an accurate muster of the property before the cattle were sold off for \$60 000?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there is a multitude of detail required by that particular question.

Mr B. Collins: And lots of correspondence signed by you.

Mr HATTON: Mr Speaker, I am in no way resiling from my intention to answer the question and answer it properly. However, before I answer, I will check the details because the member has referred to a number of events.

Frankly, I do not have in my head, nor could anyone reasonably expect that I should, specific details of amounts of money and numbers of cattle mustered and put through an abattoir under a particular contract. I will provide a full explanation of those circumstances. Many issues were involved in the decision to run that muster and let that contract on Ooloo, as I am sure the member opposite is aware. I will provide a full answer.

Crocodile Meat for Darwin Restaurant

Mr PERRON to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

How is it that a restaurant in Darwin will soon be serving crocodile meat when the plan of management in the Northern Territory is not yet in place? I understand that such a plan of management is required to permit the exploitation of crocodiles in the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, crocodiles have been very much in the news recently. I asked this same question when I read that, not only was crocodile meat to be sold in a restaurant in Darwin, but it would be served on Qantas flights out of Australia. That seemed strange to me because we have spent substantial sums of money working up a plan of management to enable us to export crocodile skins and, potentially, meat from our Territory farms. Of course, the answer is that permission has been given for a very small quantity of crocodile meat to come into the Northern Territory from the Edward River Crocodile Farm in Queensland.

The Edward River Crocodile Farm was established by an Aboriginal group in the north of Queensland some years ago, with a great deal of assistance from the federal government. They are breeding from animals that are held in captivity and they are not taking any crocodiles or hatchlings from the wild. The reason the Northern Territory had to go into the detail of providing a plan of management at considerable expense was because, through that plan of management, we intended to manage crocodiles in the wild. We will be taking eggs and hatchlings, transferring them to hatcheries at the crocodile farm and producing crocodiles for skins and, potentially, meat. Under our national agreements on the preservation and conservation of wildlife that process requires a plan of management. We will proceed with that intention.

That plan of management is before the ANPWS at present. It received a great deal of support recently at the meeting of the Crocodile Management Group at Quito in Ecuador. In fact, it was regarded as an excellent document that would go a long way towards conservation of crocodiles in the Northern Territory. Under that plan, we will be taking up to 4000 eggs and hatchlings per annum from the wild and they will be taken to the farm. Up to 5% of those hatchlings will be returned to the wild if there seems to be any area in which crocodiles are in short supply. We will be able to return crocodiles of 1 m in length to the wild. I believe only about 0.01% of crocodiles born survive to reach 1 m in length.

I understand that the Crocodile Management Group has fully supported the plan of management. If it has done what it said it would do, it has written to the ANPWS indicating its support for that method of management. Now it requires only the signature of the Director of the ANPWS to approve that plan of management and we can commence production of crocodiles and put our own crocodile meat into restaurants in the Northern Territory.

The recent report in the newspapers, that Qantas would be serving crocodile meat on flights out of Queensland in the near future, was false. In fact, I understand that Qantas is very embarrassed by that report. It was issued by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and I understand that he obtained the information from the bloke next door and that there was no truth in the matter.

Mr Ede: Actually, it was goanna.

Mr McCARTHY: I am not sure about that, but certainly it was not crocodile meat. We hope that Qantas will take our meat and also that crocodile meat will be served in restaurants throughout the Northern Territory. We will have a plan of management in place that will conserve crocodiles. We are really in the business of conserving and managing crocodiles effectively and properly. I have eaten crocodile meat and I think it is very good.

Mr B. Collins: It is terrible.

Mr McCARTHY: Perhaps the honourable member ate a steak from an old bull crocodile, but there is nothing better than a steak from a fresh, young crocodile.

Mr B. Collins: Maybe I ate one that had been fattened on tourists.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the comparison of culinary delights and epicurean desires of honourable members are exhausted, I will ask the Minister for Conservation to continue with his answer.

Mr McCARTHY: I might just add that, as I mentioned yesterday, the sort of report that appears occasionally in the press throughout Australia, that crocodiles are savaging people day after day, is ridiculous. In fact, crocodiles are an important part of the Northern Territory environment. We must maintain crocodile numbers in our rivers. We must manage them effectively and control them, and we must ensure the safety of people, but that requires only a fair amount of common sense. If people go into water where there are signs indicating that there are crocodiles, they are asking for trouble. At Shady Camp recently, I saw a dozen fishermen up to their waists in water 1 km away from at least a dozen large crocodiles. I saw this from the air. If there were a dozen large crocodiles 1 km away, there would have been a dozen large crocodiles at their feet. In my view, that is a foolish way to behave. If people were more careful, they would be in no great danger from crocodiles.

Mustering Contract on Oolloo Grazing Licence

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, I repeat my previous question but have cut out much of the detail that was confusing, because I want this question answered.

Is it correct that, while he was the responsible minister, for a flat fee of \$60 000 Mr John Harrower was able to muster cattle on the Oolloo Grazing Licence - despite advice given by the proprietor of the grazing licence that the cattle were worth more than that - and so far has mustered and processed in excess of \$400 000 worth of cattle with an estimated 2000 head to go?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the honourable member is quite correct: he is simply repeating his questions. The information is being collated at the moment. I am not in the practice of misleading the Assembly, and the member is seeking specific details. The member knows that there have been problems surrounding the Oolloo property and its acquisition for some years. As Minister for Lands and Minister for Primary Production, last year I conducted extensive negotiations with Mr Rixon to resolve those issues, one of which was the need to clear stock still on the property, for which Mr Rixon held mustering rights. The cattle were causing problems for the BTEC program and for the finalisation of arrangements for Oolloo and Mr Rixon was having difficulties in mustering. I resolved an arrangement with Mr Rixon for the mustering of stock which, I might say, was significantly to his advantage. I am obtaining details of that arrangement so that I can answer the question fully.

Relationship between Territory Government and Federal Coalition

Mr FINCH to CHIEF MINISTER

Given the importance to the Northern Territory of its dealings with the federal government, what action has the government taken to ensure a sound working relationship with the federal coalition parties which are preparing their policies for the next federal election now?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, a considerable amount of liaison and cooperation is occurring with the federal opposition, particularly with the current Leader of the Opposition, Mr Howard. The relationship between the Territory government and the federal opposition is the most positive that we have ever had with any federal party in the period since self-government. Over a number of months, many matters of vital importance to the Northern Territory have been discussed. These include the fringe benefits tax, the problems with Imparja, Kakadu, the Land Rights Act and the multitude of assaults that have been made on the Northern Territory by the Hawke government.

We know Australia is experiencing a very difficult time at the moment, but probably its greatest difficulty is that it is involved in the death throes of the Hawke government. Quite clearly, Australia is facing the same sort of problems that confronted it during the dying days of the Whitlam government. At that time, the facade of the right wing fell away and there was a shift to the left which resulted in the rapid introduction of the more socialist policies of the Labor Party as it sought to put them in place because it knew it would be tossed out of government. That is happening again now. We have seen switches and changes over the last 3 months as the left assumes dominance of the Labor Party federally and, quite obviously, here in the Northern Territory as well.

I have no doubt that the present coalition opposition will form the next federal government as soon as Hawke is game to go to the people. Hawke will be tossed out on his ear, and we will see a decent government in Canberra. We will begin to see the introduction of policies that will provide for the decent constitutional development of the Territory, that will bring rationality into the management of our national parks and policies on Aboriginal land rights and mining issues in the Northern Territory. There is no doubt that the best way to resolve the problems of the Northern Territory is to get Hawke out of government.

Mr Speaker, through the relationship the Northern Territory government is developing, the federal opposition and the shadow Cabinet are becoming increasingly aware of the details of the inequities that are being foisted on the Northern Territory. I have faith that, when the federal opposition gains government, it will move to correct many of these anomalies, rationalise our state-type relationship with the federal government and do away with these crazy policies. I do not claim that we will receive any special financial favours, but the very clear and solid stance that Mr Howard has been taking, and his readiness to stand up without making promises for short-term electoral gain, give me confidence that, when he says he will do something when in government, he will do it. There is no doubt that the federal opposition is not prepared to make a promise that it cannot fulfil. Once the federal opposition is in government, it will not subject the Territory to the sort of disappointments it experienced during the Fraser years.

One of the great benefits that will come with a Liberal National Party federal government will be the reintroduction of some sense of free enterprise. We will be freed of the crazy policies of the current federal Minister for Transport who is ruining our airports. We will have a chance to introduce private airport development in the Northern Territory. We will be given the opportunity to invite private railway construction and to get things going in the Northern Territory without the restrictions imposed by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service and the lunatic uranium policies of the Labor Party.

Financial Settlement with Dr Madden

Mr SMITH to CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I am happy to oblige with a question that is within his competence. From which budget appropriation did the money to pay the financial settlement to Dr Richard Madden come?

Mr Ede: He doesn't know.

Mr Smith: A brown envelope!

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am sorry that the honourable member evidences such a lack of knowledge of the financial arrangements of government, considering that he has been posturing as the shadow treasurer now for some years - 'posturing' being the appropriate terminology, Mr Speaker,

Mr Smith: Why don't you answer the question and demonstrate my ignorance?

Mr HATTON: The simple answer is the logical answer. It came from the salaries vote of the Department of the Treasury.

Effect of 'Crocodile Dundee' on Tourism

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for TOURISM

Has the release of the motion picture 'Crocodile Dundee' in the United States resulted in an increase in the number of Americans wishing to visit the Northern Territory, and how will the success of the film impact on the Australian tourism industry now and in the future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware that that question was answered in part by myself, in a very broad sense, in response to a question from the Leader of the Opposition during the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill, as honourable members opposite would be well aware if they were listening. Since then, I have been able to obtain some further information that is relevant to the question and I am sure the Leader of the Opposition has maintained his interest. A further submission has been made, in draft form, on a survey looking at Australian tourism to the year 2000, which I want to touch on very briefly, in conjunction with the success of the movie, 'Crocodile Dundee'. I think the matters I shall raise and the figures I shall quote are of such importance, not only to every Northern Territorian but every Australian that, unless there is a great awakening in certain circles of government, by the year 2000 one of the biggest opportunities for the economy of this nation, now and in the future, will have been lost for all time.

Apparently, one should never underestimate the power of motion pictures because, as I outlined briefly during the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill, 'Crocodile Dundee' has had a staggering effect in America. I said that we had been inundated with queries at our Los Angeles office. The situation has reached a point where not only our office but the Australian Tourist Commission office and the offices of the South Australian and Queensland governments are working at a hectic pace and physically cannot handle the number of inquiries they are receiving. I am told that, in September this year, there was a staggering increase of 41% in applications for visas by Americans wishing to come to Australia. The impact of that is being felt in the Northern Territory already. That figure indicates that, in the coming months, the rush of American tourists to Australian shores will be something far beyond the conservative estimates that have been bandied around before. Places like Yulara and parts of central Australia are already fully booked for September, October, November and December 1987. It would have been unheard of to predict such figures some 12 to 18 months ago.

