# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order. Numbers with asterisks indicate questions on notice which remained unanswered when the Assembly adjourned on the last sitting day.

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

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22 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

1. How many students are enrolled at the Darwin Community College?
2. What is the staff establishment for the college including professorial, administrative and industrial positions?

ANSWER

1. There were 2616 students enrolled in the Darwin Community College during 1974. This included fulltime, part-time and block release students.
2. The total staff establishment for the college for the 1974/75 financial year is 214. This is made up of 135 academic staff, 22 library staff and 52 administrative staff.

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1 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

When is it expected that the first meeting of the Administrator's Council will be held?

ANSWER

The first meeting of the new Administrator's Council, with 5 elected members, is programmed for tomorrow.

2 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is it the intention to set sitting dates for the coming year for this Assembly? If so, will consultations be held with other members prior to the setting of those dates?

ANSWER

We will attempt to set, in conjunction with you, Mr Speaker, a timetable in advance—a year in advance if possible. Certainly all members of the Assembly will be consulted as to the suitability of the times proposed. There may be some difficulty at this sitting in indicating exactly when the next meeting will be because to some extent it depends on events beyond our control such as the tabling of the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Northern Territory and discussions which may follow, so that we have a more solid base on which to meet at that time; but with that possible exception as soon as possible I will endeavour to arrange for a timetable to be drawn up to everybody's satisfaction.

3 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that there is on sale in Darwin a corned beef product from France priced at 65 cents while its Australian equivalent costs 98 cents? What assurances will the government give that the importation of this product will cease?

ANSWER

Yes, there is a corned beef product available in Darwin at the price mentioned which is lower than the price for a locally produced product. I was speaking to somebody yesterday who had purchased a tin of this overseas corned beef, made, I think, in France although it has writing in several languages on the container. As to the second part of the question, I am unable to answer this. We are at the moment, although a majority party, in no sense the government of the Northern Territory; we have not been allocated any executive responsibilities and we cannot be held accountable for doing certain things until that stage is achieved. However, I assure the honourable member that his concern and the facts in this case will be passed on to the appropriate department to see if this class of beef is being legitimately sold in Australia and if there is anything that can be done in light of the circumstances prevailing in our own meat industry.

4 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS—

Can he advise the Assembly of the composition of the legislative committee referred to yesterday?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer off the cuff. There are 4 members of the majority party or backbench members on that committee, together with the executive member who from time to time might be concerned with particular legislation. I shall obtain the information during the course of today's sittings and advise him when I have the full list of names.

5 Mr PERRON to Mr SPEAKER—

When will more adequate facilities and office space be made available to members of the Assembly?

ANSWER

Planning for increased office accommodation for members has been going on for some time and certainly recommendations were made by my predecessor to the Minister. Although there is nothing in correspondence to indicate the Minister's approval or otherwise of the proposal, we do have an assurance from the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory that an approach has been made to Treasury for an increase in the civil works program provision from $25,000 to $137,000, which will allow the provision of additional offices in the old PABX area and a new building containing 6 new offices within the precincts. It is hoped that the pressure on existing office accommodation will be eased by the provision of offices for executive members outside the precincts. Members may inspect the plans for proposed offices on application to the Clerk. The work proposed within the precincts will not be completed until late in 1975. It is my intention to seek an interview with the Minister within the next few weeks to discuss the building proposals and other matters connected with staff and staff accommodation.

6 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

Will he advise what assurance the people of the Territory can have of a better and more reliable road and rail connection between the Territory and the eastern and southern states in the coming wet season?

ANSWER

I would like to delay answering that question until this afternoon as I am currently preparing an announcement on this. I am trying to get hold of some information which may enable me to give a fairly good answer to the honourable member.

7 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS—

Will the Assembly be kept informed about the planning of wet season arrangements for the Territory?

ANSWER

As most members will be aware, the Department of the Northern Territory has taken some initiative in setting up an emergency planning committee involving private groups and departmental people with the assistance of some experts in this field and they have had a number of meetings over the last 4 or 5 weeks. This Assembly to date has not been involved in this planning because we were going through an election and only yesterday did we become fully-fledged members. However, I have been in contact with the First Assistant Secretary chairing these discussions, Mr McHenry. We had in fact been invited to attend the last meeting but we were unable to attend because of other commitments. I believe that we will be invited to take part in discussions in the future and that the appropriate member from this Assembly will attend those discussions. It will probably be my colleague the honourable member for Millner who will also have the obligation of keeping the Assembly informed on any plans made from time to time and on any roles which we can at this stage play in assisting to overcome wet season emergencies.

8 Miss ANDREW to Dr LETTS—

What is to be the relationship between the National Heritage Commission and the National Parks and Wildlife Service? Who are the present Northern Territory representatives on the National Heritage Commission, how and by whom are they appointed and what are their qualifications for the post?

ANSWER

I understand that the honourable member for Nightcliff is one of the members of the provisional National Heritage Commission. I do not have the answer to the rest of the question. If the honourable member places the question on notice, I will endeavour to seek the information she requires and hopefully advise her between now and the next sittings.

9 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS—

I refer to a recent news item which said that executive officers of the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association are seeking discussions with the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory on preservation of their rights while a form of responsible Territory government is emerging. Has he received any approaches from the ACOA or the Fourth Division Officers Association for discussion on these matters?

ANSWER

No, I have had no approaches from any of the executive of the public service associations on this matter. Any representations that they wish to make would be welcomed. I will be available to talk to them at any time, together with the honourable member for Millner who in his portfolio will have some responsibility in industrial relations.

10 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

In view of recent publicity and comment from the Minister for the Northern Territory on the subject of a Darwin free beach, does he propose any action to be taken in the immediate future?

ANSWER

I appreciate that the honourable member has quite a big beach front in his electorate but I do not know whether he has the same view on the subject as the former member for McMillan had. I do not believe there is any immediate action that this Assembly can or should take on this subject. The Minister for the Northern Territory recently said it was a local matter and this may be true up to a point. It may be possible for this Assembly to draft certain legislation which would lead towards the development of such a facility should the majority of the Assembly be of that mind but, as I understand the situation, this Assembly at the moment

has no final authority in relation to land which is reserved for public purposes and any such legislation which we would attempt to promulgate here would have to go back anyway to the federal parliament and the Governor-General for final assent or rejection. Possibly the final answer therefore is in the hands of the national government.

The matter was raised in the Legislative Council earlier and was partly discussed but I do not believe that the full public view and the full public reaction to this suggestion has really been canvassed, nor would it be appropriate for the remarks made by the members of the Legislative Council to continue to apply. It would be necessary to find out what the viewpoint of the people now represented here is. Perhaps the best approach would be to set up a select committee of inquiry, perhaps at our next meeting, so that the public view can be more fully canvassed and we can be better guided towards making the right decision.

11 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

Can he advise me of the current membership of the Northern Territory Reserves Board?

ANSWER

I understand that the membership of the board is only partly filled at the moment. There are 2 members of the board, the chairman and the officer from the Wildlife Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory, whose terms have now expired and reappointments would be due to be made. I understand that the terms of 3 of the 5 remaining members expire next month or around about mid-December.

12 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

In relation to the federal National Parks and Wildlife Bill, can he inform me whether the Northern Territory Environmental Council was consulted on this legislation and what was its reaction? Further, did the House of Representatives select committee on wildlife conservation hold any public hearings and take evidence in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I rang the president of the Northern Territory Environmental Council last Monday to find out what their thinking was on the bill and I was informed that they had some misgivings about it in its present form, that they had made some representations to the honourable member for Nightcliff to take to the National Heritage Commission and that they would have a further look at it. This morning I received a report from the president of the Northern Territory Environmental Council which goes into some detail on the action they have taken since last Monday. Rather than provide all that information in question time it is probable that it will come up during the course of debate on the motion later in this sitting. Their attitude has developed somewhat since Monday in that, mainly on the basis of telephone conversations with New South Wales and ACT, they would like to see the bill proceed. I am not aware of any meetings or public evidence which has been taken by the House of Representatives committee on the environment in the Northern Territory but I will have to check my facts on that and confer with the honourable member later.

24 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I refer to an article in today's Northern Territory News headed "Permits needed to enter the city". Part of this article reads: "Conditions for entering Darwin have been relaxed slightly, the Director of Emergency Services in Darwin Mr Ray McHenry said yesterday". It goes on to say that men or women with properties or business interests or essential work would now be considered for an entry permit. However, it was not intended to issue permits to other women or children at this stage. I ask with what legislative authority such a statement has been issued. Can I have an assurance from the Majority Leader that without legislative authority, this type of publicity will be stopped if it is from an official source?

ANSWER

I have not seen the article in today's paper. I do know that there have been controls operating on people moving into and out of the Northern Territory. As I understand it, the controls which have operated in the past have had virtually no legislative backing. It has been an administrative arrangement, an agreement between Major-General Stretton and the various companies and bodies who operate transport services into the Northern Territory. For example, if an airline has space, it requires some sort of authority to be issued from the disaster headquarters before they would issue a ticket. This was certainly the case a few days ago when I was coming back from the south. I do not wish to anticipate a bill which will be coming into this house today but there will be a clause in that bill which deals with control of the movement of the people. I have no doubt that, when that particular clause gets into committee, there will be considerable discussion about its merits and the way that it will operate. In the meantime, I simply say that this Assembly has no executive power to ask anybody to refrain from doing anything. Depending on the outcome of our discussion later in the day, I will do whatever I can to make representations to the Director of Emergency Services to make sure that highhanded and bureaucratic action is not the order of the day.

25 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Last night at about half past nine, I was stopped at the 21-mile by an officer of the Queensland Police who informed me that in future I could not re-enter Darwin unless I was in possession of a work permit. Will the honourable member investigate this statement with a view to ascertaining upon what foundation it rests; and will he also investigate the authority for a policeman making such a statement? I ask this question particularly because the instructions given to this police officer, upon his statement to me, were that this applies to residents as well as to outside persons.

ANSWER

I will certainly bring the case mentioned by the honourable member for Port Darwin to the notice of the Director of Emergency Services. I will try to get some clarification of what the exact policy and system is for members. I do not believe there is any legal authority at the moment and I also believe that this matter will be further canvassed in the course of discussing legislation later today. In the meantime, Mr Speaker, I understand that you have arranged as far as members of this Assembly are concerned for the permit system to be waived. I am duly grateful because I would find myself in exactly the same position as the honourable member for Port Darwin.

26 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

Can it be established how long food distribution will be continued on a free basis in this area?

ANSWER

It will continue for as long as it is necessary.

27 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Since Cyclone Tracy struck, a number of young constables have been patrolling the city, and in particular the northern suburbs' distribution centres, fully armed. Although recognising that he has no actual executive authority, I ask if he would ensure that, unless it is absolutely necessary, junior police officers will not continue patrolling fully armed.

ANSWER

The Commissioner of Police has passed on to me the following information: "It has been necessary for obvious reasons for sidearms to be carried up until now. Certain interstate police forces wear sidearms as a matter of course. It is understood that many police have now discontinued wearing sidearms and gradually all weapons will be called in as the situation improves".

28 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS

I refer to the earlier press announcement that the Secretary and First Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory were to make an overseas visit to study constitutional developments in other countries early in the New Year. Is it still proposed that these officers will undertake this trip?

ANSWER

I am informed that the answer to this question is no.

29 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

I have heard a rumour that it is proposed that the trust funds being collected throughout Australia and throughout the world to alleviate the situation in Darwin are to be administered by some officer in the Department of the Northern Territory. Will he do his best to ensure that any such trust fund is administered by a board of trustees elected by and responsible to the people of Darwin?

ANSWER

I will do my best to see that any funds collected are paid into a fund administered by people of the Northern Territory responsible to the people of the Northern Territory. I did have some discussion with the Minister for the Northern Territory this morning. He told me that the government had in mind a committee which would consist of a local representative of the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Australian Assistance Commission (some name like that), a representative of this Assembly and a representative of the Corporation of the City of Darwin. He said that co-ordinating and secretarial services would be provided by the Department of the Northern Territory.

30 Mr VALE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Do the Commonwealth and interstate police in Darwin come under the control of the Northern Territory Commissioner of Police?

ANSWER

The interstate and Commonwealth police operating in Darwin at the moment come under the direct control of their own inspectors. Commonwealth Police come under their own Commissioner; those officers are in turn under the general control of Commissioner McLaren, so there is a chain of command.

31 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

Will she approach the Department of the Northern Territory with a view to having daily bulletins published by press and radio giving the next area to be serviced by water and electricity? Will these facilities be extended to the northern suburbs? If so, when?

ANSWER

I am informed that these services are being quickly extended although some areas cannot be serviced because of complete destruction of residences and other buildings. I understand that water was reconnected as from yesterday with the exception of Wanguri, Nakara and Tiwi.

32 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

There are long-term residents of Darwin who have literally lost everything but who wish to remain in the city and who have jobs. What housing assistance for the next 12 months will be offered to them? I specify 12 months because I would assume no one would be allowed to rebuild until a new building code is introduced. These people will have at least 12 months not knowing what type of assistance will be available to them.

ANSWER

I am unable to answer that question immediately from the information available to me but I will seek an answer and try to inform her during this sitting.

33 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

When is it expected that evacuees will be able to return to Darwin using free fares which have been guaranteed?

ANSWER

It is not possible to give a firm reply at this stage. Much will depend on the progress of restoration of essential services, the availability of accommodation and general amenities of the town. It would seem inappropriate to compound the problem at too early a stage after evacuation has occurred by bringing back many people.

34 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Has the Minister for the Northern Territory indicated whether there will be any significant change in the programme for political development in the Northern Territory as a result of the Darwin disaster?

ANSWER

We have had no official indication from the Minister for the Northern Territory as to changes in the previously designed programme for transfer of executive powers. In speaking to the Minister, I have had his verbal assurance that it is his wish to see political development go along according to as much of the programme which was envisaged as possible. He did say that there would have to be some changes in emphasis and I think we can all understand that. He did also add that he would try to make certain that the members of this Assembly would participate in all aspects of rehabilitation and reconstruction. At the same time, recognising that the rest of the Territory has to go ahead, the executive members and the members of this Assembly would be expected to carry out their normal functions in this regard. The Minister is obviously very keen to do the best he can by us. Unfortunately, I was advised yesterday that the services of Mr Finger, First Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory, would no longer be available to me, for an inspecified period. I hope that period will be as short as possible.

35 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

I refer to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission which is to be headed by Sir Leslie Thiess. How many residents of the city of Darwin are likely to be appointed to that commission and what will be the basis of their appointment?

ANSWER

The source of my information is probably the same as that of the honourable member for Port Darwin, namely the Prime Minister's announcement following the Cabinet meeting last Monday in which he outlined the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and what the composition of that commission would be. He said that Sir Leslie Thiess was to be its chairman and that there would be membership from the Department of Housing and Construction, the Department of Urban and Regional Development and the Department of the Northern Territory. In addition, this Assembly and the Mayor of the Corporation of the City of Darwin would be represented. Thus, there would be 2 people actually residing in this locality if the Assembly nomination was a Darwin and environments resident. I have spoken to the Minister and again asked what possibilities there were of having additional members of this Assembly added. At this stage, he sees no prospect of doing that.

36 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

What facilities are expected to be made available for the commencement of the 1975 school year in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

Until such time as the census of children remaining in Darwin is complete, the educational needs in terms of actual schools that will be open cannot be assessed. However, the administrative staff of the Education Department assured me that classes will operate from grade 1 to matriculation level and at least one large school is expected to be in operation by early February.

37 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

What action has been taken to restore and preserve large trees and flora in Darwin parks and reserves?

ANSWER

Staff members of the Corporation of the City of Darwin and the Department of the Northern Territory are already attempting to save as many trees as possible. The Superintendent of Parks from the Townsville City Council has also been made available to assist in this restoration programme. He has past experience which will be invaluable. I am not aware if he has been able to get in yet. Fallen trees to be conserved are being marked with white paint on the trunk. All standing trees are to be retained wherever possible.

38 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Will persons in Darwin whose families have been evacuated be assisted to visit their families during the period that the family is not allowed to return to Darwin?

ANSWER

The policy matter is still under investigation. I am advised that persons who have been performing essential services and voluntary efforts during the emergency will continue to be eligible for evacuation and return at the government's expense.

39 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK—

Has there been indiscriminate dumping of cleanup materials of all sorts on the Kahlin Oval and, if so, what action has been taken for protection against risks to health which are likely to result from it?

ANSWER

I have been unaware of this matter. I will ask the appropriate authorities to report to me as soon as possible. I ask that the question be put on notice.

40 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Would he inform me of the number of rape cases reported, the number of arrests for looting, the number of persons shot whilst looting, the number of persons officially missing and the number of persons killed in this disaster?

ANSWER

The number of rape cases reported during the emergency is 1. The number of arrests for looting is 15. The number of persons shot for looting is nil. At this stage, 65 persons are officially listed as missing persons. The number of persons killed in the disaster stands at 48.

41 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

My question arises from the answer given to a previous question by the honourable member for Millner. The answer concerned the evacuation south of members of the citizenry of Darwin whose families were not allowed to return. What would be the basis for the non-allowance of return of families of citizens of this city?

ANSWER

I will have to be guided by my own common sense. Having just shipped 25,000 people out of the city because there is no accommodation for most of them and there are no services yet properly connected, it seems that people could not just return into the city area on a free for all basis. If that happened, the whole object of the exercise of the last week would be lost. That is the nearest that I can get to answering the honourable member.

42 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Would he undertake to bring to the notice of whatever authority now or in the future may be responsible, the concern felt by the departing citizens of Darwin at the airport. Their prime concern was: "When we have a place to stay, we will be allowed back, won't we?" I ask him to bear that in mind and to bring it to the notice of any authority necessary.

ANSWER

I will bring the honourable member's concern to the attention of the appropriate authority.

43 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he aware that 2 aldermen of the Darwin City Council have been refused permission to return to perform any duties that they may have on that Council? Is he aware that the curator of the Townsville Gardens, who has experience with cyclone restoration, has offered to come here and has been refused a permit by a person named McHenry? Will he take some steps to ensure that aldermen of the city council are permitted back immediately, and that persons who are willing and able to render assistance in this emergency be permitted to return to this city?

ANSWER

I was aware that one alderman had been refused a permit to re-enter the city and I was aware that the curator of the Townsville Parks and Gardens had been refused a permit. I have already made representation with regard to the curator's position and I was hoping that this would have been corrected either late yesterday or early today. I will certainly continue to press for entry permits for all of these people as they are essential to the community.

44 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Will the damage done to the iron ore loading facilities in the port by Cyclone Tracy delay the exporting of iron ore from Darwin?

ANSWER

I had a report from the Navy this morning that the iron ore wharf loading facilities will be out of action for a period of 6 to 9 months. This will effectively close the Francis Creek mining operation as far as I can see.

45 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr POLLOCK—

Is there any truth in the ABC news report last evening that many Aboriginal members of the community have left Darwin and are heading south on foot?

ANSWER

I have asked official sources for a report on this matter but I have not received it to date. From information I have been able to gather personally, speaking to people who have travelled the road in recent days and over the period of the disaster, it appears that there is no unusual movement of Aboriginal persons along the road on foot. In fact there are fewer than there are normally on the road, hitchhiking or travelling by that means. From what I can gather, there is no basis in this report at all.

46 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

In view of the widely-held belief that the government administrative headquarters will shortly be moved to Katherine, Alice Springs or some other centre down the track, will the Majority Leader provide the latest information on government action proposed in this regard?

ANSWER

I am advised that there is no intention of moving government administrative headquarters from Darwin but that there is now an opportunity to decentralise some functions of the Department of the Northern Territory; for example, the animal health section might move to Alice Springs and other sections of the Agriculture Branch could move to Katherine. Fisheries might move to Nhulunbuy and Forestry could be relocated at Katherine.

47 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Does he know of any basis for the rumour at present circulating in Darwin that "they" are going to bulldoze the northern suburbs and that "they" will see that no development takes place in the immediate future past the 2½-mile? Is any decision likely to be taken by anybody?

ANSWER

I have been associated with a number of meetings of co-ordinating committees, I have spoken to the Minister, I have spoken to the Secretary of the Department on a number of occasions over the last week, and I have not heard of any basis in fact for such a decision. The usual information I have got is that the treatment of a whole suburb or part of a suburb will be deferred pending the establishment of the Reconstruction Commission and the seeking of proper advice by that commission in how to approach the rebuilding of Darwin.

48 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK—

In the evacuation and associated aftermath of the cyclone, what arrangements have been made or are being made for the Aboriginal members of the Darwin community?

ANSWER

I have asked the department for advice on this matter but I have not received it to date. I am able to say from reports coming to me from individuals that Aboriginal members of the community, during the cyclone and its aftermath, were treated no differently from the general run of the mill; everybody was treated equally, it didn't matter what their background was at all. I made some inquiries in Alice Springs as to how Aboriginal members of the community were being treated and I found they were being processed in the same way as other evacuees. Some are being sent south, if that is their choice. If they choose to return to a settlement or a mission, they are being assisted to get there. I am advised that during the evacuation the honourable member for Tiwi, himself an Aboriginal, assisted greatly with his people in dispersing them and arranging for their travel to the various top end missions, settlements and so forth of their choosing. I believe that they have been treated no differently to anybody else.

49 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING—

What provision is being made for recreation facilities for the Darwin community?

ANSWER

I am informed that a number of voluntary organisations are already planning to continue their activities. I am aware that the Brown's Mart Community Arts Project is arranging for theatrical presentations and for a street theatre. The Arts Council of Australia will bring into Darwin groups suitable for the changed population and for the school year requirement. The YMCA and the YWCA will also run recreational centres. Other voluntary agencies are active in the many small communities and refugee centres. I am sure that emphasis will be placed on all aspects of entertainment and morale as well as the sociological problems to ensure that family lifestyles are supported and re-established as soon as possible.

50 Mr KENTISH to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Will the Australian Government make available at an early date special allocations of financial support for the carrying on of business and commercial operations, and will the Australian Government be prepared to guarantee special bank finance for business and home rebuilding?

ANSWER

The question of financial assistance for business and commercial operations and home rebuilding is still under consideration by the authorities.

51 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Following the reply he gave in answer to a question yesterday, will be undertake to make early approaches to the Minister to ensure that the services of the First Assistant Secretary, Mr Martyn Finger, are returned to this Assembly as soon as practicable?

ANSWER

I will undertake to do as the honourable member for Nightcliff has suggested. If this Assembly is to continue its role and to continue with the growth of political development in the Northern Territory, as the Minister assured me it is, then we are certainly going to need Mr Finger at a very early date.

52 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Have claim procedures for compensation arising from official requisitions or acquisition of any real or personal property been established by the Department of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

No.

53 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

What consideration is being given to special determinations for remuneration for police officers, prison officers and fire brigade officers, who were required to undertake extra duties during the cyclone emergency?

ANSWER

I am informed that the First Assistant Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, who is a member, I think, of the Police Arbitral Tribunal, arrived in Darwin yesterday and is meeting with the Police Association today. Draft proposals will be available for consideration by the Police Arbitral Tribunal as soon as it can convene. Similar considerations are being given to the other Northern Territory public services as the honourable member mentioned. I am advised that no protracted proceedings are expected to take place and a decision will be reached very quickly.

54 Mr PERRON to Mr TAMBLING—

What role would the Town Planning Board play in Darwin and other Northern Territory centres in the light of the formation of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?

ANSWER

I am unable to give a full answer at this time as I have had no prior notice of the question. I will endeavour to obtain an answer later this day. I should imagine that very strong consideration would be given to the normal operation of the Town Planning Boards outside the cyclone disaster area.

55 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING—

In light of the obvious demand which will now be placed on the Department of Housing and Construction and the Housing Commission, is he able to give an assurance that work in other centres will continue and that new contracts for further work will be let?

ANSWER

I am unable to give such an assurance at this stage. However, I ask that the question be placed on notice and I will endeavour to get a suitable reply.

56 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW—

What employment opportunities are available if employment is refused? Will people be asked to leave if they do not accept reasonable employment?

ANSWER

There is an excess of jobs anticipated in the foreseeable future. According to the information I have, people will not be asked to leave if they do not accept reasonable employment, but they will not be entitled to unemployment benefits.

57 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS—

It is obvious that as a result of Cyclone Tracy the Department of the Northern Territory will be heavily burdened administering Darwin. In light of this, is it planned to delegate to senior southern district public servants additional and sufficient powers to ensure the efficient administration of those areas?

ANSWER

I do not have the information to enable me to answer that question. If the honourable member will give me the question, I will attempt to find out the answer during the day and advise him.

58 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

Is the offer of leave as reported in the NT News going to apply to Darwin residents irrespective of whether or not they are public servants?

ANSWER

I have had no notice of this question and therefore I am not able to reply now. If honourable members have questions of this nature, I ask that they let me have them and I will send them to a place where I can get the information and advise them later in the day.

59 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW—

For what period will social service benefits be paid to able-bodied persons who wish to remain in Darwin?

ANSWER

The only answer that I have been able to get on this subject is that the policy on Social Service benefits is under consideration by the government at the moment.

59A ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Port Darwin yesterday asked me the reason for the restriction on entry to Darwin of people living in nearby areas such as Batchelor, Adelaide River, etc., on what basis in law or otherwise this restriction applied, and what was the legal basis for the work-permit system of restriction of entry applying to people coming from further afield or interstate. The information that I have received is that there are no restrictions at present on bona fide residents who need to make continued entry to Darwin. The previous restriction was based on a move to control the number of people entering the devastated areas before they were made safe. Authorisations to return are required to control the buildup of numbers and available accommodation, and to restrict entry of those people with no valid reason to be in the area.

59B ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me what form of temporary assistance in housing accommodation will be provided for families wishing to return to Darwin pending permanent rebuilding. The information I have received is in very general terms, that every endeavour will be made to provide accommodation for those persons returning to Darwin.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

## (November 1974 and January 1975)

(Numbers refer to question numbers not to pages. Names in brackets identify the members who asked or answered the questions.)


Aboriginals walking south (Tungutalum) 45

Aboriginals, evacuation (Kentish) 48

Administrator's Council (Kentish) 1

Assembly sitting dates (Lawrie) 2

Business operations, financial help (Kentish) 50

Compensation for property acquired (Steele) 52

Corned beef from France (MacFarlane) 3

Darwin Community College (MacFarlane) 22

Darwin Reconstruction Commission (Withnall) 35

Delegation of authority to southern district public servants (Robertson) 57

Education 1975 (Lawrie) 36

Electricity and water services (Dondas) 31

Employment in Darwin (Steele) 56

Evacuees—return (Perron) 33 (Lawrie) 41, 42; visits to (Perron) 38

Finger, Mr Martyn (Lawrie) 51

Free beach (Dondas) 10

Free food distribution (Kentish) 26

Government administrative HQ (Steele) 46

Housing, temporary (Lawrie) 32; (Letts) 59B

Housing contracts in N.T. (Robertson) 55

Iron ore loading facilities (Perron) 44

Kahlin Oval, rubbish dumping (Withnall) 39

Killed and missing (Dondas) 40

Legislative committee (Robertson) 4

Looting (Dondas) 40

National Heritage Commission and National Wildlife Service (Andrew) 8

National Parks and Wildlife Bill (Steele) 12

Northern Territory Reserves Board (Vale) 11

Northern suburbs, bulldozing rumour (Lawrie) 47

Office accommodation for members (Perron) 5

Permits to enter Darwin (Lawrie) 24; (Withnall) 25, 43; (Letts) 59A

Police, armed patrols (Lawrie) 27

Police, Commonwealth and interstate (Vale) 30

Police, prison and fire brigade officers, special remuneration (Dondas) 53

Political development post Tracy (Kentish) 34

Public service organisations representations (Ballantyne) 9

Rape (Dondas) 40

Recreation (Steele) 49

R and R leave (Vale) 58

Road and rail connections south and east (Kentish) 6

Secretary of department, overseas trip (Dondas) 28

Social service benefits (Steele) 59

Town Planning Board (Perron) 54

Trees, restoration (Dondas) 37

Trust funds (Withnall) 29

Water and electricity services (Dondas) 31

Wet season planning (Tungutalum) 7

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

An index to questions appears at the end of this part.

13 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

What funds were spent in 1972/73 and 1973/74 and what is available for spending in 1974/75 on—

(a) fisheries research; and
(b) tourist promotion in the Top End?

ANSWER

(a) Fisheries Research:

| | Expenditure | Allocation | Committed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1972/73 | $6,181 | $10,000 | $10,247 |
| 1973/74 | $5,895 | $10,500 | not available |
| 1974/75 | $5,518 (to 1/2/75) | $10,500 | $11,703 |
| (b) Tourist Board | | | |
| 1972/73 | not available | $316,000 | not available |
| 1973/74 | $321,750 extra funds allocated | $287,000 | not available |
| 1974/75 | $337,500 (to 1/2/75) | $450,000 | not available |

It should be noted that the amounts shown above are the operational funds for materials and services but do not include associated costs such as wages, extra duty, travel and vehicle hire.

At the present time all the records relating to this matter are not available because of losses occurring through the cyclone and the transport of others to Brisbane.

14 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

What plans do the authorities have for the provision of slipways or dry-dock facilities in Darwin for trawlers so that it will no longer be necessary to send them to Singapore or Perth for repairs and maintenance?

ANSWER

Prior to Cyclone Tracy the Port Authority was investigating the provision of a large slip-way or similar facility for the handling of trawlers.

Since Cyclone Tracy these matters have been deferred. The Authority, will in the near future, be rethinking the entire Port Development Plan which will no doubt include provision of the facility before mentioned.

The Authority's proposals will, in due course, be submitted to the Reconstruction Committee.

15 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is any research being carried out into improved preservation of potatoes, onions, apples, oranges and other lines to avoid losses due to deterioration without cold storage under Territory conditions?

ANSWER

No research of this nature is being carried out in the Northern Territory at present.

16 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

Has the Department of Education recommended to the government the establishment of a University at Darwin embracing the faculties of Tropical Agricultural Science, Tropical Veterinary Science and Tropical Medicine and, if so, with what result?

ANSWER

The need for a University or University College in Darwin has been drawn to the attention of the Australian Universities Commission and Darwin Planning Consultants. However, no detailed recommendations have been made regarding the faculties to be proposed within the proposed University.

17 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

What is the current situation regarding provision of lunches to deprived children at Katherine Area School, and if the arrangements are to be changed, when and to what extent?

ANSWER

There is no policy to provide school lunches in the Northern Territory. However the Department of the Northern Territory does assist needy families so the children in such families are provided with meals by their own parents or guardians.

18 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is a Rural Bank to be established in the Territory and, if so, when?

ANSWER

Because the function of a Rural Bank is usually the provision of extended credit to rural industries at concessional rates and because this type of assistance is available in the Northern Territory already, there is no

intention to establish another agency for this purpose. Financial assistance to rural industries is available from the Commonwealth Development Bank and the Primary Producers Board and is of the type normally available from Rural Banks.

19 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

When will the bridge over—

(a) King River on the Stuart Highway;
(b) King River on the Victoria Highway; and
(c) Edith River

have their approaches resealed, or sealed to enable their use as intended?

ANSWER

(a) Work is proceeding following the take-over of the contract from the previous contractor, Manning Civil Engineering Ltd. The approaches should be sealed within 2 weeks to allow use of the bridge.

(b) Work on the approaches will commence immediately the gang can be released from the Stuart Highway bridge and completion is expected in 6 weeks.

(c) The contract has been taken out of the original contractor's hands and a new contract has been let to complete the outstanding work on the bridge which should be completed in July 1975. The approaches will be constructed by day labour and should be completed by July 1975.

21 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

1. Are Teacher Training Courses in Agriculture available at the Darwin Community College?
2. Will teacher training facilities in agriculture be established in the Northern Territory to assist in meeting the demand for teachers so trained in NT and in other states?
3. Is a general background in the biology of agricultural production a good basis for the training of environmental workers?

ANSWER

1. Teacher Training Courses in Agriculture are not currently available at Darwin Community College.
2. It is proposed that the recently appointed Katherine Rural College Planning Committee will be assessing the need for teacher training in agricultural subjects and will make recommendations regarding programs and facilities required.
3. I have received the following advice from Dr Peter Rudman, Head of the School of Applied Science (Biology), Canberra College of Advanced Education: "If 'Environmental Workers' means ecologists the answer is yes, but more particularly a general background in the whole field of biology, rather than the biology of agricultural production is required. A good basis requires biology, aspects of ecology, land use, resource management etc.".

60 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1 What is the salary of:

(a) trainee nurses in NT Health Services;
(b) trained nurses in NT Health Services;
(c) trained nurse who qualifies for employment on a pastoral property and is subsidised by Government;
(d) Aboriginal nursing aides, such as Rita Bapi of Roper Valley Station, who looks after Aboriginal health?

2. Is literacy required of such people?
3. How do they distinguish between poisons etc if illiterate?

ANSWER

1. (a)

| First Year | Second Year | Third Year | Adult |
|---|---|---|---|
| $3,574 p.a. | $4,132 p.a. | $4,654 p.a. | $5,102 p.a. |

(b) Sisters: Range $6,125—$7,205 p.a.
Senior Sister: Range $7,660—$8,260 p.a.
Both Grades are in addition entitled to relevant District and Certificate Allowances.

(c) The Minister for Health has recently approved revised procedures for the payment of subsidies in respect of nursing staff employed on pastoral properties. The Principles embodied in the revision are:

- where it is considered that a full-time nursing service is justified a subsidy payment equivalent to the current rate of pay of a Senior Sister employed in the Public Service together with appropriate District Allowance will be made.
- the revised assessment will take into account all persons including children in receipt of regular nursing attention.

Generally a population of 200 persons will attract a full subsidy and a proportionate subsidy with smaller numbers.

The full subsidy rate is $7660 p.a. plus relevant District and Certificate Allowances.

(d) Departmental employees of Rita Bapi's category are locally designated Aboriginal Health Workers.

Aboriginal Health Worker: Range $4,961–$5,349 p.a.

2. The grade Aboriginal Health Worker was created for 2 main purposes:
   - To provide basic health care in small isolated Aboriginal outstations.
   - To assist nursing and medical staff in the larger Aboriginal communities.

   Literacy is generally required of trainees; however the selection of applicants is as far as possible left to the community in which the health worker is to serve.

3. This situation usually does not arise as the use of dangerous drugs is confined to professional staff. Health workers undertake a 2 year training course which includes instruction in the use of simpler medicines.

61 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS–

Do Ministers of the Crown, and other VIP's require permits before entering Darwin?

If the answer is yes, who issues the permits?

If the answer is no, why not?

ANSWER

Permits are required for all persons entering Darwin. Permits are issued by persons authorised under the Cyclone Disaster Emergency Ordinance.

62 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK–

1. What is the total amount of money allocated for Aboriginal development in NT in 1974/75?
2. What amount was spent on the services of consultants advising the various Aboriginal enterprises in 1973/74, and how much is to be spent in 1974/75?

ANSWER

1. Total funds allocated to date by Government for Aboriginal Development in the NT for 1974/75 is $40,369,816.00
2. (a) 1973/74–$397,249.00
   (b) 1974/75–$419,200.00 (estimated)

100 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW–

Have representations been made to the Minister for the Northern Territory or any other Minister for the introduction of a freight subsidy on goods consigned to Nhulunbuy business houses and, if not, will she do so?

ANSWER

No representations have been made to the Minister for the Northern Territory or the Minister for Transport within the past 18 months for a freight subsidy on goods consigned to Nhulunbuy by sea or air.

101 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW–

What stage has been reached in the planning of the Nhulunbuy Community Library?

ANSWER

Detailed assessment of the requirements for, and practicability of, a Community Library at Nhulunbuy has been undertaken by a Committee convened jointly by the Department of Education and the Department of the Northern Territory. The Committee has not yet made any firm recommendations.

102 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW–

Why were plans for a high school at Nhulunbuy cancelled?

ANSWER

No definite plans have been formulated regarding the provision of a separate high school at Nhulunbuy.

Surveys have been regularly carried out but in order for a high school to be viable and provide a suitable range of subjects and electives, a minimum enrolment of 300 students is required. 190 students are currently enrolled in secondary courses at Nhulunbuy Area School.

It is also educationally desirable that a full high school cater for grades 8-12 (form 1 to matriculation). A further survey carried out at the end of 1974, with a view to establishing a matriculation class at Nhulunbuy Area School in 1975, indicated that the number of parents who were prepared to enrol their students was insufficient to warrant formation of the class.

However, a second site has been reserved at Nhulunbuy for future educational needs and the community's views will be sought throughout all stages of planning additional educational facilities.

125 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN–

In view of the demonstration of the value of the Katherine Flight Service Unit during the emergency evacuation of Darwin, will the facility be retained?

ANSWER

Destruction of aviation facilities by cyclone Tracy has been so great that concentration of effort has been directed towards facility restoration barely sufficient to permit early resumption of scheduled domestic airline operations. Review of longer term operational planning is now in course and this will decide the future of Katherine aviation facilities.

127 Mr MacFARLANE and Mr RYAN—

In view of the fact that 54 of the 56 radio telephones connected to the Katherine Telephone Exchange are located in the Katherine District, why is the exchange to be relocated in Darwin?

ANSWER

Because of the substantial staffing economies that would accrue and for other considerations, it was intended that operator assistance for calls made by subscribers to both the Katherine conventional radio telephone exchange be transferred to Darwin co-incident with the cutover of the new Katherine automatic exchange later this year. However, because of operational problems at Darwin arising from the recent cyclone it has been decided to retain the operator assistance facility at Katherine for the time being.

152 Mr PERRON to Miss ANDREW—

1. When is it anticipated that business premises in the Winnellie Industrial area will receive power supplies?
2. How many linesmen are working in Darwin at present?
3. Is the Electricity Supply Undertaking having any trouble getting the supplies it requires?