However, it is the future of the tourist industry, and Australia and the Northern Territory, that I wish to spend a few minutes talking about. In 1982, only about 1 million overseas visitors came to these shores. From 1982 to date, we are looking at a figure between 2 million to 2.5 million. Research done recently throughout the South Pacific, America and elsewhere indicates that, by the year 2000, an unbelievable 5 million overseas visitors will come to Australia. It is estimated that, at that time, the adult population of this country will be in the order of 10 to 12 million people. That will be a staggering ratio of visitors vis-a-vis the adult population in this country by the year 2000.

Recently, at the Australian Tourist Ministers Council, many discussions were held about the inadequacy of Australia's airports - that is, the inadequacy of our major, in-bound airports now, not in the year 2000. It is no secret that Sydney and Melbourne International Airports simply cannot handle the number of visitors arriving in this country at the moment. I think a more visionary perspective needs to be developed in the approach by the existing federal government to the development of infrastructure. Catering for 5 million tourists in the year 2000 requires forward planning, and it must be done now. Every indication from the current federal government is that nothing is happening and that forward planning and development are stagnating. The Australian Tourist Commission is in a state of disarray and the only successes in tourism promotion that can be held high for everybody to look at are those of the Northern Territory and Queensland.

Mr Speaker, may I talk specifically about our efforts overseas? We have made no secret to all those involved in the Australian tourist industry of the fact that that we took the decision not to become involved, in the physical sense of staff, with the Australian Tourist Commission. We stepped out into Frankfurt, London, Tokyo, Singapore, Los Angeles and now, New Zealand, employing local people in the local market. To a large extent, Queensland is starting to follow in our footsteps. I am led to believe that a report to be tabled soon regarding the Australian Tourist Commission points in a direction completely opposite to the approach by which success has been achieved by the Northern Territory. That is very alarming information and I would suggest to all and sundry that, in future years, whilst the Northern Territory continues to operate its overseas offices to promote the Territory and the rest of Australia with such outstanding success, its voice should be heard, especially at times when appropriations are being made and we are looking at rising costs resulting from the devaluation of the Australian dollar.

Talking about infrastructure that is relevant to the Northern Territory, 'Crocodile Dundee' contains shots of Kakadu. We went out to promote the Northern Territory with respect to 'Crocodile Dundee', hand-in-hand with the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation. In fact, we have spent \$0.25m - with Qantas, Ansett and the Queensland tourist people each contributing roughly \$0.25m - for the promotion in America. We are about to do exactly the same thing throughout Europe, the United Kingdom, South America, Japan and Asia. If the impact of that film in those countries is only 10% or 20% of the impact it made in America, it will mean only 1 thing: Australia will not be ready or able to handle the number of people who will come to this country. For too long Australians in general have had the wrong attitude to the value of the tourist industry.

In the Northern Territory, we know how important the tourist and the tourist dollar are to our future. We rely on other states, such as Queensland, and more particularly the federal government, to ensure that the rest of Australia wakes up and realises the value of that tourist dollar. All those figures are available to the federal government at the moment. One would think that, with that information before it, it would realise the urgency of the need to establish a major international airport at Brisbane. The federal government is proceeding with the domestic side of it, and I believe is heading reluctantly towards the international scene. Flights are arriving in Cairns, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne. But, Mr Speaker, I can tell you of 2 places that they are not coming to: Darwin and Alice Springs. Regardless of this government's repeated requests to both the Labor federal government and the previous Liberal federal government to upgrade the facilities, nothing has been done.

It is only fair and reasonable to presume that the Northern Territory will receive a major proportion of those visitors who will be coming to Australia. We could take even more through our airport and relieve a massive burden at the Melbourne and Sydney International Airports if somebody in the federal Labor government would just give us a fair go and let us develop Darwin as the gateway to Asia and the rest of the world.

The federal Minister for Tourism, John Brown, is quite happy to be seen promoting 'Crocodile Dundee'. He is quite happy to take the credit for it overseas, as are the Prime Minister and the rest of the Labor government. But what in heaven's name are they doing, in a physical sense, to ensure that this country can take advantage of its natural features? The motion picture 'Crocodile Dundee' is an outstanding success and the federal government needs to realise, as forward-thinking governments in the Northern Territory and

Queensland do, that tourism is one industry that will develop in Australia over the next 2 decades. It will develop to the point where Australia will have a chance to rise up and become a great nation again economically. That will happen only if the federal government unties its purse strings and starts to develop some of the strategies and physical facilities which will be needed to encourage more visitors to come here in the knowledge that they will be treated fairly and equally and have as good a time as everybody knows you can have in Australia.

The film has been unbelievably successful. This has been demonstrated by the fact that 2 features of the film - Never Never Tours and the Walkabout Hotel - are mentioned constantly by travel agents ringing the Northern Territory's tourist office, the Australian Tourist Commission office and the Queensland tourist office. The agents are ringing seeking to book tours with Never Never Tours which, of course, is a fictitious entity. With all respect to the member for Nhulunbuy, there is a Walkabout Hotel in Gove. No one is suggesting that that is the Walkabout Hotel shown in the film. I am sure people in Gove are quite proud of their present facility. However, people are ringing up, looking for brochures and asking for room rates for the Walkabout Hotel shown in the film. The film has made a great impact.

There was a 41% increase in the number of Americans applying for visas to come to this country in the first month after the film commenced screening. One asks, what does the future hold? The answer is, nothing but growth. I suggest that a figure of 5 million tourists coming to this country by the year 2000 is very conservative indeed. We in the Northern Territory know what is required so I hope that the federal government starts to sit up and take notice. It will probably take notice, as it has done in the past, when it is too late, when people are clamouring to come to Australia's shores and find they cannot get on an aeroplane because of the congestion at Melbourne and Sydney international airports.

The Northern Territory is up front. We are confident that the growth will continue and I would suggest that, instead of complaining all the time, members opposite should insist that their federal colleagues, especially the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Aviation, ensure that Darwin and Alice Springs become recognised as international airports to allow more and more overseas visitors to come to the Northern Territory.

Power at Anguala Community

Mr BELL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

To bring question time back to earth, I ask what arrangements have been made to provide power at the Anguala community near Alcoota Station?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for the written notice of this question he gave me 2 days ago. I took it that that notice and the apparent urgency about the answer indicated that this matter had just come to his attention. I would like to answer the question, Mr Speaker, and I am sure that you will be very pleased to hear the answer because the first time that this matter was raised with the Northern Territory government was by your good self in February of this year. It was obvious that the member responsible for that particular area had not been roaming around and ...

Mr Smith: Next time we will not give you notice.

Mr Bell: You are fairly hard to deal with, fella.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Interjections will cease and the minister will be heard in silence.

Mr DALE: Mr Speaker, I would like to give a little background on this subject. Alcoota Station is situated approximately 150 km north-east of Alice Springs and a group of about 70 Aboriginal people have been resident there for many years and are incorporated as Anguala Community Incorporated.

Mr Speaker, as member for Braitling, you wrote originally to the minister on 17 February 1986, requesting a power generation plant for the community. You had been approached by your friends in that area and you had represented them when the member for Stuart. You sent a telex on the subject on 17 March 1986 and wrote again on 3 July 1986. You received replies stating that the government was undertaking investigations in that community to see what could be done. The facilities there include a new school, 5 new brick houses, 8 old shelters, 5 laundry shower units, a health clinic and an old school building which may soon become a store. The water supply comes from 2 bores, one of which is equipped with a windmill and the other with a diesel motor.

Mr Speaker, following the investigation, I wrote to you indicating that there was a need for power in that community but unfortunately it was too late for it to obtain funds in this year's budget. I was advised that we would be allowing for it in next year's budget, and the power would certainly go in then. It is quite obvious that this is an illustration of the speed with which the opposition works. If I took the matter up as a result of the member for MacDonnell's inquiry today, the community probably would not get its power on until the following year. Thanks to your good work, Mr Speaker, the people will have it on next year.

ANSWER TO QUESTION Community Assistance Funding

Mr DALE (Community Development): Whilst I am on my feet, I would like to take the opportunity to answer a question put to me by the member for Nhulunbuy. He referred to the community assistance budget allocation in a question directed to me during these sittings. He stated that, in real terms, there had been an increase of \$600 000 when, in fact, there had been an actual decrease of \$16 000.

The community assistance activity includes a number of funding programs providing grants to non-government organisations to operate welfare and children's services. The areas in which 1986-87 allocations are less are those Northern Territory funding programs which, in 1985-86, made considerable one-off payments for special projects or to establish new services; for example, funding the Katherine Social Planning Committee, an establishment grant for 3 child-care centres, funding for a Darwin City Council services officer and funding for a remote area women's resource centre. Although there is less provision for new one-off payments this year, no ongoing service had its funding reduced. In fact, all services funded through these programs have been indexed according to national wage increases and there are specific additional payments to some services as requested.

An additional \$150 000 is available for new services in 1986-87 under the Remote Areas Funding Program and the Family Support Program. These programs aim to provide assistance to children and families in need in both urban and remote areas of the Northern Territory. An additional \$538 000 is available

this year under the Accommodation Assistance Program which funds community organisations providing emergency accommodation and related services to men, families, youth, women and children. Funding for the Emergency Financial Assistance Program, which provides for discretionary payments to families and individuals, has been increased by \$36 000.

Expenditure last year was inflated by one-off compensation payments of anomalies in the motor accidents compensation scheme. The Pensioner Concession Scheme budget has been increased by \$47 000 and the recent review of the scheme should reduce misuse and anomalies and should go a long way towards effectively reducing expenditure in real terms. In addition, some of the programs in the community assistance budget are subject to ongoing negotiation with the Commonwealth which are likely to result in increased allocations during this year.

Trade Development Zone

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS:

In the committee stage of the Appropriation Bill, he advised that he was seeking a meeting with the federal Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce, Senator Button, to discuss recommendations contained in the draft IAC report. Can he advise what arrangements have been made?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, at the moment the Trade Development Zone appears to be quite topical. In fact, it has been suggested in certain quarters that certain people were meant to be in certain places and did not show up. I refer to a remark in the opening part of the 7.30 Report last evening. I would like to indicate for the public record that I did not have any arrangements to appear on the show. I had a pre-commitment with a journalist earlier in the week to do a show with Senator Button and Minister Dawkins but that did not eventuate. However, I have no problem defending the zone on TV or anywhere else. To my mind, the zone is still one of the greatest initiatives of this government.

I have received recent advice from Senator Button that it would be inappropriate for him to see me until the IAC has made its final recommendations to him. I respect that advice, but I might add that I have written to the Leader of the Opposition asking him if he would like to join me in a mission to Canberra to request a meeting with Senator Button because I think the matter is of such importance to the Northern Territory's present and future economy. I might also add that Minister Dawkins advised that he would be available to see me early next week. Unfortunately, we will be sitting next week and he will be unavailable during the following 2 weeks. However, I advise the honourable member that I will continue to press both Senator Button and Minister Dawkins for an early meeting. Considerable publicity has been given to the IAC report which is a draft report and nothing more than that. Mention was made in that draft report that the Northern Territory was not able or not prepared to give forward-cost estimates for the zone. That is quite true because ...

Mr Ede: You don't know.

Mr HANRAHAN: You had better listen to this because it puts the whole issue in context.

The statement in the IAC report is more than a little misleading because we had very informal hearings before the IAC regarding the zone at the insistence of the Northern Territory government. After all, this is the first trade development zone in Australia. Those discussions took place prior to the final formulation of the budget and the preparation of the final cost estimates. The paragraph in the draft IAC report is quite misleading because, in fact, the formal hearings involving the Northern Territory will take place in Canberra on Monday week when all the relevant information regarding the zone will be presented. In that sense, I think that the statement is misleading and it is not encouraging that a statement like that could be prepared after such informal discussions because it places a gross misrepresentation on what actually happened before the IAC. We were not in a position to present the budgetary items. However, we will present them at the formal hearings, because that is where they are required to be heard. That is where the Northern Territory will make its final case.

Mr Speaker, there is 1 final item I would like to bring to the attention of the Assembly because I am aware of some rather scurrilous rumours that are circulating. For the information of honourable members, certain sensitive information has been found to be missing from the zone and this fact has been submitted for reference to the Northern Territory police as a matter of priority.

ANSWER TO QUESTION
Harry Giese Centre

Mr HARRIS (Health)(by leave): Mr Speaker, I have some further information in response to a question from the member for Nhulunbuy to the Minister for Community Development in relation to a letter from the Harry Giese Centre. The honourable member would be aware that I am the minister responsible for funding of the Harry Giese Centre. I was most concerned that the honourable member did not direct the question to me because the whole issue was debated in great detail on Tuesday 11 November. This very issue was debated as a matter of public importance in this Assembly - the care of intellectually-handicapped and physically-handicapped people in the Northern Territory. The opposition was pathetic in putting forward that case. The situation is that I, as the minister responsible, was forwarded a letter from the executive director, Dick Hosking, in relation to this particular issue. I responded to that letter and I will read my response to honourable members:

I refer to your letter of 27 October 1986, concerning changes to occur in the association's respite service, and note that, from December 1986, you will not accept 0 to 6-year-old disabled children into overnight care.

I am advised that the Commonwealth Department of Community Services, with the assistance of the Northern Territory Department of Health, is to look at the issue of respite care, as a matter of urgency, with a view to facilitating access by the 0 to 6-year-old group to other respite care options. In the meantime, it would be appreciated if you could continue to provide assistance to the families of this client group.

Mr Speaker, subsequently, I contacted Mr Graham Bull from Somerville Homes, because the matter was of grave concern to the government. At all times, the government has been most concerned about this issue. I had discussions with Graham Bull as to ways and means by which to address this particular problem. As you would be aware, Mr Speaker, Somerville Homes have

2 cottages at present. It is hoped that a third cottage will come on stream in the not-too-distant future. At the present time the matter is the subject of further investigation. I was looking at putting to government that we bring forward a fourth cottage for Somerville Homes in order to address an immediate need. We are also looking at the possibility of giving additional funds to Somerville Homes for 3 extra staff so that they can move into the homes of people who have disabled children with behavioural problems. That would provide relief for these people, and we have always acknowledged that they need it.

We have also looked at extending ward 9 at the hospital in order to cater for disabled people. Those issues are being addressed by the government, which is a little more responsible in this area than the opposition, and I wish opposition members would get in touch with their colleagues in Canberra and find out what is happening.

As the Minister for Community Development mentioned in his reply to the question, it requires everyone to be involved on this issue. The Commonwealth government is helping. The people involved in those particular areas are helping, and we are trying to do something about this very real problem. As I mentioned in the discussion of this matter of public importance, and I refer anyone interested in this subject to the debate held on 11 November, the Northern Territory grants-in-aid funding to the Harry Giese Centre, for its respite care services, totalled \$400 232, with Commonwealth funding of approximately \$175 000, which included provision for respite services. Massive amounts of funding are directed towards the care of handicapped people. The government is concerned and will continue to be concerned. The matter is being addressed, and people have already seen me about the letter circulated by the Harry Giese Centre.

A meeting is to be held at lunch time today. That memo has gone from me to the department for assessment of the funding aspects to see if we can assist those people who need care. This government is concerned and will ensure that the needs of these particular people are catered for.

Government Purchases on Vendor's Estimate of Value

Mr LEO to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, my question without notice is to the honourable minister in his capacity as acting Treasurer. It is the same question that I asked him last week on Annaburroo. Can he advise whether or not it is standard government practice to purchase items of property on the basis of the vendor's estimate of the number of items involved and the vendor's estimate of their value? If it is not standard practice for the government to purchase items of property on the vendor's estimate of the number of items and their value, can he explain why the practice was not adhered to in the purchase of Annaburroo and why the vendor's estimate of the value of the items on Annaburroo Station was the only valuation that the government adhered to?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, for items, the normal procedure is to go through the tender process so that everybody is given an opportunity to bid for the items specified in the tender. The normal practice for the acquisition of land is to rely on an independent valuation of the land. Probably details regarding the Annaburroo situation could be elicited better if the question were directed to the Minister for Lands.

Reductions in NTPS

Mr PERRON to CHIEF MINISTER

In July of this year, the Chief Minister announced that the public service in the Northern Territory would be reduced by some 400 persons by June next year as part of cost cutting measures. What progress has been made towards achieving this target?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to advise honourable members that the target of 400 is well on the way to being achieved. By 31 October, there had been a reduction of 303 in the total number of persons employed in the Northern Territory Public Service. That represents 75% of the target. The figures are modified somewhat by the fact that the number of persons on leave without pay has increased by 25 within the period, and we need to take that into account when looking at the total figures. When we hit the magical figure of 400, it will not be the end of the picture. The process under way is not one of taking out functions but of improving the efficiency and organisation of the public service and it is a process that should continue until we have the most efficient structure possible.

In the process, I must pay credit to the Chief Executive Officers within the Northern Territory Public Service, the Office of the Public Service Commissioner and the public service trade unions, all of whom have acted in a cooperative and dedicated way in carrying out a very difficult and sensitive task. There is a commitment in the service to achieving this target. I can say that it has been achieved through natural attrition, without 1 person having to be retrenched compulsorily. It has been done in cooperation with the trade unions to the extent that the trade unions were able to suggest areas where there has been inefficiency or duplication.

It is an example of how the process of consultation can work effectively. Quite clearly, it is the first time since self-government that we have seen an actual, physical reduction in the number of people working in the public sector over a sustained period. That by itself is not necessarily a thing to be proud of, because it reduces the availability of some jobs. However, it is a responsible approach in a very difficult economic environment, and I give credit to all of those who have been involved in the continuing exercise.

As I mentioned earlier in these sittings, that process does not impinge upon the school leaver program which will continue this year as it has in previous years, nor will it affect the scholarships and other schemes that operate within the Northern Territory. It has not meant a total freeze on the public service because we have ensured that jobs which need to be done are done. Where people need to be recruited, that is continuing. However, where there is an opportunity to reorganise within the service, as a consequence of terminations, that opportunity has been taken, and that is how the reductions have been achieved. This process will continue until we have a service that is efficient, effective and running at least cost.

Mustering on Oolloo Station

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

This is an update of the question I asked the Chief Minister last week. Since I asked that question, stock inspectors and other departmental officers have been thicker on the ground at Oolloo than ticks on a cow's back and therefore he should be able to answer it this morning. Can he confirm that the owner of Dorisvale Station achieved a tender with the government for a total of \$60 000, which figure was reached on an estimate of 1200 head of cattle at \$50 per head, for the muster of cattle off Oolloo and adjoining grazing licences, and that, to this point, the owner of Dorisvale has processed 3300 head of cattle at a total value of in excess of \$0.5m, with an estimated 2000 head to go, which will bring the total value of cattle harvested to in excess of \$800 000, and probably closer to \$900 000, for a total \$60 000 outlay? The cattle were owned by the government through ADMA. Is that information correct and, if so, why was this extraordinary arrangement entered into by the government and why did the government not, through ADMA, contract on a normal 50-50 split basis which is the normal practice for mustering operations in the Top End?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not in a position to confirm or refute what the honourable member has said. I have been pressing to obtain information to answer his earlier question, and I appreciate the additional advice that he has given me. I have had some briefings this morning. They were incomplete, and I have asked for further information. I understand - and I put it no higher than my understanding of information that I have received so far from ADMA - that it is exceptionally difficult to obtain accurate figures because the contractor who, I have been advised, is from Dorisvale, has been putting stock through the abattoirs not only from Oolloo but from other mustering contracts and his own property. I understand that officers of the ADMA and DPP are currently in the process of assessing waybills to establish the accuracy of the figures.

Mr Speaker, normally a question of this kind would be put on notice. However, we are seeking to obtain as accurate and complete a picture as possible. I have been advised that the contract was for a figure of \$60 000

and I have asked for the specific details of that contract. In fact, I called this morning for the full file concerning this subject so that I can examine all the correspondence myself, to ensure that I am in a position to answer the member's question properly and accurately.

Alice Springs Electricity Supply

Mr D.W. COLLINS to ACTING MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

There has been a high rate of interruptions to the electricity supply in Alice Springs over the last few months. What steps are being taken to redress the situation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is quite true that there has been a higher than normal incidence of interruptions to electricity supplies in Alice Springs, as you would most probably be aware. This has been due to several factors. I will run through the problems and the remedial steps that have been taken.

There has been abnormally high wind and lightning activity in the area. This has caused damage to overhead mains and interruptions have occurred as a result. The connection of several new consumers within the central business district has required temporary and planned interruption to adjacent consumers. Business is developing rapidly in Alice Springs and every time a new service is connected there is some disruption to the supply to other businesses. However, we will not be doing anything to inhibit business growth in order to prevent those disruptions.

The generating plant and distribution system in Alice Springs are very heavily loaded at present and I have been advised that this situation will be relieved soon by augmentation work. Currently, however, the heavy loading is causing abnormal maintenance requirements to plant and equipment, and this is necessitating interruptions to the supply to consumers. The action that is being taken to provide for increased reliability of electricity supply in Alice Springs includes the calling and letting of tenders in relation to the installation of No 9 generator set at the power-station. Some members would have seen the article in the Centralian Advocate regarding the gas turbine generating set that will be installed in Alice Springs. Tenders closed in September but, at this stage, I cannot give details of who won the particular tender.

Construction of a high voltage switching station in the Lovegrove Drive area is progressing and completion is programmed for February 1987. This station will augment supplies to the west of the central business district and, in particular, will provide for the Larapinta development. A contract has been let to Pipeline Constructions Pty Ltd for the civil and building works, siteworks have commenced and the contract is running to schedule. The contract period is for 10 weeks with completion in mid-December 1986. Delivery and installation of switch gear is programmed for February with a completion date for the entire project by March 1987.

Mr Speaker, I think I am in a position to be able to advise members from Alice Springs that the interruptions that have been occurring to the Alice Springs power supply will be a thing of the past. I am sure that the centralian people will be most satisfied with their electricity supply in the future.

Rapid Creek Water Gardens

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What date is anticipated for the completion of the installation of playground equipment in the water gardens at Rapid Creek which, though commenced, for some reason has been stalled for the past several weeks?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, when the playground equipment was delivered some of the components were missing. It is now being remanufactured and, hopefully, it will be installed in the near future.

Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

Has he yet sought a legal opinion to determine the legal standing of letters of intent for potential investors in the Trade Development Zone as he undertook to do in this Assembly on 13 November?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the answer is yes.