ANSWER

1. As at 6 p.m. on 13/2/75 ninety four (94) services had been connected to commercial consumers in the Winnellie area. Four service gangs have been working in the area since 11/2/75. Prior to this only 1 gang was working in the area. It is anticipated that the majority of consumers in the area requiring supply will have it within 2 weeks from 13/2/75 providing their installations have been restored to an acceptable condition. Some low voltage mains are still to be strung in the area. Also the HV System needs to be strengthened.
2. The number of line crew working in Darwin including cable jointers, inspectors and operators totalled 219 as at 12/2/75. This figure is diminishing gradually as interstate Supply Authorities return home. The figure at 1/2/75 was 259.
3. Some material supply problems due to the usual delays caused by lack of raw materials and transport holdups are arising. However, serious delays in this field have been avoided by the use of air transport and a nation-wide material acquisition network arranged by the Department of Housing and Construction through its regional State Offices.

173 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will he consider introducing legislation to restore the offence of drunkenness to the statute books.

ANSWER

Yes.

184 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. Does the Government have any plans to replace the one radio telephone serving 700 people at Roper Settlement with more adequate communication facilities?
2. Does the Government intend providing any communication facilities for approximately 1000 Aborigines living close to the Roper Highway?
3. What is the estimated cost of installing a land line from the Stuart Highway along the Roper Highway to Roper Settlement?

ANSWER

1. There are no immediate plans at this stage to replace the radio telephone and outpost radio facilities serving the Roper River area. Whilst the Postmaster-General's Department is most anxious to provide improved communication to outback areas there is no economic alternative at present to replace high frequency radio telephone services such as is provided at the Roper River settlement.

   The Post Office is undertaking continuing research in this aspect but unfortunately present indications are that it will be quite some time yet before any worthwhile alternative is found.
2. There are no specific plans to provide communication facilities for Aborigines along the Roper Highway who are currently without telecommunication services. However, should any of these communities apply, their applications will receive the full consideration normally accorded such requests.
3. It is estimated that the cost of providing a landline from the Stuart Highway to the Roper River settlement is of the order of $400,000.

186 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. Why was the micro wave link to and from Darwin useless during the cyclone?

2. What improvements are planned to ensure that Darwin and all other centres on the micro wave route will remain in communication during future emergencies?

ANSWER

1. Although the normal trunk circuits in and out of Darwin failed, this was due to water damage to equipment following roof damage to the Smith Street communication building which houses the equipment necessary to derive the individual trunk channels. The micro wave system itself was not interrupted and the Black Street terminal building maintained contact with Mt Isa throughout by means of an order wire circuit. During Christmas morning this circuit was used to pass emergency messages to other States for the Army, the Department of Health and from the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory, Mr O'Brien, to the Natural Disaster Headquarters in Canberra.

Later in the day another circuit was added and one of the lines was made available to Major General Stretton when he arrived.

On 26 December messages from the Director of Housing and Construction and others to multiple addresses seeking help were despatched by this means until full trunk facilities were restored after noon on that day.

2. Apart from ensuring more secure building accommodation for vital equipment, the Department is implementing plans to diversify the trunk outlets from the various Northern Territory centres including Darwin. Action has already been taken to place some trunk circuits in an underground cable from Darwin to Howard Springs, where they link with the existing pole route running south. Pre-cyclone security plans are being reviewed in depth following experience with Cyclone Tracy and measures, as practicable and in conjunction with other authorities, will be introduced.

189 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

When will the Stuart Highway to Mainoru development road be sealed for the benefit of approximately 1000 people living at Banyili, Beswick, Maranboy, Eva Valley, Euralba, Mountain Valley, Mainoru and Bulmar?

ANSWER

Northern Territory Legislative Assembly Question on Notice No. 151 related to the sealing of the section of the Stuart Highway to Mainoru Road from the Stuart Highway to Beswick Station. A reply to this question was forwarded on 3 March 1975. There are no plans for sealing the road beyond Beswick at this stage. However, progressive upgrading of sections of the road, including some creek crossings, is planned.

65 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I refer to the Citizens Advisory Committee. I am aware that there was a list of community organisations drawn up to be approached. Who was responsible for deciding which community organisation would be approached and which would not, and what were the criteria?

ANSWER

The Citizens Advisory Committee derived from a motion at the first meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. The need to have such an advisory committee urgently was seen and a motion was carried to set up such a committee. A 3-man sub-committee of the Darwin Interim Reconstruction Commission was appointed to find out and put together suitable names for an advisory committee. Those 3 men were Mr Alan O'Brien, the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory, Mr Harold Brennan, the Mayor of the Corporation of the City of Darwin, and myself. The sub-committee compiled a list of organisations which were regarded as representative of this community and which still had some remnant of their organisation operating in Darwin. Some 25 such organisations were contacted and they in turn drew up a panel of 2 or 3 names as their suggestions for members of the advisory committee. From those names—well over 30 at the time—we chose 16 in the first instance and those people comprised a committee which elected its own chairman. Subsequently, on representation from the Citizens Advisory Committee itself that various suburban action groups have a representative on that committee, the Reconstruction Commission had a third meeting, accepted that advice and resolved that additional representatives be added from those suburban action groups.

66 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

What positive steps have been taken by Government to ensure provision of temporary accommodation for the homeless people of Darwin?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any positive steps that have been taken by the Government in the form of a firm decision for the provision of temporary accommodation of the type suggested by the honourable member. The Department of Housing and Construction, at the last Interim Reconstructon Commission meeting, did put forward a proposal in the form of a recommendation to government to purchase up to 1000 temporary accommodation units which would be available for renting to people who have not got a home in Darwin. I would take it to include the public service workers in Darwin and also the private people.

The reconstruction commission subsequently passed a resolution which went a little further and recommended strongly to the Government that temporary accommodation be used, with assistance from Government, to assist the rate of return of people to this city. Although those 2 recommendations were passed through the commission, I am not yet aware of any firm decision which has been taken on the matter by the Government.

67 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What arrangements have been made to have the Katherine Town Plan displayed in positions where it can be inspected outside office hours; that is, before 8 a.m. and after 4.21 p.m. and at weekends?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any plans at the moment to make the Katherine Town Plan available for display as requested. However, I will undertake to discuss it with the department concerned and will relay the answer to the honourable member as soon as possible.

68 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

As both the Majority Leader of the Assembly and a member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, I would assume that he can have consultations with the Department of the Northern Territory regarding capital works programs, which no doubt will be amended. If that has been the case, would the honourable member table a list of the operations of the proposed capital works program along with information as to why such operations were proposed?

ANSWER

I have a good deal of sympathy with the object expressed in the question that the people of the Northern Territory should be aware of any alterations now proposed to the capital works program and have an opportunity to express their view on it. As far as the Interim Reconstruction Commission is concerned, at our last meeting we did have a list of capital works programs projects which the Department of the Northern Territory considered might have to be deferred due to the new circumstances arising out of the cyclone. This list was examined by the commission. I point out that this Interim Commission has not any real power of decision at the moment—it is only working in the field of recommendation—and as a result of the considerations of the Commission a number of major projects and minor projects were recommended to be continued and not deferred.

In addition to that, there were a number of other projects which the commission did not have sufficient information on to be able to make a firm recommendation. Further information on those projects will be sought from the Department of Housing and Construction and the Department of the Northern Territory

so that at the first opportunity, even by contact in between meetings, the commission can further advise the Government whether more of these projects should be retained or not.

In addition to that information, I will ask the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory if this list can be made available. I think that the actual recommendations of the commission would be the property of the commission. I personally would have no objection at all to making them available to the honourable member but I will try and check out with Sir Leslie Thiess, the chairman, and make sure that that is in order and provide the information the honourable member sought.

69 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Does he have any information on government financial arrangements proposed for rebuilding houses in Darwin?

ANSWER

No. I do not believe that such information will be available until the federal bill on the reconstruction commission has been introduced and dealt with. I believe that this information is vitally important and again it was the subject of a resolution and a strong recommendation. The first recommendation made at the last meeting of the Darwin Interim Reconstruction Commission was to the government to decide and to publish details of the financial assistance which will be available. To the best of my knowledge that decision has not been made. If it has been made, it has not been made available to me or to the public.

70 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Will he investigate the present entry permit system under the Social Welfare Ordinance with a view of bringing about a relaxation or an agreement to allow residents of Nhulunbuy to have freedom of access to local beaches and Arnhem Land off Nabalco Proprietary Limited leased land?

ANSWER

I am aware of recent press publicity concerning this matter and apparent problems which are being experienced at Nhulunbuy. It is my intention at the first opportunity to go to Nhulunbuy and speak with those concerned. I feel that there are grounds for an amicable agreement between all persons concerned, having due respect to the Aboriginal people of the area and the Arnhem Land Reserve and the population of Nhulunbuy and surrounding areas.

71 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Is it to his knowledge true that the Minister has flatly refused all private requests from members of this Assembly for information or discussions on the terms of the Darwin Reconstruction Bill?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge the statement made by the honourable member for Port Darwin is true.

72 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has he any information regarding the Minister's statement on acquisition of land below the 11-metre "surge line"?

ANSWER

I seem to be in the unfortunate position of not being able to give much information in relation to serious questions. The answer is along the same lines as ones that I have previously given. The whole question of acquisition policy by the federal government following the cyclone was the subject of another recommendation by the interim commission, that the government clarify its policy and announce immediately on this question. There has not been any decision made or announced yet.

73 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

In December 1974, Senator Wriedt, Minister for Agriculture, announced that $20m would be made available to cattlemen of Queensland and the Northern Territory who had no income other than cattle. Has this money been approved by Cabinet and is it in fact available?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge the money has been approved and is available and some of it has been advanced. But to be sure of my facts I would have to check this with the Commonwealth Development Bank in Darwin, who are the agents of the Government in this matter, and advise the honourable member further later in the sittings.

74 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING—

What action has been taken to reroof houses at Berrimah, Howard Springs and Humpty Doo?

ANSWER

As far as I am aware, there is no differentiation between the reroofing and temporary repair program anywhere this side of Noonamah. I will however take the matter up with the Accommodation Coordination Committee to ascertain if the works program has any differential priorities in that area.

75 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK—

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Alice Springs. What deleterious effects on the population of Alice Springs and the quality of life in that town has he observed that may be attributed to the removal from the statutes of the crime of drunkenness?

ANSWER

I have observed many deleterious effects but I would ask that the question be placed on notice to allow full answer later.

76 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Can he confirm, as a member of the interim commission, that the commission has been and is able to do nothing about reconstruction of Darwin 7 weeks after the cyclone because of the failure of the government to announce policy in any of the fields with respect to which the commission will be functioning?

ANSWER

It is true that the interim commission has not been successful in carrying out any executive action directed towards the reconstruction of the City of Darwin. At the time the government announced its intention to establish a reconstruction commission, back in January, they indicated that this would be established by statute in the Federal Parliament and that an interim commission would be set up in the meantime to examine the situation and make recommendations to government. That is all that this commission has been; it has been an advisory body.

77 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

What immediate plans are there for the provision of a medium security jail in the Darwin area. If he does not know these plans, will he seek as a matter of urgency some clarification from the relevant department because at the moment there is no medium security prison.

ANSWER

I understand at the moment that endeavours have been made to get the prison farm at Gunn Point operative; there were some administrative problems there in relation to staff. I am not aware of the situation just at this moment in respect of medium-term and other prisoners. Some, I understand, are being held at the police cells and working at Fannie Bay, on the grounds there during the day. Others have been transferred to Alice Springs. I will endeavour to find out more details later.

78 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

It is true that people are being held in police cells in Darwin. Is he aware that remand prisoners are being held in those cells with no exercise for up to 2 weeks and this is contrary to United Nations convention? They cannot be sent to Fannie Bay Goal to work because as they are on remand they are not convicted and are not liable to work. However to have them held in cells for up to 2 weeks without exercise is completely contrary to every convention Australia recognises.

ANSWER

I am not entirely aware of that situation.

79 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

After the cyclone, 2 rapists sentenced to 6 years' jail were released after serving only 2 months of their sentence. Have they been apprehended?

ANSWER

As far as I am aware, these 2 persons are at large. I believe they were released by order of the Magistrate and they have not been taken back into custody. That is the information I have had.

80 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

What child-care facilities are available in Darwin at the moment?

ANSWER

I am unaware of any child-care facilities available in Darwin at the moment.

81 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

Is it a fact that on either Christmas Day or Boxing Day prisoners held at Gunn Point walked off Gunn Point and there has been no action as yet to apprehend and charge them as escapees?

ANSWER

I believe that on the day of the cyclone and shortly afterwards there was some misunderstanding as to terms of release of persons at Gunn Point and some prisoners in good faith did leave that area believing that they had been released. Many of those prisoners have since been taken back into custody and there are warrants in existence for those who are still at large.

82 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

There are reports that the government and the Department of the Northern Territory owe contractors and suppliers in Katherine large sums of money. Will he investigate these reports?

ANSWER

I will inquire into this report.

83 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr SPEAKER—

Do members of this Assembly, including yourself, have to have permits to enter Darwin on Assembly business?

ANSWER

Yes, members of this Assembly require permits. The Director of Emergency Services has told me that new permits are being issued to members.

84 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

What provisions have been made for the after-school care of children whose parents are both working?

ANSWER

I ask that this question be placed on notice. To my knowledge there have been no provisions made yet although some independent actions have been taken by the various suburban action groups.

85 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he aware that the programs of reroofing and supplying of services such as electricity to areas of the northern suburbs beyond Rapid Creek appear to be lagging well behind other areas of Darwin?

ANSWER

Other than the opinion expressed in the question, I am not aware that the programs are lagging.

86 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I ask for clarification of an answer he gave to a previous question concerning the capital work program. Has he had discussions with the Department of the Northern Territory in his capacity as the Majority Leader?

ANSWER

No, the Department of the Northern Territory has had no discussions with me in my capacity as Majority Leader or a member of this Assembly. The only way in which discussions have come about is through the medium of the Interim Reconstruction Commission.

87 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

In light of the fact that there is no community welfare officer or social worker at Nhulunbuy, will he endeavour to arrange with the Department of the Northern Territory to have a suitably qualified officer permanently based at Nhulunbuy?

ANSWER

Yes, I will make approaches to the relevant departments to make sure that a suitably qualified person is stationed at Nhulunbuy. I will endeavour to find out what the immediate plans of the department are and advise him later.

88 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr EVERINGHAM—

On behalf of the member for Alice Springs, I ask if he would obtain from the Commissioner of Police as a matter of urgency, and table in this Assembly, a statement detailing any increase in criminal acts or difficulties in the administration of law in Alice Springs attributed to the removal from the statutes of the crime of drunkenness?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be put on notice, but I will do my best to ensure that these details are ascertained as quickly as possible.

89 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is he aware that the beef industry in the Northern Territory is a terminal occupation? If so, what representations has he made to the federal government for immediate assistance remembering that the Northern Territory is a federal responsibility?

ANSWER

The Cattle Producers Council is the combined body representing all the cattlemens associations and the beef industry of the Northern Territory. I have attended most of the meetings of that body here in Darwin and I have assisted the Cattle Producers Council secretariat and executive in drawing up a number of approaches to the federal government for forms of assistance which would best help cattlemen in the beef industry through this desperate situation that they have been in and which may well get worse. In the last few weeks I have been almost fully occupied, I must confess, in matters relating to the Darwin disaster and the Reconstruction Commission, but now that things are getting back to a more organised basis I assure the honourable member that I will renew my representations to the federal government as the Executive Member for Primary Industry to provide immediate assistance to the cattle industry in appropriate ways.

90 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Concerning the announcements from the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory that approximately 1500 public servants would be transferred interstate, I ask whether he has had discussions with the secretary or if his advice is being sought as one would assume that some of those people would have been willing to remain in the Territory and to transfer to the Northern Territory Public Service as the various government departments were transferred over.

ANSWER

I did approach the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory about this matter when the statement about the 1500 people was first made. The secretary informed me at that time that, while no precise figure was available on how many public servants might be involved in the establishment of the Brisbane sub-headquarters, the feeling was that it might be in the order of a couple of hundred. I asked him also whether those who did not want to go to Brisbane could arrange a transfer to another branch of government here, say from the Department of the Northern Territory to the Department of Health or the Department of Housing and Construction. I asked him whether this would be permitted or considered and the answer was that it would be.

91 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN—

Is it a fact that the Fire Brigades Arbitral Tribunal will be convened in the near future to bring down special determinations for the remuneration of fire officers serving during the cyclone emergency?

ANSWER

I have heard mention of this. I do not have any firm information regarding approaches to the tribunal but I will attempt to get this information and pass it on to him.

92 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

Has the majority group a policy on a free beach for Darwin?

ANSWER

This matter has been discussed at a parliamentary party meeting and the decision was reached that the question of a free beach, and any legislation which might be introduced pertaining thereto, would be a matter of personal decision and personal vote. There was no party policy established on this question.

93 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware that alcoholic refreshments are being consumed in an uncontrolled manner at the airport with resultant beercan litter and behavioural problems? Why is the official airport bar closed? Will he make representations to the airport manager to have the bar reopened and the situation brought under control?

ANSWER

The situation as he describes it, is true. The situation out at the airport is a bit chaotic regarding the drinking habits of the arrivals and departures. I have been trying to contact the manager of the airport for an official reason why the bar is not open. I have heard secondhand that it is because of structural damage. However, I have also heard secondhand that the building has been inspected by an independent engineer who claims that it would be quite safe. In addition, if the upper floor was unsafe, I suggest that it would also be unsafe on the lower floor where hundreds of people are departing and arriving. I will continue in efforts to contact the manager of the airport to get an answer on that question.

94 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is it a fact that the Police Officers Arbitral Tribunal will be convened in the near future to bring down special determinations for the remuneration of police officers serving during the cyclone emergency?

ANSWER

I understand that the Police Arbitral Tribunal met within about 14 days of the cyclone and a determination was brought down. This determination made special provisions for extra remuneration for police officers who fulfilled their duties during and after the cyclone emergency. I do not have specific details of the award but I believe it was a very generous one.

95 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will he make a statement in this place outlining the Country-Liberal Party recommendations on decentralisation of the Department of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I would be prepared to do so at a later stage of these sittings.

96 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr SPEAKER—

Has he any indications from the Minister for the Northern Territory as to provision of a new Assembly building, having regard to the state of this present one?

ANSWER

I have had discussions with the Minister for the Northern Territory and he has indicated that submission should be put before Darwin Reconstruction Commission. This is being prepared in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Construction who have made a survey of the whole precincts of the Legislative Assembly. Today I shall get a written report which I believe will indicate that this Assembly building is irreparable and that members will be given offices elsewhere. However, we will endeavour to keep this building in sufficient repair to enable the Assembly to continue to meet here until a new building is erected in another place.

104 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has any date been set for the next sittings of this Assembly?

ANSWER

In discussion with most other members, I have indicated that there will probably be a requirement for a brief sitting in late March, around about 19 or 20 March, at which stage we may, amongst other things, have to review the emergency legislation and finalise other urgent matters concerned with the cyclone. I imagine it will only be a brief 1 or 2 day sitting.

105 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr SPEAKER—

Do you agree, as Speaker, with statements attributed to the Minister for the Northern Territory, that this Assembly is ruined and that is the reason for the delay or postponement of constitutional development of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I have heard the statement by the Minister and am greatly disturbed by it. I accept that the building is beyond repair as a long term project, but I believe that I have the full support of all members and staff to carry on here until new premises become available. I have prepared a statement for the Press in which I have said that the building is beyond repair as a long term project but that the chamber and staff offices will continue to be used until a new parliament house becomes available to us. Members have already been allocated temporary offices in Block 1 and I understand that the Majority Leader has received an assurance from the Minister and the Secretary of the Department that space will be made available for the executive members and their staff.

In the Press release, I have recalled that, in the early days of the Legislative Council, meetings were held in conditions hardly less arduous that those we have today. I do not believe that the present membership and staff have less fortitude than the early members of the Council. In the statement I have referred to the Assembly sitting 3 times in the first 6 weeks of this year. There is every indication that the level of business this year will be normal or above normal.

I have one difficulty that I hope the Minister will resolve for me, and that is in the matter of staffing. The Department of the Legislative Assembly has an establishment sufficient for its needs but all positions unfilled at the beginning of the year were frozen; and until they are unfrozen there will be a shortage of staff. I will be writing to the Minister as a matter of urgency asking him to unfreeze certain positions and to provide me with funds to recruit to these positions.

Further, today I received a letter from the Director of Housing and Construction relating to the proposed parliament house. Part of the letter reads: "In view of the interest of the Reconstruction Commission in aspects of town planning and siting, this department is preparing for the Legislative Assembly alternative site studies in readiness for the anticipated 5th meeting of the commission in March".

106 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

What are the official reasons for closing Darwin airport to international flights and how long will it be closed for?

ANSWER

I have been unable to contact any official of the Department of Civil Aviation. However, I have spoken to an executive of Qantas who advised that the reasons they were given for closing the airport were that the navigational aids which were being used and are still usable are being supplied with power by emergency sets and therefore do not have any emergency backup. This is a normal requirement of the Internation Civil Aviation Organisation. There are also some navigational aids which are not operating. The time that the airport will be unavailable could be up to 6 months but they are hoping it will be less. They intend to get it operating as an international airport as soon as possible.

107 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN—

Could he offer any information about the opening of the Casuarina fire station?

ANSWER

I spoke with the Chief Fire Officer this morning concerning the opening of Casuarina fire station. He had with him at the time a building inspector and they were going out to have a look at the building at Casuarina. He is hopeful that they will be able to get the Casuarina fire station operating at the earliest.

While on the subject of firemen, I was asked a question yesterday regarding their claims through their tribunal for allowances. The Chief Fire Officer has advised me that they had not made any claims. However, the firemen themselves are supporting the TLC claims for $55 a week.

108 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

What was the result of the investigation into the large sums of money owed to contractors and other people in Katherine?

ANSWER

I regret that I have been unable to obtain the information requested by him. I hope to be able to let him have it before the close of this sitting.

109 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

Will he enquire into the completion date of Yirrkala Medical Centre and will he find out the commencement date of that centre?

ANSWER

The Department of Health has received advice from the Department of Housing and Construction that the health centre at Yirrkala will be ready for handover at the end of February 1975. The centre will start operating approximately 2 weeks after the handover provided normal barge services are available to convey supplies and equipment to the area.

110 Mr PERRON to Mr EVERINGHAM—

When will the Registrar General's Office resume the registration of transfers to real estate in Darwin?

ANSWER

As far as I was aware, the Registrar General's Office had been open for some time for the registration of conveyances of real property. I understand some transfers have been made there in the course of the last couple of weeks. I will, however, make investigations to ensure that it is open. I know that the Registrar General's Office was very fortunate in that very few, if any, of its records were damaged during the cyclone.

111 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he aware of the indiscriminate dumping of corrugated iron, bulldozing of trees and dumping of wet garbage along the Nemarluk Drive? Would he direct this matter to the Director of Emergency Services?

ANSWER

It was drawn to my attention this morning that this indiscriminate dumping is taking place. I will take the matter up with the Director of Emergency Services and the Town Clerk.

112 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Does the honourable member have a policy on extended school hours during the coming months. If so, what is the policy, has she discussed it with the Department of Education and to what result?

ANSWER

I have discussed at length with the Education Department the current policy relating to after-school activities. Each school is invited to call a committee and make arrangements. My policy would be exactly the same. In the northern suburbs we have got together a voluntary group which is organising after-school activities.

113 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN—

Has he any idea how long it would take to reinstate the iron-ore loading facilities and if such reinstatement has been put in hand?

ANSWER

The iron-ore facilities at the wharf I believe were originally going to be out of operation for about 6 months; this was an estimate. It was planned as a repair job by the Navy. I spoke with one of the executives of Frances Creek last week and he said that they felt that repairs could be made to the wharf at an earlier period. However, if the honourable member would like to put that question on notice I will see that he gets a full answer to it.

114 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Will she consider the provisions of full-time auxiliary staff, other than volunteers, who would be paid an amount to provide the necessary supervision for out-of-hours work at the schools.

ANSWER

Yes. I have considered this and I have discussed it with the Education Department. However, I am waiting until Friday when the results of their moves in the direction of after-school education are apparent. In this particular case, it will not be on a voluntary basis; the cost of providing staff to provide these after-school activities will be met.

115 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

What are the employment opportunities in Darwin at present and has he figures available of job vacancies?

ANSWER

The Department of Labor have advised me that currently vacancies exist for 350 positions in Darwin. They are averaging around about 40 to 45 jobs and 40 to 45 people looking for jobs per day, so the status quo is being maintained. Most of the jobs are in trades but there are quite a few labourer positions available. There are no unemployed at present and the attitude of the department is that anybody capable of doing any work in Darwin will have to take the job given to him or her by the department.

116 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Can he advise what form tourism will take in the Top End of the Territory this year?

ANSWER

A complete report is being compiled at the moment by the Tourist Bureau and I hope to table it during this sitting.

117 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Is it a fact that the Katherine powerhouse is in a bad way, that they have no engineer, and that 2 of their generating sets are out of commission and 2 others are operating at only 70 per cent capacity?

ANSWER

The powerhouse at Katherine I believe has some sort of problem. I was aware of this but I have not been able at this stage to get the exact problem. Once again I request that the honourable member put this question on notice and I will attempt to get full answer for him.

118 Mr PERRON to Miss ANDREW—

When is it anticipated that business premises in the Winneville industrial area will receive power supplies? How many linesmen are working in Darwin at the present? Is the Electricity Supply Undertaking having any trouble getting supplies it requires?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to put those questions on notice because, in spite of several attempts at investigation in this area, I have not had an official reply.

119 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

How many applications have been made for business assistance, and how many of these applications have been approved?

ANSWER

I understand that a considerable number of applications for these loans have been received to date. I understand that none have yet been approved. Several are in the process of being approved but it will depend on the arrival of valuers in Darwin from the south. I understand valuers are expected to arrive on about the 24th of this month and that after that applications should be able to be processed.

120 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

Would he endeavour to obtain from the Department of the Northern Territory precisely which branches of that department will be affected by transfer, the categories of people it is intended to transfer, and the numbers of people in those categories?

ANSWER

I will attempt to obtain the information required and provide it later in these sittings.

121 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware that a mining company in Indonesia has been supplying its operations from Darwin by aircraft? They have had 2 flights into Darwin since the cyclone yet further flights have been refused on the grounds that they are international flights. Will he see if he can correct the situation?

ANSWER

I was unaware of this. However I will attempt to look into the matter further and give an answer to the honourable member.

122 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

When will the Beef Stabilization Bill be presented?

ANSWER

The Cattle Price Stabilization Bill became available from the printer this morning. I did not give notice of it because that would have had the effect of deferring its introduction and discussion until tomorrow. I intend to introduce it and give the second reading speech on it at the conclusion of the Orders of the Day today.

130 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Have precautions against the entry of foot and mouth disease into Australia been relaxed since the cyclone?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge the answer is no. In fact I think that the risks are less than they were before the cyclone. Not long before the cyclone, a sub-committee of the Cattlemen's Association of Northern Australia made an examination of the precautions which were then existing in the port of Darwin and the airport of Darwin against foot and mouth disease and came to the conclusion in a report to the Association that they were adequate. Since the cyclone, the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch quarantine people have been still on deck and the Department of Health are still vigilant in the matter. But with the cessation of international flights landing at this airport one of the main risk areas would have disappeared completely.

131 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

What is the current situation in the Peko retrenchments? Have the unemployed been found other jobs?

ANSWER

The overall picture is still not clear. However, I do have some information that would be of interest. The company has retrenched about 50% of the proposed retrenchments. A further 250 will be laid off in the next fortnight. Fifteen of these people have already arrived in Darwin to take up employment opportunities and a further 45 are coming next week. I believe there are a further 50 applications to work in Darwin pending. There are substantial numbers of hard-rock miners and smelter operators who can be employed by the mining industry in Western Australia. They will take up their positions within the next month. There are several staff positions that have been vacated at Peko in the normal turnover of the company's labour force. The Department of Labour and Immigration has been very quick to recognise the problem at Tennant Creek and has declared the Tennant Creek area a Regional Employment Development area; there should be no trouble in finding a job for any man that wants to work, particularly married men with families who cannot afford to move away from the town.

132 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has he yet any information on the number of public servants liable to be transferred interstate, the categories into which they fall and the number in each category?

ANSWER

I am unable to give the information to the honourable member at this time but I hope it will be available later in the day. I will send it to her when it is available.

133 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What urgent action is being proposed to alleviate the housing shortage in Katherine?

ANSWER

I am not fully conversant with the housing shortages in Katherine. I would ask that the question be placed on notice. I will endeavour to obtain an answer for him today.

134 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I assume that he is the leader of the executive members on the Administrator's Council and this question deals with Administrator's Council affairs. Are the private members of the Administrator's Council aware that categories of people permitted to enter Darwin are adult male residents, and adult female residents who have essential employment and satisfactory accommodation? In other words, there is a vast difference between permission to enter for adult females and adult males. If they are aware of this, do they condone it, do they propose changing it, or have they ever discussed it?

ANSWER

The categories and classifications for people eligible to enter Darwin under the permit system have changed from time to time and the latest definitive statement on this matter was only made within the last couple of days. The Administrator's Council is of course composed of 5 elected members with the Administrator, and each of those members has an equal voice in the Council. We have not discussed the matter alluded to by the honourable member for Nightcliff recently but there will be a couple of meetings of the Administrator's Council in the near future and I will bear in mind her desire to see the matter discussed and for the Administrator's Council to form a view on it. I will endeavour to see that it is carried out.

135 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

What recommendations of the Gibb Committee Report have been implemented?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

136 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Is it a fact that there is a shortage of secondary school teachers in Darwin at the present moment?

ANSWER

I have had representations made to me on this particular matter and in my capacity as the Executive Member for Education have sent telegrams to Mr Beasley and the Commissioner for Education. As yet I have had no reply. I have had representations made to me that there is a shortage in specialist fields.

137 Mr VALE to Mr SPEAKER—

This question concerns the invitations honourable members have received to attend a meeting in Katherine. Are there any provisions for members to travel to meetings such as these?

ANSWER

On matters such as this the Speaker has discretionary powers. Any person who wishes to attend a conference such as this should make approaches to the Speaker.

138 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

What steps does he propose to take in order to draw up a budget for Katherine and other areas of the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

I am flattered that he considers I have money with which to allocate a budget to Katherine. The honourable member is aware I am certain that as yet this Assembly has no executive powers, as has become painfully obvious since the cyclone. It also has no money to speak of and I am therefore unable to assist him.

139 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Is there a blueprint for tourism in the Northern Territory and in particular the Top End and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

The simple answer to the question is no. However, I do believe that the Director of the Tourist Bureau and the Tourist Board have been mindful of this problem for some time and have underway certain proposals under which to undertake a survey and prepare a report for the industry.

140 Mr MacFARLANE to Mrs LAWRIE—

In her capacity as honorary member for the National Estate——

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Nightcliff is not responsible for that position in the Legislative Assembly.

141 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Does the Majority Party in this House have a spokesman on Aboriginal Affairs. If so, who is he?

ANSWER

Yes. We did circulate to everybody, I think, a list of responsibilities. It went to all members of the Assembly and to departments, but I will secure another copy for the honourable member. The person in charge of Aboriginal matters, in so far as answering questions etc. and making contacts for legislation, is the Executive Member for Social Affairs, the honourable member for MacDonnell.

142 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

Does he in his capacity as spokesman on Aboriginal Affairs have a policy concerning the desire of Gove residents to be able to travel outside the township area? If so, what is it?

ANSWER

The honourable member may recall the other day there was a question asked on this matter by the honourable member for Nhulunbuy. I then said that I had recently read Press reports concerning the matter and it was my intention to travel there and have discussions with the local people and those concerned with a view to some amicable arrangements, which I am sure can be made, for the movement of persons living in the area through the area.

143 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Does the National Estate interest itself in preserving the life stories of pioneers like the late Charlie Dargie?

ANSWER

I cannot answer the question on behalf of the National Estate, nor is it my province in this Assembly to answer questions relating to environment and conservation. I believe that we do have an executive member who has the responsibility in that field and that is the Executive Member for Education and Consumer Services,

the honourable member for Sanderson. If the honourable member for Elsey would direct his question to her, I am sure she would be happy to take it on board and see what she could find out for him.

144 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK—

What stage has drafting of the proposed amendments to the Mental Defectives Ordinance reached? If he is unaware of this, is he prepared to undertake that he will look into the matter and speed up any proposed legislation?

ANSWER

I am unable to advise to what stage the drafting of the revised Mental Defectives Ordinance is at. I will undertake to find out and to inform the members concerned.

145 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: On Tuesday the honourable member for Nightcliff asked me if I was aware that prisoners on remand were being held in the police cells for periods in excess of 14 days without proper exercises. I have made inquiries and I am advised that for at least the last 10 to 12 days all prisoners on remand have been conveyed daily to the Fannie Bay Gaol site. There they are being housed in the former female section which provides shelter, a kitchen area, a separate open-air exercise yard. They are being kept separate from sentenced prisoners and generally their conditions are vastly improved on what they formerly were at the time of the cyclone. There are presently in Darwin 13 prisoners being held on remand and 28 prisoners under sentence.

146 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Has the honourable member had discussions with officers of the Australian Electoral Office regarding the feasibility of local government elections being held on time as scheduled.

ANSWER

No.

147 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: I wish to answer a question about tourism asked of me yesterday by the honourable member for Stuart. The Director of the Tourist Bureau has been south to speak to airline companies, coach operators and accommodation people in an endeavour to seek their aid to promote the top end of the Territory as a tourist destination once authorities give permission to bring in tourists. He has also spoken to local industry people who are equally as keen to ensure that their livelihood in tourism is maintained this season. The response from the domestic airlines could not have been better; they have agreed to fly the trade Press to Darwin so they can see for themselves the tourist plan, bring selected retail travel agents to Darwin from all over Australia, promote the Top End in special package deals once the authorities give permisson to do so, and allocate funds to advertising when the Top End is open to tourists. Coach operators have agreed to continue their operations, particularly the camping tours, and to make contact with safari operators based out of Darwin, the idea here being that the existing camping sites be used as bases for day tours to Darwin. The trade Press have offered much support as have newspapers. The Adelaide News and Melbourne Age have promised to run specials each week in the travel sections free of charge. All we have to do is send the information. At the present time the Bureau is continuing to promote the rest of the Territory and correct any fears that centres such as Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Katherine and other areas have been damaged in any way. Any promotion for the top end will be of assistance to the rest of the Territory. Katherine for example will probably benefit as the tourist destination in 1975. Several of the Mid-March departures by coach from south have already been booked out and the fears of the southern bureau staff is that there will not be enough departures to accommodate the people wanting to visit the Top End this year.

226 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

Has he any advice as to what medium security facilities will be provided in Darwin for the holding of people sentenced to prison?

ANSWER

I am unable to advise what medium security steps will be operational in Darwin in the near future. This has been a matter of considerable discussion between myself and the members of the prison service. The Gunn Point prison farm is now operating as a minimum security area. Other prisoners are being held at the police cells in Darwin and they are being taken to Fannie Bay site to work there. There was a suggestion that some security arrangements could be made at Fannie Bay which would allow the prison to be used as a medium security prison until a new prison is built. However, these plans are not proceeding at this stage and there is no firm commitment to provide any medium security prison facilities in Darwin. A submission is being made to the reconstruction committee to approve a site for a new prison out Berrimah way. It is hoped that work on that site can proceed in the very near future to provide some improvement in prison facilities in Darwin.

As many prisoners as possible of a medium security and high security rating are being transferred to Alice Springs. However, the capacity there is rapidly coming to a climax. Arrangements have been made to send prisoners interstate and now prisoners may be moved interstate much more quickly than formerly. Arrangements have been made with most State governments rather than just an arrangement with the South Australian Government to accept prisoners into prisons in other States. However, there is a difficulty in that Aboriginal prisoners cannot be moved interstate easily and this is causing problems. There will be a serious problem in Darwin if there are any female prisoners because at the moment we have very limited facilities.

227 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

When will the Administrator's Council consider the appointment of the parole board legislation which was passed nearly 2 years ago?

ANSWER

I am unable to give a precise answer. I can say that the matter has not come before the Administrator's Council since I have been serving on it but I take note of the honourable member's question and I will have the matter investigated by the Secretary of the Administrator's Council and my own staff.

228 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

I have had 2 complaints from persons who were mortgagors of property to the Commonwealth who had applied for payout figures on the mortgage so that insurance moneys could be paid and who received figures and had the matter finalised only to be told later that they owe the Commonwealth another $1,500 in 1 case and $1,100 in another case. Will he ascertain the extent to which mistakes have been made in other cases and can he get some assurance that it is not due to the Finance Branch being partly stationed in Darwin and partly stationed in Brisbane?

ANSWER

I would ask the honourable member for Port Darwin to put this question on notice and I will then undertake to follow it up.

229 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

What steps have been taken to upgrade the mosquito eradication program at Nhulunbuy by the Department of Health? Has the incidence of mosquitoes lessened or increased in the Gove Peninsula over the past 3 years since the township of Nhulunbuy was established?

ANSWER

I was at Nhulunbuy last week and discussed the matter of mosquito eradication program with the Deputy Director of Health for the East Arnhem area. He has a program of mosquito eradication for that area. However, the program is hampered by the lack of equipment; the equipment which is there is a little outdated. It is hoped that equipment will be provided shortly to allow the eradication program to be stepped up. As to the second part of the question, I will have to seek information from the Director.

230 Mr KENTISH to Mr EVERINGHAM—

When is new building likely to commence in Darwin apart from repairs and maintenance?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide an answer at this moment but I will undertake to seek out this information during the course of this day.

231 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

It would appear from the second report of the reconstruction commision that areas on the Esplanade and Larrakeyah, the proposed civic centre area in Fannie Bay and a tourist hotel area will occupy land which is at present used for private housing. What plans for acquisition has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission at the present time and is it a fact that acquisition of these areas is proposed?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has no plans for the acquisition of these areas at the present time nor does it propose to acquire them. A draft town plan has been made available to the public and there is a statutory period of 1 month from March 17 for the public to voice its objections against any particular section of that plan and the accompanying proposals to which the commission has indicated specifically its support at this stage. In the light of the objections received and considered and in the light of the commission's own further consideration some decision will be taken to make recommendations to the Minister for the Northern Territory under the act as to a development scheme for Darwin. Until that process has been completed, it would be premature to refer to any definite policy of acquisition in any particular area.