Kava Research Assistance

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for HEALTH

During the last Assembly sittings, he informed the Assembly that he had approached the Commonwealth Minister for Health for a grant to assist the Menzies School of Health Research in its investigations into the health effects of kava. At the time, he had not received a formal reply from the federal minister and I ask whether he has had correspondence to date?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have received 2 responses from Hon Dr Blewett. The first letter, dated in August, referred to my suggestion that funds for kava research might be made available under the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse program. On that occasion, Dr Blewett informed me that the drug abuse program did not include funding for pharmacological or toxicological research and that, therefore, the national campaign funds would not be made available to assist the Menzies School of Health Research in carrying out that particular activity. Naturally, I was very disappointed, as I am sure other members of the Assembly were disappointed. I know that the Menzies School of Health Research was disappointed that the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse did not make funds available for this particular purpose. However, the Commonwealth minister appears to have had a sudden change of heart. Last Thursday, I received notification from him that an amount of money would be made available to the Menzies School of Health Research to carry out research into the effects of kava. The amount was some \$37 876.

Some cynics might suggest that the Commonwealth minister's change of heart is connected to the fact that, at the end of this week, the National Health and Medical Research Council, in cooperation with the Menzies School of Health Research, will hold a workshop in Alice Springs to look at priorities in

research to improve Aboriginal health. Cynics may suggest further that the Commonwealth minister's lack of support for kava research could be embarrassing to him politically as there will be wide representation on a national basis at this particular workshop. I am not saying that that is the case. May I say that, while Dr Blewett may have seen some political mileage to be gained through this grant, I would rather regard it as a fortuitous coincidence.

However, politics apart, I am delighted that the Hon Dr Blewett has seen fit to make funds available for work to be carried out on the effects of kava by the Menzies School of Health Research. It is a body that is becoming renowned for its work, and I am sure members in this Assembly support wholeheartedly the research that is being carried out by it. I hope that further money will be made available to enable the Menzies School of Health Research to look into the effects that kava has on Aboriginal people, and that the workshop to take place at the end of this week will give more emphasis to the school. We look forward to continued support from the Commonwealth in relation to that wonderful organisation.

Kakadu Video

Mr FIRMIN to CHIEF MINISTER

On the radio program AM this morning, the ABC correspondent in Paris, Mark Colburn referred to the video which is being used to support the Territory's submission opposing the inclusion of Kakadu stage 2 on the World Heritage List. He said that the federal government alleged, and that the Northern Territory government has acknowledged, that some of the shots of buffalo damaged country were taken in parts of the Northern Territory which were not within Kakadu stage 2. Was what the ABC reporter said correct?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am happy to confirm that all of the shots of buffalo damaged country shown on the Territory video were taken in Kakadu stage 2. The report from Paris is totally erroneous and does no credit either to the ABC or the reporter concerned. I can only assume that someone from the Australian delegation to the World Heritage Committee has passed this totally misleading allegation to the ABC's reporter.

I would add, by way of clarification, that there are some shots on that video of areas which are not in Kakadu stage 2. Members who have seen the video will be aware of some very attractive scenery contained in the footage to show some of the outstanding features of the Northern Territory. These include Katherine Gorge, Tolmer Falls and the Finnis River, none of which are within Kakadu stage 2. Those shots were included to make the point that, by and large, Kakadu stage 2 is unexceptional in its beauty while other parts of the Top End contain areas of outstanding scenic and cultural value. It is a pity that the ABC reporter missed the opportunity to speak with the Deputy Chief Minister who has been in Paris. The Deputy Chief Minister would have been able to set the story straight and the ABC could have avoided getting the story so embarrassingly wrong.

Reptiles

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

Mr Speaker, I have asked this question several times before but I will ask it again. When will the Conservation Commission have a program to permit private people to keep reptiles?

ANSWER

As the member for Koolpinyah has said, she has asked this question many times before and it is not an easy one to answer or to act upon immediately. The keeping of reptiles anywhere in Australia is bound by rules and agreements in relation to the keeping of any native animal. We are looking very hard at ways of enabling people to keep some of the more harmless species that exist in great numbers. Obviously, there are problems with the keeping of reptiles because some are dangerous and not everybody is able to control reptiles in cages - or out of cages, for that matter - in their yards. We would not want to have released here reptiles that are a danger to the wildlife of the Territory, particularly if they are exotic and have been brought in from other places. We would be very reluctant to see those sorts of reptiles kept. However, there are some harmless species that may be able to be kept and the Conservation Commission is liaising with the states in an attempt to find a means of keeping those. If we can come up with some guidelines that will suit the purposes of people who wish to keep them, we will be able to introduce some amendments to the present act to enable us to do that.

Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for BUSINESS, COMMUNICATIONS and TECHNOLOGY

Mr Speaker, my question is a follow-up to my earlier question. Has he received the legal opinion that he has asked for on the letters of intent and, if so, what are the contents of that legal opinion and, if he has not received a legal opinion, when does he expect to do so?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as yet I have not received the legal advice that I sought. In future, I intend to be very careful indeed about any information I give to the Leader of the Opposition because, quite frankly, I do not trust him.

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The honourable minister knows full well that imputations or assertions going to the honesty or integrity of members of this Assembly are absolutely out of order. He should withdraw that remark.

Mr HANRAHAN: I withdraw that remark, Mr Speaker.

The formula in place for the establishment and signing of investors into the Trade Development Zones is something that I have spoken about at length, and I am very happy with the way in which procedures are being followed at the moment. If the Leader of the Opposition has a legal opinion to the contrary, I would ask if he would like to lay that on the Table.

CT Scanner at Royal Darwin Hospital

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for HEALTH

In early September, he announced that a Brisbane firm of radiologists had been appointed to install, operate and maintain a CT scanner at the Royal Darwin Hospital. Is that CT scanner fully operational now?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am very pleased to inform members that the CT scanner, upgraded from a head scanner to a full body scanner, has been installed at the Royal Darwin Hospital. It is working extremely well. I understand that, by early November, some 44 scans had been undertaken. The quality of the pictures has been top class. Installation was completed on about 7 October. The radiologist, Dr Morgan, who was a senior partner in a Brisbane practice, has come to Darwin to operate the CT scanning service. He is taking up a part-time position as specialist radiologist at the hospital and this will improve the specialist staffing situation. I am very pleased to say that the CT scanner at the hospital is now fully operational.

Expenditure on Education

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

On 11 November 1986, the Minister for Education disputed in this Assembly figures on education spending that I quoted from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Bulletin No 5504. They related to the level of expenditure by all states on education, which was 42% of total outlays. The minister was so emphatic that this figure was inaccurate that he said that, if I could substantiate my figures, he would eat his hat in Smith Street Mall. To make sure I was absolutely right, I triple-checked my figures in personal communication with the Australian Bureau of Statistics over a period of 1 week. I advise the minister that the figures I quoted related to general government final consumption expenditure, classified by government purposes. Table 2 of the bulletin showed the figures for all states and table 70 showed the figures for the Northern Territory. General government final consumption expenditure is defined in ABS Bulletin 1217 as current outlay on goods and services referred to as real transactions. This figure for all states in 1984-85 was \$20 819.7m, of which \$8678.4m was for education; that is, 42%. For the Territory, the comparable figure - based on the same criteria - was \$574 200m in total, with education expenditure of \$147.7m; that is, 26%.

I do not expect the minister to do this today, but will he ask his staff today to check the accuracy of those figures? I am happy to supply him with them now. Will he then make a statement to the Assembly as to whether he believes that the information I gave the Assembly was accurate, and consequent upon that, will he advise us all as to when and where in Smith Street Mall he will fulfil his promise?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would be most happy to have the figures that the opposition has partly quoted presented to me so that I can carry out a check. If, on a per capita basis in terms of total education expenditure, Territory expenditure on education is lower than in the states, and I find that I have to eat my words - and that means literally eating my hat - obviously I will have to make arrangements to do that publicly. However, until I have time to

take a look at the detailed figures, I shall not eat my hat. Certainly, I would like an undertaking that, if I can establish that the member for Arafura has been using statistics to try to imply certain matters in some way that are not actually correct, he will reciprocate and eat his hat.

Educational Programs at Alice Springs Prison

Mr POOLE to MINISTER for CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

What educational programs are available to prisoners at the Alice Springs Prison?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am happy to say that educational programs are now in place at the Alice Springs Prison. I would like to mention also that we are starting a number of industries in that area. These 2 new industry projects for prisoners in Alice Springs will provide meaningful work and useful job skills as well as producing good financial returns for the department. One is a vehicle number plate manufacturing plant, expected to go into production by the end of this year, while the other project involves the manufacture of prefabricated housing units for Aboriginal communities. This scheme has been developed through the Northern Territory Housing Commission. The operation started in January of this year and has been very successful indeed.

The number plate plant involves a capital outlay approaching \$0.25m. All vehicle number plates for the Territory will be made at the Alice Springs Prison under contract to the Motor Vehicle Registry. I have some statistics that will be of interest to members. The registry requires number plates in the following quantities: motor cars 20 000 pairs, motor cycles 3500 singles, trailers 4000 singles, government vehicles 1000 pairs, and buses 100 pairs. Replacements for lost or damaged vehicle plates and personalised number plates will be part of the job also. The plates will be made of aluminium instead of steel, and this will save on the cost of drying in ovens and the lacquering side of the operation. The Territory will be the only government in Australia making its number plates from aluminium. Tenders have been finalised for the machinery needed in this project and delivery is due within a few weeks. The building for the plant is being constructed within the prison using prison labour. Prison-produced number plates will be supplied to the Motor Vehicle Registry at cheaper rates than it pays now while, at the same time, some revenue will be earned by the prison. Some 10 or more prisoners will be employed gainfully on this particular process.

Through the other project, 36 prefabricated houses for Aboriginal communities have already been supplied in accordance with Housing Commission specifications, and there are orders for another 15. The houses are rather modest 2-room dwellings, steel-framed and clad, with a 3 m verandah at the front. They are prefabricated down to the last nut, bolt and door lock. Erection is easy and such that nothing can go wrong - dare I say. A display home can be seen at the Alice Springs Prison and I must say that they are the pride and joy of the inmates that have been working on them. Amazingly, these houses sell for \$2900 which is pretty close to the actual manufacturing cost. From a comparison of that price with the cost of housing generally in some of the communities, it is clear that there are tremendous savings across the board. This project provides employment for 12 prisoners in a range of welding and steelwork jobs, and maximum use is made of Aboriginal workers.

Following the success of the Alice Springs housing project, a similar program is being established for the Top End, based at the Darwin Prison. Approximate house designs, cyclone proofing and other aspects have been agreed upon with the Housing Commission and other authorities. We believe this whole project will provide 2 important benefits: an economic boost for small Aboriginal communities, where dollars spent on housing will go further, and a much-needed work outlet for maximum security inmates at Darwin Prison who have limited opportunities for constructive activities. For this reason, the housing plant will be adjacent to B Block, the maximum security wing at Darwin Prison.

Both of these projects illustrate the Department of Correctional Services' concern to see that prisons become more productive and more viable economically and therefore less of a financial burden on the community. Any option offering a financial return and prisoner employment is being assessed as part of the move away from traditional prison industries which were mainly labour-intensive.

When I went to the wilderness camp at Wildman River last week, I was very interested to note that the young lads out there have provided their wet season accommodation by actually setting up 2 of these prefabricated homes and putting a verandah between them. They have constructed a considerable facility using a great deal of initiative. At a cost of \$5400, they have created a substantial unit that will give them plenty of shelter from the wet weather. It is their own initiative and I believe it is very worth while. A number of magistrates and media representatives who visited the camp had quite a day. It was an education for them to see what was going on down there, to see the initiatives that the young men are taking to develop their own self-esteem and to learn skills in welding, building and the like. I am very happy to say that a number of these lads have already been offered jobs. One has been offered a job a little way down the road from the wilderness camp project. I look forward with a great deal of enthusiasm, as minister responsible, to the future of these wilderness camps.

Water and Sewerage Charges for Housing Commission Tenants

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I draw his attention to remarks he made about water and sewerage charges for Housing Commission tenants. He said in the Assembly that the Housing Commission tenancy agreement provided that the tenant was responsible for all lawfully levied water rates and that the circumstances of water and sewerage charges will be changed. However, in answer to a question without notice last Thursday, the Minister for Housing said: 'Although arrangements have not been finalised I can assure the tenants that there will be very little change in their water charges'. Exactly what is the government's intention with respect to water and sewerage charges both for Housing Commission tenants and for all of us who are levied with those charges in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it was my intention to cover this topic in detail during the second-reading debate of the relevant bill that is before the Assembly. However, to set the member for MacDonnell's mind at ease, there is a proposal to amend the legislation that is before the Assembly. This amendment would allow 500 KL to be deemed as the basic amount above which excess water charges would apply. This is because of some of the contractual arrangements that exist between landlord and tenant in regard to excess water charges, including

some involving the Housing Commission. It was thought that the easiest way to overcome the problem, whilst still maintaining the thrust of attaining parity between water and sewerage charges, was to deem that 500 kL would be the basic limit. Everything in excess of that would have to be paid for by the Housing Commission tenant or flat or unit tenant.

Commemoration of Bishop O'Loughlin

Mr PERRON to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What steps have been taken recently to commemorate the significant contribution made by the late Bishop O'Loughlin to the community in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am very pleased to advise that we have come up with a very appropriate way to honour the late Bishop. The Darwin Institute of Technology is advertising degree-level welfare studies for 1987. It is my understanding that the DIT has completed all the necessary in-house arrangements to introduce this course in 1987. The non-availability of professional welfare education opportunities in the Territory has been a matter of great concern to me for a considerable time. It has forced us to rely on interstate recruitment in a professional area of high turnover. The Darwin Institute of Technology initiative means that, for the first time, my department has the opportunity to plan for Territorians to be recruited to full positions in the important welfare functional areas.

Accordingly, I propose to award 5 scholarships to commemorate this important milestone in Territory self-sufficiency. The figure of 5 has been chosen in order to award a scholarship to a student from each of the 5 recognised regions of Northern Territory administration. Each scholarship should be made up of a cash grant of \$10 000 per annum, and I intend them to be awarded in the nature of memorial scholarships. Memorial scholarships provide the opportunity to perpetuate living contemporary Northern Territory history, an important social awareness issue in our drive for statehood.

Thus, Mr Speaker, I intend to award 5 memorial scholarships in welfare study at the Darwin Institute of Technology with a value of \$10 000 per annum to be known as the John O'Loughlin Memorial Scholarships in Welfare Studies. I would like this to be seen as an appropriate mark of recognition of the late Bishop's contribution to welfare and community care. I am very pleased to say that the response from the Catholic Church to this announcement this morning was extremely enthusiastic. I think it rather appropriate that I am able to make this announcement in the week of the visit to the Northern Territory of His Holiness the Pope. Advertisements relating to these scholarships will be appear in the media in the near future.

Government Purchases on Vendor's Estimate of Value

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LANDS

By what process did the Northern Territory government assess the value of stock on Annaburroo Station? If the only valuation was consequential on the vendor's estimate, is it normal NT government practice to purchase items based on the vendor's valuation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, in December 1985, the Northern Territory Development Corporation purchased Annaburroo Station for \$1.05m from the Baldwin family. Of this purchase price, \$883 000 was attributed to the value of the land and some \$167 000 to the value of stock. I am quite surprised that the member for Nhulunbuy has persisted with the asking of this question because he should have known that the Northern Territory Development Corporation was a statutory authority and therefore had the ability to negotiate either sale or purchase in respect of any of its responsibilities. The Northern Territory Development Corporation was set up in 1978-79 to allow it to move through the commercial fields without having the encumbrance of government departments and serious government policy hampering its operations.

The NTDC has a board made up of about 8 private entrepreneurial persons and a chairman. It was a board decision to purchase Annaburroo in December and the gauge that it used in purchasing it was an evaluation of the land. In addition, information was available from the BTEC program which gave it the number of head on that property at that time. NTDC used to administer the BTEC program on behalf of the Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments. The land value of the purchase was about \$883 000 of a total purchase price of \$1.05m. The cattle price was \$167 000 approximately. That particular valuation was made by virtue of the information NTDC had through its administration of the BTEC program.

Aboriginals and Statehood

Mr D.W. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What methods will the government be using to consult with Aboriginal Territorians in relation to statehood?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, there are a range of options for dealing with that. Later in the week, I intend to make a statement when tabling the land options paper. At that time, I will deal with the matter in considerably more detail than would be appropriate in answer to a question. I can advise that the basic avenues being developed are those of direct consultation with Aboriginal communities. The Leader of the Opposition and myself visited the Hermannsburg community recently to discuss the statehood question. After these sittings, members opposite will accompany me to meet and discuss the statehood question with the communities in east Arnhem Land and Nhulunbuy, including Aboriginal communities.

In addition to that, the Constitutional Development Unit will be moving around the communities, consulting with the Aboriginal people, particularly on the issue of land options. Use will be made of some written literature, but principally videos will be used in order to provide as much information to the Aboriginal communities as is reasonably possible, and to ensure that the Aboriginal people, along with other Territorians, are fully aware of the issues relating to statehood and are in a position to participate fully in this important program. I have undertaken repeatedly to engage in full consultation and discussion with the Aboriginal people, particularly on the very vexed question of Aboriginal land tenure in the event of statehood.

Kakadu Video

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

In a public statement made in the last few days, he said that Mr Harry Butler had been paid nothing for his work on the Kakadu video and that he would imagine that the work was done in the course of Mr Butler's employment as a commissioner on the Northern Territory Conservation Commission. Was that statement correct or was Mr Butler paid a consultancy fee for his recent work to prevent the listing of Kakadu stage 2?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I think that could be termed a liberal interpretation of my statement. To clarify the situation, I do remember the interview, and my comment was that I was not aware of any specific payment that had been made to Mr Butler for that particular project. Mr Butler is a commissioner of the Northern Territory Conservation Commission and, as such, receives a fee for his attendance on and the work that he carries out for and on behalf of the Northern Territory Conservation Commission. I am advised that Mr Butler was paid fees that he would have received normally as a commissioner of the Northern Territory Conservation Commission and, in respect of the time he spent and the work that he did there, it is my advice that he was paid under that contractual arrangement.

Trading Links with Indonesia

Mr SETTER to CHIEF MINISTER

Considering the Northern Territory's stated policy of developing trade and cultural links with South-east Asian countries and the good work already undertaken in east Malaysia, what action has Nortrade taken to promote trading links with that enormous market of 162 million people to our immediate north, and I refer to Indonesia?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. The member has been working quite extensively in assisting the Northern Territory government to develop trade and cultural links with the Indonesian community, particularly the Ambon east community where he has developed quite close and productive communication and working relationships. He has done an excellent job in the development of a joint working group between the Ambon east community and the Northern Territory community.

It is true that the Northern Territory's major trading thrust has been directed to those countries to our immediate north in the South-east Asian region. A great deal of work has been done over the last 2 years in building up strong links in east Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore to pave the way by establishing links for Northern Territory companies. This activity has been complemented by an investment attraction program, conducted principally by the Trade Development Zone Authority, in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. It is recognised that many countries, such as Indonesia, China, the Philippines and Japan, in the South-east Asian and north Asian regions, have large populations. In recent years, many of those markets have been researched and surveyed for trade potential. Target markets have been determined on a priority basis, given the limited resources of Northern Territory industries, to determine the number of companies capable of participating in export and

other trading activities and the long lead time required to secure those markets.

Brunei and east Malaysia have been selected as target markets for reasons such as ease of access, transport and communication links, large development projects which offer opportunities to Northern Territory businesses, a small business base which parallels the Northern Territory's own industrial capacity, comparable economic and commercial mechanisms - for example, many of the politicians and business leaders in those regions have been educated in Australia and have an affinity with the Australian way of doing business - and access to decision makers. These are not complex markets and they offer an opportunity for Territory businesses to cut their teeth before expanding into the more complex markets such as Indonesia, China and Japan.

This approach is paying dividends as many of the companies have participated in Nortrade-sponsored exhibitions and trade delegations are now achieving worthwhile results. Nortrade itself was recognised at Brunei Build recently by being awarded second prize for the design, layout and implementation of the Brunei Build Exhibition in which 8 Territory companies participated. This achievement is testimony to the fact that the Northern Territory is on the right path in promoting its companies and products in the South-east Asian region. Might I say that at least 15 countries exhibited at Brunei Build, including countries from Europe and around South-east Asia, but the only organised participation from Australia came from the Northern Territory. That is somewhat to the discredit of those who are talking loudly about the export drive but doing very little in that respect.

Currently, preliminary survey work is being undertaken by Nortrade to explore the market prospects in Indonesia as well as other countries throughout the region such as Taiwan, Papua New Guinea and peninsula Malaysia. Indonesia is acknowledged internationally as a difficult market. Market research provided by Austrade and other trading associations indicates that Indonesia must be thoroughly researched before extensive trade promotion activity is undertaken. Companies and products must be well prepared before launching into that market and, at the moment, many of those companies capable of participating in export activities are saturated with other export development workloads. Nortrade is proposing to participate in a trade exhibition scheduled for Jakarta in May of 1987 and is already planning this exhibition with the organisers, AR Format from Singapore. AR Format is developing a program for Nortrade to meet with members of the Indonesian Manufacturers Council and chambers of commerce in Jakarta to plan the 1987 program.

Of specific note is the fact that the Australian consulting group has already opened accounts with 2 local dealers in Darwin to supply spare parts for equipment used in an agricultural development project in Indonesia. The same organisation has undertaken to use Darwin as a rest area for Australian consultants in transit, thereby assisting the Northern Territory accommodation industry by guaranteeing the use of a large number of hotel rooms per year.

Nortrade has commenced longer term discussions on the supply of equipment needed for development of various primary industries. It is significant that the Northern Territory Branch of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Scientists recently arranged a tour of Timor for its members thereby indicating its growing awareness of the significance and role of Indonesia to the Northern Territory's agricultural industries. Nortrade is monitoring this progress. In addition to this, a trade delegation from Ambon is to visit Darwin in December to explore the prospects of establishing trade links between Darwin and the Moluccas group.