232 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

What has been done in relation to the sealing of the Stuart Highway south of Alice Springs to Port Augusta?

ANSWER

Several weeks ago, I sent a telegram to the Minister for Transport in South Australia asking him the same question. During a recent visit to Adelaide I had a question to put to the Minister for Transport in the House of Assembly in South Australia. The answer that I received was that the highway from Port Augusta to the border in South Australia is a national highway and South Australia does not have the finance available to carry out any construction on the road. He also pointed out that the money that was being allocated to them by the Commonwealth was being used in the upgrading of the Eyre and the Princes Highway. The South Australian minister did not expect anything to be done on that road other than minimum maintenance until June 1977. This is completely unsatisfactory and I intend to write to the Prime Minister and remind him of the speech which he made during his election campaign last May and ask that something be done immediately to upgrade that road.

233 LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that the present Director of Emergency Services will be leaving Darwin within 3 weeks? If that is so, will a successor be appointed?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for Nightcliff for the news that she has just given me because it is new to me. I do not know that it is a fact. There have been so many rumours circulating Darwin in the past 2 months. Knowing the honourable member for Nightcliff is usually a reliable source of information, I will check her suggestion out during the course of the day and endeavour to advise her before the end of this sitting day as to what Mr McHenry's movements will be.

The matter of appointment of a successor is one for the Administrator in Council and, having been unsuccessful on one occasion, that body could hope for better success the second time.

234 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

Could she tell me why the Government has not attended to repairs on the Oenpelli Primary School? Despite repeated requests for several years, no attention has been given to this job.

ANSWER

Staff shortages exist in the Education Department. One position vacant at the moment is the one which lets such contracts. This work is being done by a variety of people from Canberra who have come up on short stints. However, it does become a problem of the Department of Housing and Construction and there is difficulty in letting contracts because of Government non-payment for previous work. However, I have drawn this matter to the attention of the Education Department.

235 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is he aware that a building code for the construction of houses in Darwin has been prepared? Is he aware also that it is apparently being acted upon without having been incorporated into any law?

ANSWER

I was aware that a building code had been prepared but I am not sure whether it is being acted on or not. If the honourable member would place his question on notice, I could follow the matter up.

236 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

Is there any truth that there are children in Darwin schools who were not here prior to the cyclone?

ANSWER

There is some small percentage of children in Darwin schools who were not here prior to cyclone Tracy—208 out of approximately 5500 children. This is more or less justified by the usual Christmas changeover of managerial and other positions in Darwin.

237 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

I refer to question 193 on the notice paper which asked if he will obtain information from the Director of Emergency Services. Has the honourable member been able to obtain this information and when will he make it public?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, I do not have that information at the present time. I shall endeavour to obtain it by the end of the day.

238 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER—

The Remuneration Tribunal recommended the provision of secretarial assistance to certain members. At least in my own case, that has not been forthcoming. As the Remuneration Tribunal's recommendations have not yet been implemented by the Australian government, when will the secretarial assistance be provided?

ANSWER

I will provide an answer for the honourable member later this day.

239 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

I have information that stoves, washing machines and refrigerators in good order are being destroyed at the RAAF before they are dumped. These things are in short supply in Darwin. Recently at an auction, I saw an electric stove that a year ago would have sold for $3.00 or $4.00 run up to $40.00. I would like to have some assurance that this matter will be investigated.

ANSWER

Yes.

240 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

What steps have been taken to upgrade the roads from Yirrkala to Melville Bay Highway and from Dhupuma College to Gove Airport? When will the maintenance program for roadworks in Gove be officially announced?

ANSWER

I do not have that information. If he will put the question on notice, I will endeavour to give him an answer.

241 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

The Indian government presented a gift of tea to Darwin as a mark of their sorrow at the devastation. I ask the honourable member to find out what has happened to this gift of tea. Is it to be distributed to the citizens of Darwin who were present then and, if so, how? Will he seek an assurance that protocol will not be breached by having this tea sold or otherwise disposed of? It was a gift of one country to Darwin.

ANSWER

I will make investigations and seek the assurance that she wishes in this matter. I think that my colleague the honourable member for finance and law who is a member of the Relief Trust Fund will help with this investigation.

242 Mr KENTISH to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Will he investigate the possibility of stationing 2 police officers at Oenpelli if the community undertakes to provide buildings? Will he follow this up and see what is to be done about it. I would like some assurance from him.

ANSWER

I wish that I could give him the assurance that he requests. Unfortunately, neither myself nor any member of this House has any power over the police force other than a persuasive one. When the petition of the residents of Oenpelli was presented at the last sittings, the Police Commissioner was away from Darwin and I was not able to take the matter up with him. Shortly after that, I was away. However, I intend to speak to the Police Commissioner about this matter in the very near future and I am in complete sympathy with the member for Arnhem on this question.

243 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK—

Will the honourable member tell us in what way 'Medibank' will operate in the Northern Territory and in what way it will affect its citizens?

ANSWER

I am quite uncertain as to how it is going to operate. The other day I asked the Minister responsible to advise me. Despite the request, I have not received any advice on the matter. I would ask that the question be placed on notice.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

February 1975

(Numbers with the suffix "N" refer to Questions on Notice which are printed in the first part of the Question Paper)


Aboriginal development funds (MacFarlane) 62N
Acquisition of land Esplanade and Larrakeyah (Withnall) 231
Airport bar (Steele) 93
Airport—international flights (Perron) 106; mining company flights (Perron) 121
Assembly building (Lawrie) 96; (Robertson) 105
Assembly sittings (Lawrie) 104
Beef Price Stablilization Bill (MacFarlane) 122
Beef industry (MacFarlane) 89
Berrimah, reroofing of houses (Tungutalum) 74
Building Code (Withnall) 235
Business assistance loans (Steele) 119
Capital works program (Lawrie) 68, 86
Casuarina fire station (Dondas) 107
Cattlemen, financial aid (MacFarlane) 73
Child care facilities (Dondas) 80, 84
Citizens' Advisory Committee (Lawrie) 65
Community College, teachers' courses in agriculture (MacFarlane) 21N
Darwin—reconstruction (Withnall) 76; (Kentish) 230
Darwin Reconstruction Bill (Withnall) 71
Department of NT, decentralisation (MacFarlane) 95
Director of Emergency Services (Lawrie) 233
Drunkenness legislation (MacFarlane) 173N; (Robertson) 75, 88
Electrical appliances destroyed (Kentish) 239
Employment in Darwin (Steele) 115
Finance for rebuilding (Withnall) 69
Fire brigade, special determinations (Dondas) 91
Fisheries research funds (MacFarlane) 13N
Foot and mouth disease precautions (MacFarlane) 130
Free beach (Steele) 92
Gibb Committee Report (MacFarlane) 135
Gove—see Nhulunbuy
Gunn Point prisoners (Lawrie) 81
Insurance payouts, Commonwealth mortgages (Withnall) 228
International flights—see Airport
Iron ore loading facilities (Dondas) 113
Katherine—
  area school lunches (MacFarlane) 17N
  budget (MacFarlane) 138
  contractors owed money (MacFarlane) 82, 108
  flight service unit (MacFarlane) 125N
  housing shortage (MacFarlane) 133
  powerhouse (MacFarlane) 117
  telephone exchange (MacFarlane) 127N
  town plan (MacFarlane) 67
King River bridges (MacFarlane) 19N
Local government elections (Lawrie) 146
Mainoru development road (MacFarlane) 189N
Medibank (Robertson) 243
Mental Defectives Ordinance (Robertson) 144
Microwave link (MacFarlane) 186
MLAs, attendance at meetings (Vale) 137
National Estate (MacFarlane) 140,143
Nemarluk Drive, garbage dumping (Steele) 111
Nhulunbuy—
  community library (Ballantyne) 101N
  freight subsidy (Ballantyne) 100N
  high school (Ballantyne) 102N
  mosquitoes (Ballantyne) 229
  permit system (Ballantyne) 70; (Lawrie) 142
  roads (Ballantyne) 240
  social worker (Ballantyne) 87
Northern suburbs reroofing (Dondas) 85
Nurses salaries (MacFarlane) 60N
Oenpelli, police officers (Kentish) 242
Oenpelli school, repairs (Kentish) 234
Parole board legislation (Lawrie) 227
Peko Mines retrenchments (Vale) 131
Permits—VIPs visiting Darwin (MacFarlane) 61N; for MLAs (MacFarlane) 83; males and females (Lawrie) 134
Police cells, remand prisoners (Lawrie) 78, 145
Police, special determinations (Dondas) 94
Prison, medium security (Lawrie) 77, 226
Public servants, transfer interstate (Lawrie) 90, 120, 132
Rapists released (MacFarlane) 79
Registrar-General's office (Perron) 110
Roper settlement, communications (MacFarlane) 184N
Rural Bank (MacFarlane) 18N
Schoolchildren, new arrivals (Dondas) 236
School hours (Lawrie) 112
Schools, paid auxiliary staff (Lawrie) 114
Schoolteachers, shortage (Lawrie) 136
Secretarial assistance for MLAs (Lawrie) 238
Slipways for trawlers (MacFarlane) 14N
Stuart Highway sealing (Vale) 232
Surge line, acquisitions (Lawrie) 72
Tea from India (Lawrie) 241
Temporary accommodation (Withnall) 66
Tourism in Top End (Vale) 116, 139, 147
Tourist promotion funds (MacFarlane) 13N
University for tropical studies (MacFarlane) 16N
Vegetable and fruit preservation (MacFarlane) 15N
Winnellie Industrial area, power supply (Perron) 152N, 118
Yirrkala medical centre (Ballantyne) 109

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order.

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

123 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

1. Is it a fact that there is dissatisfaction with the system which prevents children living within a one mile radius of a school using the school bus?
2. Is it a fact that people living within the limit cannot send their children back to the pick-up point, even if it is only a hundred yards (or metres) away?

ANSWER

1. Dissatisfaction with the 1 mile limit was expressed by a small number of parents at the commencement of the 1975 school year. It appears that the majority of parents now appreciate the practical consideration which led to the introduction of the limit.
2. At present, children living within a 1 mile radius of their school may walk back to a bus pick-up point. Should overcrowding of buses occur in the future, the acceptability of this practice may be reviewed.

149 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

1. How are enrolments at the Darwin Community College estimated?
2. What was the total of tuition hours at the College in 1974?

ANSWER

1. Enrolments at the College are not estimated; they are actual, physical enrolments. Total number to date is 1,710.
2. The total number of tuition hours at the College in 1974 was 36,616 hours.

151 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

When will the Stuart Highway to Beswick Station road be sealed, as was promised in 1973?

ANSWER

The sealing of the road Stuart Highway to Beswick Station has been economically justified. The present programming is for the 1975/76 financial year. The first stage will be from the Stuart Highway to Bamyili and depending on budgetary considerations and road construction priorities, work should commence within the programmed period.

157 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Have any plans been made to set up a Roads Authority in the Territory along the lines suggested in the motion passed by the Legislative Council on 21 August 1969?

ANSWER

No legislative action has been taken to form a Roads Authority along the lines of the motion passed by the Legislative Council in August 1969.

The Government introduced the Rural Road Conference in 1970 to give the private sector the opportunity of advising the Government on road conditions and priorities. This conference has been continued bi-annually since that date and members of the Legislative Council have been invited and have participated.

These conferences will continue and Members of the Legislative Assembly will be invited. Interested organisations are also invited to advise the Government on their local area priorities for roads and any problems that exist. All suggestions are considered by the Government when compiling the forward roads programme.

158 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How does the government collect fines from convicted Aboriginals who are destitute?
2. If Aboriginals are unable to pay the fines does the Department of Aboriginal Affairs advance them the money?

ANSWER

1. The Aboriginal community is treated in exactly the same manner as in the case of members of the wider community. An Aboriginal either pays the fine or serves a short prison sentence which usually accompanies such convictions as an alternative punishment. The Aboriginal Legal Aid Services are also available to all Aboriginals in Lower Courts.
2. No.

161 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

On the ABC News on 23 February 1975 mention was made of 10 English Sparrows at Gove—will they be destroyed?

ANSWER

1. Officers of the Wildlife Section of the Department of the Northern Territory are investigating the report of English Sparrows at Gove. If the birds are identified as English Sparrows they will be destroyed.

163 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. Has the Government any intention of stocking lakes like Lake Woods with fish?
2. Have local residents expressed interest in such projects?
3. Would Murray Cod be suitable stock?

ANSWER

1. The government does not have any immediate plans for stocking lakes such as Lake Woods with fish.
2. Interest in such projects by local residents have been received by the Department of the Northern Territory in the past, however, details of such requests are not available due to cyclone damage of Fisheries Section records.
3. Murray Cod is not considered to be suitable stock for such a project as it is a species which lives only in temperate climates.

167 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to the article "Lawyer Angry" in the November/December 1974 issue of "Bunji" and ask, is Mr Brennan correct in his assertions that the Government is not carrying out Mr Justice Woodward's suggestions?

ANSWER

No. The Government has already accepted in principle the recommendations made by Mr Justice Woodward. It is expected that supporting legislation entitled "The Aboriginal Land (Northern Territory) Bill" will be introduced in the next sitting of Parliament. Two interim Land Councils have been established within the provisions of the Report and are beginning to function effectively.

168 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Which of the Gibb Committee recommendations has been accepted and implemented?
2. If none has been accepted, and if none have been implemented, what grounds have there been for refusing the recommendations?

ANSWER

The recommendations of the Gibb Committee were accepted in principle by the previous Government in 1972, and have also been endorsed by the present Government. No recommendations of the Committee have been specifically rejected. The recommendations of the Commitee occupy 7 pages of the Committee's report and involve a number of different departments. Of those matters which are the primary responsibility of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, progress has been achieved in several areas.

The Committee's recommendations on land tenure and the possibility of excising suitable area from pastoral leases were complicated by the subsequent appointment of an Aboriginal Land Rights Commission. However, negotiations with pastoralists have continued throughout the period since the report of the Gibb Committee was accepted and a number of pastoralists have agreed to surrender areas of land for tenure by the resident Aboriginal community. In no case has excision action been completed, but the necessary surveys have been or are being carried out.

With regard to improvement of accommodation and facilities for Aboriginal groups on cattle stations, bores have been sunk for village development purposes on six stations, test drilling has been carried out on four more properties, a water storage and reticulation system has been completed at Maryvale, and two other systems are under construction at present at Ti Tree and Utopia. Financial assistance has been provided to several Aboriginal Communities including Roper Valley and Elsey to purchase vehicles, plant and equipment, or tools and materials for temporary improvements to services or accommodation in those communities. Full scale housing programmes are being developed in a number of areas and are already under way on two properties. With so many Aboriginal people and so many communities involved, the process of improvement will continue: "inevitably extend over many years."

The various recommendations concerning employment and vocational training have been understudied by the Department of Labor and Immigration, the Department of Education, and in some instances by the Miscellaneous Workers Union. Such matters as rates of pay, award coverage for domestic employees, slow worker provisions etc. are now the subject of an application by the Union before the Arbitration Commission.

169 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. What amounts of freight and passenger traffic over current traffic are required to warrant the DC9 aircraft operating between Alice Springs and Darwin calling at Katherine and Tennant Creek?
2. Will he ask the airlines to replace their Fokker Friendship services with a single DC9 aircraft operated by each airline alternately?

ANSWER

Ansett Airlines and T.A.A. currently operate Boeing 727 aircraft on services between Alice Springs and Darwin. This aircraft type is preferred to the DC9 on this route because the latter aircraft is subject to performance and payload restrictions as a result of the high temperatures experienced in that area.

The aerodrome at Tennant Creek is not suitable for Boeing 727 aircraft. DC9 aircraft are only permitted to make limited use of the aerodrome.

Even without these aerodrome limitations, the airlines estimate that the passenger traffic at Katherine and Tennant Creek would have to increase threefold to justify the use of DC9 aircraft on services to those centres. With the present level of passenger traffic the change from 727 to DC9 aircraft would result in at least a 50% reduction in the frequency of services to Katherine and Tennant Creek.

Another point to be taken into consideration is that passengers travelling between Alice Springs and Darwin would be greatly inconvenienced should aircraft be required to call at Katherine and Tennant Creek en route.

172 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How many Aboriginal settlements have communal eating facilities and which are they?
2. How long has each been established?
3. Has this method of feeding people—
   (a) raised health standards;
   (b) provided motivation; or
   (c) deprived Aboriginal families of independence?
4. Will communal eating facilities be abolished and, if so, when?

ANSWER

1. Aboriginal settlements that have communal eating facilities are:
   Bamyili, Beswick, Hooker Creek, Delissaville, Amoonguna, Areyonga, Haasts Bluff, Docker River, Warrabri, Papunya, Yuendumu (temporarily closed).
2. Provision for communal eating facilities at these centres were generally included in the initial planning for the settlement, so most have been operating for over twelve years.
3. The question of whether this method of feeding people has raised health standards must be looked at in light of the fact that in a number of Aboriginal communities people were not receiving an adequate diet for reasons beyond their control and that this method made food available to all. The establishment of community eating facilities was in response to a desire to improve dietary standards but this action alone has been shown as not sufficient by itself to raise the general health standard of a community. However, it must have often meant the well-being of people who may otherwise have gone hungry.
   The system has not been without criticism, which has usually been that communal eating facilities deprived Aboriginal families of independence. Whether this is so is difficult to objectively determine as it is impossible to isolate this facet of life in the changing circumstances of Aboriginal settlements from other conditions which may have resulted in reduced independence and initiative.
4. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs, in recognition of unsatisfactory elements in this method of feeding people, has embarked on a programme to replace community kitchens with facilities which are more in line with those that exist in the wider Australian community. This would include the passing of communal dining centres from government management to become the responsibility of the Aboriginal community, if and when they indicate that they are prepared to accept this responsibility, the provision of financial assistance to enable an Aboriginal group to undertake the development of a cafe, restaurant or "hasty tasty" as a business enterprise. Either of these sorts of undertakings would provide an avenue for Aboriginals to purchase meals if they so desired. The most important aspect, however, is the upgrading of accommodation for Aboriginal families to enable them to store, prepare and cook food as part of their normal way of life, thus eliminating the need to make use of communal facilities.
   This phasing out programme is continuing at a rate that is most suited to the social and economic conditions existing in each Aboriginal community at the present time.

179 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

In view of the increase in petrol prices as a result of the removal of the petrol subsidy, is any action to increase the mileage allowance rates paid to persons travelling on Government or official business particularly in areas similar to Borroloola where petrol costs 93 cents per gallon?

ANSWER

The rates of mileage allowance paid to Government employees are determined by the Public Service Board. It is understood that there is no immediate proposal to increase the rates as a result of the removal of the petrol subsidy. Reviews of mileage allowance and other conditions of service are reviewed from time to time by the Joint Council (a high level employer/employee body) and no doubt the removal of the petrol subsidy will be taken into account by the Joint Council when next reviewing mileage allowances.

181 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

How often are roadside verges graded back to protect the bitumen edges of the following sections of roads:

Pine Creek to Elliott section Stuart Highway;
Carpentaria Highway;
Tablelands Highway;
Barkly Highway;
Roper Road; and
Victoria Highway?

ANSWER

Depending on soil type, type of vegetation (grass growth to edge of bitumen is encouraged to stabilise shoulders) and need, the shoulders of the roads, under normal circumstances are graded as shown:

Stuart Highway—Pine Creek to Elliott: once every 1—2 years.
Carpentaria Highway: once every three years.
Tablelands Highway: desert country only, once every 18 months.
Barkly Highway: once every two years.
Victoria Highway: once every two years.
Roper Highway: once every three years.

185 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Do Aborigines at Elsey Station, Hodgson Downs Station, Roper Valley Station, Urapunga Station and at Borroloola receive their financial entitlements regularly?
2. What is the effect on these people of the rural recession?
3. Are routine medical services provided for the communities at each place and are they provided with reticulated water and electricity and septic tanks?
4. Are telegraphic, mail, road and air communications provided by the Government for these people or are they dependent for such things on the goodwill of pastoral managements?

ANSWER

1. That part of the Question which refers to "financial entitlements" is assumed to mean entitlement to Social Security benefits and not wages. The five communities mentioned are all visited regularly during the "Dry" season, while Borroloola has a resident departmental adviser. On present information, the residents of these communities are receiving the benefits to which they are entitled but departmental officers keep the situation constantly under review. If there are any delays in payments, these are normally caused by seasonal conditions leading to disruptions in mail services or the movement of claimants from one place to another.
2. The principal effect of the current rural recession on people in these communities has been that of unemployment. It is now more difficult to obtain work, and when they do obtain work it has recently tended to be of a short duration.
3. Routine medical services are provided by the Department of Health who have nursing sisters regularly visiting these stations or, in the case of Borroloola, have a permanent clinic established in that centre. The Aboriginal villages at Elsey, Hodgson Downs, Roper Valley and Urapunga do not have electric power supplies.

   At Borroloola, electricity is due to be connected to a number of houses within the near future. At Elsey and Urapunga there is no reticulated water in the village areas, and there is limited reticulation at Hodgson Downs and Roper Valley. The last two communities also have septic systems installed but they are of limited capacity.
4. The telegraphic, mail, road, air and communications services are all provided by the Government or subsidised by the Government, though not without charges. The delivery of these services does depend in many areas upon the co-operation or goodwill of the local pastoralists.

187 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Does the ABC transmit short wave programme from the Darwin studios as well as broadcast programmes and, if so, what effort is made to publicize the short wave programmes for the benefit of those outback residents who cannot hear broadcast programmes?

ANSWER

A shortwave frequency broadcasting from Shepparton in Victoria was allocated during the emergency following cyclone Tracy as a back-up for ABC Radio 8DR in Darwin.

This has now ceased and it would appear that the cyclone has seriously delayed the introduction of a fulltime shortwave service for the Northern Territory.

190 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. What is the reason for Aborigines at Borroloola living in appalling conditions far worse than those at Lake Nash Station?
2. When will reticulated water, toilet and ablution facilities be provided for these people?

ANSWER

1. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs questions the validity of the first part of Question No. 190 and does not agree that Aboriginals at Borroloola are living in conditions far worse than those at Lake Nash Station.

2. The diminished level of town services that have been made available at Borroloola have been largely due to the very poor water supply. This is a problem that faces all the town's people of Borroloola. The difficulties of obtaining the water and the storage problems make the provision of water closet system impossible.

The Department is currently considering proposals to upgrade the water supply and other steps are being taken to improve the living conditions amongst the Aboriginal population at Borroloola. These improvements include the connection of the reticulated water supply from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs bore to six Aboriginal houses. The Mobile Works Force has been instructed to construct demountable toilet and ablution facilities. In addition to these improvements, the six houses which were constructed by Mobile Works Force have recently been connected to power.

Another problem which has recently inhibited further growth of facilities at Borroloola is the indecision about its future location due to the problems associated with the flooding of the McArthur River. This is a matter which is still being considered by the Department of the Northern Territory.

193 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Will he obtain the following information from the Director of Emergency Services:

1. On how many occasions, since 1 February 1975, has the Director of Emergency Services or his delegates used the powers vested in him by the following paragraphs of sub-section (1) of section 10 of the Cyclone Disaster Emergency Ordinance:
   (a) entry into land or building;
   (b) closure of roads;
   (c) destruction of buildings;
   (d) destruction of animals;
   (e) requisition of property;
   (f) shutting off of electricity or water;
   (g) closure of buildings;
   (h) setting up of first aid posts;
   (i) requirement that persons be vaccinated;
   (j) suppression of disease and pests;
   (k) control of supplies of food, etc.;
   (l) street clearance;
   (m) regulation of movement of goods;
   (n) steps to prevent looting?
2. In the exercise of the power vested in him by paragraph (8) of section 10 (1), how many persons has the Director or his delegates refused entry to the cyclone disaster area?
3. Of the persons refused entry, how many were former residents of Darwin wishing to return?
4. What action has been taken by the Director of Emergency Services to implement the requirements of the law as set out in section 10 (3) of the Ordinance?
5. Will the Director give the Assembly an assurance that no person who was a bona fide resident of Darwin on 9 January 1975 has been prohibited from returning to Darwin?

ANSWER

1. No records are kept of the number of occasions on which the Director or his delegates use the individual powers listed in section 10 (1) of the Cyclone Disaster Emergency Ordinance. The Honourable Member will appreciate that the Ordinance was not assented to until 9 January 1975 and the validatory clauses in the Bill enabled retrospective action taken by the Director or other authorised persons to be condoned. Powers have been used only on those occasions where they have been necessary for the good of the community, including public safety, sanitation, and community support purposes.
2. Many applications for entry are rejected after an oral enquiry and are not recorded. Where a formal application has been made and it is necessary to refuse entry records are kept. In the period 1 January to 14 March available records show that 365 applications for entry into the cyclone disaster area have been refused.
3. Applications made do not necessarily show if the applicant was a former Darwin resident. It is estimated that approximately half of the persons refused entry were former Darwin residents.
4. Persons to who section 10 (3) applies are issued with a re-entry permit on request. The entry permit is used for this purpose to provide a uniform method of control at checkpoints.
5. Assembly members are assured that no person who was a resident of Darwin on 9 January 1975 has knowingly been refused permission to return to Darwin.

195 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Does the Government intend to purchase Finnis River Station for the Aboriginal people?

ANSWER

Aboriginals have expressed a strong desire to acquire the Finnis River Pastoral Lease and there would appear to be a strong case to support the proposed purchase for attachment to the Wagait Aboriginal Reserve.

An inspection of the property has been carried out to assess its value and the feasibility of operating the area in conjunction with the Wagait Aboriginal Reserve.

At this stage however, the asking price of the owners is considered to be well above the value of the property and stock and a more reasonable price would need to be negotiated before the Department of Aboriginal Affairs could consider its purchase for Aboriginals.

198 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Why did it take a sympathetic Government 27 months to give to the Wailbri and Gurindji people title to the land formerly held by Vesteys?
2. What are the lease conditions?
3. What assistance will the new lessees get from the Government in the form of finance, consultant advice and housing?

ANSWER

1. A formal application by the Gurindji people for title to a pastoral lease over an area of 3,250 square kilometres, previously being part of the Wave Hill Station Pastoral Lease No. 529, was not made until 7 October, 1974.

The transfer of this lease has not yet been finalised due to an agreement between the Vestey group and the government that certain improvements to the area be undertaken before the handover is completed. These improvements include fencing which has been delayed by a shortage of materials and unfavourable weather conditions.

2. The conditions of the lease for this area of land are the same as those applied to other leasehold in the Northern Territory.
3. This property will be regarded as a viable economic project and funded as such when the transfer of the lease is completed.

201 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Over what areas of Darwin has aerial and surface spraying been carried out?
2. Has the spraying included all areas in which rotting meat was likely to be in existence?
3. Has the spraying included all areas in which pools of water in abandoned utensils are breeding mosquitoes?

ANSWER

1. The whole of the Greater Darwin Area was covered by aerial spraying some 15 times between 1 January and 26 February.

The RAAF Base and Airport area were excluded from the aerial spray rounds because of aircraft movements and these areas were sprayed from the ground by RAAF personnel.

The total urban area of Greater Darwin was covered by ground spraying twice weekly up to 25 February. Since that date problem areas as detected by the Entomology and Health Inspection units have been sprayed from the ground.

2. Yes.
3. Yes.

202 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. How many permits to enter Darwin have been given to persons not resident in Darwin on 24 December 1974?
2. Has the distinction made by section 10(3) of the Cyclone Disaster Emergency Ordinance been observed?
3. Have persons been required to obtain a permit to enter Darwin notwithstanding that they were in Darwin on 9 January 1975 and, if so, why has the Ordinance been administered contrary to its tenor?

ANSWER

1. Available information indicated that 2,080 permits have been issued to persons not resident in Darwin on 24 December, 1974. Of this total 743 permits have been issued to business executive for visits of short duration and 1,337 permits have been issued to essential workers not previously resident in Darwin.
2. Yes.
3. Permits are used as the method of allowing people who were in Darwin on 9 January 1975 to pass through checkpoints. If this was not done some other form of identification would have to be issued. Permits are issed to these people on request. To the knowledge of the Director, no person has been knowingly refused permission to return to Darwin so the Ordinance has not been administered contrary to its tenor.

205 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING–

When will a regional coordinator be appointed to Katherine?

ANSWER

The Department is looking at levels of representation at district centres, but no decision has been reached at this stage.

206 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW–

1. Will short courses for "Rural Technicians" be held in 1975 and, if so, who will conduct these courses?
2. Will associations such as the Cattlemen's and Northern Farmers be consulted with a view to ascertaining the need for immediate action on such facets of rural education as vehicle maintenance, welding, shoeing horses, artificial insemination, etc.?

ANSWER

1. Courses for "Rural Technicians" have not been planned for 1975 since needs have not been expressed to the Darwin Community College in this respect.
2. Associations will be, and are, given every consideration when they express a need. If the Cattlemen's and Northern Farmers Associations should desire assistance in rural education subjects then they will be assisted in every possible way. Present serious shortages of staff preclude the Darwin Community College from deliberately seeking new course offerings.

207 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING–

1. What toilet facilities are available for public use in Katherine including the toilet block erected by Welfare on Crown Land near proposed High Level Bridge?
2. Will facilities at the Showground/Race Course be available if required?
3. Will facilities at old aerodrome be available if required?
4. Was money allocated for a new toilet block to be erected near March's Corner?

ANSWER

1. Public toilets are situated on the corner of Giles Street and Katherine Terrace in Katherine.
2. The showgrounds are under the control of Trustees who have control over the use of showgrounds facilities.
3. The toilet facilities at the old aerodrome are being used for 13 staff of Department of Transport at the Flight Service Unit. The facilities are barely adequate for current needs and could not be treated as "public". When final decisions on the Flight Service Unit are made the building will most likely be demolished.
4. Funds have been allocated for expenditure in 1974-75 financial year for a new toilet block to be erected in the park on the corner of Stuart Highway and Katherine Terrace opposite March Motors.

215 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW–

1. When will detailed recommendations be made regarding the facilities to be established within the proposed university college in Darwin?
2. Will the recommendations include provision of faculties of tropical agricultural science, tropical veterinary science, tropical medicine and tropical agronomy?

ANSWER

1. Detailed recommendations regarding facilities to be incorporated in a university or university college would be made when the proposed university was considered viable by the Australian Universities Commission and a Council or interim Council formed.
2. University Councils usually recommend the establishment of faculties as the community demands make a faculty viable. It would be impossible to state, at this stage, what recommendations would be made regarding faculties in any future Darwin University.

217 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK–

Is the "Medibank" scheme to be introduced in the Territory and, if so, how will it affect people paying accounts for medical treatment?

ANSWER

From 1 July everybody in Australia will have medical insurance cover at no direct charge.

When Medibank begins on 1 July 1975 everybody in Australia will be automatically insured against the cost of medical treatment–that is the fees charged by doctors.

Everybody will be able to claim a refund, through Medibank, of all but a small part of the fee he or she has paid a doctor. This refund is known as a Medical Benefit.

Because Medibank will provide automatic medical insurance coverage for the entire population from 1 July, it will no longer be necessary to continue paying contributions to a private medical insurance fund to qualify for medical benefits.

218 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Have Aborigines and others on award wages, training allowances, unemployment and social security benefits been encouraged to join medical benefits funds?

ANSWER

For several years now, Aboriginals have been encouraged to participate in the various medical benefit fund schemes and officers of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs have been available to assist them in so doing. While statistics are not readily available of the total number of Aboriginals who have joined such schemes, it is considered that this would not be at this stage significant.

219 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. How many cane toads are still unaccounted for in Darwin?
2. Are the efforts to capture the toads which were being made prior to 25 December 1974 being continued?

ANSWER

Two cane toads have not been accounted for out of twenty escapees. The eighteen recovered comprised both live and dead animals and the former were all killed and preserved.

The original twenty specimens were sexed by the supplier as ten males and ten females and of the eighteen recovered out of those which could be sexed accurately, ten were females. However, the supplier's sexing is not being accepted as necessarily reliable and spotlight surveys in the release area are being continued on a fortnightly basis.

220 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. Are transport companies, as suggested by a letter received by a Katherine firm from a Queensland supplier, restricted to accepting only essential building materials for Darwin?
2. By what means are businesses not affected by the cyclone to function if this restriction is continued?

ANSWER

1. No. For a short period after the cyclone some restrictions were placed on unessential goods coming to Darwin. There has never been any restriction on goods consigned to Katherine.
2. As the answer to part 1 of the question in "no" this part of the question does not apply.

221 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. Does provision exist in the Motor Vehicles Ordinance as amended in 1973 for taxi plates to have a collaterial value?
2. How many taxi plates have been issued since the Ordinance was amended in 1973?
3. How many taxi plates have been sold since that time?
4. What revenue has the Government collected since the 1973 amendment of the Ordinance for the issue and transfer of plates?

ANSWER

1. Yes. Section 27A refers.
2. Nil.
3. Since September 1973 the total number of transfers is 21.
4. Revenue from transfers is $4,016.82.

222 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Is the Kalano Association negotiating with Uralla Meats of Katherine for the purchase of the meat handling facility?
2. How could such a purchase with public funds be justified in view of the fact that Aborigines already own Beswick Station close to Katherine?

ANSWER

1. No. Not to the knowledge of the Northern Territory Division of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.
2. In view of the above the answer to this question is hypothetical. The ownership of a nearby station by one group of Aboriginals need in no way inhibit the business aspirations of another group and in fact business relationships might well be developed between undertakings of some affinity which could enhance the justification of expenditure of public funds specifically set aside for the development of such business undertakings. This statement is of a general nature and specific cases would have to be fully investigated and judged on their merits.

225 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Is it a fact that over 700 persons are unable to obtain payment of insurance moneys because of the delay of the Finance Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory in supplying pay-out figures of mortgages to the Commonwealth?
2. Will this situation be remedied soon?
3. When will the impossible situation created by the location of parts of the Department in Brisbane be ended?

ANSWER

1. No! Since Cyclone Tracy, more than 900 owners buying former Government houses on terms have been supplied with a calculated pay-out figure of their mortgage. On 17 March 1975, less than 50 applications for pay-out advice were being calculated or were in transit. Once applications reach the Finance Section of the Department either in Darwin or Brisbane, they are normally dealt with in three days, provided the information supplied by the enquirer is accurate.
2. As vacant positions in the Brisbane office are filled, the rate of delivery of pay-out advices can be increased if this is found to be necessary.
3. The temporary transfer of parts of the Department of the Northern Territory has been made necessary by the lack of adequate office space and houses in Darwin. Officers and their families will be relocated from Brisbane back to Darwin as soon as these facilities are available. New officers being recruited to Brisbane are being informed that their positions will be transferred to Darwin as soon as possible.

251 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

What steps have been taken to up-grade the roads from Yirrkala to Melville Bay Highway and from Dhupuma College to Gove Airport and, when will a maintenance program for roadworks in Gove be officially announced?

ANSWER

Negotiations have been carried on between the Australian Government, Nabalco and other interested parties for some time in connection with the Yirrkala Road. The present position is that Nabalco have proposed a new alignment for the road and a cost estimate is being prepared subject to this alignment proving satisfactory. The work is expected to be placed on the Department of Aboriginal Affairs Works Programme for 1975/76.

No firm proposals or requests have been received for up-grading of the Dhupuma College road. When a request is received the Department of Education will arrange for the Department of Housing and Construction to provide a cost estimate.

Road maintenance in the Gove area is largely the responsibility of Nabalco. The Australian Government meets a proportion of the cost of maintenance and offers other assistance as required.

254 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

1. What areas in and around Darwin have been set aside (or are going to be set aside) for the dumping of rubbish?
2. What controls are to be placed on this activity?

ANSWER

1. The areas set aside for dumping of rubbish in and around Darwin are:
   (a) Leanyer—used for wet garbage;
   (b) Ludmilla—currently used for dry garbage and cyclone rubble;
   (c) Frances Bay—cyclone rubble;
   (d) Lee Point side of Leanyer—cyclone rubble;
   (e) Howard Springs—all rubbish.
2. (a) Leanyer dump is under control of the Darwin Corporation and operated under the Local Government Ordinance and Health Regulations.
   (b) Ludmilla is under the control of the Darwin Corporation but as the main activity is dumping of cyclone rubble, the dump is jointly operated by the Corporation and the Department of Housing and Construction. The Corporation expects to be finished with the dump by the end of the next dry. It operates under the Local Government Ordinance and Health Regulations.
   (c) Francis Bay and Lee Point dumps are under the management of the Department of Housing and Contruction and operate under Health Regulations.
   (d) Howard Springs dump is the responsibility of the Department of the Northern Territory, is managed by the Department of Housing and Construction and operates under the Health Regulations.

306 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will he make a statement on financial assistance for the Northern Territory cattle industry?

ANSWER

The details which I have on this subject don't come directly from government sources but from the special releases made by the Minister in the same way that the media and all other members of this Chamber receive them. The Minister indicated last week that a loan had been approved to the extent of $1.4 million to enable the Katherine Meatworks to open in the 1975 season. I do not know when more will be known on that subject, except to say that the industry recognises that providing money to assist the Katherine Meatworks to open will not in itself be sufficient to ensure that the works can in fact operate without assistance directly to producers to enable them to get their cattle to the meatworks and still receive a marginal profit over and above their costs. In that respect, a number of proposals have been before the Minister and the government. The latest information I have is contained in a press release received from the Minister yesterday in which he said that the case for the Northern Territory to be considered for assistance to the same level as the states had been put before Cabinet and that, as soon as the terms and conditions had been finalised for the states, financial assistance would be made accordingly to the cattle industry in the Northern Territory. He went on further to say that this decision would be made in a week so that information should be available on the forms of assistance within the next week. I understand from my association with the Cattle Producer's Council that the forms of assistance which have been sought have been special finance and carry on finance at low interest rates and also assistance with freight reductions in the Northern Territory.

307 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

For the purpose of tourist buses coming to Darwin, it seems apparent that the city area has been expanded to include Adelaide River. We are told that tourist buses may not enter the city area, that they must go to Mandorah. Since when has the Howard Springs area, Berry Springs and the eastern outskirts of Darwin been in the city area?