Whilst Indonesia may appear to be a lucrative market because of the size of its population, the history of our previous contacts with Indonesia, through a joint working party arrangement established some years ago, never progressed beyond initial briefing because the Indonesian authorities did not respond to our initiatives. That was not encouraging. It is known that payment is difficult to extract from many Indonesian dealings. Our advice is that the Indonesian market must be approached with caution.

It is my intention to visit Jakarta at the earliest opportunity to establish links at the highest possible level and to ensure that, when it commences, the market push will meet with favourable responses at all levels within the Indonesian government and commercial structure. Mr Speaker, I will advise further when this visit is to take place, particularly when formal invitations are received from Indonesia.

Land near Railway Terrace in Alice Springs

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS

What progress has been made towards establishing a bus terminal in Alice Springs on land adjacent to Railway Terrace and what proposals are being put forward for the possible use of the southern section of that land?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, an offer has been received for the purchase of that land to establish a bus terminal. The offer has not been finalised and, until further documentation is given to me, I am unable to give any further information. In respect of the land adjacent to that area, at the moment the Department of Lands is evaluating an application for its use.

Letter from Leader of Opposition

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

Given that the minister tabled a letter yesterday written by myself to Mr David Cran, which was posted to 2 Warrego Street, Darwin, and which Mr David Cran never received, and given the fact that the current occupant at 2 Warrego Street, Darwin, is a senior Trade Development Zone employee, could the minister explain how he came by the letter?

ANSWER

Surprise, surprise! Isn't it amazing, Mr Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition has yet to answer the public challenge as to whether he received any of the information contained within the file missing from the zone? Last night, it was suggested on a local television program that the saga of the Trade Development Zone had now turned into the case of the stolen letter. If it is being suggested by anybody that a senior official or otherwise has stolen a letter or has interfered with the mail, I would challenge the Leader of the Opposition and any member of the press to make that statement outside this Assembly.

After discussion with the chairman of the zone this morning, I am aware of the details pertaining to the arrival at the zone of anonymous letters. I have asked, quite correctly, for the chairman of the zone to communicate those details, in writing, to the investigating police officer. I am aware, as is the Leader of the Opposition, of the details of the address shown on that letter. I can assure honourable members that, if people are suggesting that senior officials of the zone have stolen a letter or interfered with the mail, they are on very shaky ground indeed.

Trade Development Zone

Mr FIRMIN to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

Can he advise what incentives are available to investors in the Corby Enterprise Zone in the United Kingdom which the Leader of the Opposition visited a year or so ago and praised as the way to go?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is good news. We have all heard comments from members opposite about what a rough deal we are giving taxpayers in the Territory as a result of incentives to investors in the zone. The government stands by every decision it has made in relation to incentives for investors coming into the zone. The zone will impact in a major and beneficial way on the Territory economy.

For the benefit of members opposite, I have a rough list of some of the incentives that are available to investors and manufacturers establishing themselves in the zone at Corby in England. I believe the Leader of the Opposition has inspected that zone. Financial incentives, including regional development grants, either 15% of the cost per job or £3000 per job created, paid to the manufacturer; regional selective assistance, including phased cash grants against capital expenditure; loan repayment guarantees and cheap European loans; exemption from development land tax; exemption from local authority rates on industrial and commercial property; 100% allowances for corporation and income tax purposes for capital expenditure on industrial and

commercial buildings; grants towards marketing strategies, £1500; market research studies, £7000; translations, £1500; management and financial advice, £5000; new product and processes, £35 000; computer applications, £1500; and a range of other smaller grants. Investment grants of 20% towards the cost of fixed assets, including plant, buildings and machinery are available also.

Mr Speaker, those are some of the incredible incentives offered and the Leader of the Opposition has said in this Assembly that we should learn from the Corby experience. Why are these incentives offered at Corby? Because the English are seeking a positive impact on their economy. They are looking to create jobs and growth in the industry and manufacturing face of the area around Corby. The Leader of the Opposition agrees that that is the way to go. However, the Territory has not approached the level of incentives applied at Corby.

I can quote similar examples for the zone at Shannon. It cannot be denied that Shannon is one of the biggest and most successful free trade zones in the world. There is also Penang, and Kao-hsiung in Taiwan, where we launched the Trade Development Zone yesterday. Enough of this debacle, Mr Speaker, and may we have some honesty from the Leader of the Opposition, and answers to questions that are a little more relevant to the debate than the biggest beat up since the media and the opposition learned how to spell 'contingent liability'.

Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

As the Corby zone shows no reluctance to publish the details of the incentives that are made available to investors, and as the minister has represented that zone as an efficient and effective operator, is he prepared to give the Assembly details of the incentives available to investors and potential investors in the Trade Development Zone?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, that is a very poor question. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, the Corby handbook contains guidelines to incentives available to investors and industrial operators in the zone. They are exactly that: guidelines. I have made a clear statement in this Assembly and the Leader of the Opposition has been briefed by TDZ officers on the range of incentives that apply to anybody investing in the zone in Darwin.

Mr Smith: I want guidelines to the amounts.

Mr HANRAHAN: Particular details concerning the levels of those incentives, whether they be maximum, minimum or in between, will not be given. I have told the Leader of the Opposition why repeatedly. It would place the operations coming in to establish in the zone at a commercial disadvantage. Once again, he is highlighting his absolute ignorance of the facts that apply to anybody operating in the real world called commercial business. I just hope that he grows up, gets off the band wagon and does something a little more responsible than trying to destroy 1 of the greatest incentives that this government and the Territory economy have going for them.

Draft Food Standards Regulations

Mr PERRON to MINISTER for HEALTH

I refer to the draft Food Standards Regulations which his office has available for interested members. I understand that these regulations are to come into force right across Australia at some time in the future. I have some concern about some of the draft standards. What is the timetable for the introduction of the standards as formal regulations?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I am aware that a number of members have concerns about the Food Standards Regulations. The first draft of the regulations is available and, whilst it follows very closely the model regulations recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council, a number of corrections and amendments are required. The department is working on the second draft and this is expected to be completed in another month or so. The final regulations will be ready for presentation to the Executive Council early in the new year. The draft regulations are available and I will provide a full copy to the Leader of the Opposition so that his colleagues can study them. A full copy is available in my office for other members. Interested people who are listening should contact their local member so that they can view the draft regulations and comment on them.

Trade Development Zone

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

Mr Speaker, in an attempt to get some information from him again, I refer to the information he supplied concerning Corby where definite upper limits were placed on the amount of assistance available under any one incentive. Is he prepared to make a statement to this Assembly outlining the maximum amounts of money that are available under any of the incentives? Is he prepared to state the maximum amount of money the government would be prepared to pay to any firm for relocation costs, and what is the maximum amount it would be prepared to pay to any firm in respect of export freight subsidies?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not prepared to give the maximum and the minimum amounts to the Leader of the Opposition because they are not relevant for the exact reasons that I have repeated ad nauseam in this Assembly. Every business is different. I will give him a simple example. The machinery coming from Hong Kong to set up 3 runs of a knitwear product could involve several thousand tonnes. The output could be fantastic and the number of jobs created could be quite large. Those minimums and maximums will not apply to someone manufacturing plastic bags. It is irrelevant. The board assesses the commercial viability of the manufacturer. It is quite simple. The Leader of the Opposition cannot understand that; it is too simple for him.

Mr Speaker, I will not repeat what the Chief Minister had to say yesterday in the discussion of a matter of public importance. A document was tabled in August that detailed the types of incentives available to manufacturers establishing in zone. Members opposite applauded that document unanimously at that time. This is an incredible turn of events, Mr Speaker.

Youth Centre for Katherine

Mr STEELE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What progress has been made on the establishment of a youth centre for Katherine?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am very happy to tell the member for Elsey that we have had a great deal of success in negotiating for a worthwhile youth facility in Katherine. It is a much-needed facility when we take into account the very rapid growth in the population of that area and the general demography of the Northern Territory. Katherine has a very young population and we have been quite concerned about this for some time. I have been down to Katherine to speak with the member for Elsey, the Mayor of Katherine and various community groups.

As recently as yesterday, the Minister for Transport and Works signed a lease over what is known as the old Katherine sports complex. I believe that by 6 December of this year, the owners will have renovated some floor space that was the old bowling alley, and that that will be used for youth programs over the Christmas break. We will be taking over the entire area early in the new year when some general interior cleaning has taken place. Part of the complex comprises a skating rink and health studios, and all will be utilised during the Christmas break. I believe that the member for Elsey will be quite pleased to be there with me at the opening of the youth centre early in the new year. The youngsters and their parents can be very pleased to see that, through the negotiations of the member for Elsey, Katherine once again has a high-class youth facility, as do a number of other major centres in the Northern Territory.

National Parks in Central Australia

Mr BELL to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

I refer to the anticipated increase in the number of vehicles travelling to central Australia following the sealing of the south road and the consequent impact on national parks in central Australia. What assessment has been made of the environmental impact on those parks of the anticipated increase in tourist numbers?

ANSWER

There is ongoing assessment of visitor numbers to national parks. As the member said, they are on the increase. Certainly, we expect the increase to continue and to grow very quickly over the next few years. The Conservation Commission is looking at that constantly and trying to disperse the numbers of visitors over a greater range of parks. We are searching for ways to extend our park options and have people visit other areas. Of course, we do not have much say about the major park in the Centre in which the member for MacDonnell would be mainly interested. We do not have any control over the environmental impact of visitors at Uluru. However, we have responsibility for the wider area and we are assessing tourist needs in the central region through our office in the Petermann district.

While we are trying to disperse tourists over a larger area and so lessen the impact on the major parks, we are looking also at the possibility of

expanding our operations in some of the smaller parks. In fact, we are acquiring portions of property to expand those parks and so lessen the impact on the very small parks in the MacDonnell electorate. It is very difficult to undertake a full environmental impact study on something that is fairly airy-fairy. We do not have a clear indication of what the numbers will be or where people will want to go outside of places like Uluru, which is under the control of the federal Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Environment. I do not really have any say at all in that matter although I would certainly like to have some in the not-too-distant future.

The Conservation Commission is assessing the needs of tourists visiting parks in the whole of the Northern Territory, not just the central region. We are expending substantial sums of money this year to improve facilities in Kings Canyon including walking trails and horse-riding trails which will be operated by the Aboriginal communities in that area. Also, we are looking at areas in the eastern Petermann district, that area south of Alice Springs and bounded by the boundaries of states to the east, west and south. We anticipate that we will be able to lessen the impact on some of the present areas and expand more into those areas that have not been visited by significant numbers of tourists in the past.

There are many means by which to assess impact. Feasibility studies could be undertaken on a multitude of aspects. I guess feasibility studies could be set up to establish the numbers of cattle roaming the Northern Territory at present and numbers of kangaroos hopping around, to see what damage they may be inflicting on the environment but, in fact, it is very difficult to come up with a clear picture of what is required, when we do not control the whole area and do not have unlimited resources.

Sadadeen Secondary College and Anzac Hill Junior High School

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he assure the people of Alice Springs that the revamping of the Sadadeen Secondary College and Anzac Hill Junior High School is on schedule and that they will be available for the 1987 school year?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am able to advise that the work is progressing on schedule. The Anzac Hill Junior High School will be open for the coming school year. I have had the pleasure of walking around the site of the old Anzac Hill High School which became the Community College of Central Australia. The amount of work that has been done there in a short time is very good. The facilities that will be available to students at the junior high will be most satisfactory. Probably, it will be the most pleasant junior high school in Alice Springs.

I would like to express my thanks in the Assembly to 2 people who were heavily involved in arrangements for the changeover of secondary colleges and junior high schools both in Darwin and Alice Springs. Mr Denis Bree of the Department of Transport and Works has done a great job as has the Department of Education's consultant, Mr Peter Cross. Those 2 officers have worked very well together and the results can be seen in both Darwin and Alice Springs. I am very pleased, and I would like to thank all officers involved, for the amount of work that has been done very well in a very short time in order to provide excellent quality education to all young Territorians.

Promotion of Buffalo Meat

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for CONSERVATION

In view of recent interest in the restaurant trade in crocodile meat, have any attempts been made to promote buffalo meat further for both restaurant and home consumption?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Territory has the potential to develop a variety of options for restaurant meats. I would very much like to see the buffalo industry stimulated by the sale of good young buffalo meat to the restaurant trade throughout Australia. Possibilities for the sale of buffalo meat to the restaurant trade throughout Australia, and probably much further afield, are very good. A recent estimate, made by a man involved in the sale of deer meat to the restaurant trade within Australia, indicated that there was probably a market for 20 000 buffalo per year through restaurants in Australia alone. If that estimate is accurate, clearly there is a good market for buffalo meat. That person was keen to obtain young buffalo, preferably grain-fed, for sale to that market. Estimates of price went as high as \$20 a kilo for that sort of meat. That price is better than any obtained for any meat that we are selling out of the Northern Territory at present. If we are able to sell buffalo meat to the restaurant trade within Australia for \$20 a kilo, we should be working in that direction.

As a consequence, recently I approved funding of \$2500 to feed a test group of young buffalo to be put into that market to determine whether we can find a niche there. I have no doubt that we will have a great deal of success. The Buffalo Industry Council is keen on the project. It is donating the buffalo and we are providing the feed. The animals will be fed close to Darwin and then killed for this market. Deer meat from the southern parts of Australia is being supplied to the same market. We believe buffalo meat will compete successfully. I have no doubt that this will be the way for the Northern Territory buffalo industry to go in the future.

Trade Development Zone

Mr FINCH to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

In response to an earlier question, he mentioned the launch of the Darwin Trade Development Zone in Kao-hsiung, Taiwan. Is he in a position to advise the Assembly as to the success of that launch?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I certainly am and it gives me a great deal of pleasure to do so. Yesterday, the chairman of the zone authority launched the Darwin Trade Development Zone at a business and industry seminar in Kao-hsiung. I explained earlier in these sittings that he was overseas honouring these commitments. As members are no doubt aware, Kao-hsiung is the manufacturing centre of the Republic of China, and Taiwan's second-largest city.

The level of interest there in the Trade Development Zone is enormous. Some 120 people attended yesterday's seminar and I am told it was one of the best attended - if not the largest - seminar of its kind arranged by an Australian state or territory. I would suggest that is not a bad marketing effort and it speaks volumes for the interest being shown in the Territory by the world's most active and aggressively competitive manufacturing nation.

Expressions of support for the zone have also been received from the Taiwanese government. This has been in the form of encouragement for Taiwanese manufacturers to invest in the zone. None other than the Director of Information for the Ministry of Economic Development addressed yesterday's Trade Development Zone seminar. That gentleman came to Darwin in July to inspect the zone. The Ministry of Economic Development is the authority which receives applications by Taiwanese businessmen to withdraw reserves for offshore investment. The secretary-general of the Kao-hsiung municipal government, the Chairman of the huge Kao-hsiung Fishing Guild, and the Chairman of the Sino-Australian Cultural and Economic Association also spoke in support of the zone. I am informed that, following the seminar, our sub-consultant based in Taipei was inundated with requests for places on the next group tour to Darwin. That tour - the seventh group of potential investors to come to Darwin to inspect the zone - is due to arrive here on 4 December. The results of our marketing in the region are clear and positive. The interest is increasing at a rate we had not thought possible, and that, I might add, is due largely to the expertise of Mr K.K. Yeung.

TB-positive Cattle

Mr SMITH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Is he aware that TB-positive cattle have been found on Eva Downs and Anthony's Lagoon properties which have both been classified as clean or free from TB? If he is, what action is being taken by the government to protect neighbouring properties from the spread of TB, and is action against the proprietor of Eva Downs and Anthony's Lagoon being considered for allowing his clean properties to become dirty again?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question reflects a misunderstanding of brucellosis and tuberculosis and the campaign that is currently under way. I was not specifically aware that unclean cattle had been found recently on properties that had been clean in the past. However, I know what actions are taken the moment that happens. We have excellent facilities for finding unclean cattle on properties and finding out where unclean cattle have come from. I am not aware whether these cattle were found during a normal test on the property or through abattoir slaughtering checks. In either situation, testing will take place on the property in the area that the cattle were taken from. Even if they went through an abattoir, we will be able to determine their origin through our tail-tagging system. We will be able to trace exactly where the cattle came from on that property.

To talk about taking punitive action against property owners because 1 or 2 head of cattle turn up with tuberculosis is rather a strange way to react. The potential for that sort of breakdown will be there for a few years, particularly in the northern regions. I do not know whether the property owner in this case is responsible for that breakdown. If there has been a breakdown there, the correct action will be taken. There will be further testing of cattle in the area and a cleanup of the area from which the cattle were taken. If there is only a very small percentage of cattle with TB, it will not mean that the area will be destocked. If the numbers are under 3%, they will be put through a testing program. I am not fully informed of the facts. I will find out the facts and give a full answer to the Assembly.

Traffic Lights on McMillans Road

Mr SETTER to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will the new traffic light installations incorporated in the current duplication of the McMillans Road project include a pedestrian phase to allow people to cross McMillans Road at the intersections with Rothdale and Lee Point Roads in order to gain access to the Marrara sporting complex?

ANSWER

A pedestrian-activated crossing is to be installed and, hopefully, will be in place by about May next year.

Trade Development Zone

Mr PALMER to MINISTER for BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

How many potential overseas investors have come to Darwin to inspect the Trade Development Zone?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, this is another example of positive marketing to which members opposite seem to shut their eyes and ears. Let me say to the member for Arafura that, at this time, he has been very wise in his silence on the subject. We have had seminars running at the zone over the last 12 months which have enabled prospective investors to look at the zone and to be taken through the whole procedure of establishing in the zone. They are shown the Darwin area. Indeed, they are told everything they need to know about coming to live in Darwin.

It is interesting that one of the greatest selling points to Asian investors is that the Territory will have a university next year. It is no secret that some 5000 Malaysians have invested in the city of Perth. You would find that perhaps four-fifths of those people had gone to Perth for educational purposes. That is an interesting sidelight.

Mr Speaker, 94 investors, including 17 that are due here on 4 December, will have arrived in Darwin at their own expense to find out about the Trade Development Zone. Those are encouraging figures. After the news of our marketing success, I anticipate that several more investor groups will be coming to Darwin early in the new year. That proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the marketing of the Trade Development Zone overseas is succeeding. We will make it one of the biggest successes this Territory has seen.

Mustering on Oolloo Station

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Who authorised the transfer of the Oolloo Grazing Licence 2082 to ADMA in June 1985 and why? Considering the considerable personal distress caused to the former owners of that property by the compulsory acquisition of that property, why were they not given the opportunity to muster their own cattle?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is probably appropriate for me to take this opportunity to provide as much information as I can on this issue. As I said yesterday, the member has asked questions that should normally and reasonably be submitted as written questions. The member knows only too well that, in the period since I have been in the ministry, there have been no delays in responding to written questions. However, Mr Speaker, allow me to deal with the issue.

On Thursday of last week and again yesterday, the member for Arafura asked me a series of questions relating to the acquisition and subsequent destocking of Oolloo Station. I have now had the opportunity to personally peruse the files related to these activities and I am in a position to answer the questions as far as is possible.

Oolloo Station was acquired compulsorily by the Agriculture Development and Marketing Authority on 24 March 1982. The land was required for development as agricultural land. The previous owners, Mr and Mrs Rixon, were given until 31 December 1984 to remove their stock from the lease. Little effort was made by the Rixons to remove stock from the property although, in January 1984, the authority met the cost of helicopter hire to assist Rixon with destocking operations. Cattle became a major nuisance to the project farmers on the 4 farms which had been developed in the area. Farmers complained about fencing being broken down and crops being damaged. By December 1984, stock removal was far from complete.

The Rixons asked for a further 12 months in which to complete mustering. Based on their previous record, it appeared unlikely that an extension of time would allow the matter to be completed. For that reason, ADMA sought my approval, as the Minister for Primary Production, to purchase the cattle remaining on the property. This purchase was suggested by the Rixon's solicitors in a letter dated 1 October 1984. The proposal involved the authority purchasing the cattle at a price based on the Valuer-General's submission to the Land Acquisition Tribunal. That submission had placed a value of \$40 a head on estimated stock numbers of 3000 head.

The estimate of numbers was considered generous by the Valuer-General, the Department of Primary Production and officers of the Department of Lands. It resulted in a value of about \$106 880 being placed on the stock remaining on Oolloo, calculated on the basis of the stock numbers as accepted by the tribunal less the number sold by Mr Rixon. ADMA was willing to pay that amount to purchase the stock so that the authority had full control over the property, and because the purchase would allow orderly removal of the stock by mustering and shooting, when necessary, without undue disturbance to the project farmers.

It is a matter of public record that, during that period, the authority bent over backwards to be generous to the Rixons in all respects. The valuation placed on the property prior to the acquisition was \$200 000. The authority offered the Rixons \$350 000 for the land only, even though this was well in excess of the Valuer-General's valuation, with numerous options for settlement and with provision for stock to be removed by them over a considerable period of time.

However, the Rixons rejected that offer and the matter was referred to the Land Acquisition Tribunal for decision. The tribunal determined that the Rixons should be paid compensation totalling \$202 250. The authority then gave the Rixons exclusive use of their homestead and the paddocks adjacent to

it. To facilitate destocking of the area, the Rixons were allowed to keep their stock horses and, as indicated above, were allowed a very generous amount of time for destocking of their cattle. Apart from all this, I approved a payment of nearly \$32 000 to meet costs incurred by the Rixons in presenting their case to the Land Acquisition Tribunal as part of the deal concerning the purchase of the remaining cattle.

A considerable number of interested parties had inspected the Oolloo property and adjacent grazing licence. Some had undergone considerable expense for helicopter hire in order to estimate the stock population on the lease. The authority was advised that none of these inspections revealed stock numbers as high as Mr Rixon expected. Of course, this was of no surprise to the authority who had calculated his payout figure for the stock on a basis considered to be extremely generous to Mr Rixon.