ANSWER

The inclusion of places such as Howard Springs and Berry Springs in relation to a restriction of tourist entry is probably in conformity with the Darwin Reconstruction Act which the honourable member for Arnhem may recall prescribes a radius of 40 kilometres from the Darwin Post office as being the areas within which the Darwin Reconstruction Act operates. The government probably sees some connection between that legislation and the Cyclone Disaster Ordinance under which they administer the permit system.

308 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr EVERINGHAM—

My question relates to the state of the jury roll in Alice Springs. It was last reviewed some time ago and I am informed by the Deputy Sheriff in that area that it is very difficult now to obtain a jury. Is he aware of any plans to revise the jury list in the near future?

ANSWER

I ask him to put his question on notice.

309 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is drunkenness a crime in the ACT?

ANSWER

I must confess myself ignorant on this point. I shall do some research on it and possibly answer him in the adjournment debate this afternoon.

310 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

My question concerns the proposed Drunkenness Bill which is before the Assembly. Has he discussed with the Director of Health the implementation and the procedures in this bill and, if so, what were the results of the discussions?

ANSWER

I have forwarded a copy of the bill to the Minister for Health and I subsequently forwarded a copy to the Director of Health. I have been invited to discuss the bill with him but I haven't as yet discussed it with him for various reasons. At one stage, I was away and at another stage he was away. I certainly will be discussing it with him before the bill proceeds through final stages in this House.

311 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

I notice a comment in the newspaper that the Australian Teachers Federation wants education authorities to introduce phonetic spelling: "said" for instance would become "sed", and "threat" would become "thret". Has this disease reached the Northern Territory yet, and, if so, how widespread is it?

ANSWER

To my knowledge this particular form of instruction is not used in the Territory except perhaps as an experiment in isolated class rooms.

312 Mr VALE to Mr EVERINGHAM–

Can he advise the number of police officers based in Alice Springs who are trained and able to operate the breathaliser?

ANSWER

I would ask him to put the question on notice.

313 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING–

Will 240 volt electricity from the new power house at Mataranka be laid onto houses on the east side of the Stuart Highway?

ANSWER

The topic is currently under discussion within the department. I will endeavour to obtain a full reply for him later this day.

314 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK–

What facilities will be made available in the event of any female being sentenced to a period of detention or remanded in custody in the Top End?

ANSWER

At the moment, there are 6 female prisoners in the Northern Territory. They are all being held at the Alice Springs Jail. Any female who is sentenced to a period of imprisonment in the Top End will be transferred to the Alice Springs Jail. Temporary facilities are being made to accommodate female prisoners in Darwin for a minimum period, perhaps overnight, until they can be transferred to Alice Springs.

315 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN–

Can he advise the present state of the Darwin Waterside dispute which is affecting all Territory centres?

ANSWER

The present state is that it is still well on. The wharfies are not back at work and they do not appear ready to start. I cannot say when they are likely to start work because I do not have a crystal ball. I will be contacting later on today some people around the town to get some indication of which way this dispute could be moving.

316 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS–

Has the North Australian Development Corporation at Scott's Creek a chance of becoming a viable proposition?

ANSWER

I can only quote the views of the receiver for the company which appear to have been for the time being accepted by the creditors of the company. The receiver has established to the satisfaction of the creditors that there is a chance of the company working its way out of its present debt situation and back into a situation of profit. It is in the nature of agricultural and pastoral enterprises that they are long term and this process may take several years. I understand that the basis for the receiver's optimism is that there will be a substantial change in the agricultural program of Willaroo as there will be a reduction in the acreage planted to crops. It was the original intention of the project to go in for large-scale cropping but this current wet season there are some 10,000 acres of cow-feed planted and which will be harvested for seed. That 10,000 acres will be planted to a crop of sorghum next wet season to take advantage of the nitrogen produced by the legumes this year and a rotation will be developed on a 10,000 acre basis of this sort. At the same time the receiver proposes to expand the cattle breeding operations on the property using Brahmin cross females. Various propositions have been discussed with the creditors; an extension of time to put them into operation has been given and further funds have been made available by certain of the principal creditors in order to try to see the program through.

317 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS–

Has the Building Code which has been spoken of freely in the press been formally adopted by the commission? What action has the Commission taken to ensure that the Building Code becomes a code enforceable at law and, if the Commission has taken no such action, will he take steps to see that such action is taken forthwith?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has formally adopted the new Building Code. The legal advice which the Commission has received is that, following the adoption of the code by the Commission, no further legislative requirement exists in this Assembly or elsewhere. As recently as the last meeting, I again raised this matter as to what was the legal position and was again informed that the Attorney-General's advice was to the effect that the adoption of the cyclone code by the Reconstruction Commission did in fact give it sufficient legal standing to operate. However, I will check again on the matter with the staff of the Commission and legal advisers to see whether there is any change in the advice and, if so, I will advise the honourable member.

318 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING—

Newspaper reports referred to the winning of a ballot for caravan accommodation by Mr Kirkman. How many caravans were ballotted for, how many persons were in the ballot and on what housing lists do the names of these persons appear? Why were the housing lists removed from the notice board in block 7 and where can they be inspected?

ANSWER

I am informed by an officer of the Department of the Northern Territory that the newspaper report alluded to was incorrect. The caravan was not ballotted for. Government department caravans are allotted by an interdepartmental committee and there also exists an accelerated priority list which was applicable in this instance. Mr Kirkman's particular requirement was for a caravan.

In relation to the second part of the question, I am also informed by an officer of the Department of the Northern Territory that lists were removed from block 7 notice board for reasons of their wear and tear. Copies of government employee housing lists are now being forwarded to each department.

319 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

I noticed recently that the honourable member journeyed to Tarcoola to assist at the beginning of the work at the new railway there. He may remember just prior to the federal elections and after the disastrous floods of 1974, the Prime Minister promised a 4-lane highway from Port Augusta to Alice Springs. Can he report on the progress of that highway? Is it started or is it finished?

ANSWER

The highway was to be a 2-lane highway, a standard highway. There has been no start on this road. During my visit to Tarcoola, I did manage to have a few words with the secretary for the Department of Transport but I was unable to speak to Mr Jones, the Minister. They advised me that the road in question is part of the national highway network which they hope to have finished completely in about 9 years. I said that I hoped that this didn't apply to the Stuart Highway because we could do with a decent road well before 9 years. He said that with the railhead reaching a certain point in about 3 years time, they will then conduct co-ordinated road and rail services through Alice Springs. I suggested that they may have to make an early start on the road from the Northern Territory border down into South Australia. He was non-committal as to when this was likely to be and, from the information that I have received from a question that I had asked in the House in South Australia, the South Australians don't expect to be making a start on that particular stretch of road for at least 2 years. The money which they had allocated to them by the Federal Government was $16.4m for national highways in South Australia. The majority of this money will be spent on the Eyre and the Prince's highway. At the moment, there doesn't seem to be any short term start to this highway. I intend to write to the Prime Minister and send him a copy of the speech that was referred to in the question. Hopefully, he may decide to inject some money into the system so that South Australia can go ahead and produce a road that will enable us to get the goods that we need drastically in the Northern Territory.

320 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is it the intention of the Attorney-General's department to replace police prosecutors with professional prosecutors?

ANSWER

I cannot cannot officially give the view of the Attorney General's department but I do know second hand that it is the intention of the Attorney General's department to gradually replace police prosecutors with members of the Crown Law Office staff. To my mind, this will be a mixed blessing in some cases. I would like to pay tribute to the pretty good work of members of the police force who have been seconded as prosecutors throughout the Territory. I can think of many prosecutors who are more than equal to their professional opponents. Some of those prosecutors are still around the courts today. That is why I think it will be a mixed blessing. I am not sure of the timetable but I believe it is to start fairly soon. I think that the cyclone has set the timetables back some months but I would expect that qualified solicitors would be appearing to prosecute police offences before the end of this year.

321 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Has the incidence of drug charges before the court increased or declined in the Northern Territory in the last 6 months?

ANSWER

I would ask him to put the question on notice.

322 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Before the end of the sittings, would he table a precise account of which branches of the Department of the Northern Territory have been transferred interstate, how many officers of these branches have been transferred, at what level they've been transferred and the expected date of return?

ANSWER

The honourable member did ask me a somewhat similar question back in the February sittings; "What functions in the Department of the Northern Territory and the Australian Public Service will be transferred to Brisbane, and what are the classifications within these functional areas and how many people are involved". I have received within the last few days an answer from the Department of the Northern Territory. The answer which will possibly cover part of the question is as follows: "The management services function together with portion of the administrative substructure of various branches of the Department of Northern Territory have been temporarily relocated in Brisbane. The executive and policy areas of the department have remained in Darwin. Approval was given, however, for temporary relocation of three level-1 positions in Brisbane. The other classifications within the functional areas cover a broad spectrum of clerical and administrative classifications. At the present time 116 evacuees have been relocated in Brisbane and 67 people have been transferred from Darwin". I will pursue the last part of the question in relation to probable return time with the Department of the Northern Territory and advise her when I have the information.

323 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

In view of the fact that the new Building Code states that it applies to the whole of the Northern Territory and in view of the member's statement that no law is to be made bringing it into operation, how can this code be applied outside the cyclone area without some action being taken either through the Building Ordinance or some other appropriate legislation?

ANSWER

My legal expertise doesn't extend to being able to answer the precise question asked. However, I have taken a note of the question and will pursue the matter with the Chairman of the Reconstruction Commission and find out whether it is necessary to do as the honourable member suggests and, if so, execute moves to do so.

324 Mr PERRON to Mr TAMBLING—

Are the repairs currently being effected at the Parap Theatre building of a temporary or a permanent nature? Are the provisions of the new Building Code being adhered to? Are the new town planning proposals being adhered to?

ANSWER

I am not able to give the honourable member an answer today. However, I will have discussions with the Northern Territory Building Board and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and endeavour to give him an answer at this sitting.

325 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Recently I was informed of a person who applied for a job with the government and he was interviewed by 3 or 4 people in the government. One of the first questions he was asked on each occasion was what were his political beliefs or persuasions. Could he tell me whether this is now standard practice or whether this would be something applying to certain categories?

ANSWER

In cases such as the allegations made by the honourable member for Arnhem, it is very difficult to find out any information in regard to such a question unless the specific instance is available. I would ask him if he would give me the fullest details that he has available of the time, place and any names connected with this incident and I shall certainly be happy to pursue the matter on his behalf and get to the bottom of it.

326 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is it the intention of the Attorney-General to combine the Aboriginal Legal Aid Service with the Australian Legal Aid Office?

ANSWER

I cannot answer for the empire-building talents of the Attorney-General because he doesn't have any control over the North Australian or Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Services. These bodies are supposedly independent incorporated associations which are funded by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and by reason of that fact do come to some extent under its jurisdiction. The Attorney-General does not particularly—this is entirely my personal opinion—like the concept of 2 separate legal aid services operating side by side in the Northern Territory. It would appear on the face of it to be a discriminatory practice and I can really see no good reason for it. There have been matters in relation to the conduct of the legal practitioners employed by the legal aid service and the conduct of the bodies that administer the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services which have been commented on unfavourably. I have here a judgment of the Northern Territory Supreme Court in a matter of a Justices Appeal by one George Putti against Harry William Simpson which, with the leave of the Assembly, I would like to table. This might give the honourable member for Elsey some information on how these services operate. My own view is that it would be very desirable if the Aboriginal Legal Aid Services were combined with the Australian Legal Aid Office which is doing a pretty competent job and has on its staff some pretty competent people. I can see absolutely no reason for 2 separate legal aid offices to exist side by side, not only from the cost point of view but from the appearance of discrimination.

327 Mr TUXWORTH to Mr RYAN—

Is it a fact that the government has increased the costs of airline rental space in the Northern Territory airports by 1,000% and if so, on what criteria did they base this increase?

ANSWER

I don't have the information required. I will get some details from the Executive Member for Resource Development and provide an answer later in these sittings.

328 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission is incomplete. It has not yet had representatives from the Darwin Citizens Advisory Committee. When is it likely that the people will be appointed by the Minister to that committee?

ANSWER

I have difficulty in answering the question precisely because part of the steps in the appointment of members is outside the powers of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Honourable members who are familiar with the Darwin Reconstruction Act may recall that there shall be a council of up to 20 members—the actual number is to be set by the Minister—and that the procedures for the appointment of this council called for nominations to be called widely in the community. Anybody who is an elector of the Northern Territory may nominate anybody else. While nominations have been called, sufficient time had to be allowed for them to come in, not only from the people who are resident in Darwin but also Darwin residents who are interstate. Then the Reconstruction Commission has the job of making recommendations to the Minister according to what they think might comprise a representative group from a broad cross-section of the community. The Reconstruction Commission has examined people who were nominated and has made recommendations to the Minister. The matter is now one for ministerial decision. I hope that the matter will be finalised before the next full meeting of the Commission which takes place in early May.

329 Mr KENTISH to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Could he advise me of the criteria or qualifications for a person to be appointed a justice of the peace?

ANSWER

I have had a quick look at the Justices Ordinance and there are no criteria contained therein for the appointment of justices of the peace other than that the person be a resident of the Northern Territory. There are certain disqualifications but I think there are unwritten criteria which operate no doubt in the minds of the Attorney-General and the Administrator when they appoint justices. They would be such things as their known character, their ability to administer the provisions of the ordinances that may come under their scrutiny, etc.

330 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr SPEAKER—

What steps are being taken to restore airconditioning to this chamber and the lounge?

ANSWER

The matter is being discussed with Housing and Construction. A review is being made at present of the whole premises which includes premises, electrical wiring, airconditioning and such. It is expected that a report will be brought before a house meeting which will be held either today or tomorrow.

331 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr SPEAKER—

When is secretarial assistance to be provided to private members as recommended in the Tribunal?

ANSWER

The matter was taken up by myself with the Minister some time prior to 4 February. On 5 February, I wrote a letter to the Minister regarding certain matters relating to members of this Legislative Assembly. One of those matters referred to secretaries for members. A further letter has been sent to the Minister asking him that the establishment of this Legislative Assembly be increased so that these secretaries can be employed by the Legislative Assembly. I understand that the Minister is coming to Darwin tomorrow and this morning I have requested an appointment with him to further take up the matter.

332 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Miss ANDREW—

When will work begin again on Howard Springs School and when is it expected to be used?

ANSWER

The tender has already been let and rumour declares that they have started pouring the foundations. However, I am uncertain as to when the school will be opened.

333 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Is the honourable member aware that an order of exemption under section 422A of the Commonwealth Navigation Act 1912 comes into force in the Northern Territory on 19 May this year and will have the effect of forcing some local barge and small cargo ship owners to lay off some of their existing crews? Will the honourable member ask the Minister for Transport to delay the date of implementation of the order to give local operators reasonable time to comply?

ANSWER

I am aware of the situation. I will send a telegram to the Minister for Transport asking him to delay the implementation of this Exemption Order although I would not expect a particularly satisfactory result as the Minister for Transport tends to take a rather dogmatic stand on these types of things.

334 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

How long will Mr Jim Gallacher be Acting Director of Education and is there still a teacher shortage in Darwin?

ANSWER

It is uncertain as to when the permanent director will be appointed. A number of applicants have already been interviewed but due to the fact that many of these are from overseas, it is a very long and tedious process.

At the moment, there are only about 15 teachers in the pipeline en route here and with the large number of enrolments already declared by parents for second term, the Acting Director has sent a request to the Commonwealth Teaching Service asking them to ask state authorities if they will release teachers for secondment to Darwin for the remainder of this year to alleviate the shortage.

335 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Has he been able to obtain a copy of Dr Millar's report on detoxification centres? If not, when is it likely to be available and does he intend tabling it in the Council or making it available to members in a private capacity?

ANSWER

I made several requests to senior public servants this morning and the report is now on my desk. There are several strings attached to it in that only I may read it because the Minister has not read it yet. I was supposed to read it in a room in a government office block but I managed to avoid that condition and I am afraid I cannot at this stage report on it because I haven't read it and because I have pledged that I will keep its contents confidential until such time as the Minister has read it.

336 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

As the Minister is to be in Darwin tomorrow, would he agree to seeking the Minister's permission for other members to read this and would he also agree for the debate to proceed at this sittings until we have been able to read the report and have the benefit of it?

ANSWER

I don't think I could give an undertaking that debate on the bill will not proceed until such time as the report is released as that would tie the bill to a timetable over which I would have absolutely no control. I would not be able to have the Minister release the report if he didn't wish to. The Drunkenness Bill would not be proceeding further at this sittings in any event.

The other part of the honourable member's question was whether I would endeavour to have the report made available to other honourable members at this time. I believe that the Minister is coming to Darwin tomorrow and, at this moment, I am the only lucky member of this Assembly who will be seeing him because I am on the Cyclone Relief Trust Fund. I shall endeavour to ask him whether he would be agreeable to that.

337 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware that the vessel the "John Burke" will not be carrying sea freight goods to Gove? If so, can he inform me if alternative sea transport is available to replace this service, such as the vessel the "Darwin Trader"?

ANSWER

I was aware that there will be a discontinuation of the service of the "John Burke" to Nhulunbuy and I will attempt to get some information off the Federal Minister for Transport as to what alternatives they would consider to give this service back to the people in that area.

338 Mr KENTISH to Mr TUXWORTH—

Can he advise me whether Mr Johnstone, the manager of the Tourist Bureau has a financial interest in Mandorah or any of its related facilities?

ANSWER

I don't have an answer to that. I would sincerely hope not and I will try to get an answer this afternoon.

339 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Does the Northern Territory Building Code apply to areas outside Darwin?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Building Code does apply to areas outside Darwin but it is possible that certain provisions relating to cyclone damage prevention will be restricted to prescribed areas such as Darwin or coastal communities.

340 Mr PERRON to Miss ANDREW—

Who authorised the removal of the soil from the area known as Pilot Hill on the foreshores of Frances Bay, what is the soil being used for and have the environmental and tidal aspects been studied?

ANSWER

I have already sent 3 telegrams to various people on this particular subject but as yet have had no reply. I will endeavour to get the answer to this question by this afternoon.

341 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Is it a fact that some 3000 waterside workers from Australian ports were levied $10 each for Darwin cyclone assistance funds? Is it further a fact that this money was sent for distribution only amongst the 100 odd Darwin waterside workers and not for assistance to other persons in Darwin? If this is so, are not the Darwin waterside workers at an advantage compared to other workers in Darwin, as they have 2 assistance funds to help them?

ANSWER

The waterside workers around Australia were in fact levied $10 per head to be used by the Darwin waterside workers. I believe that it is being held in a trust fund. I don't know what they intend doing with the money but I believe that they do have it.

342 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM–

Has there been any consultation between the Attorney-General's Department, the Department of the Northern Territory and this Assembly on the Karmel Report on Australia police?

ANSWER

No.

343 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN–

Has any consideration been given to using the army personnel who are presently based in Darwin to unload ships and essential goods and supplies for Darwin and other centres?

ANSWER

In making my adjournment speech yesterday, I did forget to mention that I had sent a telegram to the Minister for Defence, Mr Barnard yesterday requesting that action be taken.

344 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS–

At the last sittings, I mentioned a gift of the Government of India to the people of Darwin of a large consignment of tea and asked how that was going to be distributed. I believe that at least part of that tea has now arrived in Darwin. Accordingly, I ask the honourable member as a matter or some urgency if he would indicate how, when, where and to whom the tea is to be distributed.

ANSWER

I do not have the information previously sought by the honourable member for Nightcliff but I will endeavour to get something on it today.

345 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW–

When will the Wanguri and Nakara schools be completed and what facilities are available for mentally retarded children in the Northern Territory and especially in Darwin since the cyclone?

ANSWER

The Nakara school is now in the hands of Housing and Construction who are assessing the damage. However there is considerable difficulty with the re-carpetting of the building but the Education Department are hopeful that it will be reopened in third term. Wanguri school was rather severely damaged because it was only partially completed and it is now estimated that it will be opened in April 1976.

Although a special school is not yet operating, classes have been set up within primary schools to cater for mentally retarded children. Assistance has been given to the teachers responsible for these children in the form of special teachers aids who have had experience in dealing with mentally retarded children. The department is pursuing the policy of educating mentally retarded children wherever possible in normal circumstances.

346 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN–

Can he inform me when the PMG will complete the new installation of post boxes at the Nhulunbuy Post Office? What other steps are being taken to improve the present appalling postal system?

ANSWER

I don't know the answer to the honourable member for Nhulunbuy's question and I will attempt to find out later on today and give him an answer either this afternoon or tomorrow.

347 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS–

Is he aware that when Darwin residents applying for permits to either bring back other members of their family or guests who will be accommodated in their own home were being told that in most cases it is not possible because of the strains on the food outlets in Darwin and that the commercial centre can't cope with extra people? If he is aware of this, is it intended that tourist buses bringing the estimated 14,000 people into Darwin will be fully self-sufficient and bring their own food or are they to be fed while the locals are kept out?

ANSWER

I wasn't aware of the situation described by the honourable member for Nightcliff. I believe that the proposal with regard to tourist buses is that they would be largely self contained although there may be some replenishment of resources required during the very temporary period they are in Darwin. I think that it is wrong that the authorities concerned with the administration of permits should make this information available to the people who are applying for permits because I don't believe that it truly reflects the state of affairs in Darwin. As somebody who has to do his own shopping here from time to time, that is not my experience. I shall bring this matter to the attention of His Honour the Administrator who with his Council makes representation or gives directions from time to time to the Director of Emergency Services as to the administration of the ordinance to see that that kind of misleading information might be corrected.

348 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING—

Will he inform me when the present prefabricated houses which are under construction will be delivered on site to Tennant Creek and are there any further tenders to be let for homes in Tennant Creek in the very near future.

ANSWER

I assume the honourable member for Gillen is referring to contracts currently being negotiated and considered by the Northern Territory Housing Commission. I do not have available the information he requests but I will endeavour to obtain it for him today.

349 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW—

Are insurance companies underwriting storm and tempest insurance and, if so, which insurance companies are underwriting this type of insurance in Darwin right now?

ANSWER

Earlier this week, I sent telegrams to various leading insurance companies around town but only some have replied. I believe that some companies are applying more stringent conditions to their policies. However, the replies that I have had indicate that they are writing business for their clients only at pre-October 1973 rates which is the period when the rates for such policies went down as a result of a long period in Darwin without any disasters. The companies are also inspecting premises before writing policies.

350 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is he aware of an ABC report about financial difficulties of the McArthur River Cattle Company? In view of the importance to Borroloola and the gulf area of the killing facility operated by this company, will he investigate means of ensuring that this company receives every reasonable financial encouragement to continue its operations?

ANSWER

I have heard the reports of the problems of the McArthur River Cattle Company. I agree that this is a very important regional abattoir within the Northern Territory and I will take the matter up with the Minister and the Department of the Northern Territory to see if any way can be found to assist the continued operations of the industry. Indeed, some of the legislation which is being considered by the Assembly may be of assistance in that regard.

351 Mr PERRON to Mr T AMBLING—

Is it a fact that the houses built by the Housing Commission in the future will cost $29,000 and that the economic rent will be over $70 per week? If this is so, will the weekly income requirement of a tenant be $280?

ANSWER

By ordinance, the Housing Commission must operate on commercial lines and balance its operational expenditure against its operational income. It must charge economical rents in accordance with provisions laid down in the ordinance but may, with the approval of the Administrator in Council, vary rents from dwelling to dwelling provided the total rent revenue is not less than the sum of economic rents for all rental dwellings at any given time. Since the commission's main function is to provide suitable housing for low and middle income earners on an economic basis at rents which they can afford, it has always been necessary for the commission to adopt the most economical form of construction consistent with sound building practice. With steeply rising building costs and interest rates, it is imperative that the commission adopt the most economical form of construction. If an estimated contract price for Housing Commission dwellings was $28,700 and if the Housing Commission obtained its funds at an 8½% interest rate, the economic rent in accordance with the ordinance would be $70 per week and under the income formula arrangement that would be in the order of $280. However, if the Housing Commission obtained its finance at an agreeable interest rate of 4%, and this is currently under negotiation with the Minister for the Northern Territory, then the economic rent would be $43 per week and the income requirement for that would be $172.

352 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is he aware that there is a meeting of the Standing Committee of State and Federal Attorneys-General in Perth on the 8th and 9th of May 1975? Has he any knowledge as to whether there will be an Assembly representative at the meeting?

ANSWER

I was not aware that there was to be a metting in Perth until late yesterday when I received information on it from Queensland. As far as I know, a Legislative Assembly representative has not been invited to the meeting.

353 Mr WITHNALL to Mr SPEAKER—

Was the Motor Vehicles Ordinance 1975, passed by the Assembly on 12 February 1975, presented to the Administrator, and if so, with what result?

ANSWER

The ordinance was presented but has neither been assented to, declined assent nor reserved.

354 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Can he tell me if the proposed air charter flights to Singapore by the unions will invite people from outside Darwin? If these charter trips are successful, when will Qantas or British Airways reschedule these as regular overseas flights?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

355 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN–

Can he advise me when the Stuart Highway between the airport entrance and Westco will be completed or how long it will be left in a state of half repair?

ANSWER

The section of road in question is at the moment under contract. So far as I know, the contractor has been advised that he is to go on with the job. I don't know when he is likely to start up again but I will endeavour to find out.

356 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM–

Some time ago there was a ministerial statement indicating that finance would be made available for people wishing to rebuild their homes in Darwin. I think a figure of 6% was mentioned. Has he any idea as to how this is to be distributed?

ANSWER

I wrote a letter to the secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory about this matter. I have not yet received any definite information from the Australian Government on the subject.

357 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH–

Has the Northern Territory Tourist Board or the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau ever invited travel agents to inspect the attractions of the Katherine district?

ANSWER

I don't have the answer to that question and I will try to obtain it before this afternoon.

358 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN–

How many permits have been issued by the Fire Brigade and how many have been refused since April?

ANSWER

I would ask him to place the question on notice.

359 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS–

In the previous Council, I asked several questions relating to applications of certain persons for occupation of leases of land in the Adelaide River area. At that stage, the reply was that no information could be forthcoming until such time as a land use survey of the area was completed. Is this survey now complete and, if so, will applications be processed?

ANSWER

I expect to have some information on this matter later today and I will pass it on to her then.

360 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER–

When will offices for members here be opened in the northern suburbs?

ANSWER

The matter has been referred to the Minister. I have an appointment with the Minister this morning and recommendations will be made that the offices in the northern suburbs be established. If members have some intention of creating offices there, a recommendation is being put to the Minister that those members be refunded their rental expenses.

361 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW–

Is she aware that the teachers in Alice Springs have called for a stopwork meeting at 10 a.m. to discuss among other things a continuing lack of housing and a continuing lack of communication with the Department of Education? Would she investigate the matter as soon as possible?

ANSWER

I am aware of the stopwork meeting that was to commence at 10 a.m. This morning, I phoned the Director of Education in Darwin who was unaware of the situation until he heard it over the news this morning. I also phoned a representative of the Centralian Commonwealth Teachers Federation of the Northern Territory who told me that 2 months ago a motion for a stopwork action was passed if no concrete action was taken by the Department. This action was to be taken because many teachers and their families are living in unsuitable accommodation. The demands are for a housing officer to be put in Alice Springs to act for the Education Department.

362 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW–

Why are the Nakara, Wanguri, Tiwi, Anula, Karama and Wulagi primary schools all to be constructed on the open space concept? Have the views of teachers and parents been sought by the Education Department as to whether they prefer the traditional classrooms or the open space concept?

ANSWER

The design of these schools is done with consultation between architects of the Department of Housing and Construction and a committee of parents, teachers and administrative educationalists. The design of these schools will give a much greater opportunity for alternative education because of the space available. In answer to his second question, the short answer is no. However, a group of interested parents and teachers called a meeting recently to discuss the establishment of one alternative school and, as far as I know, representation has been made to the department for the provision of alternative education.

363 Mr KENTISH to Mr SPEAKER—

You may have noticed that the fans provided blow their breeze only on the front benches but nothing is blown on the unjust in the back benches. Will more fans be made available?

ANSWER

It is not intended to have any favouritism in this Chamber. However, we had discussions yesterday with an officer of Housing and Construction relating to the repair of this Chamber and other offices in the vicinity. Work is being planned and we hope that in the near future extra power points will be brought in here with the view to having more fans. We do expect that after a review on the airconditioning has been completed in the next two months, we will have this Chamber back to something like its normal condition.

364 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

On the subject of the free tea for Darwin, has he any further additional information as to how this tea will be distributed—by whom, to whom and when?

ANSWER

I understand that the responsibility for arranging the distribution has been delegated to the food subcommittee of the emergency services organisation. The suggestion was made that they would be contacting various service organisations such as Apex and Rotary in Darwin to see if they could assist with the distribution but I don't think any final decision has yet been made.

365 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Stuart Park asked a question relating to the Parap Theatre. I am informed that the building currently being carried out there is in accordance with the general press release that was issued earlier with specific reference to business premises whereby they were encouraged to rebuild to former code standards. Before public use may be made of any of these buildings an engineer's certificate will be required that they do conform to the old code. A certificate of occupancy would be required before public use. In this particular instance, I believe the owner has been informed that there is no inconsistency with the proposed town plan.

366 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: A question was directed to me by the honourable member for Elsey relating to a power supply in Mataranka. I am informed that it is the intention to hook up the east side in conjunction with the current contract.

367 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: The member for Arnhem asked whether the Director of Tourism of the Northern Territory had pecuniary interest in the tourist installations in Darwin or its surrounds. The answer is no.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

## April 1975


ABC shortwave program (MacFarlane) 187
Aborigines—
  Borroloola conditions (MacFarlane) 190
  Communal eating facilities on settlements (MacFarlane) 172
  Court fines (MacFarlane) 158
  Elsey Station, financial entitlements etc. (MacFarlane) 185
  Legal Aid service (MacFarlane) 326
  Medical benefit funds (MacFarlane) 218
Adelaide River area leases (Lawrie) 359
Airconditioning of Assembly building (MacFarlane) 330
Airline rental space (Tuxworth) 327
Air services, Katherine and Tennant Creek (MacFarlane) 169
Alice Springs—
  breathalyser (Vale) 312
  jury roll (Robertson) 308
  teachers' stopwork meeting (Robertson) 361
Army to unload ships (Vale) 343
Beswick Station—Stuart Highway road (MacFarlane) 151
Building code (Withnall) 317, 323; (MacFarlane) 339
Cane toads (MacFarlane) 219
Caravan ballot (Steele) 318
Cattle industry assistance (MacFarlane) 306
Cyclone Disaster Emergency Ordinance powers (Lawrie) 193
Darwin area and tourist buses (Kentish) 307
Darwin Citizens Advisory Committee (Lawrie) 328
Darwin Community College enrolments (MacFarlane) 149
Department of NT, branches transferred interstate (Lawrie) 322
Detoxification centres report (Lawrie) 335, 336
Drug offences (Ballantyne) 321
Drunkenness Bill (Lawrie) 310
Drunkenness, crime in ACT (MacFarlane) 309
English sparrows (MacFarlane) 161
Fans for chamber (Kentish) 363
Females sentenced to detention (Lawrie) 314
Finance Branch, insurance payout delays (Withnall) 225
Finance for rebuilding (Lawrie) 356
Finniss River Station (MacFarlane) 195
Fire brigade permits (Kentish) 358
Fish stocking of lakes (MacFarlane) 162
Gallacher, Mr Jim (Dondas) 334
Gibb Committee recommendations (MacFarlane) 168
Gove—
  freight on "John Burke" (Ballantyne) 337
  postal services (Ballantyne) 346
  roads (Ballantyne) 251
Gurindji land title (MacFarlane) 198
Housing Commission rents (Perron) 351
Howard Springs (Tungutalum) 332
Insurance, storm and tempest (Steele) 349
Justices of the Peace, qualifications (Kentish) 329
Kalano Association and Uralla Meats (MacFarlane) 222
Karmel report on police (Steele) 342
Katherine—
  public toilet facilities (MacFarlane) 207
  regional coordinator (MacFarlane) 205
  tourist attractions (MacFarlane) 357
Legal Aid Office (MacFarlane) 326
Mataranka, electricity supply (MacFarlane) 313, 366
McArthur River cattle company (MacFarlane) 350
Medibank (MacFarlane) 217
Mileage allowance (MacFarlane) 179
Motor Vehicles Ordinance 1975 (Withnall) 353
Nakara school (Dondas) 345
Navigation Act (Perron) 333
North Australia Development Corporation, Scotts Creek (MacFarlane) 316
Northern suburbs, offices for members (Dondas) 360
Northern suburbs primary schools (Dondas) 362
Nhulunbuy—see Gove
Parap cinema (Perron) 324, 365
Permits to enter Darwin (Withnall) 202; (Lawrie) 347
Phonetic spelling (Kentish) 311
Pilot Hill, removal of soil (Perron) 340
Police prosecutors (MacFarlane) 320
Political questions to applicants for jobs (Kentish) 325
Port Augusta-Alice Springs highway (Kentish) 319
Primary schools and open space concept (Dondas) 362
Rebuilding finance (Lawrie) 356
Roads Authority (MacFarlane) 157
Roadside verges (MacFarlane) 181
Rubbish dumps (Dondas) 254
Rural technicians courses (MacFarlane) 206
School bus limit (MacFarlane) 123
Secretarial assistance (Lawrie) 331
Singapore charter flights (Ballantyne) 354
Spraying of Darwin (Withnall) 201
Standing Committee of State and Federal Attorneys-General (Dondas) 352
Stuart Highway at airport entrance (Kentish) 355
Taxi plates (MacFarlane) 221
Tea gift (Lawrie) 344, 364
Teacher shortage (Dondas) 334
Tourist Bureau director, financial interest (Kentish) 338, 367
Transport companies, restrictions (MacFarlane) 220
Tennant Creek housing (Robertson) 348
University college in Darwin (MacFarlane) 215
Wanguri school (Dondas) 345
Waterside dispute (Vale) 315
Waterside workers, $10 levy (Perron) 341
Woodward Commission recommendations (MacFarlane) 167

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

20 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch promoting the sale and/or use of Townsville Stylo to African countries?

ANSWER

The Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch is aware of experimental work being conducted in the Sahelian region of Africa with several species of stylo leguminous pastures. A prominent Northern Territory farming advisor has been seconded to both private and international consultancy agencies to carry out this work south of the Sahara in several of the new African nations. He has indicated the prospects for providing stylo seed to this area and would no doubt promote Northern Territory seed if adequate stocks of the required varieties were available from local producers.

23 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Following the tabling of the report of the Select Committee on Rural Land Settlement, what steps has the Australian Government taken to arrange a final settlement with the pilot farmers and when is it expected that the matter will be finally resolved?

ANSWER

The main problem in reaching a settlement with the pilot farmers is that one farmer wishes to leave his block and one wants to stay. Thus two equal offers must be made to each farmer at the same time; an offer to surrender the lease with compensation for time and money invested if a farmer chooses to leave and an offer to remain on the lease with a restructured debt which can be serviced from expected income. Budget studies on this latter proposition have indicated that a cattle breeding and fattening operation alone is barely viable. However, the efforts of one farmer in diversifying into cropping with a measure of success over the past two years will improve the viability.

In view of the above it is expected to finalise negotiations with the farmers in the next two to three months.

64 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

In view of the increasing problems associated with the consumption of liquor in the Territory, what action has been taken—

(a) to set up a Liquor Commission;

(b) to review the types of liquor licences;

(c) to review the hours of trading under various licences; and

(d) to set up overnight shelters and detoxification units?

2. How many licences to sell liquor are current in Alice Springs; what are the different types of licenses and how many are there of each?

3. What is the minimum amount of liquor that can be sold under each licence?

4. How many licences of each type were granted in Alice Springs in 1973, 1974 and 1975?

ANSWER

1. (a) The Minister for the Northern Territory has agreed in principle to the establishment of a Liquor Commission. This advice was forwarded to the President of the Legislative Council for the Northern Territory on 11 June 1974.

(b) (c) and (d) Unfortunately action to implement the Minister's decision lapsed after the cyclone but it is now being re-activated. Certain aspects of the report of the Board of Inquiry which recommended, amongst other things, the establishment of the Commission, are being considered with the specialist recommendations made by Dr Milner, consultant to the Government on alcohol and drug dependency problems.

2. 52 licences current Alice Springs.

| | |
|---|---|
| Publications | 3 |
| Private Hotels | 4 |
| Restaurants | 12 |
| Storekeepers | 16 |
| Clubs | 8 |
| Liquor Merchants | 9 |
| Total | 52 |

3. Liquor Merchants — Minimum 2 gallons
All other licences — Any amount

4.

| | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Publication | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Private Hotel | Nil | 1 | Nil |
| Roadside Inn | 1 | 2 | Nil |
| Restaurant | 1 | 1 | Nil |
| Liquor Merchant | 1 | Nil | Nil |
| Wine Licence | Nil | Nil | Nil |

5. Licences pending—

| | |
|---|---|
| Publicans | 1 |
| Private Hotel | 1 |
| Wine | 1 |
| Storekeepers | 1 |

Figures quoted above current at 16 May 1975.

98 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. How many applications for assistance have been received by the Business Assistance Committee?

2. Have any of the applications been approved?

ANSWER

1. 300 applications have been received.

2. 82 applications have been approved.

The above figures apply as at 30 April 1975.

126 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

1. Is it a fact that Katherine power house is in disrepair, has no engineer, two of its generating sets are out of action and the remaining two operate at only 70% capacity?

2. What is proposed to be done to upgrade the power house and when?

ANSWER

1. Certain problems have arisen due to the late commissioning of the No. 6 set at Katherine, requiring postponement of maintenance on some sets. However, statements that the power station is in a state of disrepair cannot be supported.

The five (5) sets at present installed are available and in reasonable condition although some maintenance is outstanding. Each set would be capable of at least 85% of its site rating and this figure could be expected to improve as outstanding maintenance is completed. The commissioning of the No. 6 set in May 1975 will facilitate the additional maintenance required.

It is not proposed to employ a professional engineer to run the Katherine Power Station.

2. The installed capacity of the Katherine Power Station will be increased by 1.7 MW with the commissioning of the No. 6 set in May 1975 and by the commissioning of a further 2 MW set in May 1976. It is anticipated that this expansion of the station will meet Katherine needs to early 1979.