Mr Rixon negotiated privately for the sale of the cattle to several other parties. His negotiations apparently centred on a price of \$150 000 based on 3000 head at \$50 a head, subject to an inspection to confirm numbers. Regarding Mr Rixon's private negotiations, I am advised that original private negotiations between Mr Rixon and Mr Harrower fell through as no agreement could be reached on stock numbers. Mr T. McFarlane inspected the stock also, but was not satisfied with stock numbers claimed by Mr Rixon. This became known to the authority in June 1985 and, at a meeting between Mr Rixon and myself on 20 June 1985, I agreed to extend Rixon's option of negotiating with independent buyers until 19 July 1985. However, ADMA understands that, whilst a number of interested parties inspected the cattle, Mr Rixon received no offers which exceeded the ADMA offer. Apparently, negotiations lapsed when the parties failed to reach agreement on the stock numbers.

The ADMA purchase of the stock was finally concluded by an agreement executed on 18 September 1985. The authority then entered into a contract with a private contractor for the removal of the cattle from the property. The contract was let by public tender on a lump sum cash basis with no guarantee as to stock numbers. The amount was paid in advance of the muster.

In response to ADMA tenders, inspections were carried out by various people including the following: W. Sullivan of Douglas Station, which is a neighbouring station, who considered the stock numbers too low and of such poor quality that they would not be worth the effort of mustering; T. Teese who, after a helicopter inspection of 3 hours, considered stock not worth the effort of mustering and did not submit a tender; T. Fawcett who was prepared to tender on cattle on the farm area only; and M. Teelow who made an extensive inspection over 4 hours in a helicopter and decided that, when cost of recovery for the stock was considered, he would be prepared to offer \$22 000 only.

Tenders closed on 28 October 1985 for removal of both cattle and buffalo. Tender documents were forwarded to 12 parties which had expressed interest. No offers were received for buffalo but, at Mr Rixon's request, the successful tenderer for the cattle agreed to deal with buffalo as well. Two formal offers and one informal offer covering the farm area only were received. However, Mr Rixon continued to complain about the situation.

The next area of complaint related to buffalo numbers. ADMA carried out a further inspection of the Oolloo Grazing Licence by helicopter on 10 April 1985. This operation was directed by Mr Rixon. The helicopter pilot was familiar with the area and had mustered previously on that portion of the property for Mr Rixon. The result of the inspection was a total of 21 head of

buffalo and a small number of horses which were spotted on the property. This was wildly incompatible with Mr Rixon's claim that there were 1000 buffalo on the property at that time.

Once ADMA had bought the cattle, Mr Rixon forfeited all legal interest in them. By agreement, if sums greater than \$106 880 were raised from the sale of cattle from Oolloo, the excess would be paid to Mr Rixon. Needless to say, it was in the government's best interests to raise as much money as possible from the sales to at least recoup its purchase price. However, at that time, all the evidence pointed to a much lesser return being likely. As I said a few moments ago, only 3 tenders were received. The highest of these was a payment of \$60 000 to the NT government for the rights to muster all stock left on the property. That tender was accepted and the rights to muster sold to Mr John Harrower of neighbouring Dorisvale Station. I wish to stress that the contract between the government and Mr Harrower was not based on any particular number of animals although, on the basis of all available evidence, it was believed that less than 3000 cattle remained on Oolloo. Whatever Mr Harrower was able to realise from the sale of the cattle was a matter for him, and I am unable to confirm the accuracy of the figures quoted by the member for Arafura.

My information is that, whilst the muster is still in progress, the member for Arafura's estimate of some 3500 head having been sent to meatworks or taken as breeders to Dorisvale Station is probably a reasonable one. However, I must add a caveat. Since the boundary between the Oolloo grazing licence and Dorisvale Station and its associated grazing licence is not fenced and cattle graze freely over the area, it is likely that many of the cattle mustered belonged to Mr Harrower in the first place. In addition, once cattle are removed from an area, more cattle will move in from neighbouring areas to take advantage of available feed. Members will be aware that last year's wet season was a rather dry one. As a result, many of the waters to the south, traditionally used by cattle in this area, dried up. Cattle have migrated to Oolloo and to the Daly River which flows through it, to obtain water and to take advantage of the available feed. For this reason, it is likely that there were more cattle on Oolloo during the current dry season than there ever were when Mr Rixon owned it or when the contract was originally let.

A few points need to be made regarding the revenue figures bandied about by the member for Arafura. As I said earlier, the contract let was for a fixed sum on an as-is where-is basis. No guarantee of numbers was given. I do not know how much Mr Harrower has been paid for the cattle he has mustered so far. That is his business. What I do know is that, at the time when the contract was let, the cattle were assessed as being worth about \$50 per head. However, as we all know, as a result of economic policies implemented by Mr Collins' hero, the world's greatest Treasurer, Mr Keating ...

Mr B. COLLINS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Chief Minister knows full well that members of this Assembly will not be referred to by their personal names. Debate in this Assembly cannot be personalised and he knows it.

Mr SPEAKER: There is a point of order. The Chief Minister will refer to the member for Arafura by his correct title.

Mr HATTON: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

As we all know, as a result of the economic policies implemented by the hero of the member for Arafura, the world's greatest Treasurer,

Hon Paul Keating, the value of the Australian dollar has fallen considerably in the intervening period. This has had a substantial effect on the price of beef on the international market so that today Mr Harrower is probably realising in the order of \$120 a head.

In addition, the member for Arafura does not seem to acknowledge the considerable expense involved in mustering these animals. I am advised that Mr Harrower has had a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 16 men employed during the whole of the dry season to undertake the muster. Also, he has had to make extensive use of helicopters at considerable expense. It is only the nature of the contract awarded to Mr Harrower that makes the extensive muster in which he is now engaged worth while. The 50-50 type of contract that the member for Arafura refers to - and I am advised by ADMA that the best deal that it has ever been able to achieve on this basis was an 80-20 split with ADMA getting the 20% - would have meant that substantially fewer cattle would have been mustered, as the extensive muster now being carried out would not have been a financially viable operation. The implications of the BTEC scheme are obvious.

In summary, having examined all the relevant documents and having been briefed by relevant departmental officers, I am firmly of the view that the utmost propriety has been observed by all concerned in this matter. The contract to Mr Harrower was let after the calling of public tenders. He submitted the highest tender and, on the information available to the government at the time, the terms of Mr Harrower's offer were very reasonable. Even after I had agreed to extend the time limits, Mr Rixon had been unable to come up with a better deal. I do not know how much Mr Harrower stands to make from this deal. As I said before, that is his business. I suggest that, if the member for Arafura is so concerned at the prospect of a businessman making a dollar as a result of his legitimate business dealings, he will have to seek that information direct from Mr Harrower. With respect to the grazing licence question, I suggest he direct it to the Minister for Primary Production.

World Heritage Listing of Kakadu Stage 2

Mr PERRON to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the outcome of proceedings in the High Court in respect of the proposed inclusion of Kakadu stage 2 on the World Heritage List?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the decision of the High Court on this matter was handed down just over an hour ago. The issue was an appeal to the High Court by the Commonwealth against orders issued in the Federal Court restraining the Commonwealth from seeking to have that part of Kakadu stage 2 included on the World Heritage List which was the subject of mining interests held by Peko-Wallsend. As members are aware, the Northern Territory government had entered proceedings in the Federal Court also and, because our interests in this particular matter were very similar to those of Peko-Wallsend, we also sought to intervene in the High Court action.

The High Court decided this morning to dismiss the Commonwealth's appeal. This means that the orders issued by the Federal Court stand. Effectively, this means that the courts of Australia have taken the view that the Commonwealth should not proceed with the proposed World Heritage Listing in Paris until the question of Peko-Wallsend's rights can be determined properly.

The reasons given by the High Court this morning for its decision are extremely important. The High Court dismissed the Commonwealth's appeal on 2 grounds. The court made the point that the embarrassment which the federal government had claimed it would suffer at UNESCO if the Federal Court's restraining order were not lifted constituted no ground for this appeal. The court said that embarrassment was no ground for denying people their rights. I am sure that all members would share that view.

I would remind honourable members that, in my first letter to the Prime Minister requesting him to defer this matter so that full and proper consultations could take place, I emphasised that it was not the Territory government's wish to cause embarrassment to the federal government, but that we had rights and prerogatives which the Commonwealth had to respect. All along the line, the Commonwealth has sought to steamroll Northern Territory interests in this exercise in an arrogant and cavalier fashion. The Prime Minister is fond of talking about consultation, but the Commonwealth has landed itself in this sorry situation because its actions do not match his rhetoric.

The second reason given by the High Court was that no detriment would be caused to the Commonwealth by any delay in the matter, and that this again meant that there were no valid grounds for appeal.

I take it that the Australian delegation in Paris will be instructed now not to proceed with the proposed listing of Kakadu stage 2. That is the position that the Northern Territory has sought to advocate since we first learnt that the Commonwealth had decided to repudiate the undertaking which we were given that we would be consulted. We stand ready to cooperate fully with the Commonwealth in a proper assessment of Kakadu stage 2, and we will support World Heritage listing of any areas which meet World Heritage criteria genuinely. I regret to say that the arrogant and bullying tactics of the Commonwealth seem likely to continue.

I note with great concern statements attributed to the Prime Minister last night, that legislation will be introduced to preclude any mining activity in either Kakadu stage 1 or 2. This is not an acceptable basis for the cooperation and consultation which I believe is required on Kakadu. We will do our part, but I assure this Assembly that we will fight again as hard as we have fought over the last few days and weeks to ensure that our interests are protected.

Registration of K.K. Yeung Consultants

Mr SMITH to MINISTER FOR BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY and COMMUNICATIONS

Is the company, K.K. Yeung Consultants, which operates from offices in the Raffles Plaza building, registered with the Northern Territory Companies Office?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I will supply that information to the Leader of the Opposition when I have checked the register of the Northern Territory Companies Office.

Increased Health Facilities for Katherine

Mr STEELE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Will adequate health facilities be provided to meet increasing needs resulting from the growth that is taking place in Katherine?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, work is nearing completion on the new 32-bed wing on the Katherine Hospital site. That wing will cater for 20 paediatric beds and 12 general beds at a cost of over \$2.6m. I would like to take the opportunity to inform the member for Elsey that there has been some delay in the completion date of that particular project. Completion is now expected to be achieved at the end of February or the beginning of March.

We are very much aware of the growth of the Katherine area and we are attempting to meet the needs of the people there. Included on the 1986-87 design list is provision for an obstetrics and gynaecology wing, and upgrading of the operating theatres in Katherine. That work will be to the value of some \$3.5m. I hope that will be on next year's capital works program. The government is aware of the growing need and will ensure that adequate health facilities are available.

NT Road Toll

Mr BELL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he aware of the report on the front page of the NT News of 24 November in which the road toll was given as 64 so far this year, which was identified as being 6 more than at the same time last year and only 6 short of last year's total road death toll of 70? Has the government conducted any analysis of the Northern Territory road toll, and road accidents generally, which would compare the 5 years previous to the introduction of random breath testing with the 5 years after the random breath testing operation commenced, to ascertain whether RBT had reduced road trauma in the Territory? If an analysis of road trauma does not reveal any improvement due to the introduction of random breath testing, does he have any plans to identify the causes of road deaths in the Northern Territory and to take preventive action?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the question resembled an adjournment debate statement. During the course of the next 7 days, I will provide in writing all the information that the honourable member has requested.

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