129 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Further to the answer given to question 60—

(a) how many Aboriginals or other health workers have undertaken the 2 year training course;

(b) for how long was Rita Bapi trained, and did she qualify to use simple medicines; and

(c) in the 2 year training course are any other subjects taught and, if so, what are they?

ANSWER

(a) The Health Worker Training Programme began in July 1973. The course is of 2 years duration. None have yet graduated. There are 31 students in training.

(b) The Health Worker referred to in the question commenced training in November 1974 and has had the first 6 one-month instruction sessions in Darwin. The first session is largely of an introductory nature. Apart from minor dressings, ointments etc. she would not yet be expected to dispense medicines.

(c) The curriculum for the training program is:

| | |
|---|---|
| Disease and disability | 15% |
| Growth and development | 15% |
| Environment and environment change | 15% |
| Culture, culture change and conflict | 15% |
| Family health | 10% |
| Adults—life and work | 10% |
| Communication—groups and communities | 10% |
| Resources and sources | 10% |

150 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

What aspects of decentralisation does the Country Liberal Party support?

ANSWER

The Country Liberal Party supports decentralisation of population to solve the overcrowding problems characteristic of our larger cities, for decentralisation of industry for balanced economic growth, decentralisation of administration to give people rapid public service, and decentralisation of government so that electors can be in close contact with their representatives.

We believe that effective decentralisation in the Northern Territory in all these fields depends on constitutional development with transfer of executive powers to an elected legislature so that Territorians can make decisions affecting decentralisation.

153 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

An Aboriginal, Mr Yogi Kelly was reported on the ABC news service of 20 February as having impersonated a police officer for the purpose of obtaining spirits—on what grounds was this man classified as an Aboriginal?

ANSWER

An Aboriginal is defined as a person of Aboriginal descent, either in whole or in part, who identifies himself as such and who is accepted by the Aboriginal community as such. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs accepts this definition in the implementation of Government policies particularly directed towards the Aboriginal community. Mr Yogi Kelly was not classified by that Department as an Aboriginal and is not aware if he meets the criteria contained in the definition referred to above.

The statement that Mr Kelly was an Aboriginal was made during an appeal against the sentence. The grounds for this statement are not known.

154 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How many of the Aboriginal Justices of the Peace appointed recently by the Government are literate?

2. How many had convictions recorded against them prior to their appointments and what were the details in each case?

ANSWER

1. All the recently appointed Aboriginal Justices of Peace are literate.

2. It is not the practice to provide any record of any convictions which a person may have outside the requirements of a Court.

155 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Now that Aboriginal community areas have been established at Urapunga, Roper Valley, Hodgson Downs, and Elsey, has the general health of the communities improved?

2. Are the health facilities and general conditions at these places comparable with those available to the Wattie Creek community?

ANSWER

1. No significant changes have been recently observed in the health of the people at Urapunga, Roper Valley, Hodgson Downs and Elsey, but such changes are not easy to measure.

2. The Wattie Creek community has the advantage of being situated close to the larger community at Wave Hill Settlement which has a permanent health centre.

The Elsey community is visited weekly from the Katherine Community Health Centre. Urapunga has access to the health centre at Roper River which is 20 miles away. There is a subsidised nursing sister at Hodgson Downs. Roper Valley, Hodgson Downs and Urapunga are offered visits by the Aerial Medical Service and are also visited by sisters with the mobile health clinic, currently based at Roper Valley.

156 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Does the Government have plans to make the Katherine hospital an area hospital catering for centres south to Elliott, east to the Queensland border and west to Kunnunurra?

2. Will aerial medical services for the region be conducted from Katherine?

3. If there are plans, when will they be put into effect?

ANSWER

1. The Katherine hospital is already an area hospital and the general intention is to build up its resources as a medical centre for the surrounding rural areas.

2. and 3. Aerial Medical planes are based on Darwin because of maintenance requirements but these planes do use and will continue to use Tindal Airport for the provision of routine services to the Katherine area.

At present the Queensland border area including the Borroloola district is serviced by aircraft based at Gove.

159 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. When will private and intermediate wards be provided at the Katherine hospital?

2. When will television receivers for the entertainment of patients and staff be installed at the hospital?

ANSWER

1. There are no plans at the present time to build private or intermediate wards at Katherine Hospital. However, intermediate beds will be designed for Medibank purposes.

2. Television sets are already available at Katherine hospital for the entertainment of patients and staff.

160 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Will the historical trees at Daly Waters and at Roper Bar be preserved and, if so, when?

ANSWER

The Department of the Northern Territory has no plans for I presume preservation of a historical tree at Daly Waters and has no knowledge of a historical tree at Roper Bar.

162 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. What study has been made of the needs of children, particularly deprived children, in Katherine?
2. Have the YMCA or the YWCA been encouraged to take an interest in the youth of Katherine?

ANSWER

1. During 1973 and 1974 investigations were held into ways and means to establish a satisfactory youth service for Katherine and surrounding districts. Discussions were held with Katherine Action Group, Katherine Citizens and Youth Club, Darwin YMCA, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Education and Department of the Northern Territory and it was agreed there was an urgent need for a Youth Worker to be located in the district.
2. Unfortunately it was not possible to proceed with filling of a position of Government Youth Officer during 1974, but action to re-advertise the position is being taken at present. In addition, the YMCA has considered establishing an officer in Katherine but has been unable to proceed for financial reasons.

164 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

When will the road to the Mataranka Pool from the Stuart Highway and the road into the Mataranka Wild Life Reserve be sealed?

ANSWER

Sealing of the Mataranka access road to 3.7 m is included on Development Roads Programme proposals for 1975-76 and, subject to budgetary considerations, work should commence during that year.

165 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What further delay can be expected with the provision of reticulated electricity at Mataranka, now that the generator sets intended for the purpose are being used for pumping at Darwin River Dam?

ANSWER

Whilst one of the Dorman Diesels from the Mataranka Power Station was used for pumping at Darwin River Dam, immediately following Cyclone Tracy, for a period of 5-6 weeks, it was not the cause for delay to completion of the Mataranka Power Station.

Due to the closure of roads during the wet season, certain other supplies have been delayed and this has caused postponement of commissioning of the power station. It now is anticipated that the Diesel generating sets at the Mataranka Power Station are expected to be commissioned in early June 1975.

166 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to the January issue of "Bunji" and the article "Fred Fogarty Freed—Bunji Lives" and ask—

(a) what is Fred Fogarty's real name and nationality;

(b) has he been naturalized;

(c) has he a criminal record and, if so, what is it;

(d) is he a ticket-carrying Communist; and

(e) was he freed because of heroism or simply because "Fannie Bay Gaol crashed to the ground"?

ANSWER

(a) Frederick Stewart Fogarty. Born—Miles, Queensland, 19 April 1931. Nationality: Australian by birth.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Information of this nature is always made available to a Court which is dealing with a particular person, but otherwise it is not made public.

(d) as far as is known he is not a "ticket-carrying Communist".

(e) Mr Fogarty was included in a total of 22 prisoners released on 26 December 1974 under the authority of the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate.

The decision was taken to release the prisoners in view of the security facilities available at that time and was taken in the best interests of the community. Selection was based mainly on length of sentence remaining.

He was not singled out for special consideration but was included in a group released to ease the accommodation problem of prison authorities.

171 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

Will high voltage cables be placed underground in Darwin following the damage caused recently to exposed cables?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission decided in principle at a recent meeting that all distribution should be placed underground. Consequently all new 11,000 volt primary distribution mains will be underground and a programme for the undergrounding of existing 11,000 volt lines is being developed.

Transmission lines (i.e. 66,000 volt and higher) will remain as overhead construction but designed to meet cyclonic conditions.

174 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. What was the total number of public servants of all types, including school teachers, in the Territory in 1974?
2. How many dependants of public servants were in the Territory in 1974?
3. How many productive people are in the Territory now?

ANSWER

1. According to official Public Service Board statistics, the total number of full-time Australian Public Service staff employed in the Northern Territory in December was 11,197. This figure would not include teachers employed by the Commonwealth Teaching Service.
2. and 3. It is not possible to answer this part of the question.

175 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. How many people in the Territory were charged with the offence of drunkenness in the 12 months preceding the removal of this particular offence from the statutes?
2. How many people have been charged with offences in which drunkenness was a contributing factor in the period since drunkenness was declared not to be an offence?

ANSWER

1. Number of people charged with the offence of drunkenness between 21 October 1973 and 21 October 1974: Males 5,261, Females 1,013, Total 6,274.
2. Statistics in relation to part 2 of the question are not maintained, therefore an answer cannot be supplied.

177 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Are the Commonwealth Hostels intended to house only Australian Government employees?
2. Is it intended to change the name to Australian Hostels?
3. Will the Board of Directors, including Mrs Whitlam, inspect the substandard facilities at the Katherine Hostel?

ANSWER

1. Australian Government hostels in the Northern Territory which are now operated by Commonwealth Hostels Limited are intended primarily to accommodate Australian Government employees. Other persons are admitted when accommodation is available.
2. A change in the company's name is under consideration.
3. The Minister for Housing and Construction as well as Directors of Commonwealth Hostels Limited have inspected Katherine hostel. The complete rebuilding of the hostel on a nearby site is proceeding: the first new accommodation block was opened on 2 March and construction of a second accommodation block is well advanced.

178 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Will the cafeteria in Block 8 Mitchell Street, Darwin, remain after the emergency is over and, if so, is it intended to repair the floor, upgrade facilities, install airconditioning, and then escalate prices, or merely to repair the floor and leave conditions and prices as at present?

ANSWER

The cafeteria in Block 8 Mitchell Street, Darwin, was designed as Australian Government Food Service to cater for Australian Government employees. Though incomplete, and damaged by Cyclone Tracy, it was opened on 13 January 1975 at the request of the Department of Services and Property to provide an emergency food service for the community. The cafeteria closed on 19 March 1975 after the requested period of emergency operation had been completed, but primarily because of serious operational problems, particularly safety hazards to which staff were exposed.

Repairs are being affected to enable the cafeteria to operate at standards observed for Australian Government Food Services. Such standards include pricing of meals to recover prescribed operating costs. It is expected that when repairs are satisfactorily completed the Department of Services and Property will request the Department of Labor and Immigration to operate the cafeteria through its food service section as a normal Australian Government Food Service.

182 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. What long-term plans have been made for the disposal of effluent at the Katherine Low Level Reserve?
2. When will the ranger at the Mataranka thermal pool be provided with standard accommodation?
3. When will toilets, reticulated water and camping sites be available at Edith Falls?

ANSWER

1. Connection to Katherine Sewerage System.
2. Ranger will be accommodated at Mataranka Township when permanent position approved.
3. Attempts to obtain a suitable quote have been made for two (2) years. It is hoped to arrange a contract for completion of work in 1975-76.

183 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. When will the Kintore Caves be developed to enhance the status of Katherine as a tourist centre?
2. What alternative is planned for the unsatisfactory licensed operation of the Sixteen Mile Caves Reserve near Katherine?
3. Will a report on the Cutta Cutta caves be published following the 3 day visit to the caves by a Mr Hamilton Smith?

ANSWER

1. There are no plans to develop Kintore Caves in the near future as the demand is being met at Sixteen Mile Caves.
2. It is proposed to appoint a Board Ranger.
3. Mr Hamilton Smith was a member of a group from the Australian Speleological Foundation which visited the caves at the request of the Reserves Board. The group prepared a report on behalf of the Reserves Board to assist in Management/Development plans for the caves. It is not intended to publish this report.

188 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. In view of the fact that Hodgson Downs is only 20 miles from a development road, why was it necessary to evacuate a sick child on 22 February 1975 by helicopter?
2. When will an aerodrome be established at Hodgson Downs or when will the Roper Valley-Hodgson Road be upgraded to all weather standard?

ANSWER

1. Official records do not show any air evacuation on 22 February 1974. There was an evacuation on 22 February 1974. A helicopter was used because Hodgson Downs was inaccessible by road at that time.
2. The provision of an aerodrome on a pastoral property is the responsibility of the owner. Advice and assistance to do this is available from the District Airport Inspector, Air Transport Group, Department of Transport, Darwin.

Access roads to pastoral properties are provided to the standad of dry weather accessibility for conventional drive light vehicles.

The Roper Valley-Hodgson Downs Road will be graded during the 1975 dry season.

192 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

Does the Department of Education recognise the need for nutritional supplements for deprived children rather than just "free lunches" and, if so, what does it intend to do to satisfy the need?

ANSWER

Under the administrative arrangements existing the need for nutritional supplements is one for consideration by the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of the Northern Territory.

Where it is indicated by a medical officer on health grounds that special nutritional supplements are necessary, these are provided. In the cases of families in necessitous circumstances direct assistance for the provision of meals is provided to the families as a whole.

In cases where a child or children are suffering because of parental neglect, direct interim assistance in the provision of meals is made. At the same time consideration of legal action against the parents is undertaken.

194. Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. Has a new site for the King River bridge on the Victorian Highway been chosen and, if so, when will tenders be called and the new bridge built?
2. Is the Dunmara—Top Springs road to be upgraded in view of its frequent use as an alternative road to Victoria River Downs and West Australia when the Victoria Highway is cut?

ANSWER

1. Two possible sites are being investigated for a new bridge over King River on the Victoria Highway. The project is listed on the draft forward programme for 1976-77.
2. Major gravelling inprovements on the Dunmarra—Top Springs section of the Buchanan Highway are listed on the draft forward programme for 1977-78. Minor gravelling improvements are listed on the draft 1975-76 maintenance programme.

196 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. What support can tourist operators in Katherine expect from the Government or the Tourist Board by way of the provision of facilities for the accommodation of tourists now that such facilities in Darwin are depleted?
2. Does the Government recognize the value of tourism as the second most important industry in the Territory, and, to maintain this position, will the Government consider the provision of tent villages for tourists at Howard Springs, Berry Springs and Batchelor?

ANSWER

1. So far as the Department of the Northern Territory is aware there has been no approach, of the kind mentioned in the Question, to Government for assistance to the tourist industry in Katherine or elsewhere in the Northern Territory outside Darwin.
2. If an approach is made for provision of tent villages at such places as Howard Springs, Berry Springs and Batchelor this will be considered.

197 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

1. On how many days since 25 December 1974 have road or rail communications between Darwin and the following places by the routes indicated been cut:
   (a) Katherine
   (b) Kununurra via Top Springs
   (c) Kununurra via Victoria Highway
   (d) Alice Springs via Stuart Highway
   (e) Adelaide
   (f) Mt Isa via Three Ways
   (g) Mt Isa via Balbarini
   (h) Longreach via Mt Isa, and
   (i) Townsville via Mt Isa?

ANSWER

1. Road or rail communications have been cut between Darwin and the following centres since December 25 for the number of days stated—
   (a) Katherine—Nil
   (b) Kununurra via Top Springs—8 days
   (c) Kununurra via Victoria Highway—11 days
   (d) Alice Springs via Stuart Highway—30 days
   (e) Adelaide (sections in N.T. only)—30 days
   (f) Mt Isa via Balbarini—32 days
   (g) Mt Isa via Three Ways—16 days
   (h) Longreach via Mt Isa (sections in N.T.only)—16 days
   (i) Townsville via Mt Isa (sections in N.T. only)—16 days
2. The following action has been taken to reduce flooding on the various sections—

   Proposals for a three year Improvement and Maintenance Program for the Stuart and Barkly Highways have been prepared and are about to be submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. These include proposals to substantially upgrade major stream crossings on these highways.

   Work has already commenced on the Tarcoola to Alice Springs standard gauge rail link due for completion in approximately five years.

199 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How many Aboriginal are there at the "Rockhole" camp in Katherine?
2. What area of land do these people desire, require or have title to?
3. What improvements on the land are envisaged?
4. What is the estimated cost of the proposed improvements; was a previous estimate varied and, if so, who prepared the previous estimate and why was it changed?

ANSWER

The population of Aboriginal people living at the "Rockhole" camp in Katherine varies between 50 to 70 people.

The community (through the Kalano Community Association Incorporated) have been granted title to an area of 32 acres. Approval to the transfer of title was agreed to by Lands Branch in December 1974. This area of land includes what is known as the "Rockhole" camp and extends from the main road down to the river. Although this area does include an area of water frontage, it would not be considered prime agricultural land.

Improvements envisaged on this area are basically in the form of a housing programme. A Housing Association has been formed amongst the local residents and plans for the building of up to ten houses over a three year period are well advanced. A consultant firm of architects have submitted house plans for approval by the committee members of the Association. Also included in the programme are plans for the construction of a communal kitchen and communal ablution blocks. It is also envisaged that at a later date a vegetable farming project will be commenced. The estimated cost of the proposed improvemnents is $250,000. This is the initial estimate for this project.

203 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. Has the price of superphosphate and other fertilizers risen?
2. Has the bounty or subsidy been withdrawn?

ANSWER

1. The price of superphosphate and other fertilizers has been rising over the last year due to the rock phosphate price increase, manufacturing costs and removal of the bounty.
2. The national bounty expired on 31 December 1974. The matter of a bounty has however been referred to the Industries Assistance Commission for enquiry. The Northern Territory scheme of providing a subsidy on the cost of the freight on superphosphate to the Port of Darwin was estimated on 1 July 1973.

204. Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. Will facilities for loading and unloading double decker transports be incorporated into the Government yard and dip at Elliott (and other places)?
2. Will the Government insist that all cattle travelling to tick free areas or interstate are clean dipped before loading so that they will not be held up at Government dips?

ANSWER

1. At this stage provision for loading and unloading double decker transports is not being incorporated in the construction of the new Government yard at Elliott and is not being considered for other dip sites. Although originally it seemed that there would be a need for this facility, which could still be added at a later stage, discussions with transport operators have revealed a trend to double decker vehicles being fitted internally with suitable loading ramps.
2. The suggestion would require all properties wishing to send cattle to tick free areas or interstate to have their own dips for treating cattle before loading. Some pastoralists have this facility, in many cases it is one of the covenants in the pastoral lease and in all cases it is a facility which we recommend should be provided for proper animal husbandry on the property to control tick, a debilitating pest of cattle.

   However it is not considered that the provision of dips on all properties both small and large should be made compulsory at this stage. In so far as travelling stock are concerned the dipping of cattle under Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch supervision at strategically sited Government dips is proving to be an effective method of controlling tick to provide clean dipping facilities under supervision where this is required by importing states.

208 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Does the Betting Control Board recommend to the Administrator's Council the amounts to be distributed to racing from the revenue of the Board?
2. Were the last amounts distributed decided upon by the current Administrator's Council or by the previous Council?
3. Were the recommendations by the Betting Control Board for Adelaide River, Pine Creek and Timber Creek race clubs for much smaller sums than those allocated by the Administrator's Council?
4. Are the sums to be received by Mataranka, Daly Waters, Larrimah, Katherine and Borroloola race clubs all lower than those recommended by the Betting Control Board?
5. What expertise in racing does the Administrator's Council possess?

ANSWER

1. Yes.

   Section 94KD(2) of the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance, which is the relevant section, provides: "The proportion of the prescribed revenues of the Commonwealth that is payable to racing bodies under the last preceding sub-section shall be divided amongst such registered clubs within the meaning of Part V of this Ordinance, and such companies, associations or other bodies of persons established for the purpose of promoting, conducting or controlling the sport of dog-racing, and in such proportions as the Administrator in Council, after consideration of the recommendations of the Board, determines."
2. The distribution of prescribed revenue from the 1973-1974 financial year was determined by the present Administrator's Council.
3. No.
4. No.

209 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Will the Government consider the development of Tindal as a strategic base rather than rebuild the RAAF Base at Darwin on the grounds that Tindal is better located strategically; the provision of housing is easier

and cheaper in Katherine; and the Government would have less complaints about the disturbance to residents occasioned by air exercises?

ANSWER

Optimum strategic disposition is a major factor in deciding location of deployments of defence forces, but economic and other factors also apply. Despite cyclone damage, RAAF Darwin represents a significant national investment and present plans provide for continued RAAF capability in this area. Should other national considerations lead to a Government decision to re-locate Darwin airfield, the option of development of the RAAF Base at Tindal will be fully assessed in conjunction with other options available.

210 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. I refer to the advertisement in the "Katherine Informer" of 21 February for the supply of 3000 gallons of water every 5 weeks for Cutta Cutta Caves and ask: is the water for the domestic use of the ranger or for public toilets?
2. What use is made of the bore reported in the Reserves Board Annual Report of 1974 as having been successfully sunk?
3. Will accurate counts of visitors to the Katherine Gorge, Katherine Low Level Reserve, Mataranka Pool, Cutta Cutta Caves and Edith Falls be kept?

ANSWER

1. The advertisement for the supply of water was placed in the "Katherine Informer" by a Mr K. Guy, who conducts tours to Cutta Cutta Caves on behalf of the lessee Mr Seidel. I presume water is for his own use and not for public toilets.
2. Bore was sunk and equipped by Reserves Board and is used to supply water for public toilets and is available to lessee or representative of caves.
3. It is not possible to count visitors to Katherine Gorge, Katherine Low Level, Mataranka Pool, Cutta Cutta Caves and Edith Falls until tickets for entry are issued. This is not being done at present.

211 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Have any Aborigines been found to be infringing the laws relating to hire cars by transporting people for a fee?
2. Was the recent accident which resulted in the death of Clancy Roberts caused by mechanical failure or a "rust bucket"?

ANSWER

1. No reports or complaints have been received relating to hiring of cars by Aborigines for a fee.
2. The accident in which Clancy Roberts was killed (4 March 1975) was caused when the vehicle which was being driven by a Joe Doctor became uncontrollable when the deceased, who was a passenger, pulled at the steering wheel and attempted to gain control of the vehicle (Roberts was alleged to have been intoxicated). The vehicle overturned and crushed Roberts. The vehicle was a 1967 Valiant Station Sedan, registered No. NT 96350, which is reported to have been in a reasonable condition.

212 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Are Aborigines engaged in pastoral enterprises subject to the same laws with regard trespass, wrongful branding, unlawful killing, etc. as other Australians?
2. Has the Stock Squad been instructed not to prosecute Aborigines accused of cattle stealing, unlawful killing and associated offences and, if so, what are the terms of the instruction?

ANSWER

Aboriginals engaged in pastoral enterprises are subject to the same laws with regard to wrongful branding, unlawful killing, etc. as other Australians.

With regard to trespass, Section 37(b) of the Crown Lands Ordinance states that all N.T. Pastoral Leases must contain a reservation in favour of Aboriginal inhabitants of the Northern Territory. Section 24(e) defines this reservation as the right to enter on any pastoral lease for defined purposes. These purposes include the right of access to water and right to hunt indigenous species of animal life.

The police officer in charge of the activities of the Stock Squad has advised that no special instructions have been issued in matters relating to stock offences involving Aboriginals.

213 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will research be carried out into improved preservation of potatoes, onions, apples, oranges and other lines to avoid losses due to deterioration without cold storage under Territory conditions?

ANSWER

There is a continuing programme of research into the technology of preserving fruit and vegetables by the Division of Food Research of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation. Many methods of storage, in addition to cold storage, are being examined.

214 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. What are the prospects for the shipment of live cattle to South East Asia in 1975?
2. What loading facilities are available or are to be made available?

ANSWER

1. The prospects for the shipment of live cattle from Darwin to South East Asia in 1975 appear to be good.

   An airlift of several hundred live slaughter cattle to Burnei has already commenced.

   A number of enquiries have been received from prospective exporters and it is known that negotiations for sales are taking place. It is too early to predict how many cattle might be exported by plane and ship in 1975 but figures in the order of 5000 to 20 000 seem possible at this stage. The longer term future of the trade however remains uncertain.

2. There are presently no permanent facilities at the Darwin wharves for the export of live cattle, but the problem has been examined by a number of prospective shippers who seem satisfied that adequate loading arrangements can be made with cranes and containers at the ship's side. The loading operations will be carefully observed by Department of Northern Territory officers and Port Authority officials. If an economic loading rate cannot be achieved and the trade appears to have reasonable prospects then other arrangements will have to be considered.

216 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that there is no provision for extended credit at concessional rates to rural industries in the Territory?

ANSWER

The only credit presently available to rural industries at concessional rates is through the Rural Reconstruction Scheme administered by the Primary Producers' Board. Since that scheme was introduced, following amendment to the Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance in December 1972, there have been six applications for loans of which three have been approved and one not approved.

Rural Reconstruction finance is primarily used to restructure existing debts at higher interest rates and provide some development capital where this is needed to increase the debt servicing capacity of the producer. The interest rate for rural reconstruction finance is 4½ %.

In addition, as stated by the Minister for the Northern Territory in a press statement of 21 April 1975 and again in his second reading speech to the States Grants (Beef Industry) Bill on 21 May 1975 carry on finance for beef producers is also available. Northern Territory beef producers will be able to obtain carry on finance on the same basis as the states at 4 % concessional interest rate. The carry on finance scheme will be administered by the Primary Producers' Board and full details will be announced shortly.

223 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

In view of the fact that poor communications east and south of Mt Isa led to a beer rationing situation in that town and the same poor communications affect the supply of Darwin, will he enlist the co-operation of the Queensland Government to make a joint approach to the Australian Government for funds to seal to all-weather standard the roads between Townsville and Mt Isa and between Longreach and Mt Isa?

ANSWER

Yes. I have already made such an approach to the Queensland Government.

224 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Before Christmas 1974, the Rural Health Sisters responsible for the Elsey Community Area stated that the health of the Aboriginal community had improved 100 per cent since their move to Duck Creek. I ask:

(a) what is the general condition of the community now;

(b) how many children have been hospitalized since Christmas 1974;

(c) how many children are hospitalized now;

(d) what was the nature of the complaints for which the children were hospitalized;

(e) is the main cause of the illness suffered attributed to malnutrition; and

(f) will the Department of Aboriginal Affairs ensure that an appropriate amount from Social Security payments is spent on food for the dependants of recipients?

ANSWER

(a) The People camped at Duck Creek have a similar pattern of health problems to that encountered in most Northern Territory Aboriginal communities.

(b) Ten children from this community have been hospitalized since Christmas 1974.

(c) On 3 April 1974 one child from this community was in hospital.

(d) Diarrhoea and chest infections usually with mild to moderate undernutrition.

(e) As in most Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, the children's resistance to infectious diseases would be undertermined by under-nutrition and this should therefore be regarded as an important causative factor.

(f) Aboriginals are encouraged, as part of the overall community education program, to allocate a reasonable proportion of their income for family maintenance purposes but the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is not empowered to issue a direction to this effect.

244 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Was an investigation made into the reasons for the attack on Aboriginal Patrol Officer Campbell in Katherine on 11 March 1975 by Aborigines exiled by the Hooker Creek Council and, if so, what were the reasons?
2. What action was taken against the assailants?
3. What action will be taken to ensure that Aborigines who are not amenable to control by their own community do not intimidate or maltreat people outside their own "country"?

ANSWER

It is understood that Katherine Police investigated a brawl, in which Mr Campbell was involved at Katherine on 11 March 1975, and that some arrests were made.

Apparently Mr Campbell has not availed of the opportunity offered by the Police to lay charges for assault and it seems that this is because the brawl arose out of a domestic argument.

Where cases of intimidation or maltreatment are reported and it appears likely that charges can be laid and sustained then Aboriginals involved are advised of their rights in the situations. However, such incidents are rare.

245 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Is the new building code being used at present without being lawfully promulgated?
2. When will the building code be legalised?

ANSWER

1. No.
2. The Northern Territory Draft Building Manual 1975 was adopted by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission on 17 April 1975 and has effect in the Darwin Area as defined under the Darwin Reconstruction Act 1975.

   The draft Northern Territory Building Manual 1975 was adopted in declared building areas outside the Darwin area following normal legal/administrative action required pursuant to the Northern Territory Building Ordinance and Regulations.

246 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. In view of the fact that at least two persons, to my knowledge, have been misled by the Commonwealth as to the payout figure of loans owing to the Commonwealth on houses, will he find out and tell me how many such mistakes have occurred?
2. Is the making of these mistakes due to the locating of half the Finance Branch in Brisbane or was it due to an incorrect method of calculation decided on before the movement of staff to Brisbane?
3. When will the Finance Branch be brought together again for the improvement of efficiency of its operations?

ANSWER

1. Some confusion has arisen concerning the difference between the insurance payout figure for improvements on a leasehold and the payout figure for discharge of the mortgage. In some cases the owner has asked for one when in fact the other was needed.
2. To avoid this confusion the department now provides both figures in response to all requests and identifies each clearly.

   Where the loan or purchase was made prior to the commencement of the reserve price system the insurance payout figure should have been sufficient to pay out the amount owing under the mortgage. In the case of loans after the reserve price system commenced the view was taken that as the Government's equity in the land had not been destroyed, repayment of the full loan from insurance funds would not be sought unless the mortgagee so desired.

   Unfortunately, in both cases, there were inconsistencies in the manner in which the Government's equity in the improvements was recorded in departmental records. Because of the urgent demand for insurance payout figures from home owners, and the prolonged delays which, with a reduced staff and damaged filing systems, were probable in verifying doubtful calculations the Department chose to use the information then available and rely on its existing mortgage security to obtain repayment for the amount outstanding for the land (if any) and any error of calculation in the insurance payout figure.

   These difficulties have been resolved now that the financial records of the department are properly housed and adequate staff is available in Brisbane.
3. The timing on the return of detached elements of the Department from Brisbane was given in Part 3 of the answer to question No. 225.

247 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

When will an engineer be appointed to take charge of the operation of the Katherine power house?

ANSWER

The Department of Housing and Construction advises it is not intended to appoint a professional engineer for the sole purpose of taking charge of the power station at Katherine.

An Area Engineer has been appointed to take charge of all ESU operations in Katherine and he will be realeased as soon as his current contract commitments in Darwin make it possible.

248 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

What was the reason for the delay of almost two weeks before the late Mr Clancy Roberts of Katherine could be buried?

ANSWER

In view of the fact that a coronial enquiry had to be made into the death of Mr Clancy Roberts and, because of his position as a leader amongst Aboriginal people in the district and the necessity to make arrangements for many people to attend the funeral from throughout the district, together with the time needed to arrange a burial at the locale chosen, the delay seems reasonable. There appears to be no evidence to suggest that there was undue loss of time.

249 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Will the establishment loans being granted to Darwin businessmen be matched by similar loans for pastoralists who have suffered from the disastrous collapse of the world beef market?

ANSWER

No. No similarity is seen between the situation of Darwin businessmen whose premises and stock were destroyed in Cyclone Tracy and the situation of Northern Territory pastoralists who have experienced a drop in prices offering for live cattle.

The Government has however announced that a substantial loan on favourable terms is to be made to enable the Katherine Meatworks to open in 1975 and has announced that in addition to the Territory pastoralists share of the $20m made available to the Commonwealth Development Bank for carry on finance loans at current commercial rates, specific assistance in the way of loans to a reasonable limit at a very low interest rate are to be offered to N.T. producers under a national scheme of assistance to the cattle industry. Details of this scheme will be determined following discussions to be held with the States.

252 Mr MacFARLANE to Miss ANDREW—

When will the power house at Tindal be reactivated?

ANSWER

The Power Station at Tindal is not part of the ESU establishment. Its operation comes under the control of the Department of Defence (Air Office).

From time to time the Tindal Power Station has been used to supply a small part of the Katherine Township, this being done with the co-operation of the Air Office. Future use of the Tindal power station will be requested if the need arises.

253 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

When will a coroner be appointed to Katherine?

When will a permits officer be appointed to Katherine to authorize travel to and from Darwin?

ANSWER

It is not proposed that an appointment of a coroner to Katherine be made at this time. Dorrit Gisela Eirmann, who is the Clerk of Courts at Katherine, was appointed as a Deputy Coroner under the Coroner's Ordinance by the Administrator of the Northern Territory on 28 February 1975.

A permits officer took up duties in Katherine on a full-time basis on 18 March 1975.

255 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

I refer to the report on the Katherine Power House you furnished in February and ask: were the capacities for each generator listed those of the makers up to 20 years ago or were they the output of each generator was capable in 1975?

ANSWER

The information sought is set out in the following Table:

| Generating Set | Original Site Rating (KW) | Present Continuous Output (KW) |
|---|---|---|
| No. 1 | 970 | 800 |
| No. 2 | 529 | 450 |
| No. 3 | 529 | 450 |
| No. 4 | 970 | 800 |
| No. 5 | 1725 | 1500 |
| No. 6* | 1725 | 1500 |
| Portable Dorman | 474 | 450 |

* This set is due to be commissioned in mid 1975.

256 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Did the N.T. Port Authority submit applications for capital expenditure to the Federal Government in 1972/73, 1973/74, or 1974/75 and, if not, why were applications not made?

ANSWER

**1972/73**—For the financial year 1972/73, the Port Authority made application for funds totalling $858,000 which were to be supplemented by a further $270,000 for Capital Works out of the Port Authority's own funds. No funds were made available by the Government and the Port Authority actually expended $738,000 on Capital Works out of its own funds.

**1973/74**—During this year, funds were not requested from the Government, as it had been made quite clear that any money made available would be on an interest bearing repayable loan basis, and would only be made available if it was considered the money was to be used for a viable operation. The Authority budgeted for $281,500 to be spent on Capital Works, but in effect expended $154,000 during the year.

**1974/75**—Application was made to the Government for a grant of $101,000 to provide an Inshore Fishing Facility, and budgeted to spend $182,500 on Capital Works out of its own funds. To date funds have not been received for the Inshore Fishing Facility as requested.

257 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

1. Is it a fact that Port Authority staff who left Darwin after the cyclone and only returned recently have been paid for the period they were absent?
2. Is the period of absence being classified as annual leave?

ANSWER

1. In all cases staff of the Northern Territory Port Authority were paid in accordance with Public Service Board Circular No. 1975/4, Darwin Cyclone Disaster—Conditions of Service, and any amendments thereto.
2. No member of the Port Authority's staff was obliged to take annual leave to cover any period of absence during this period.

258 Mr PERRON to Dr LETTS—

Does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission intend to have the facilities in the port upgraded or increased?

ANSWER

The draft report on 'Darwin Planning Guidelines' says: "The port area is expected to continue its current essential role. Should long term development occur in East Arm, as was proposed, it is unlikely that all port activities will be removed."

The National Materials Handling Bureau is examining the development of the port for the Northern Territory Port Authority and a submission is expected in June.

No commitment to consider upgrading or increasing port facilities could be given before this report has been examined.

The relationship between the Authority and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission responsibilities with regard to development programming over the next five (5) years is being investigated.

259 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

1. Has the N.T. Port Authority applied to the Government for special financial assistance to repair facilities damaged during the cyclone, and if so, with what result?
2. If no application has been made, what is the reason for the delay or for the decision not to make an application?
3. In view of the closing down of Francis Creek Mine, does the authority intend to repair its bulk loading facilities?

ANSWER

1. Under its agreement with the Government, the Port Authority provides for an Insurance Reserve Fund, and any deficiency in its insurance reserve will be made up by the Government. An advance made in respect of such a deficiency would be regarded as equity capital and interest would not be payable thereon. The Government will therefore finance repairs to Port Authority facilities damaged during the cyclone. Preliminary estimates of cyclone damage, which exceed $2m, have already been forwarded to the Government. The Government has so far provided an advance to the Authority of $200,000 and will be providing more in accordance with the Authority's estimated cash requirements which so far have been tabled for the period ending 30 November, 1975.
2. Not applicable.
3. As mentioned in the answer to question 1, the Authority's insurance is underwritten by the Government. Damage to the bulk loading facility has been assessed at approximately $250,000. Whether the facility will be repaired will be determined by the Government.

   It should be noted that the Authority has not yet fully discharged its responsibility to the Government in respect of repayments on the stockpile and loading equipment. The final payment of $231,000 is to be made in June of this year. Repayments on the Iron Ore Wharf continue for a further 22 years.

261 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is it the Government intention to provide recreation fares to Darwin residents in the private sector and, if so, when?

ANSWER

The Government provided recreation fares to Darwin residents in the private sector until 31 March 1975. Consideration is being given as to whether it would be appropriate to extend this period, and, if so, under what conditions future fare concessions should be granted.

262 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

1. How many permanent officers and how many temporary officers are employed by the Department of the Northern Territory?

2. How many officers of the Department have been transferred interstate and what branches do they represent?

3. Will all these officers be transferred back to Darwin and, if so, when?

ANSWER

1. The Department of the Northern Territory employs 938 permanent officers and 448 temporary employees.

2. Approximately 200 officers and employees of the Department of the Northern Territory have been temporarily transferred to Brisbane. The Branches represented are:

   Establishment and ADP Branch

   Finance, Supply and Transport Branch

   Forward Planning and Major Projects Co-ordination Branch

   Legislation Branch

   Mines Branch

   Urban Development and Town Planning Branch

   Commercial and Industrial Affairs Branch

   Local Government and Services Branch.

3. It is intended to return all functional areas that have been temporarily relocated outside the Territory to Darwin as soon as possible. The timing of the return to Darwin depends upon a number of factors including the availability of suitable accommodation in Darwin.

265 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. When will the Nakara Primary School open?

2. When will the Wanguri Primary School now open?

ANSWER

1. The Northern Territory Education Division has asked the Department of Housing and Construction for the return of Nakara School by commencement of third term. Whether this can be achieved is dependent on the extent of the repairs to be carried out and whether the required carpeting can be obtained.

2. Housing and Construction have advised that Wanguri is programmed to open in April, 1976.

268 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. How does the current number of enrolments of school children in Darwin compare with the corresponding period in 1974?

2. How does the number of school teachers employed now compare with the corresponding period in 1974?

ANSWER

1.

| | March 1974 | March 1975 |
|---|---|---|
| Government Pre & Primary Schools | 7 351 | 3 700 |
| Government High Schools | 2 532 | 1 664 |
| Non-Government Schools | 1 132 | 762 |
| Total | 11 051 | 6 126 |

2.

| | March 1974 | March 1975 |
|---|---|---|
| Government Schools | 657 | 302 |
| Non-Government Schools | 64 | 28 |
| Total | 721 | 330 |

270 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

1. When will the Casuarina Hospital open?
2. What other medical facilities will be provided in the Casuarina District?

ANSWER

1. The Casuarina Hospital is now scheduled for completion in January 1978.
2. The Department has made certain recommendations to the Construction Commission on this matter.

   Further information will need to await decisions by the Construction Commission.

271 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. What remedial steps has the Price Controller taken in response to the many complaints about high prices in Darwin?
2. Have any persons in Darwin been charged for over-charging since 24 December 1974?

ANSWER

1. All price complaints received by the Controller of Prices are thoroughly investigated and where necessary a justified price is negotiated or fixed by order under Section 20 of the Prices Regulation Ordinance.

   A continuous programme of research and investigation is being undertaken to check price levels over a wide range of commodities and services.
2. No.

273 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Will the adoption of orphans from Vietnam and other places overseas be as difficult to arrange as the attempts at adoption of children made by Territory residents under normal circumstances, as witness the applications of A. J. Gorey of Mataranka and R. Bathgate of Katherine, or will the procedure be simplified?
2. How many Territory residents have indicated willingness to adopt war orphans and of these how many are Katherine residents?

ANSWER

1. It is not proposed to relax standards or to establish new procedures in the case of the adoption of Vietnamese orphans in the Northern Territory. Prior to the cyclone there was a considerable waiting list of applicants and it was possible to find the best possible adoptive parents for a particular child. It is of note that Section 10 of the Adoption of Children Ordinance spells out that the welfare of the child is paramount.
2. Thirty-seven applications have been received throughout the Northern Territory to adopt Vietnamese orphans and of these six have come from the Katherine area.

274 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

In answer to question 207 it was stated that "Funds have been allocated for expenditure in 1974-75 year for a new toilet block" in Katherine opposite March Motors. Will tenders be called and let in the three months remaining of the financial year?

ANSWER

Tenders have been called, the successful tender has been selected, approved and authorised and will be announced shortly. The contract will be let this financial year.

275 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Have approaches been made by the Red Cross Society to the Government for the enlarging and improving of the Old Pioneers' Home at Katherine?
2. What progress has been made in having houses built for pensioners on the area of land near the Old Pioneers' Home in Katherine?

3. Some years ago the Government undertook to survey the need for aid to elderly people in Katherine and I now ask, was the survey carried out and, if so, with what result?

ANSWER

1. The Australian Red Cross Society, Katherine Branch, has notified the Department of Social Security that it is considering the installation of four transportable type units in the Pioneer Home area. As yet no formal application has been lodged.

2. The Department of Social Security advises that the subject of houses for pensioners on the area of land near the old Pioneers' Homes in Katherine, has been taken up with the N.T. Housing Commission. The Housing Commission has now acquired three of the six acres formerly held by the Red Cross in that area for the purpose of erecting new design units of self contained flats.

3. A survey on the need for accommodation for elderly people in the Katherine area was carried out by the Department of Social Security and the action indicated in answers (1) and (2) emerged following that survey.

276 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Are payments of wages and salaries to employees and staff in Government departments in Katherine frequently delayed, and, if so, will he make representations for the appointment of a resident paymaster?

ANSWER

Following Cyclone Tracy there were a few instances of late payment of salaries and wages to employees and staff of Government Departments in Katherine. These delays were of short duration and resulted from new arrangements necessary following cyclone damage. All concerned Departments advise that new arrangements are working satisfactorily and that wages and salaries are now being paid on time. Each Department does have a paying officer in Katherine.

277 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Are any trials being undertaken or is research being conducted with the object of growing sugar cane commercially in the Territory?

ANSWER

No trials or research into commercial growing of sugar cane are being conducted in the Northern Territory. The Kimberley Research Station at Kununurra, West Australia, maintains sugar cane variety stocks and does some limited trial work under irrigation, the results of which would be applicable to the Northern Territory if sugar cane production became feasible.

It should be noted that sugar requires about 60 inches of rain spread over about nine months of the year so that there would not be any chance of growing the crop under Northern Territory dry land conditions. Further, sugar requires a tremendous infrastructure of transport facilities including deep sea ports plus crushing mills. The Queensland coast has all these facilities and could increase Australian production if required with little or no increase in infrastructure.

The Ord area would offer best prospects for sugar growing in this region with available irrigation water and a settled farming community.

278 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

1. Has the Port Authority objected to the Cities Commission proposal to have the Frances Bay Arterial Road traverse land which was intended for small craft facilities?

2. Has the Port Authority supplied details of their medium and long term port development proposals to the authorities replanning Darwin?

ANSWER

1. The proposed alignment of the Frances Bay Arterial Road does not encroach on the area proposed for small craft facilities. It lies behind the existing Frances Bay Access Road.

2. The Port Authority's reconstruction programme and preliminary development proposals have been given to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Several investigations are in hand and will be completed by June this year which will enable the Port Authority to finalise its medium and long term development plans.

281 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW—

1. What is the current annual cost of operation of the Prices Control Board and how many staff are employed?

2. How many additional staff will be required for the policing of controls on the prices of building materials? Will they be recruited interstate and, if so, where will they be accommodated; and what will be the cost of operating the branch in 1975-76?

ANSWER

1. (a) The operating cost of the Prices and Consumer Affairs Branch for the full financial year 1974-75 will amount to approximately $198,000.

(b) The approved establishment of the Branch comprises at present 22 positions, of which five positions have been transferred to Brisbane.

2. (a) At this stage it is not envisaged that additional staff will be required for the control of price movements of building materials, as it is the aim of the Branch to arrive at fair prices by way of price justification rather than by direct price control. Should the imposition of direct price control become necessary, up to six additional officers may be required to cover the increased work load. The additional staff will be either recruited locally, in which case no additional accommodation will be required, or transferred temporarily from Brisbane requiring only single hostel or motel accommodation.

(b) The budgeted operating cost of the Branch for the year 1975-76 is $308,000.

282 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

When will Strata Titles legislation, necessary for the future development of the Territory, be introduced into the Assembly?

ANSWER

The subject of Strata Title legislation for the Northern Territory is presently under consideration but it is not possible at this stage to accurately state when a bill for this purpose will be ready for introduction.

The form of any such legislation necessarily depends upon the system of land tenure applicable in the Northern Territory, which is presently under examination by the Commission of Inquiry into Land Tenures.

(My comment on this information is, "Humbug".)

283 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will he make representations to the Government for the relocation in the Katherine area of the Radio Australia facility destroyed at Cox Peninsula?

ANSWER

No, but I will ask the Government what action it proposes for replacement of the Cox Peninsula facilities, and may make appropriate recommendations after receiving and considering this advice.

284 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to recent reports of children having been withdrawn from Roper School because of a leaking roof and other maintenance problems and ask:

(a) have the positions on the 1969 Roper establishment of one Builder/Carpenter (European), seven Builders Assistants (Aboriginal) and one Plumber's Assistant (Aboriginal, been maintained and, if so, how many people have been trained in these positions in the intervening years; and

(b) why was it not possible for some of these trained or partly trained people to have made at least temporary repairs to the school roof?

ANSWER

(a) No. Up until 1973 it was difficult to keep the position of Carpenter (Tradesman) occupied on a regular basis. In December 1973 the establishment was reduced to three Trades Assistants (Building) and there has been little emphasis on using these positions since as the local Housing Association developed and as other Departments became responsible for on-going repair and maintenance.

(b) Temporary repairs were made until recently when the Department of Education arranged to let a contract for this work. The nature of repairs needed are beyond local resources.

285 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

The answer to question 380 appearing in the February/March 1970 Hansard refers to Welfare Officers "watching and observing what goes on" with regard to Aborigines drinking in hotels and other places and I ask: Do officers of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs still continue with this practice and do they counsel Aborigines observed to be over-indulging to desist?

ANSWER

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs does not arrange for officers to observe Aboriginal people drinking in hotels.

286 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Why was it necessary to have Territory police recruits trained in Adelaide rather than in Alice Springs or other places that could be used?

ANSWER

Police recruits are being trained in Adelaide as a result of the facilities at the Darwin Training Centre suffering major damage during the cyclone. There is no other centre in the Northern Territory that could supply facilities and accommodation required for the recruit schools, which comprise of an average of thirty members.

The SA Police Department were able to supply training facilities and accommodation, therefore this course was accepted.

It is pointed out that the recruits are trained by NT Police training staff who have been temporarily posted to Adelaide for this purpose.

287 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

What were the circumstances of the incident on a lonely Central Australian road during Easter 1975 involving Mr W. Waudby of Mt Wedge station and a group of Aborigines?

ANSWER

Circumstances are not known. Mr Waudby has been spoken to and stated he did not wish to make any complaints or supply a statement concerning the incident.

288 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. What is the reason for the delay in letting the contract for the building of Housing Commission homes in Katherine?

2. What is the estimated waiting time for a Housing Commission home in Katherine and how many applicants are there for such homes?

ANSWER

The Housing Commission has attempted to undertake several housing projects in Katherine this financial year including—

(a) the building of 3 houses for the Northern Territory Reserves Board;

(b) the building of 11 medium density units in Quinn Street, which were advertised in August, 1974 and 3 tenders were considered by the Commission in August 1974;

(c) the building of 14 single unit brick dwellings for which tenders were called in September 1974 and tenders were considered by the Commission in October 1974;

(d) the Commission is currently calling tenders for 14 transportable factory-built houses in Katherine.

With respect to the 3 houses for the Northern Territory Reserves Board, the Commission has been awaiting a decision by the Government for 6 months on the provision of special funds to build these houses.

With respect to the medium density units in Quinn Street, the lowest tender received was about $29,000 per unit. The other two tenders were very much higher. It was decided to make further investigation into the financial standing of the lowest tenderer who subsequently withdrew his tender in September 1974. As the result of this, the contract was re-advertised in September 1974, when again three tenders were received, the lowest this time being over $39,000 per unit, which was far too high for acceptance by the Commission.

In October 1974 having received completely unacceptable tender prices, the Commission decided to negotiate with contractors from Katherine, Darwin and Alice Springs in an effort to obtain an acceptable contract price. However, no other contractor has been prepared to submit a tender price. The present position is that the contractor who withdrew his tender in September 1974 has now contacted the Commission and is anxious to negotiate again to complete the project and it is anticipated that he will submit a price by about mid-May for the Commission's consideration.

With respect to the tender for 14 single unit brick dwellings, only one acceptable price was tendered in September 1974, but in the Commission's opinion this particular tenderer would have had considerable trouble in completing a contract for 14 houses, so that the Commission in December 1974 offered this contractor a contract for 5 houses at the price previously submitted but was prepared to negotiate within specified limits. Mainly because of the cyclone in Darwin, it was not until April 1975 that an acceptable price for 5 houses was achieved. A letter of acceptance has been forwarded to the contractor. It is therefore expected that work will proceed on the construction of these houses immediately.

With respect to tenders being called for 14 transportable units, because of the Commission's inability to let a contract for medium density units and the inability of virtually all contractors to submit satisfactory prices for brick dwellings in single units or medium density units, the Commission investigated the possibility of introducing transportable factory-built houses into Katherine and Tennant Creek. Tenders are now being called for 14 factory-built houses at Katherine and tenders will close in June 1975.

Apart from the problems referred to above, the Commission has had advice that there seems to be a decrease in demand for Commission houses in Katherine. In fact, the waiting time for Commission houses and flats has remained fairly constant over the past 12 months which may indicate that the demand for Commission houses in Katherine is small. This concern had been increased by the doubts surrounding the future of the Northern Meat Exporters for whom the Commission provided 10 houses in 1972, some of which were unoccupied at 21 April. Before the announcement to provide further Government financial assistance to Northern Meat Exporters, there was a real possibility that these 10 houses could revert to the Commission and would therefore have been available for general allocation.

2. The estimated waiting time and number of applicants are as follows:

| | Number of Applicants | Waiting time |
|---|---|---|
| Houses . . . . . | 38 | 10 months |
| 2-Bedroom Flats . . . . . | 6 | 5 months |
| 1-Bedroom Flat . . . . . | 8 | 8 months |

290 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Has any further attention been given to the request of the Tourist Board made in 1970 for the provision of public toilets at Larrimah, Daly Waters, Dunmarra and Borroloola?

ANSWER

Correspondence was entered into between the Department of the Northern Territory and the Tourist Board on the subject of provision of Public Toilets and the possibility of their lack of maintenance. The Board agreed with the Departmental attitude that toilets in remote locations should be adequately maintained or they become a serious health hazard, are then objectionable to tourists and result in adverse publicity for the Territory. Since that time consideration is given to establishing toilets on locations where adequate maintenance can be provided on an assured long term basis. In locations where there is only one facility e.g. hotel or a store, it is considered that it is the proprietor's responsibility to erect toilet facilities for his customers.

The deplorable lack of cleanliness in several of the public toilets established throughout the Territory has been a source of concern to the Department of the Northern Territory, the Department of Health and the Tourist Board. The major problem is the difficulty experienced in obtaining a suitable contractor to undertake the task of regular maintenance of the blocks. This occurred particularly in locations where there was only one establishment such as a store or a wayside inn. There was no guarantee that after the first maintenance contract expired, the local contractor would be interested in re-negotiating a further term. It then became an expensive operation to maintain these units and in some cases they were actually closed. Prior to closure, the toilets became such health hazards that complaints from the travelling public were numerous and the Department of Health asked for action.

However, any application for a public toilet is treated on its merits but unless there is adequate guarantee that the blocks will be maintained satisfactorily for the life of the unit, erection of toilets is avoided in locations other than towns where there are sufficient residents to undertake the cleaning contract.

Currently there are no proposals for erection of public toilets at Larrimah, Daly Waters, Dunmarra or Borroloola.

291 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Will Mr S. Ruhman be granted permission to cross part of the Katherine Gorge Reserve with his proposed guided tours?

ANSWER

No.

293 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What was the result of the approach made five years ago (see question 371 February/March 1970 Hansard) to a church group to sponsor the provision of a hostel for convalescent people in Katherine?

ANSWER

The North Australia Baptist Home Trust approached the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in May 1973 with a proposal to build a hostel for convalescents and outpatients of the Katherine Hospital. (At that time the Department of Aboriginal Affairs was responsible for the General Community Welfare function). Because of difficulties associated with funding this type of accommodation, the proposal has temporarily lapsed although the Baptist Homes Trust has indicated that it still is interested to develop the proposal when possible. In the meantime a 22 bed hostel which has been established for young people by the Baptist Homes Trust in Katherine may be able to provide some accommodation for convalescents from time to time.

294 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

Will he investigate the 1968 Water Resources Branch internal report on a reticulated water supply for Katherine and endeavour to have its recommendations carried out or at least made public?

ANSWER

Yes.

295 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What was the result of the negotiations being carried out in 1970 between the Northern Territory Administration and the Baptist Homes Trust (see question 349 February/March 1970) for a long term low interest loan scheme in connection with the building of a hostel for outback children interested in attending Katherine Area School?

ANSWER

The Baptist Homes Trust had proposed building small hostels for secondary school children and primary school children in Katherine and had acquired leases aver land for this purpose. Hoewever, their investigations revealed that there was no substantial need for this type of accommodation and in the light of these results, the leases were surrendered.

The Department of Education advises that it has provided in its program for 1975-76 for the construction of a drop-in residential centre to enable outback students of the Katherine School of the Air to live in at the school in Katherine for short periods throughout the academic year. The centre is designed to accommodate eighteen students in single and double rooms and also contains units for staff and a housekeeper. In addition provision has been made for a dining room with kitchen facilities, common room for the students and a common room for the staff.

296 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Will the new Building Code, if and when it becomes law, require changes in associated regulations such as those pertaining to the Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Board and, if so, will all the new associated regulations come into force at the same time as the Building Code?

2. What are the other associated regulations that will have to be amended or replaced as as result of the introduction of the new Building Code?

ANSWER

1. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has approved the Building Code for the Darwin area under the Darwin Reconstruction Act. Section 15(6) of the Act provides that "the erection of a building . . . shall be deemed to be not in contravention of any Ordinance of the Territory or any regulation or by-law under such an Ordinance." Consequently it is not essential to amend any Territory legislation although as far as possible it is proposed to conform with such legislation.

In as far as it is proposed to adopt the new Building Code for the rest of the Territory pursuant to the Building Ordinance and Regulations the Code will have to comply with existing Territory Regulations.

2. Investigations are proceeding to see whether any amendments are necessary. It is not possible at this stage to specify what amendments are necessary.

297 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Is the area blocked on the Stuart Highway at Newcastle Waters or Newcastle Creek?

ANSWER

Newcastle Creek.

298 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Do the inland routes of Queensland, through Mt Isa and the Townsville to Mt Isa railway offer cheaper and quicker supply routes to the Territory than either road or rail routes via Alice Springs from Adelaide and Melbourne?

ANSWER

No. Information received from North Australia Railways gives the freight cost of general cargo between Melbourne and Darwin via Alice Springs as $248.96 per tonne whereas the cost via Mt Isa is $304.52 per tonne.

It takes approximately two weeks for freight to reach Darwin via the Alice Springs route and approximately three weeks via Mt Isa.

299 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

Will he explain why the parallel air services provided by the airlines between Alice Springs and Darwin which do not provide Tennant Creek and Katherine with a service each day of every week are tolerated when it is the Government's expressed desire to avoid parallel flights?

ANSWER

Airlines are making rescheduling arrangements to serve Katherine and Tennant Creek with at least one daily service in each direction. New schedules will be introduced before 1st July.

300 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

By whom and on whose authority was Mr Ian Barker Q.C. briefed to represent Aboriginal defendants at Katherine on April 14 and 15?

ANSWER

The Aboriginal Legal Aid Service.

301 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

When was the Acting Director of Aboriginal Affairs notified of the incidents which took place in Katherine on Sunday 13 April involving a large group of Aborigines from Hooker Creek?

ANSWER

The Director of Aboriginal Affairs or his delegate discussed alleged incidents involving Aboriginals and other persons in Katherine, with Katherine field officers, at various times from Monday 14 April onwards. No record has been kept of the exact times.

302 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Are Aborigines visiting towns like Katherine for special functions, such as rodeos allowed to bring firearms, spears, boomerangs, etc. with them?

ANSWER

Aboriginals visiting towns like Katherine for special functions may bring with them whatever the law allows every person to bring in similar circumstances. The question of what is allowable in any particular case that is not specifically prescribed is a matter for interpretation by the Police and subject to review by the Courts should the Police feel that some enforcement of regulations are necessary.

303 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Are attempts made to instruct unsophisticated Aborigines such as those from Hooker Creek in acceptable social behaviour in towns, and, if not, will attempts be made?

ANSWER

Generally Aboriginals learn what is or is not acceptable social behaviour in the same manner as do other people. That is, from a variety of sources including parents, the school, peer groups, work supervisors, etc. The Aboriginal people at Hooker Creek also discuss such matters in local sessions of the Council and these discussions are carried into the community at large.

304 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

In view of the existence of the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch advisory services, why is it necessary for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to spend nearly $700,000 on consultants for pastorals and farming enterprises?

ANSWER

The Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory does provide an advisory service to pastoral and agricultural concerns in the Territory. However, it is felt that Aboriginal ventures, as least in the initial stages of development require more than just an advisory service and in most instances where considerable financial assistance has been made available by the Government, consultants have been retained as General Managers to the projects.

Recent advice from the Branch indicates that their staff resources are limited and they are unlikely to be able to provide more than casual assistance.

The Consultants fees for this type of service are of course substantial but in total for the Northern Territory would amount to only a fraction of the $700,000 suggested.

305 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

How many lepers are:—

(a) in the Territory;
(b) in each district of the Territory;
(c) arrested cases;
(d) hospitalized; and
(e) incurable?

ANSWER

Before providing the figues requested the following explanation is offered on the interpretation of leprosy statistics; especially as these have been used by some in the past to give the impression that large numbers of infectious cases roam at large in the Northern Territory and elsewhere in Northern Australia to the peril of the rest of the population.

Effective treatment for the disease is relatively recent and it is the practice to keep patients on the leprosy register to ensure their efficient follow up even when the disease is no longer infectious and has been arrested. The patient's name is kept on the register until such time as the case can be considered to be a definite cure.

The specific answers to the Honourable Member's question are:—

(a) there are currently 840 names on the leprosy register;

(b) the numbers for each district are:

| Northern Region | | East Arnhem Region | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bagot | 9 | Elcho Island | 57 |
| Bamyili | 30 | Goulburn Island | 8 |
| Bathurst Island | 39 | Croker Island | 6 |
| Borroloola | 25 | Maningrida | 122 |
| Daly River | 17 | Oenpelli | 75 |
| Darwin | 64 | Milingimbi | 30 |
| Delissaville | 5 | Rose River Area | 21 |
| Garden Point | 6 | Yirrkala | 24 |
| Katherine | 37 | | |
| Mudginberri | 7 | Sub Total | 343 |
| Port Keats | 53 | | |
| Roper River Area | 30 | Southern Region | 59 |
| Snake Bay | 19 | | |
| V.R.D. Area | 62 | Total | 840 |
| Wave Hill Area | 35 | | |
| Sub Total | 438 | | |

(c) 820 of these are arrested cases.

(d) 20 patients are in hospital.

(e) Leprosy is no longer incurable.

368 Mr WITHNALL to Mr EVERNGHAM—

What are the Government's intentions in respect to each of the following Ordinances reserved for the Governor-General's pleasure on the dates indicated:

Administrative Actions (Investigation) Ordinance 1972
1.6.72

Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Ordinance 1973
11.12.73

National Parks Ordinance
11.5.73

Housing Ordinance 1974
26.6.74

National Parks Ordinance 1974
20.3.74

Crown Lands Ordinance 1974
20.3.74

Public Parks and Garden Ordinance 1974
20.3.74

Succession Duties Repeal Bill 1974
24.10.74

Land Tenure (Transitional Provisions) Bill 1975
13.3.75

Local Government (Extension of Terms of Office) Bill 1975
13.3.75

ANSWER

Administrative Actions (Investigation) Ordinance 1972

No final decision has been made in respect of this Ordinance due to the introduction of the Ombudsman Bill 1975 in the Australian Parliament. The matter will be reconsidered after Parliament has dealt with this Bill.

Criminal Injuries (Compensation) Ordinance 1974

The Australian Government is presently giving further consideration to this matter having regard to current developments relative to the question of compensation. Implications arising from the National Compensation Bill 1974 also require consideration in relation to the Ordinance.

National Parks Ordinance 1973
National Parks Ordinance 1974
Public Parks and Gardens Ordinance 1974
Crown Lands Ordinance 1974

The Australian Government is presently giving further consideration to all of these Ordinances having particular regard to the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975, which commenced on 13 March 1975. Discussions are presently in progress as to the effects of this Act on the existing National Parks and Gardens Ordinance and the Northern Territory Reserves Board established under it. A decision on the reserved Ordinances will be made as soon as possible after these discussions have been concluded.

Housing Ordinance 1974

The policy on the sale of houses, including the sale of Housing Commission houses and Australian Government houses, is currently under review and discussions on this matter are presently taking place. Consequently a decision on this Ordinance is not possible at the present time.

Succession Duties Repeal Ordinance 1974

The Australian Government is giving further consideration to this Ordinance with a view to making a decision shortly. Amongst other matters, it is having regard to proposals that have been made for transfer of executive responsibility to the Northern Territory and consequent implications as to the financial responsibility.

Land Tenure (Transitional Provisions) Repeal Ordinance 1975

This Ordinance was reserved because of doubts as to whether it came within the provisions of the Northern Territory (Administration) Act, section 4W(a). It is intended in the near future to submit to the Governor-General a recommendation that he assent to this Ordinance.

Local Government (Extension of Terms of Office) Ordinance 1975

As the elections for the Corporation of the City of Darwin have now been held, it is intended in the near future to submit to the Governor-General a recommendation that he withhold his assent to this Ordinance.

370 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

What were the wind loading specifications for the Government contract built houses in Nakara?

ANSWER

Houses constructed for the Department of the Northern Territory in Nakara were constructed to comply with the undermentioned wind loading specifications:

The roof when constructed, erected and fixed, together with associated purlins, roof sheeting and all relevant items, shall be capable of withstanding dead and live loads specified as Australian Standard CA 34, Part I, and wind forces specified in CA 34, Part 2, using Terrain Category 3.

Framework shall be of approved material and section, guaranteed by the manufacturer, when properly constructed and with all associated items fixed to withstand wind loading as set out in Australian Standard CA 34, Part 1 and 2.

All rafters, purlins, etc., are to have Trip-l-Grip anchors, tie rods, etc. Anchors shall be located where rafters meet exterior walls unless indicated.

372 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

Is it the intention of the Government to set up a Health Commission in the Territory as recommended by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Hospitals and Medical Services and, if so, what stage has been reached in the project?

ANSWER

The present position is that Dr Everingham, the Minister for Health, has directed the Department to produce a discussion paper exploring the issues involved in the establishment of an independent statutory authority to provide Health services in the Northern Territory.

It is anticipated that the paper will be ready within two months, and will set out and discuss the concepts pertaining to such an authority. Comments on the paper will be sought from a wide spectrum of people in the Northern Territory.

373 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

What stage has been reached in the replacement of the Department of Health's Dove aircraft and what type of aircraft was chosen as the replacement?

ANSWER

The Cabinet decision was that the Dove aircraft of the Northern Territory Medical Service would be replaced by "Nomade 24" aircraft. Orders have been placed for six of these planes and the first is expected to be delivered towards the end of this year with regular deliveries thereafter.

374 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr POLLOCK—

Pending receipt of an answer to question 64, notice of which was given on 11 February 1975, can the honourable member indicate which of the recommendations made in the report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into all aspects of the sale and consumption of liquor have been implemented?

ANSWER

See answer to question No. 64.

375 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

Has the Darwin publication "Northnews" received financial or other assistance from the Australian Government to enable it to continue publication since the cyclone?

ANSWER

The Darwin Business Relief Loan Fund has approved a loan of $5,000 at 5% per annum for five years to continue publications of "Northnews". This approval is conditional on the registration of the business and the partners involved in the proprietorship.

We are not aware of any other financial assistance from the Government for this enterprise.

376 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Were the persons seen to be taking photographs of houses in the suburbs of Darwin on 24 and 25 May and identifying each house by the use of a blackboard with the block number written on it acting with the authority of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and, if so, what use will be made of the photographs?

ANSWER

Yes.

Visual identificaton of the degree of reconstruction required.

Visual reference to particular blocks which are the subject of a telephoned enquiry from the householder.

Visual reference for use by the Commission's Homes Advisory Service in their discussion with home owners who are seeking advice on rebuilding or repairing.

380 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Is he, as a member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, aware that citizens of Darwin are being subjected to questionnaires and in some cases harassed by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. If he is, will be take steps to make sure—

(a) that the harassment is stopped, and

(b) that householders are informed that they are under no obligation to answer any question put to them by employees of the Commission.

ANSWER

I am not aware of harassment of citizens of Darwin by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. If the honourable member will provide me information of specific cases of harassment I will have them investigated. I am aware that the Reconstruction Commission is posing questions on important matters to people of Darwin, I am not aware of instances of the Commisson advising persons that they are obliged to answer such questions. Again, if the honourable member will provide information on this I will have the matter investigated.

395 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

How long will the Stuart Highway between the airport entrance gates and Bombing Road remain in its present condition?

ANSWER

The road outside the airport has been in that state for some time now. I have been in touch with the contractor who is to do the work. The reason for the delay in starting the road is that the contractor has been unsure of the amount of work which the company would have as a result of the cyclone. They have now cleared up this problem and they are at present negotiating with the department of Housing and Construction on rise and fall for the contract. The manager of the company estimated that there could be about 2 weeks negotiations after which the road will be once again under repair.

396 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Did the Darwin Reconstruction Commission make selections and recommendations to the Minister for the Northern Territory Citizens Council and did the Minister vary these recommendations and substitute some people selected by himself? If so, how was that substitution made?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission did make recommendations to the Minister for some 15 places in the Citizens Council. The Minister did make variations to those recommendations in respect of 3 positions. He inserted persons other than the 3 nominated by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

397 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

Why didn't the Minister for the Northern Territory have a member of the northern suburbs on the Darwin Citizens Advisory Council?

ANSWER

I have some hesitation in answering that question because I have no idea what is in the Minister's mind most of the time. Therefore, that question is almost impossible to answer. I believe that it is not in conformity with Standing Orders either. I think I know what the honourable member is getting at and perhaps the only way I can answer it satisfactorily is that there was somebody representing the northern suburbs in the original recommendations made by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. That person was not included in the Minister's final list. The Minister has not given the Darwin Reconstruction Commission any reasons for any of the substitutions which he made.

398 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Would he ascertain for me before the end of these sittings how many of the staff presently employed by the Commission were formerly members of the NCDC.

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain that information for the honourable member in the course of these sittings.

399 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Will he table in the Legislative Assembly a copy of the questionnaire currently being used by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in a survey of the Darwin housing situation?

ANSWER

The honourable member did give me some indication that he would ask a question on these lines. At the end of last week, I sought a copy of the questionnaire which I subsequently received. On receiving the questionnaire, I noticed that it was headed across the top "CONFIDENTIAL". In view of that heading, I feel that I should either advise the Chairman of the Commission of my intention to table this paper or seek his co-operation in having it tabled. In the meantime, I would be quite happy to make a copy of the questionnaire available to the honourable member for Port Darwin.

400 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

There is apparently considerable speculation regarding the movement of the headquarters of the Department of North Australia from Darwin to some other place. Can he give me any information to confirm or refute this rumour?

ANSWER

I am aware of the rumours alluded to by the honourable member for Arnhem. In fact, they are more than rumours. The Minister in a conversation with me last week indicated that the matter was in fact under consideration but no decision has yet been reached. I believe that further consideration of this proposal will take place this week in Canberra. In view of that, it is my intention to formulate a motion calling on this Assembly to express its view on this which can then be transmitted to the Prime Minister.

401 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN—

What action has been made regarding road signs for the Shoal Bay area?

ANSWER

I ask him to put the question on notice.

402 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

It is said in the press that amendments have been made to the Building Manual that was tabled here at the last meeting of the Assembly. Have such amendments been made in fact? Is that amended manual being applied and will he table a copy of the amendments?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has considered a number of amendments to the Building Code and has approved a number of amendments which would have the effect of potentially reducing the price of buildings in Darwin. In approving these amendments, the authority was given to the staff of the Commission to have them incorporated within the new Building Manual. I will endeavour to obtain a copy of all these amendments during the course of this week and provide them to the Assembly.

403 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

I understand the Auditor-General commented on the number of berths still available on the "Patris" whilst many public servants are still staying in hotels. Does he know whether any action has been taken to rectify this situation?

ANSWER

I was unaware of this position but I will undertake to do my best to find out information for the honourable member and will probably reply to him this afternoon.

404 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has the Administrator's Council made a decision on setting up of a parole board in the Northern Territory? I asked a question along these lines at the previous sittings and I believe that the Administrator's Council were going to give further consideration to this. It is now over 2 years since the necessary legislation was passed.

ANSWER

I know the matter has been under consideration by the Administrator's Council on recent occasions. Unfortunately, I have been unable to be present at a couple of meetings of the Administrator's Council and I am not quite sure what stage this matter has reached. However, I will find out the information for the honourable member and report to her during these sittings.

405 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Has the Australian Government yet determined the desirable extent, nature and purposes of the uses and development of the Darwin area? If it has, will he disclose in this Assembly what has been determined? If it has not, when does the Government expect to be able to make such a determination?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide a full and satisfactory answer in this matter because the Reconstruction Commission's responsibilities terminate when the plan has been put on display for a month and when the objections and comments of the public have been received and considered by the Reconstruction Commission and then forwarded to the Minister as the Commission's final version of a scheme for the plan of the town of Darwin. The views of the Commission on the plan have been formulated with the exception of one particular road and I understand those views have been transmitted to the Minister and the Government. As far as I am aware, the Commission has had no final declaration by the Minister or the Government to say that this is the plan but I will seek this information from the general manager.

406 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Last week the chairman of the Primary Producers Board drew attention to the failure of the Australian Government to provide the funds it promised to cattlemen to provide carry-on finance. Are the promised funds available?

ANSWER

I find that question a little ambiguous. I am not quite sure what the honourable member for Elsey means. As I understand the matter the Australian Government has entered into a commitment in relation to the Northern Territory to provide carry-on finance to producers in need. Various figures were talked about as to what the ceiling on individual loans would be and what the rate of interest would be. The Minister expected to make an announcement about the final details of the scheme last week. I haven't seen any final listing of the exact details of the ceiling amounts and the final confirmation of the rate of interest which was to be a concessional rate.

The honourable member for Elsey may be speaking about the overall extent of the finance which was to be granted. I don't believe that the Minister or the government ever gave a firm undertaking that it was to be one and a half million or two million dollars or any set amount. I have heard a statement that the total amount that would be available may have been reduced to something less than the one and a half million dollars which was commonly discussed several weeks ago. This may well be so but it is not a matter of grave concern because, once the scheme is approved in principle, I am confident that, as in the case of former drought schemes and flood schemes, the government then has an obligation to meet the total amount which can be proven to be required.

407 Mr STEELE to Mr SPEAKER—

Would it possible for him to approach the Department of the Northern Territory in respect of the Burmese plywood and do something about these desks in the Assembly?

ANSWER

I will make representations to the Department of Northern Australia to see what can be done in regard to members' desks.

408 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

What land has been vested in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for its control and administration pursuant to section 12A of the act?

ANSWER

I do not have a copy of the act before me and I don't know the exact wording. I ask him to put that question on notice.

409 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Why has a certain tour operator at Katherine been consistently refused permission to cross the Katherine Gorge Reserve to reach the 17 mile falls?

ANSWER

The answer that I have received from the Northern Territory Reserves Board is that they are reluctant to let anybody pass through the reserve as they are afraid that people will abuse the area, leave rubbish in their wake and generally make a nuisance of themselves. They feel that, until they can get a ranger station in the area, they will not be able to permit anybody to go into the gorge.

410 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How many buildings has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission erected, repaired or demolished?

ANSWER

I would ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

411 Mr Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

Have the staff appointments been made at the Yirrkala Medical Centre and how many have been appointed? When will the official opening date be announced?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

412 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH—

Did the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau consult with the Tourist Promotion Association in Darwin and Katherine before deciding to shift the bureau headquarters to Alice Springs and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find out and answer the question this afternoon.

413 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

Will the TB eradication campaign be affected by the reluctance of the Australian Government to assist the beef industry?

ANSWER

That is almost a matter of opinion and therefore is close to the wind as far as Standing Orders are concerned. Within the last couple of weeks, I have made a visit over quite a large area of the Barkly Tablelands stations which is one of the areas that has had some problems with tuberculosis in the past. In the course of my travels, I found that a number of stations had virtually ceased operations for this year. The staff had been put off; they were not active in normal cattle station work; improvements were not being maintained in the normal way. Because of this, I expect some stations will go back in their ability to handle cattle. On top of that, by far the largest cost in a tuberculosis eradication campaign is the cost on the station itself of providing the manpower and the resources to muster the cattle periodically as required by the department in order to put them together so that the veterinary and stock inspection staff can carry out the tests. That cost runs into many thousands of dollars per station and far outweighs anything that is paid in compensation or any contributions made from the public purse. You can't get blood from a stone and if there was an absence of any suitable financial help in the way of carry-on finance and assistance to enable stations to operate even at a reduced level, in many cases it would be quite impossible for the stations to be able to provide the mustering exercise to enable the TB tests to be carried out. Therefore, the national eradication program could be seriously retarded.

414 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that a position exists in the DRC for a Director of Information? If so, how does this position differ from the normal public relations officer? Was the position approved by the Reconstruction Commission or has it been set up by administrative action?

ANSWER

I can perhaps throw some light on the way the Commission makes appointments of this kind. The Commission decided that any senior position equivalent to the second division in the Australian Public Service would have to come individually before the full meeting of the Reconstruction Commission for authorisation and approval. For positions equivalent to the third division in the Australian Public Service, authority for approval was given to the Chairman of the Commission and the Deputy Chairman of the Commission. I feel fairly confident that the particular position that the honourable member for Nightcliff has asked about falls into that category. In any case, I have had a note taken of the question and I will try to find out precise information about how this position differs from a normal PRO position.

415 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware that between Berrimah and the Batchelor turn-off there are many narrow strips and ruts caused by workmen rebuilding the road and these are creating a hazard to the traffic? Will he ascertain when this will be repaired?

ANSWER

I will attempt to find out the answers and give them to him at a later date at this sitting.

416 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

What plant, equipment and machinery has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission taken on hire and let out?

ANSWER

I will have a note taken of this question and I will endeavour to find out the details and furnish them to him during the course of these sittings.

417 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

My question relates to the previous question about the Director of Information. Is it a fact that the salary for that position is $19,000?

ANSWER

I do not know what the exact salary level is. I think there are some 100 positions within the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and I can't recall what each salary level is. I will check that one and advise the honourable member.

418 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

What are the circumstances relating to continuous complaints by Mr Kevin Guy who operates guided tours at the 16 mile caves at Katherine for the Reserves Board?

ANSWER

The brief details are that he was given permission to operate and develop the caves as an attractive tourist facility which he has done very well. He now finds himself in the position with the Reserves Board that he can neither get compensation for his capital outlay nor a lease to continue to operate. The Reserves Board has adopted the approach that they want Mr Guy to leave this area by the middle of 1976 and they are standing firm on this request. I am unable to fathom their reasoning for this and I sympathise with Mr Guy very much but I am unable to give any suggestion as to what he may do to get out of his dilemma.

419 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How much money has been committed and expended to provide transport, accommodation, provisions and amenities for officers and employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and their families up to 30 June, 1975?

ANSWER

The financial details of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission really start operating as from the beginning of the next financial year. They are working on special appropriations at the moment until the budget is approved. Then, it will be public knowledge exactly how much money is available and in what categories. In the meantime, I will endeavour to obtain the information and advise the honourable member.

420 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Did the Fire Department consult with either the City Corporation parks and gardens personnel, the Forestry Department or the Environmental Council before undertaking the burning off of the area around the Darwin High School?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question. I will endeavour to make some enquiries during the course of these sittings.

421 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How many and what directions has the Minister given to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission pursuant to section 10 of the act?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

422 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

What facilities are there in Darwin at present for the holding of female prisoners sentenced by a court or what arrangements are made in such an eventuality?

ANSWER

The situation is unchanged since the honourable member last asked this question. There are basically no facilities it would seem in Darwin at the moment for holding female prisoners under sentence. Any female prisoner sentenced in Darwin or the Top End is being transferred to the Alice Springs prison.

423 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Does she have a policy on the semester versus trimester system in the schools? If so, what is it, and has it been expressed to the Department of Education?

ANSWER

I have discussed this matter at length with the Director of Education. It is going to be discussed again at what I feel is the correct forum as I am representing the Assembly on the Advisory Committee for Education in the Territory. I think that the system generally could well be adopted for Aboriginal schools but for town schools it seems that the term system will continue.

424 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

Has he noticed the immense bank up of traffic waiting for their turn at the registration office in Goyder Road? The waiting time at the office there is very great. Can he advise me of the cause for this delay in getting registration and what is being done about it and when?

ANSWER

The situation at the Motor Registry seems to be the same wherever you go although the Northern Territory is blessed with the worst that I have struck to date. They are presently building a new premises for the Motor Registry although I feel that this is not the problem. There appears to be a staff problem. They have recently transferred the licensing section to another place which should have eased the problem at Motor Registry office. However, this does not appear to be the case. I will contact the manager at the Motor Registry and ask him what is being done about trying to improve the situation, and give an answer at a later date in these sittings.

425 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Can he advise how many terminations of pregnancy and hysterectomy operations have been performed each month this year at the Darwin Hospital and what were the reasons for them? Are comparative figures available for 1974?

ANSWER

I do not have the statistics with me this morning. I will endeavour to get them and answer the question later in the session.

426 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

It has come to my notice recently that what are termed full scale local government, or town councils with full authority, are being installed at places on the reserves and settlements, most recently at Maningrida, where a special ceremony occurred last week with the inauguration of a town council with full authority. Incidently, I was not invited or even notified about this although I am the member for that area. There seems to be something wrong about this; they don't seem to be related to this Assembly, these new town councils. Can the honourable member give me any information about these new councils?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any particular links of Aboriginal town councils with the Local Government Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory. There is no established legislation link or functional role. I am aware that a number of advisory town councils have been formed in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory and I believe they do play an important role in representing the voice of those communities. However, they are in no way traditional or linked with normal legislation, particularly through this Assembly.

I am informed by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs that legislation is being considered for incorporating or formulating a form of local government and at the moment it is purely a functional arrangement between the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the town council. In many instances they are budget allocations to the town councils, of a similar nature to local government grants, to cover such work as hygiene and minor roads and maintenance within the town council areas.

427 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I refer to a question I raised yesterday. Has he yet any advice for me on how and when the Parole Board of the Northern Territory will be appointed or when it will be considered finally by the Administrator's Council?

ANSWER

I regret that I have not yet got the answer required by the honourable member for Nightcliff. I hope to obtain it during the course of today and advise her later in the day.

428 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise me about the two short-wave transmitters which arrived in Australia late last year and were to be installed in Darwin for transmitting local ABC programs to outback areas of the Territory?

ANSWER

After many years of haggling the Northern Territory was about to get 2 short-wave transmitters for transmitting local ABC broadcasts to the outback areas of the Northern Territory.No doubt you, Mr Deputy Speaker, would appreciate this type of service if it was instigated. As the executive member concerned in answering the question, I am certainly not going to offer excuses for the Australian Government because it is obviously their decision to withhold these transmitters. I believe that they did arrive last year and are likely to be used in Victoria which means that we have to start from scratch once again to try and establish the short-wave broadcasts which would greatly be appreciated by outback people. I have written to the Postmaster-General on this subject and asked him if he could give me some advice as to what their moves would be for the future of these broadcasts, and on receiving this I will relay it to the Assembly.

429 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

What is the waiting time for elective surgery, other than termination of pregnancy, at the Darwin Hospital and what is the number of outstanding elective surgery cases at the Darwin Hospital?

ANSWER

I don't have this information with me but I will endeavour to get it during this session.

430 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW—

Are children in the Tennant Creek Area School being denied an education and turned away from that school because of the continuous shortage of teachers? If this is the case what action is being taken to rectify the situation?

ANSWER

I am informed that the parents of children in 6 classes at the Tennant Creek Area School yesterday received a letter sent by the representative of the Northern Territory Commonwealth Teachers' Federation informing them that if their children belonged to one of these particular classes the children would not receive any instruction at school and they were advised not to send them. The circular listed, with dates, the amount of time that these classes had been without a teacher. The teachers have decided that rather than baby-sit the children from other classes, which has been interrupting the education of the children under their jurisdiction from the beginning of the year, they would refuse to take them. I am informed by the department that a senior officer deputising for the director will arrive in Tennant Creek at lunchtime today to undertake a survey of the situation. We hope to have some information of his findings tonight.

431 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission acquired a block of land on the Esplanade on which it is proposed to build a house for the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I have heard only a rumour. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has acquired a prominent block on the Esplanade. I am not certain of the purpose for which it has been acquired but I will make further enquiries and advise the honourable member later this sitting.

432 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Are any unemployed persons in Darwin receiving unemployment benefits or social welfare benefits?

ANSWER

I will find out the answer during the course of the sittings and advise him.

433 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is it proposed to hold any further meetings of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in any place other than Darwin?

ANSWER

It is possible that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission may have meetings in places other than Darwin. There is no proposal at this stage to have any such meetings. There was a resolution or a firm expression of opinion and agreement within the commission that meetings of the Reconstruction Commission should be held in Darwin. Regular meetings of the commission have always been held here with one exception and I think that was back in the days of the interim commission anyway. There was one occasion when an urgent consultation was required in order to get certain recommendations to the Minister in the Cabinet and it was necessary for Darwin members of the commission to go to Canberra in order for such a meeting to take place. That was in rather exceptional circumstances and it will be the exception rather than the rule in the future.

434 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Could he tell me the new contractor for installation of postal boxes at the Nhulunbuy Post Office, how many boxes will be installed and when they will complete this contract?

ANSWER

I will attempt to find out and answer this afternoon.

435 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Some time ago I wrote to the Director of Emergency Services, Mr McHenry, asking for information about meat which was given to the people of Darwin by the people of Cairns. I believe 40 tonnes of meat was involved. I asked for information as to when it was distributed, to whom and in what quantities. I am still awaiting a reply some weeks later. I ask the Majority Leader if he would attempt to get this information for me in a fairly short time. They have had notice of these queries for 3 weeks.

ANSWER

I have no direct relationship with the Director of Emergency Services other than the relationship which the Administrator's Council has with that person. However I will use whatever influence I can to obtain the information and expedite the action which the honourable member for Nightcliff has suggested should be taken.

436 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Can he advise me whether the post of the Director of Emergency Services will be redundant after June 30?

ANSWER

As I understand it, the cyclone emergency legislation will expire on June 30. I intend to take no initiative to continue it after that date, nor have I had any approach from government suggesting that I should do so. I take it that the statutory position of Director of Emergency Services will expire with the legislation at that time. There is another disaster emergency organisation which is being set up within the Department of Northern Australia and involving some members of this Assembly; presumably that body will carry on the role for any future work required.

437 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

At the end of this month when the legislation expires, what is to be done with the records presently held by the Permit Section? These records contain a large amount of information about individuals in Darwin. Are they to be destroyed as I believe they should be or, if not, what is to be done with them? Who will have access to them and where will they be kept?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member of Nightcliff to place that question on notice as I have to obtain the answer elsewhere.

438 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

I must necessarily refer to paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 of the Joint Committee's report on constitutional development for my question to be intelligible. I don't propose to read the full text of it but paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 said that the committee accepted that it was not possible for the urban land function in respect of Darwin to be immediately transferred to the Executive because the Darwin Reconstruction Act would give the urban land authority to the commission for the next 5 years. It went on to say that whilst the committee agreed that the commission needed to have full authority for the reconstruction of Darwin, it considered that the principle recommended in its original report in regard to the urban land function should not be altered; that is to say, it should be a function exercised locally under the authority of this Assembly. Paragraph 15 said that before the Darwin Reconstruction Commission had completed its task the committee would expect that negotiations would take place for the transfer of the Darwin urban land function to the Territory Executive.

I ask whether this statement by the Joint Committee has been considered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Will the honourable member put to the commission the proposal that, in view of the Joint Committee's statement, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission should exercise its planning powers only in so far as planning may be necessarily involved in its immediate task of reconstruction during the next 5 years?

ANSWER

I don't believe that paragraph 15 and the preceding paragraphs of the Joint Committee report had been brought to the attention of or consideration by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission as yet. I will undertake to bring this matter before them as the honourable member for Port Darwin has suggested. Certain urban land matters were partly involved in the debate that we had yesterday. As far as amendments to town planning legislation and other urban land matters are concerned, the executive members with responsibilities in those fields are continuing with the drafting of legislation and proceeding as though the authority still rests with this legislature for those matters.

439 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

Are educational services in Darwin considered to be now normal?

ANSWER

Most of the schools which were operating previously, with the exception of the 3 that were most badly damaged, are now operating. There were 7260 children attending school as at last Friday. The teacher situation, taking the usual standard of 1 teacher to 30 children is considered to be normal or a little better. However, there are some shortages in more specialised areas.

440 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW—

Is she aware of reports which state that the Yirara Aboriginal College has serious structural faults and in fact has been unsatisfactorily built? Is it a fact that a lot of money is currently being spent in repairing that college and, if so, from where are these funds coming?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are serious structural faults in Yirara College. The matter has gone back to the Department of Housing and Construction who have let a contract for repairs. However, the Department of Education will be expected to foot the bill for the repairs.

441 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN—

I ask this question because of the poor road systems and poor access to the states. Has he taken steps to seek an invitation for a Northern Territory representative to attend state transport ministers' conferences?

ANSWER

Yes, we have taken steps to get to the ATAC conference which takes place in Adelaide next month. I have written to the Minister for Transport, Mr Jones, asking him if he would invite us to the conference. I have also spoken to Dr Patterson who has given his approval for our going to this meeting.

442 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW—

Can she tell me the present situation regarding the proposed Yirrkala school? Have the tenders been sent out or accepted? Have they had a total estimate of the cost of this building? Have they an estimate of the completion date for those buildings?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice as I do not yet have the details available.

443 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Will the honourable member ask the District Telephone Officer to have a public telephone installed at Tuckwell Court to alleviate the present situation which compels pensioners to walk a considerable distance to use a telephone?

ANSWER

I will take what action is necessary to try and establish this phone.

444 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Does he consider that the present Alice Springs court house is a suitable place to conduct the processes of the law? If he doesn't, what plans are in hand for a new court house, or houses if you like, for Alice Springs and where is it proposed that they be built? Having regard for the fact that there is going to be a considerable delay in building, if in fact somebody is going to build a new court house for Alice Springs, is he aware that an extensive space has been leased—since July 1973 the agents tell me—and that the area has never been used for the purpose of a court house in 2 years? Is he aware of what plans are on foot to get that place into operation and, if so, when?

ANSWER

I am aware of the present situation with the Alice Springs court house, having practised in it almost daily for a period of 8 years. I do consider that it has serious defects and the administration of justice is difficult there in the circumstances. The Clerk of the Court has an office which is virtually open to the public and cannot be under any circumstances termed private. The courtroom itself is a quaint, archaic, antediluvian structure—to the use the terms of the honourable Majority Leader in another sense yesterday—and we have seen in the course of the past few weeks that security in this courtroom is very seriously lacking. One of the reasons for that is that it can be entered by about 5 different doors.

These defects, I understand, were to be remedied by the construction of a new courts complex in Alice Springs adjacent to the new police station on the corner of Hartley and Parsons Streets, diagonally opposite the location of the present court house. However plans for this courts complex were delayed because the Central Australian Branch of the National Trust were concerned that an old stone cell used to incarcerate persons in years gone by might be demolished in the course of construction of the new court house and I know that this matter delayed proceedings for at least 12 months. I am not aware of the current situation on construction of the new court house complex. The plans which I did see had some serious defects in that the Clerk of Courts' Registry would have been on an upper floor rather than on the ground floor handy to the public.

As to the area leased, I assume that the honourable member refers to the area leased by the Attorney-General's Department in the REL Building in Parsons Street, Alice Springs. I do not know that this has been leased since I think it was 1972 or 1973—that would certainly be correct. Since then it has been occupied by 1 solicitor and 2 stenographic staff although it is an area, at my estimate, of several thousand square feet. I do understand, although this of course is hearsay, that it was intended for use as an additional courtroom in Alice Springs.

I cannot unfortunately give the honourable member any timetable for the construction of a new courts complex; however, I shall certainly take the matter up with the Attorney-General's Department and give the honourable member a written answer in the course of the next few weeks.

445 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to the brutal battering to death of a woman at Goulburn Island by drunks about 11 days ago, on June 7, and numerous incidents of this nature in the Arnhem electorate caused by liquor but not always leading to death or injury. Can he tell me if any positive or corrective action is being taken to prevent this sort of occurrence on reserves?

ANSWER

The matter of police patrols and so forth on various Aboriginal reserves and settlements in outback areas has been one of concern to me for some time. In my own electorate in recent times we have had incidents where the necessity for police attendance and patrols and so forth has come under scrutiny. The Commissioner of Police advises that the cost of establishing a police station in those areas is now estimated at $700,000 per station. The funds required to establish stations on a number of localities which are in urgent need of them are therefore considerable and at the moment beyond the budget of that department. Heaven knows what they will get in the future since they have been finally taken away. I will take the matter up further and see what can be done to ensure more patrols and more enforcement of the law for the protection of life and property in the more remote areas of the Territory.

446 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TUXWORTH—

Does he know whether financial and practical assistance is available to Aboriginal communities to help develop tourist attractions and facilities in remote areas and on Aboriginal reserves?

ANSWER

I have not yet received a reply from the Minister for Tourism. I wrote to him some 2 months ago seeking his advice on whether financial assistance or any other assistance would be available to Aborigines to help develop tourist facilities in their areas. I asked him if these people would have access to the tourist loans that were available through the Development Bank or whether this inquiry should be channelled through the minister representing Aborigines in the federal parliament. Shortly after he would have received this letter, there was a certain amount of movement in cabinet positions in Canberra and I do not doubt that his question has been delayed in being answered because of this. As soon as I have an answer I will advise the honourable member for Tiwi.

447 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

I understand on good authority that the ABC intends to continue the Darwin-Katherine television from Queensland via the microwave link but there are not any plans for the Northern Territory programs from Darwin, including proper rural shows or full news programs. Bearing this in mind I ask if he will protest against this situation with the ABC head office in Sydney.

ANSWER

I will follow this through with the ABC.

448 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS—

Is he aware of any move to displace the community creche now located in the previous Essington House? Will he make efforts to ensure that the creche is not relocated?

ANSWER

Information came to my ears only this morning that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission was interested in Essington House as a site and a building for other purposes. I have not yet had the opportunity to follow the matter up but I will do so and inform him of the result of my further inquiries.

449 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Who owns the unbranded cattle on Aboriginal reserves?

ANSWER

This matter has been decided in the past by courts or by agreement of adjoining landholders with people on Aboriginal reserves. Mr Justice Woodward made a recommendation in his report that this issue should be resolved by negotiation within a period of 2 years between the government, the Aboriginal people and any adjoining landowners. I do not believe that there is a simple one-word answer to the question.

450 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

Would he investigate the need to speed up the final contour survey of the surge line? I understand the survey is being handled by an agent of the commission and it is expected that another 6 to 8 weeks will elapse before the policy is determined.

ANSWER

Yes.

451 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

It is understood that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is seeking views of this Assembly on the surge line. Does the Majority Leader intend putting forward a point of view of all members of the Assembly or does he intend that each member submit his own private view on the surge line?

ANSWER

There was no formal resolution to the effect that the views of the Assembly would be sought. If such a resolution was carried, I would take it that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission would communicate with the Speaker of this Assembly and then the Speaker would in some way arrange for the views of the whole Assembly to be sought. When the matter was discussed and the City Corporation's representative on the DRC indicated that he was going to have the matter referred to the Corporation, I said that the Assembly would be interested, in particular those members of the Assembly who reside in Darwin. It was arranged that a meeting would be held with the gentleman who is supposedly an expert on these matters and who has been retained by the commission to give advice on it. I believe that that meeting did take place but I did not attend it. The honourable member for Nightcliff may have been away at the time the meeting was called, but there has not been any formal request to the Assembly to express a view. As far as I am concerned, they could be given individually or collectively.

452 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN—

In view of the increased traffic on dirt roads in the rural areas which is causing a hazard and inconvenience to road users and children, what plans are there for sealing roads in the areas?

ANSWER

I assume the honourable member for Tiwi is referring to the Berrimah-Howard Springs area. I would suggest that he put the question on notice.

453 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Apart from the Casuarina Hospital complex, what medical services does the Department of Health intend providing for the Casuarina district in the future?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get an accurate reply for the member later today.

454 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN—

The ABC some time ago proposed to have a half hour daily program directed to the Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. Has this been affected by the decision to locate radio transmitters in Victoria rather than in the Northern Territory as originally planned?

ANSWER

The decision to implement this program still stands and I have been told that this could be started in a short time. However, the effect of the program would be greatly inhibited by the fact that they would be unable to transmit the program to the more remote areas of the Northern Territory. The Aboriginal population residing around the major centres would receive the program through the normal transmitting facilities of the ABC but those Aboriginals living in settlements and isolated areas would be unable to share in these benefits.

455 Mr PERRON to Mr TUXWORTH—

Could he advise the reason behind the surplus stocks of fish in Darwin which fishermen are unable to sell?

ANSWER

A study of this is currently being made by both the Department and the Fishermens' Cooperative. As a result of the cyclone, there are half as many fishing boats operating out of the port. There are 27 000 fewer people available to consume fish but there is still a discrepancy in the total consumption by the population and the amount being exported to southern capitals. The study being undertaken at the moment is to ascertain whether the local distributors are importing. It also involves a study into whether there is any irregularity in the import of fish into the Territory at the moment. Further, they are considering the effect that the prices of other commodities such as meat may be having on fish consumption.

456 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

My question refers to question 378 on the notice paper which asked certain questions about the proposal to install swimming pools in the homes of senior public servants. When can I expect an answer to this question?

ANSWER

I will see that the matter is taken up with the Department which is providing information with a view to expediting it.

457 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS—

There has recently been an increased interest in the Darwin area for an Australian Atomic Energy Commission. How many new employees and their dependants does the Atomic Energy Commission propose to house in Darwin and will this strain housing areas?

ANSWER

There have been some very strange goings-on with government instrumentalities in Darwin in recent days over their accommodation in which I have become personally involved in a sense. Qantas sold some of their accommodation units to TAA who subsequently disposed of theirs to somebody else and then Qantas decided to come back in and the Atomic Energy Commission is also mixed up in the whole of this accommodation shambles. None of these instrumentalities have helped the cause of the people of Darwin, especially some of those who are living in some of the accommodation that legally belong to them. As far as the Atomic Energy Commission is concerned, they have 5 additional staff to come into Darwin—and I think 12 children are with those people—and they will be taking up quite a bit of accommodation which is administered by the Department of Property and Services.

458 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

When will a system of releasing land by auction be recommended and how many blocks will be available between June 1975 and June 1976?

ANSWER

I am unable to give a specific answer to the honourable member's question. However, I am aware that the Department of Northern Territory Lands Branch is currently in consultation with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission on the matter of availability of land. Whilst it must be appreciated that the first priority is the reconstruction program, I know that this matter is being pursued to make available blocks at an early date for people in Darwin. However I do not see much hope of it coming about in 1975 or 1976.

459 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

Can the honourable member confirm that contracts for the supply of certain building materials from Western Australia have been cancelled and will now be supplied from South Australia by road transport due to the problems associated with sea freight from Western Australia?

ANSWER

It is a fact that contracts with Western Australian companies have been cancelled because of the doubtfulness of sea transport from Western Australia. The doubt is not actually with the sea transport; their ships are quite reliable. However, we have a certain amount of bother with our wharf; the personnel there seem to take delight in turning these ships away.

During the last sittings, we had a situation where the ships had left the port still carrying the cargo which is needed by Darwin and the Northern Territory. This city is once again in a similar situation. The Gertrude Bakke has left Darwin. This ship was carrying Japanese cars which now will be unloaded in Western Australia and will be subject to higher freight costs because they have to be transported back to Darwin. The Nyanda is in port but it is not able to be unloaded because of the strike and also is unable to leave the port because they will not let it go out. They have 500 tons of freight that is required at Wyndham. The owners gave the assurance that they would return to Darwin after having delivered perishables to Wyndham but the wharfies decided that they would not allow the ship to leave the port. I do not know how long this situation is to continue but, if it does continue, our friends down at the wharf could find themselves permanently with nothing to do because people running a business in shipping are not going to continue bringing ships to Darwin just to have them sit in the port. They will return to the port unloaded. I therefore suggest that there may be some action taken.

460 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

On Tuesday, I asked him to table a copy of a questionnaire that he claimed was marked "confidential". I asked him whether he has yet come to understand that the word "confidential" on the top of the form refers to the information to be supplied and not to the form itself? Will he table that form today?

ANSWER

I accept the view that the word "confidential" would refer to he personal details about people rather than the form being confidential in the sense that it is not to be made available to other people. I would be happy to table it.

461 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

I direct the honourable member for Victoria River's attention to his answer to question 380. I asked him whether he was aware that citizens of Darwin were being subjected to questionnaires and in some cases were being harassed by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I also asked him to take steps to ensure that householders are informed that they are under no obligation to answer any question put to them.

The answer I received was this: "I am not aware of harassment of citizens by employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. If the honourable member will provide me with information of specific cases of harassment I will have them investigated. I am aware that the Reconstruction Commission is posing questions on important matters to the people of Darwin but I am not aware of instances of the Commission advising persons that they are obliged to answer questions". I direct the honourable member's attention to the question I asked him. Will he take steps to make sure that householders are informed that they are under no obligation to answer these questions? I did not ask him or suggest to him that people were told they had to answer questions but I was insisting that people be told that they did not have to answer the questions unless they wanted to.

ANSWER

I will bring this matter to the attention of the Reconstruction Commission with a view to having the matter clarified by the surveyors to the people they are interviewing.

462 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Can he give any indication as to how long the funds of the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund will last?

ANSWER

It is expected that the funds will be totally dispersed within the next 6 weeks to 2 months.

Whilst on my feet, I will answer a question from the honourable member for Casuarina yesterday as to whether any persons in Darwin were receiving employment benefits. I have been informed by an official of the Department of Labour that no such benefits are being paid in Darwin at the present time.

463 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Has there been an official tabled report on the failure of communications during Cyclone Tracy? If there has been a report, can he obtain one for me?

ANSWER

I do not know of any report and, if I can obtain one, I will see that the honourable member for Nhulunbuy gets a copy of it.

464 Mr KENTISH to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Are any other payments being made to the reputed 350 unemployed in Darwin in lieu of unemployment benefits? I refer to ration or sustenance allowances?

ANSWER

I will take this up with the Department of Labour and the Department of Social Security today.

465 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it a fact that within the Commonwealth Public Service female public servants with dependants and not necessarily living with their husbands are being denied the opportunity of going on the housing list simply because they are females, even though they have dependants and are permanent? If this is a fact, has the honourable member discussed it with the department and does he agree with it?

ANSWER

This is the first occasion that this matter has been brought to my attention. I will discuss it today and hopefully provide an answer to the member later this day.

466 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Has the PMG any future plans to install a new telephone at the Gove Airport?

ANSWER

I ask that he put the question on notice.

467 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING—

Prior to the cyclone work had commenced on Howard Springs Primary School. What plans do the government have for commencing reconstruction? What percentage is the school planned for and for how many years will the capacity be capable to serving the area before extensions are required?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain the information today for the honourable member.

468 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Does he consider that executive members of this Assembly owe first allegiance to affairs of the Assembly?

ANSWER

I think that all members of this Assembly owe first allegiance to the Assembly. I would be a shining example of that in that I have never missed one day's sitting in the time that I have been in the Council or the Assembly. Possibly the honourable member for Nightcliff has in mind that one of our executive members is absent today. I would add that it is commom practice in parliaments for a minister—in our case an executive member—to have to be away on other matters in which case the responsibility for answering questions or carrying the work of that member is transferred to another member. In the case of the honourable member for Education and Consumer Affairs, the honourable member for Community Development will be handling her work during the course of the day. When the honourable member for Nightcliff has the advantage of belonging to a majority group that forms an executive, she might understand better how these things work.

469 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING—

What progress was made in discussions yesterday between the Department of Education and the striking school teachers in the Tennant Creek Area School?

ANSWER

The results of the conference yesterday have not been relayed to me. I will endeavour to seek the information today.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

**June 1975**


ABC, shortwave transmitters (Vale) 428
Aborigines—
ABC program (Tungutalum) 454
community areas, Urapunga, Roper Valley etc (MacFarlane) 155
Elsey community area, health (MacFarlane) 224
health workers training (MacFarlane) 129
hire car laws (MacFarlane) 211
Hooker Creek people in Katherine incident (MacFarlane) 301
instruction in social behaviour (MacFarlane) 303
justices of the peace (MacFarlane) 154
liquor problem on reserves (Kentish) 445
observation of drinking activities (MacFarlane) 285
"Rockhole" camp (MacFarlane) 199
tourist attractions on reserves (Tungutalum) 446
town councils on reserves (Kentish) 426
trespassing, unlawful killing etc (MacFarlane) 212
unbranded cattle on reserves (MacFarlane) 449
weapons carried on visits to towns (MacFarlane) 302
Abortion figures (Dondas) 425
Adoption, Vietnam orphans and other children (MacFarlane) 273
Alice Springs courthouse (Robertson) 444
ATAC conference (Steele) 441
Atomic Energy Commission, housing (Tungutalum) 457
Barker, Mr Ian, QC (MacFarlane) 300
Betting Control Board allocations (MacFarlane) 208
Building Code (Withnall) 245, 402; (MacFarlane) 296
Business assistance applications (Steele) 98
Cafeteria, Block 8 (MacFarlane) 178
Campbell, Aboriginal patrol officer, attack (MacFarlane) 244
Casuarina Hospital (Dondas) 270
Casuarina, medical services (Dondas) 453
Cattle shipments (MacFarlane) 214
Cattle travelling to tick-free areas (MacFarlane) 204
Cattlemen, carry-on finance (MacFarlane) 406
Commonwealth Hostels (MacFarlane) 177
Consultants, pastoral and farming enterprises (MacFarlane) 304
Country-Liberal Party and decentralisation (MacFarlane) 150
Credit for rural industries (MacFarlane) 216
Cutta Cutta caves (MacFarlane) 183, 210
Cyclone Relief Trust Fund (Dondas) 462
Cyclone Tracy, communications failure (Ballantyne) 463
Darwin area, government plans for development (Withnall) 405
Darwin Citizens' Advisory Council (Withnall) 396; (Dondas) 397
Darwin High School, burning off (Perron) 420
Darwin Reconstruction Commission—
buildings erected, repaired, demolished (Withnall) 410
citizens' advisory council (Withnall) 396
directions from the Minister (Withnall) 421
Director of Information (Lawrie) 414, 417
Esplanade block (Lawrie) 431
house for Secretary of Department of NT (Lawrie) 431
Joint Committee on NT statements on executive functions (Withnall) 438
land vested in (Withnall) 408
meetings outside Darwin (Lawrie) 433
money spent on accommodation etc for employees and families (Withnall) 419
plant and machinery on hire (Withnall) 416
questionnaire (Withnall) 399, 460
questionnaires and harassment (Withnall) 380, 461
staff from NCDC (Lawrie) 398
Decentralisation (MacFarlane) 150
Department of the Northern Territory, permanent officers and transfers interstate (Dondas) 262; movement of headquarters from Darwin (Kentish) 400
Deprived children, nutritional supplements (MacFarlane) 192
Director of Emergency Services (Kentish) 436
Dove aircraft replacement (Kilgariff) 373
Drunkenness offences (MacFarlane) 175
Duck Creek, health (MacFarlane) 224
Dunmarra-Top Springs road (MacFarlane) 194
Edith Falls, water and toilets (MacFarlane) 182
Education in Darwin (Dondas) 439
Elective surgery, waiting time (Dondas) 429
Elliott, loading facilities (MacFarlane) 204
Essington House community creche (Dondas) 448
Executive Members—allegiance (Lawrie) 468
Female prisoners (Lawrie) 422
Female public servants, housing (Lawrie) 465
Fish unsold (Perron) 455
Fogarty, Fred (MacFarlane) 166
Gove airport, telephone (Ballantyne) 466
Guy, Mr Kevin, (MacFarlane) 418
Health Commission (Kilgariff) 372
Historical trees, Daly Waters and Roper Bar (MacFarlane) 160
Hodgson Downs, evacuation of child (MacFarlane) 188
Hodgson Downs airfield (MacFarlane) 188
Howard Springs Primary School (Tungutalum) 467
Justices of the peace, literacy and prior convictions (MacFarlane) 154
Katherine—
coroner (MacFarlane) 253
counts of visitors to tourist spots (MacFarlane) 210
deprived children's needs (MacFarlane) 162
government employees, pay delays (MacFarlane) 276
hospital and aerial medical services (MacFarlane) 156
hostel for convalescents (MacFarlane) 293
hostel for outback children (MacFarlane) 295
hospital intermediate wards (MacFarlane) 159
Housing Commission homes (MacFarlane) 288
low level reserve, effluent (MacFarlane) 182
new toilet block (MacFarlane) 274
Old Pioneers Home (MacFarlane) 275
permit officer (MacFarlane) 253
power house (MacFarlane) 126, 247, 255
tourist operators, government support (MacFarlane) 196
water supply report (MacFarlane) 294
YMCA and youth (MacFarlane) 162
Kelly, Mr Yogi (MacFarlane) 153
King River bridge (MacFarlane) 194
Kintore Caves (MacFarlane) 183
Land auctions (Dondas) 456
Lepers (MacFarlane) 305
Liquor consumption problems (Kilgariff) 64
Liquor inquiry recommendations (Kilgariff) 374
Live cattle shipments (MacFarlane) 214
Loans for pastoralists (MacFarlane) 249
Mataranka electricity supply (MacFarlane) 165
Mataranka Pool, road sealing (MacFarlane) 164; accommodation for ranger (MacFarlane) 182
Meat gift to Darwin people (Lawrie) 435

Motor Vehicle Registry, waiting time (Kentish) 424
Nakara Primary School (Dondas) 265
Newcastle Creek, block (MacFarlane) 297
"Northnews", government assistance 375
Nhulunbuy—
airport telephone (Ballantyne) 466
post office boxes (Ballantyne) 434
Ordinances reserved (Withnall) 368
Parallel air flights (MacFarlane) 299
Parole Board (Lawrie) 404, 427
Payout figures on government houses (Withnall) 246
Permit records, disposal (Lawrie) 437
Photographs of houses (Withnall) 376
Pilot farmers (Kentish) 23
Plywood for desks (Steele) 407
Police recruits trained in Adelaide (MacFarlane) 286
Port Authority, capital expenditure (Perron) 256; payment of staff (Perron) 257; finance for repairs (Perron) 259
Port development plans (Perron) 278
Port facilities, upgrading (Perron) 258; bulk loading (Perron) 259
Price control (Dondas) 271
Price Control Branch (Steele) 281
Public servants, number in Territory (MacFarlane) 174
Public servants in hotels (Dondas) 403
Public toilets, Larrimah, Daly Waters, Dunmarra and Borroloola (MacFarlane) 290
Queensland inland routes, freight costs (MacFarlane) 298
Radio Australia relocated at Katherine (MacFarlane) 283
Road sealing, rural areas (Tungutalum) 452
Road communications with Darwin (MacFarlane) 197, 223, 298
Roberts, Clancy (MacFarlane) 211, 248
"Rockhole" camp Aborigines (MacFarlane) 199
R and R fares for private sector (Dondas) 261
Roper school repairs (MacFarlane) 284
Ruhman, Mr S, guided tours (MacFarlane) 291, 409
School enrolments and teacher numbers (Dondas) 268
Shoal Bay area, roadsigns (Tungutalum) 401
Sixteen Mile Caves Reserve (MacFarlane) 183
Strata titles legislation (Steele) 282
Stuart Highway at airport gates (Kentish) 395
Sugar cane (MacFarlane) 277
Superphosphate price (MacFarlane) 203
Surge line (Steele) 450; (Lawrie) 451
Stuart Highway, Berrimah-Batchelor (Steele) 415
Swimming pools in homes of senior public servants (Lawrie) 456
Television programs (Lawrie) 447
TB eradication campaign (MacFarlane) 413
Tindal (MacFarlane) 209, 252
Tourist Bureau, move of HQ (Dondas) 412
Tourist tent villages (MacFarlane) 196
Townsville stylo sale to Africa (MacFarlane) 20
Trimester system (Lawrie) 423
Tennant Creek Area School (Robertson) 430, 469
Transport ministers' conferences (Steele) 441
Tuckwell Court, public telephone (Perron) 443
Underground electricity cables (MacFarlane) 171
Unemployment benefits in Darwin (Dondas) 432; (Kentish) 464
Vegetable and fruit preservation (MacFarlane) 213
Wanguri Primary School (Dondas) 265
Waudby, Mr W. (MacFarlane) 287
Western Australia, building materials (Perron) 459
Wind loading, Nakara housing (Dondas) 370
Yirara College, structural faults (Robertson) 440
Yirrkala Medical Centre staff (Ballantyne) 411
Yirrkala School (Ballantyne) 442

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

An index to questions appears at the end of this part.

97 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Has the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund received all outstanding money from donors around Australia, and, if not, what are the reasons for the delay?
2. What money has been paid out of the fund and to whom?
3. Who may apply for relief from the fund and what is the official method of making applications?

ANSWER

1. It is not known how much money was contributed from all sources to the relief of the victims of Cyclone Tracy so it is not possible to answer this portion of the question.
2. As at 23 July 1975 the following amounts have been paid from the Fund:

| | $ |
|---|---|
| Financial Assistance paid to applicants outside Darwin | 1,582,133 |
| Financial Assistance paid to applicants in Darwin | 3,110,283 |
| Bereavement Grants | 288,500 |
| Disbursement as requested by the donors | 192,642 |
| Medical and Funeral Expenses | 1,404 |
| | 5,174,962 |

3. Any person resident in Darwin immediately prior to the cyclone may apply for relief from the Fund by completing an application form available from the Trust.

99 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Is it the intention of the Australian Government to provide individual Darwin residents with long term home finance and, if so, will the loan be an extension of the Home Finance Trustee or will another fund be set up?

ANSWER

The Australian Government has approved a scheme for concessional low interest long term housing loans to pre-cyclone owner-occupiers and those intending to be. The loan is being administered by the Home Finance Trustee concurrently with the existing scheme.

124 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. How many RAAF houses at Tindal will be occupied by people relocated in Katherine?
2. Will a regular bus service be provided between Katherine and Tindal?

ANSWER

1. Thirty-six houses at Tindal are occupied by these people.
2. A regular school bus calls at Tindal each school day to transport children to and from school. A licensed bus operator in Katherine has studied the probable level of patronage available for a regular public service between Katherine and Tindal. He has decided that there is no feasible demand for such a service under existing circumstances.

126 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

What progress has been made on the installation of the sewerage system at Katherine and when will it be completed?

ANSWER

At present connections have been or are being made to lines 1, 8, 9, 13, 17A, 17D and 19. A total of 29 properties has been connected up to 29 May 1975.

It is expected that, by the first week in June, the area between the Railway Line and Dowling Street will be able to be connected. The Connection of Stage 1 of the airport subdivision has been held up due to blockage in line 17. The only mains not yet laid are line 3 and 150 feet of line 2 which should be completed by the end of July. There are 58 gravity mains and 5 rising mains in the system.

Allowing for a period of cleaning up the contractor should have all the work completed by September.

148 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What urgent action is proposed to alleviate the housing shortage in Katherine?

ANSWER

It is proposed to build 40 houses in Katherine during 1975-1976. A contract for 20 of these is about to be let.

170 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

Who owns the houses formerly used by the ACS at Tindel and what are the intentions for their future use?

ANSWER

The ACS houses at Tindel are owned by the Australian Government.

ACS houses at Tindel were scheduled to be demolished in the December/January 1975 period. The Department of Services and Property was to arrange for their sale and removal, but after the cyclone they were used by the Department to house evacuees and officers relocated in Katherine.

All of the habitable homes are occupied, and some more are being restored to alleviate the housing situation in Katherine.

176 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

When will the flats for single professional people at Katherine be opened?

ANSWER

Tenders for the erection of 48 bed sitters in Katherine are now being considered and the completion date will be 58 weeks from the placing of the contract.

The 38 single units being constructed for Commonwealth Hostels are expected to be completed in September 1975.

180 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Will a faithful reproduction of the Elsey Homestead be made by tourist authorities as an historically important feature with great potential as a tourist attraction?

ANSWER

The Department of Northern Australia is unaware of any plans for Elsey Homestead to be reconstructed as a tourist attraction. It is possible that the Interim Committee on the National Estate may be prepared to consider the proposal based on the historical value of the site and if there is a group, such as, say, the Katherine Historical Society, interested in its preservation, then an approach may be made to the Interim Committee with a view of preservation of the site and nearby graves, as part of the National Estate.

191 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

For housing purposes, are school teachers, doctors and veterinarians regarded as "key" personnel and when such people vacate houses are the houses retained for occupancy by their successors?

ANSWER

1. School teachers, doctors, veterinary officers and in fact any positional category are not automatically regarded as "key" positions for housing purposes. Any case for "key status" is considered individually and on its merits.

2. In some cases particularly in respect of officers on set term transfers between Territory centres i.e. Meteorological staff, Air Traffic Controllers, certain Postal and Telecommunications personnel etc. houses are reserved for the use of the replacement officer provided he or she is available to take up occupancy of the vacated premises within 30 days. A similar concession is allowed to members of the Police, Fire and Prisons services. This replacement officer housing system operates in all Territory centres except Darwin at the present moment.

200 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW—

1. Is it a fact that at this late stage of any emergency that may have existed a decision has been made to transfer to Brisbane the accounting and salaries staff of the Department of Education now based in Darwin?

2. How many, if any, of the staff are prepared to go to Brisbane?

3. How many of the staff to be transferred are satisfactorily accommodated in Darwin?

4. If the transfer to Brisbane is or was necessary, why was it left for nearly three months to propose it?

5. What additional costs will be incurred by the transfer?

6. What benefit will be obtained by the transfer?

ANSWER

Part 1—Following discussions with staff, three Adult Education Programmers and three members of the Curriculum and Research Branch of the NT Division of the Department of Education moved from Darwin to Brisbane in early May 1975.

Part 2—All six officers were prepared to move to Brisbane.

Parts 3, 4, 5, 6—None of the officers transferred were satisfactorily accommodated in Darwin. However, the transfer was arranged not primarily because of family accommodation problems. For some time the Curriculum and Research Branch, which provides an advisory service to teachers, has been trying to gain a viable staff establishment in order to continue the development of meaningful curricula for use in schools in the Northern Territory.

Following an assessment of the Darwin situation in March and April 1975, it became apparent that it was not possible to fill vacant curriculum positions from the already depleted Darwin teacher population nor to

recruit to new positions which were being created, because of the unavailability of accommodation in Darwin. Accordingly, the plan is to build up an advisory service in Brisbane with a view to moving back to Darwin as soon as adequate staff accommodation is available.

250 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Does the Department of Housing and Construction provide a demolition squad for Government employees' cyclone damaged homes and, if so, is this a free service and is it available to private citizens?

ANSWER

The Department of Housing and Construction does not provide a squad to demolish cyclone damaged homes but will remove cyclone debris from a person's property if notified. This service applies to all residents.

260 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Will former Darwin houseowners not returning to Darwin receive any assistance in buying homes in other cities?

ANSWER

The concessional low interest long term loan scheme being administered by the Department of Northern Australia does not have application outside the Darwin area. At this stage, there is no known special assistance for persons from Darwin other than that provided through normal grants/loans schemes as applying in the States and the ACT.

263 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. What department will administer the new home loan of $33,000 at 6% interest offered by the Australian Government?
2. When will application forms be available to Darwin residents?

ANSWER

1. The loan scheme is being administered by the Public Utilities and Housing Branch of the Department of Northern Australia. The scheme has a maximum loan amount of $42,000 at a 6% interest rate repayable over a period of up to 45 years.
2. Applications forms have been available from the Home Finance Section, Department of Northern Australia, Mitchell Chambers, Mitchell Street, Darwin, from 19 May 1975.

264 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. When will charges for the supply of electricity be imposed?
2. How is it proposed to calculate charges for electricity supplied to unmetered premises?

ANSWER

1. The Administrator in Council has approved the introduction of electricity charges in Darwin for commercial consumers from 1 May 1975 and for domestic consumers from 22 May 1975.
2. Almost all supply to consumers in the Darwin area is now metered. Regulation 19(3) of the Electricity Supply Regulations provides that where the number of units supplied is not registered by a meter then the number of units supplied during that period may be assessed.

266 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN—

What steps have been taken to ensure that there will be adequate materials available for the Darwin reconstruction program?

ANSWER

The contracts awarded for the construction of the first 1,300 new homes were distributed to companies in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

The material requirements for these contracts are supplied from varying sources, the majority originating in their respective capital cities. Common suppliers to each contractor are in the timber, roof sheeting, concrete and steel items.

The Commission is evaluating the requirements of placing bulk orders for the materials listed above and P.C. items for direct supply to future contractors. This pre-ordering will give suppliers additional time to cope with the supply and reduce high demands on manufacturers.

The majority of the material supply will be transported to Darwin by road for the above contracts. This will reduce the demand for shipping capacity in the Darwin port.

The majority of the labour force for the construction of these houses will be imported from various areas throughout Australia and housed in contractors' camps. This action will minimise the demand on local resources.

The Government commercial building and the Housing Commission Construction Programme constitutes the major building industry work outside the new homes projects. These projects produce less demand on the Darwin material and labour resources than the 1973-1974 works program.

The Commission is currently conducting a survey of the private homeowners in Darwin and the capital cities to determine their proposed rebuilding program. This program will be evaluated and approvals to build issued in line with overall labour and materials availability.

The material and labour requirements for these contracts will be supplied ex Darwin. The Commission is extremely conscious of the necessity to work in close co-operation with the Darwin suppliers and contractors and not to award contracts which will place excessive demands on their resources. The Commission will monitor the Darwin resources situation continuously and give as much advanced information to these organisations to allow them to plan their activities.

**In Summary**

**Material**
(a) Materials supplies for the first major contracts will come from varying sources mainly outside Darwin.
(b) Bulk orders are currently being prepared to give suppliers extra lead time to meet construction deadlines.
(c) Bulk store facilities in Darwin are being prepared to house suppliers.
(d) Evaluation of the supply potential of Darwin based firms is in hand.

**Transport**
(a) Major contractors are tendering to use road rather than marine transport.
(b) The marine transport capacity is handling current requirements.
(c) Engagement of additional shipping capacity for future requirements will be investigated shortly.

**Labour**
(a) The major contractors will import the majority of their labour for their work.
(b) The work load in the local building and civil construction companies is light and will cater for the work of restoration and Government commercial construction.
(c) Evaluation of future labour requirements is currently proceeding.

267 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN—

Does the Minister for Transport intend providing more ships in the immediate future for transporting freight from southern ports to Darwin?

ANSWER

The Government is most concerned to ensure that an economic, reliable and adequate coastal shipping service is maintained for Darwin at all times. Although industrial disputes have disrupted the service provided by the ANL vessel "Darwin Trader", it appears from previous months' loadings that the existing ANL service is at present adequate to cater for demand. For example, in January and February of this year the "Darwin Trader" was only half loaded although a full load was carried in March and May. The vessel is, at this stage, fully booked for the June voyage. I am also advised by the Line that they have no serious backlog of cargo which could not be accommodated by the existing cargo carrying capacity available. The Line is however exploring all avenues to ensure that sufficient capacity exists in the future to cover demand for cargo space.

For nearly 60 years it has been Government policy to reserve the coastal trade for Australian licensed vessels. This policy is embodied in the Coasting Trade provisions of the Navigation Act. Provisions exist, however, to meet the situation where the existing licensed coastal fleet is unable to cater for the requirements of shippers, and consideration is then given for the granting of a single voyage permit. Before approving the use of unlicensed tonnage I am required under the Act to ensure that there is an immediate need for the shipment concerned and that no suitable licensed tonnage could be arranged within a reasonable time. You can be assured that should such a situation develop the provisions of the Act will be availed of.

269 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

1. When will the first of the proposed demountable housing units be placed on site in Darwin?
2. What kind of rents are envisaged for these demountable units and how will tenants be chosen?

ANSWER

1. The first demountable units were sited on 30.5.75, 76 units have been allocated to 8.8.75 and a total of 169 have been sited.
2. Rentals will be approximately $20 per week. Once handed over by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, the units are divided equally between the NT Housing Commission and the Department of Northern Australia. Tenants are selected from the housing lists held by the Department and the Commission in order of priority and with regard to family content.

272 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

When will the M S "Patris" leave Darwin and what arrangements will be made to re-accommodate those persons on board?

ANSWER

The charter of the "Patris" is due to expire in mid November 1975 and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has announced it is to build hostel type accommodation and purchase additional relocatable units to accommodate those left on the ship at that stage.

279 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. What is the average annual cost of operation of the whole of the Northern Territory Medical Service?

2. What is the estimated cost of operation in the Territory for the first year of Medibank and how much of the cost will be represented by wages and salaries?

3. What staff increases over current levels will be necessary to service the scheme?

ANSWER

The cost of operating medical services in the Northern Territory during 1973-74 was $21,325,814. The cost was divided between Hospitals and other services as follows—

| | |
|---|---|
| NT Hospitals | $14,629,029 |
| Other medical services | $6,696,785 |
| Total Cost | $21,325,814 |

This figure includes the cost of repairs and maintenance to hospitals only.

The estimated cost of operation for the Northern Territory Medical Service in 1975-76 is $34,271,000. This includes a component of $23,700,000 for wages and salaries. Capital costs are not included in the above total.

The introduction of Medibank has not necessitated any increase in staff within the Northern Territory Medical Service.

Note: Costs incurred in the administrative operation of the medical benefits element will be met directly by the Health Insurance Commission. These costs will include salaries for two persons and payments to agencies only. These payments for 1975-76 are estimated to be $20,000.

280 Mr STEELE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

What proportion of the Northern Territory's income will be needed for the operation of Medibank and how much financial assistance will be provided by the Government?

ANSWER

Both the medical benefits and hospital payments under MEDIBANK will be met from general revenue. Medical benefits will be paid to the patient or private medical practitioner and the Northern Territory's income is not affected.

In accordance with Section 32 of the Health Insurance Commission Act 1973-75, daily bed payments of $16 plus an additional amount to bring the total payments to 50% of the net operating costs of recognised hospital will be payable. Estimates of the amounts involved might be made by the hospital authorities in the Northern Territory.

292 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Is electricity and water available for connection to all housing blocks sold at the last auction in Katherine?

2. Can the blocks be connected to the sewerage system?

ANSWER

1. and 2.—Yes.

371 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

Has the incidence of drug charges before Territory Courts increased over the past six months?

ANSWER

No—For the period 1.5.1974 to 31.10.1974, 131 charges were laid by Police and Customs authorities in the Courts of the Northern Territory, whereas only 54 charges were laid in the period 1.11.1974 to 30.5.1975.

377 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

The staff accommodation office has issued a document entitled "BALLOT LIST AS AMENDED 27.5.75" and sub-titled "Ballot 21.3.75 CARAVANS ONLY"—

1. Are the names on that list in the order in which caravans are to be issued?

2. Are the names in the order in which they were drawn in the ballot?

3. Are all the names on the list the names of persons in the ballot of 21.3.75 or are there other names?

4. How many persons are on the "Accelerated Priority List"?

5. When is it estimated that the issue of vans to persons on the accelerated priority list be completed?

ANSWER

1. Yes. Where caravans are suitable in relation to family content and applicants specific requirements. If other accommodation becomes available this will be allocated, if desired.

2. Yes.

3. A second ballot was held on 27 May for staff whose names were not included in the first ballot but who were eligible. These names were inserted into the list in vacancies left where persons had been removed because they already had suitable accommodation or were not eligible to be in the ballot in the first instance.

There are 15 persons on the accelerated list at present, but key personnel are added to the list as they are approved by the Interdepartmental Committee on Housing Allocation, at its regular meetings.

5. Accommodation will continue to be allocated to persons on the accelerated priority list as they are nominated.

378 Mr LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

1. In the reconstruction of residences for senior public servants in Darwin have any plans been made for the provision of swimming pools?
2. If so, how many pools are to be provided and what are the designations of the officers who are to occupy the residences?
3. What is the estimated cost of the pools, installation, and ancillary equipment?
4. What are the criteria for determining whether or not a public servant shall have a pool installed?
5. What rent on the pool is proposed to be charged?
6. Who is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of any pool so provided?
7. Has Treasury approval been obtained for the purchase of the pools and ancillary equipment?
8. If so, in which financial year are funds to be provided?

ANSWER

1. No.
2. to 8. Not applicable.

379 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Some home owners in the Darwin area are receiving by registered post a threatening letter purporting to come from L. A. Robinson, Architect of the Urban and Town Planning Building Section of the Department of the Northern Territory.

1. From where does Mr Robinson derive his authority to send these letters?
2. Who is the person who actually signs these letters and what is his designation?
3. How are the home owners to whom these letters are sent selected?
4. From where is the information leading to the sending of these letters obtained?
5. Why does the letter refer to the "1975 edition of the Building Manual" when no such document exists?
6. How many of these letters have been sent?

ANSWER

1. The letters are issued under the authority of section (61) of the Darwin Reconstruction Act 1975. The Commission has delegated authority to Mr Robinson to exercise these powers on its behalf.
2. The letters are signed by the Area Building Inspector responsible for the area in which the building is located.
3. Such letters are not sent in respect of normal dwelling houses. It is acknowledged that two of these forms were sent in error.
4. The letters are sent to the owners of buildings identified by the Area Building Inspectors in the course of their duties as being in a dangerous condition and open to public access.
5. A draft 1975 edition of the Building Manual was produced in February this year and circulated for public comment. Copies have been available for public inspection at the office of the Northern Territory Building Section since February 20. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission adopted amendments to the Manual at its meeting on May 22, and these were widely publicised in the press. A revised edition of the Manual, incorporating these amendments, is now being printed. Meanwhile a revised copy of the Manual is available for inspection at the office of the Building Section.
6. Twenty-two (22) of these letters have been sent.

381 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

With reference to the answers supplied to my question No. 376 regarding the photographic dossiers being prepared by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

1. Was this action authorized by the Commission itself?
2. Who were the contractors taking the photographs and where are they accommodated while in Darwin?
3. What was the cost of the contract for the photography?
4. Was any consideration given to the possibility that private citizens might regard the photographs as an invasion of their privacy?
5. Are the photographs in fact being used to identify home owners making repairs to their houses?

6. Can he give the Assembly an assurance that the photographs are not intended to be used as evidence for the prosecution of home owners?
7. Will he, as a member of the Commission, take whatever steps are possible to stop the use of these photographs without permission of the owners of the properties?

ANSWER

1. The Acting General Manager authorized the programme.
2. Filmwest Pty Ltd, accommodated at Esplanade Hostel.
3. $27,580 for 31,000 photographic prints.
4. No. The photography was required as part of the technical process of reconstruction.
5. No.
6. Yes. The photography was required for the sole purpose of recording the status of all land within Darwin. The photographs are to be used in a card referral system linked to a computer output recording complex data. This system is to be used for the establishment of programmes and priorities and will become a permanent record of the reconstruction programme.
7. Removal of data regarding individual properties from the system would result in the property being excluded from priority schedules. The Commission's responsibilities include the proper conduct of the reconstruction programme and assistance to the community as a whole. Should owners of properties which are included in the survey wish to relieve the Commission of responsibilities in any of the complex programmes in hand or planned for the future this can be arranged.

382 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr POLLOCK—

I refer to the recommendation by Mr Justice Woodward that January 1976 be set as the date by which Aboriginal land claims in the Northern Territory be lodged. Could he provide details of claims to the present including names of claimants and areas claimed?

ANSWER

No. I am advised that the Northern Land Council is currently carrying out a survey with a view to identifying all unalienated Crown Land on which there might be an Aboriginal interest and that full details of claims will be furnished as soon as is possible.

384 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

When will the Burketown Crossing at Borroloola be upgraded?

ANSWER

In reply to Question on Notice No. 4458 of September 1974, it was advised that it was proposed to undertake work on the crossing to Bessie Springs abattoir in conjunction with the construction of a causeway over the McArthur River Crossing at Borroloola in May/June 1975.

Work has already commenced on the McArthur River crossing and it is expected that this work will be completed within the next two months. It is proposed that this crossing of the McArthur River serving the Bessie Springs abattoir will be upgraded on completion of the McArthur River crossing.

NOTE: It is assumed that the Burketown Crossing referred to in the question is the McArthur River Crossing.

385 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr RYAN—

When will the crossing over the McArthur River between the highway and Bessie Spring serving the Bessie Spring abattoir be completed?

ANSWER

Please see answer to Question on Notice No. 384.

386 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

Does he check the accuracy of information supplied to him to answer questions on notice and, if so, how accurate was the answer to question 165 which stated that the diesel generating sets at the Mataranka power station are expected to be commissioned in early June 1975?

ANSWER

Where questions are of a technical or administrative nature the information is sought from the appropriate Government department and the information supplied is therefore relied upon as the basis of answer.

I am now further informed that earlier information available concerning the installation of diesel generators at Mataranka Power Station indicated that they would be commissioned early in June.

There has been a slight delay, but the sets were tested over the weekend of 14-15 June and are expected to be on line by 19 June.

388 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

Is the Mataranka Health Centre for general out-patient use, or for Aboriginal out-patient use?

ANSWER

The Health Centre being constructed at Mataranka is for general out-patient use. The Department's Health Centres are established throughout the Territory to serve the communities in the areas in which they are built.

390 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr EVERINGHAM—

1. Has the police stock squad ever ventured out of the Darwin area?
2. Is the squad equipped for deterrent patrols or merely to investigate complaints?

ANSWER

1. Yes.
2. The equipment and resources of the Police Force are available for the use of the Stock Squad, should it be for deterrent patrols or to investigate complaints.

391 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

Has the block sold at Borroloola for a Service Station site in 1973 been developed in the manner required by the covenants?

ANSWER

No. The covenant of the lease over Lot 409 (Service Station site) Borroloola, requires the commencement of building by 1 September 1974 and completion of building by 1 September 1976.

The prepartion of the lease was delayed awaiting the incorporation of the Borroloola Social Club. Incorporation was finally effected on 5 February 1975 and lease instruments were sent to the lessee for signature on 30 April 1975.

An extension of time of 18 months to commence building has been rejected but an extension to commence by September 1, 1975 is being considered. An extension of time was considered necessary due to flooding in 1974 in the Borroloola area and the subsequent interdepartmental study of various factors important to town development.

392 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TAMBLING—

What steps have been taken to provide reticulated electricity and water for the township of Borroloola?

ANSWER

The provision of town electricity and water to Borroloola will be further considered when a town plan is finalised following completion of the South West Gulf Study now in progress.

393 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

1. What land has been vested in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for its control and administration pursuant to section 12(a) of the Act?
2. How many buildings has the Commission—
   (a) erected,
   (b) repaired, or
   (c) demolished?

ANSWER—

The Section of the Act concerning land is presumably a reference to Section 14(2)(a)—not Section 12A. On the assumption that this is correct the answer is none at this stage although we have made requests to the Department of Northern Australia.

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission through its agents is in the process of:

(a) constructing 1,300 new houses;
(b) repairing 20 houses for evaluation of economics and building technique; and
(c) restoration of 70 houses.

To date, no houses have been completed in either new, repair or restoration category and no houses have been totally demolished under Commission direction.

394 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How many and what directions has the Minister given to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission pursuant to section 10 of the Act.

ANSWER

None. However the Minister has asked the Chairman of the Commission to convene meetings of the Commission in Darwin wherever possible.

395 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How many staff members have been appointed to the Yirrkala Medical Centre and for what period?

2. When will the official opening date of the centre be announced publicly?

ANSWER

1. It is intended to transfer existing staff at Yirrkala to the new Medical Centre.

   The present staff consists of–

   1 Resident Clinic Sister
   1 Rural Health Sister based at the Centre
   5 Aborigines, 4 of whom are hospital assistants and 1 a Health Worker.

   There is no intention at this stage to increase the staff.

2. Present indications are that it will be possible to commence work from the Centre on Monday, 14 July 1975.

395A Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK–

Has the Department of Health considered appointing a permanent specialist in gynaecology and obstetrics to Gove Hospital?

ANSWER

The appointment of a permanent specialist as suggested is not considered warranted at this stage. The Department has under consideration alternative means of improving the service in Obstetrics and Gynaecology to the Gove Hospital.

399A Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS–

1. Following the expiry of the Emergency Services Legislation, what is to be done with the large amount of information held on file by the Permit Section?
2. Is it to be destroyed and if so, how?
3. If not to be destroyed where is the information to be held and who will have access to the information and in what circumstances?

ANSWER

1. Records previously held by the Permits Section have been placed in safe custody with the Department of Northern Australia Central Registry.
2. Working papers only have been destroyed by shredding.
3. The records will continue to be held by the Department of Northern Australia. Access to these records will be available only to authorised persons.

401A Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN–

Are street and road signs to be erected in the Shoal Bay area and, if so, by whom and when?

ANSWER

There is no current program provision for street and road signs in the Shoal Bay area. Should the Honourable Member have any particular road or roads in mind the matter will be taken up with the appropriate authority at his request.

402A Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN–

What stage has been reached in the provision of a new loading ramp for supply barges at Mission or Linyalung Bay, Croker Island?

ANSWER

In 1973 arrangements were made by the Department of Housing and Construction to carry out a survey into the needs for the upgrading of barge landing facilities to coastal Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. In the report released in 1974, the Department of Housing and Construction estimated that the cost of upgrading the barge landing facilities at the 13 communities involved would be in the vicinity of $1.7m including $160,000 for Croker Island. It will be appreciated that since the issue of the report present day costs would be considerably in excess of these figures.

Because of the size of the commitment it was necessary to allocate priorities with Stage 1 of the project being included in our Works Proposals Program for 1975-76. Unfortunately Croker Island was not included.

Following recent discussions with the General Manager of Perkins Shipping Corporation Pty Ltd in which the Government has a controlling interest, it was accepted that there was a need to revise the initial priorities and this action is currently in hand. If it is possible to vary the program to bring Croker Island forward to 1975-76 then this will be done. It is important to mention however, that at this stage the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is not aware of those projects which will finally gain the approved Civil Works Program for the current year, and this of course will not be formally established until the Budget is brought down by Parliament.

403A Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN–

When will a public telephone be provided at Gove Airport?

ANSWER

The matter has received consideration in the past but there are no immediate plans in hand to install a public telephone at the Gove Airport as it is considered the revenue potential would be very limited and would not provide a reasonable return on the expenditure incurred in setting up and maintaining the facility.

An assurance is given that the matter will be watched closely however and a review will be made in the light of any change in local circumstances.

If the enquiry has been prompted by the lack of facilities for booking taxis, this problem will be overcome in the near future as arrangements are well advanced for the provision of an extension off a taxi proprietor's telephone service which will permit free taxi booking calls to be made at all hours from the airport.

470 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

1. How many residential blocks in the Darwin area have been offered back to the Government?

2. How many offers of blocks have been accepted by the Government?

3. How many of the blocks have been paid for?

ANSWER

1. 172

2. 172.

3. 42 in 1974-1975, 23 so far in 1975-1976. This is continuing while funds continue to be available.

472 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Are consultants employed by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission paid at the rate of $25 per hour and are their consultancies subject to audit by the Auditor-General's Department?

ANSWER

A number or consultants have been engaged by the Commission with varying hourly rates, depending on their qualifications and expertise.

Commission consultants are engaged in accordance with the relevant professional organisation's formulae and, on several engagements, time spent by a Principal of the consultant organisation is at an hourly rate of $25. This level of payment is made to the organisation, not the individual.

Audit of the Commission's accounts is carried out by the Auditor-General's Department.

473 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

1. Is the large amount of information concerning individuals in Darwin which was collected while the entry permit system was in force still in existence?

2. If the records containing this information have not been destroyed, where are they stored and who has access to them?

ANSWER

Please see answer to Question on Notice No. 399.

474 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Has the Australian Government purchased Lot 622, corner of Esplanade and McLachlan Street, Darwin for $116,000 and, if so, was Ministerial approval obtained prior to the purchase of this block?

2. If approval was not obtained, who authorized the purchase of the block and for what purpose has it been acquired?

ANSWER

1. Yes, but the Lot is in Mitchell Street, not the Esplanade. Approval was obtained from a Delegate of the Minister as it was within his financial delegation. The Lot was one of a number offered back to the Government and was purchased as one of the blocks required for reconstruction purposes by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

2. See above.

475 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

1. I refer to the 32 square mile acquisition area and ask:

   (a) how much compensation has been paid to former landholders in the area to date;
   (b) how many cases still await settlements; and
   (c) what is the estimate of the further compensation to be paid to achieve full settlement?

2. In the Darwin area—

   (a) what is the current number of blocks offered back to the Government;
   (b) how many of the blocks have been paid for;

(c) what is the estimated cost of settling the remaining proposed acquisitions and when is it expected that they will be finalised; and
(d) what money is available for this purpose?

ANSWER

1. (a) $12,474,831.
(b) 38 on which part payment has been made. 25 on which compensation has not yet been paid.
(c) $3.0m

2. (a) 1,600 enquiries have been received.
(b) (c) (d) with the intention of obtaining a valuation only. Eighty properties have been settled to date. It is not possible at this stage to even estimate the cost or date of settling any outstanding offers as there are several valuations not yet received and until a firm figure has been arrived at it will not be possible to say what funds will be required.

476 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

1. Does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission as a whole consider all tenders received or does it delegate this responsibility to a tender committee?

2. If the responsibility is delegated, who comprises the tender committee and who is the Chairman?

3. Are members of the tender committee able to nominate deputies to sit on the committee in their absence and, if so—

(a) on how many occasions have deputies sat on the committee;
(b) who were the deputies, for whom did they deputize and what position was occupied by each deputy in or in relation to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission, as a whole, considers and approves all tenders and commitments in excess of $1m.

For projects below $1m, certain officers within the Commission are granted delegation to commit works following detailed reports on tenders received from Commission Agents. The Agency for over 90% of such recommendations is the Department of Housing and Construction.

479 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK—

Has the Department of Aboriginal Affairs made an offer to purchase the Finiss River Cattle Company and, if so, what price has been offered and on what basis has a valuation been made to support the offer?

ANSWER

No.

480 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is there a boxing control body in the Northern Territory and, if not, will steps be taken to form a boxing control body to assist trainers, referees, youth and sporting bodies?

ANSWER

No. Until about one year ago there was a Northern Territory Amateur Boxing Association, and the Police and Citizens Youth Club was attached to the Association. The Association was affiliated to the South Australian Amateur Boxing Association. There is no current boxing activity in the Police and Citizens Youth Club and the Association is now defunct. The Police and Citizens Youth Club conducted its boxing activities under the rules of the Australian National Boxing Code, with a strong emphasis on medical oversight.

Because of the limited amount of boxing in the Territory, it is suggested that at this time any interested body would be better advised to form an association and seek affiliation with a large State organisation, from which advice and assistance may more readily be available.

491 Mr STEELE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Has he asked the Minister for Northern Australia to clearly state if the Home Finance Trustee will or will not finance homes in the surge areas?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Community Development discussed the matter with the Minister last week. The Minister has advised that he has the matter under consideration but has not yet reached a decision, due to the complication of long term compensation policies of the Australian Government?

492 Mr DONDAS to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is it true that the staff of the Compensation and Repatriation Department have been instructed not to issue any more compensation cheques to the business sector?

ANSWER

I have received a report today in which there is an instance. At the moment, I have no further information, I will obtain it during the day and give the honourable member a fuller answer later.

493 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise me when the section of the Stuart Highway between the airport entrance and Bombing Road will be completed? This has been in a state of disrepair for nearly a year.

ANSWER

I think this is the third consecutive meeting that I have been asked this question and each time I have given an answer that has been supplied. I did take steps last week to obtain some more information in anticipation of a possible question once again and I have been assured that the negotiations between the contractor involved and the Department of Housing and Construction have been completed and the price agreed upon. The papers have been sent to the head office of the Department of Housing and Construction for final ratification, after which the road will be under way once again.

Unfortunately, in answering this question, I have had to rely upon the advice tendered to me by various departments over which I have no control. I am disappointed that the road has not been started as I feel we have lost valuable time. I intend to follow it up and take whatever stronger measures I possibly can to ensure that action is taken on starting the construction of the highway as soon as possible.

494 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

Have all blocks sold to the public in the surge area been in subdivisions originally approved by the Commonwealth Government or the Northern Territory Administration?

ANSWER

Yes.

495 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is the person in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission presently occupying the position of Acting Deputy General Manager a member of a firm of consultants known as Crooks Mitchell Peacock and Stewart? If so, did the Commission as a whole appoint this person to the acting job; if not, which member or members of the commission appointed him and on what authority?

ANSWER

I can only provide with absolute certainty an answer to part of the honourable member's question. The person to whom I believe she is referring was not appointed by the commissioners sitting as a board but was appointed under other delegations of the Chairman or the Acting General Manager. I will check out the details of the question and provide her with precise information later in the day.

496 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is the person presently occupying the position of Acting Chief Planner also a member of the consultancy firm Crooks Mitchell Peacock and Stewart? If so, was that person appointed by the board as a whole or, if not, by which members and on what authority?

ANSWER

I will obtain further information. The appointment was not made by the commission as a whole sitting as a board but under delegations given to the Chairman or Acting General Manager.

497 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

Can owners of blocks in the surge area obtain insurance against tidal waves or flood risk?

ANSWER

I will look at the matter and advise the member later in the day.

498 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

What assistance does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission provide to assist private persons in the rebuilding of their houses? Will the Darwin Reconstruction Commission undertake the rebuilding of a house to a home owner's plan and does the Commission have a list of approved contractors to whom a private person can turn with confidence for building?

ANSWER

The policy of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission as formed by the Commission sitting as a board is that it would provide assistance to the private home builder both in the helping with provision of design facilities and to enable private builders to use the services of contractors to whom contracts may be let by the Commission. That is the policy which the Commission as a whole determined some time ago. I am unable to give any precise information as to what extent this policy has been implemented, how many people have taken advantage of the situation or have been given help, but I do know that the Commission also conducted a survey to see how many private home owners would be interested in using the services of the Commission's agents for design and construction. At the time that survey was conducted, some 800 Darwin residents indicated their interest in using the agencies of the Commission for this purpose.

499 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Miss ANDREW—

The Berrimah School has an enrolment which is considerably over the capacity for which the building is designed. What steps is the Department of Education taking to alleviate the problem?

ANSWER

Construction is planned for an estimated completion date in August 1976. If this is achieved, the school could be open in third term of that year. However, because of normal building delays, it is more likely at the moment to be at the beginning of 1977. The school is planned in two stages with stage 1 to accommodate approximately 200 children and staff. There is no pre-school. There is provision for an eventual stage 2 which will take the size of the school up to 500 students but no timetable for the building of this has yet been established. The children from this area will continue to attend the Berrimah Primary School and the Department, in association with the DRC and the Department of Housing and Construction, is attempting to have extensions at the Berrimah school completed for the commencement of next year. This will allow the school to accommodate both local children and those from Howard Springs without overcrowding.

500 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I am aware that members of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission have their deputies; for example, the honourable member for Fannie Bay is an able deputy of the Majority Leader. Who is the deputy of the person normally representing the Department of Housing and Construction and the Department of Urban and Regional Development?

ANSWER

The deputy of Mr Alan Reiher, the permanent head of the Department of Housing and Construction is a Mr Keith Rodda who is an Assistant Scretary of the Department. The member representing the Department of Urban and Regional Development—althogh that is not the way it is expressed in the act—is the Assistant Scretary of the Department of Regional Development, Mr Peter Thiele, and the person who has represented him as deputy is Mr Terry Wardlaw.

501 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Have either Mr Rodda or Mr Wardlaw sat as members of the Commission when tenders were being discussed?

ANSWER

I would not like to entirely rely on my memory on this matter. My memory tells me that Mr Rodda did sit at a special meeting that we had in Canberra to examine and discuss tenders that were issued by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. However, I would like the opportunity to get the list and inform the honourable member later in the day.

502 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is Mr Wardlaw a full time member of the Commission and employed in no other capacity or is he a member of the consultancy firm Crooks Michell Peacock and Stewart?

ANSWER

I won't ask the honourable member to place that question on notice although I think it is the kind of question that one must answer absolutely accurately. I will find out the answer and advise her later in the day.

503 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

In the light of the shortage of doctors at Darwin Hospital, what arrangements have been made to rectify this?

ANSWER

The shortage of doctors in the Territory as a whole and in particular at the Darwin Hospital is causing the officers of the Department of Health here in Darwin great concern and it is causing concern to myself as well. The department has been advertising fortnightly for officers. I saw the advertisements in last Saturday's press along with advertisements for Alice Springs. However, I did notice in the advertisements that the commencing salary was $10,700 which is ridiculously low and is in no way going to attract medical officers from other parts of Australia to the Northern Territory as a whole, let alone Darwin where we have the problem of accommodation. To help overcome this shortage, the Minister for Health is, I believe, after with discussions with him at the weekend at Tennant Creek, doing everything he can to get a case to the Public Service Board to get them to increase salaries and therefore attract the doctors and other medical staff so badly needed for the Territory.

504 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware that the food stocks held at the emergency centres since the last emergency and as a contingency against the next have an expiry date, and that in fact tins of milk probably are now considered stale and not fit for human consumption? If not, would he check this please and advise the Assembly?

ANSWER

I am the Executive Member responsible on the Emergency Committee. I was not aware of the situation and I will be in contact with the honourable member and follow it through and try and give an answer later on in these sittings.

505 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware of recent increases in air fares which have affected all Territory centres? If so, has he considered making representations to the Transport Minister of the Australian Government with a view to some mitigation of these increases in favour of Territory residents?

ANSWER

I am aware of the increase in the air fares in the Northern Territory and in fact for the whole of Australia. I have not as yet made any moves to approach the Minister for Transport. I am prepared to do just that on the advice of my colleague. However, I don't feel that we would have much chance of changing the Federal Minister's mind on this particular point.

506 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Can he advise if a Government Grant is to be made to a service club in Central Australia for redevelopment work on the old Hamilton Downs homestead?

ANSWER

Yes, the Minister for Tourism and Recreation has recently announced that in grants made to the Territory in this last few months there is a grant for $10,000 to the Apex Hamilton Downs Youth Club.

507 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Some two years ago, legislation was passed through the Legislative Council prohibiting the use of motor vehicles and motor bikes on prescribed beaches and one of those beaches is Casuarina beach. Are signs to be prominently displayed indicating the prohibition of these motor vehicles, as Casuarina beach is assuming the proportions of a speedway?

ANSWER

I will pursue the matter raised by the honourable member for Nightcliff with the appropriate department and inform her at these sittings what action is proposed.

508 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

There have been reports that there have been delays in the supply of electricity to householders. When will that matter be rectified?

ANSWER

The number of applications for reconnection have been very high, especially in the last couple of months, and although the staff of the Electricity Supply Undertaking is back at a normal level they simply can't cope with these demands. Additional crews are being negotiated. Three line crews and three electrical inspectors from the Capricornia Regional Electricity Supply Undertaking will arrive on Monday and commence work. The ESU are still negotiating for other crews but there is no definite outcome. I imagine that the delays will be somewhat shorter as from next week.

509 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

How many people have been charged by the police for driving motor vehicles on prescribed beaches and how many members of the Northern Territory Police Force have ever been instructed to control beaches for the purposes of warning or charging people?

ANSWER

I do not have the answers here but I will obtain them and reply to the question later.

510 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER—

Mr Speaker, I address this question to you without notice in the hope that you may be able to offer some information with regard to the future office accommodation for the back benchers of this Assembly.

ANSWER

In anticipation of a question of this kind I did prepare an answer. I am extremely disturbed at the lack of action to rehabilitate this building and only this morning I rang the Deputy Director of the Department of Housing and Construction and the Acting Manager of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I am informed that the final design drawings will go to the commission today and that tenders will be advertised next week. Even if a contract is awarded without any delays, I am very doubtful that this building will be waterproof before the beginning of the wet season.

With regard to members' offices, I am aware of the totally unsatisfactory conditions existing in the present offices in Block 1. These offices are temporary and I have asked for urgent consideration of our needs by the Reconstruction Commission. The best we can hope for is some demountable offices located on the floor slabs at the back of this Chamber. But if these cannot be obtained in a short time, I hope that I can get accommodation on the ground floor of Block 3 next door. That building is still under repair but I have made my wishes known to the Department of Services and Property.

511 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is he aware of an apparent shortage of police uniforms, particularly in the Alice Springs region? Is he also aware that this is causing such unsightly scenes as policemen with half winter and half summer uniforms worn at the same time? If he is aware of this, what is being done to rectify the situation?

ANSWER

I am aware of the situation and in fact I read in the NT News this morning some reference to "Dad's Army". I have had correspondence with the Commissioner of Police and this morning on my desk I found a letter from him in which he says: "Our 1975 supplies of uniforms were decimated as a result of Cyclone Tracy. Supplies of uniforms destined for the Alice Springs area were destroyed at the Darwin Aerodrome. Attempts made to obtain replacement supplies of uniforms have been frustrated by industrial disputes and the inability of contractors to supply at comparatively short notice, especially as the better materials used in the past have been supplied by overseas sources. Our planning had provided for new-style uniforms to be issued early in 1976 and, because of the 1975 shortages, arrangements have been made to bring forward the supply date for new uniforms. Contracts have been let. The broad brim hat will be retained as an item of uniform for Northern Territory Police". That last sentence relates to requests from the Northern Territory Police Force that the slouch hat should be retained. They will be pleased to know that it is going to be retained as an item of equipment.

512 Mr KENTISH to Mr SPEAKER—

Is any attention being given to the air conditioning of this Chamber at the earliest possible time?

ANSWER

The air conditioning will be restored when tenders are let, probably next week, for the rehabilitation of the buildings.

513 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING—

How many swop blocks are available for persons affected by surge and buffer areas? Will residents be given a choice of blocks?

ANSWER

I am aware that proposals relating to swop blocks and to general land acquisition proposals have been under consideration by the Department of Northern Australia and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. However, I have not been able to ascertain what stage the negotiations have reached and in fact I express my concern that these people are being left without sufficient answers and without sufficient availability of land to rebuild.

514 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

Will he ask the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to state clearly for the benefit of the Darwin public the limits of their assistance in respect of tying down caravans, screwing down roofs, and the many other forms of assistance which have been offered to Darwin residents?

ANSWER

Yes.

515 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK—

Is it a fact that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs has made an offer to purchase the Finniss River Cattle Company? If so, what price has been offered and on what basis has a valuation been made to support the offer?

ANSWER

I don't know the answer to the question. I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

516 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW—

Could she ascertain from the Controller of Rents by tomorrow what is the longest period that has transpired between an application for a rent determination and the actual determination being made, what is the average period taken, and what is the longest period as at this date that he has held a current application pending determination?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to collect that information and give it to the honourable member tomorrow.

517 Mr KENTISH to Mr KILGARIFF—

I refer to two young men, the Harvey Brothers, who were in Fannie Bay Gaol prior to the cyclone serving a sentence of 4 years for a rape at Mataranka. I understand that these two men were released at the time of the cyclone. Could he ascertain whether these men have been pardoned or have since been reinterned to serve their sentence?

ANSWER

It is my understanding that when these two men were released from gaol, it was a type of pardon and they have not been returned to gaol. That advice could be incorrect and I will check on it and answer the honourable member later.

518 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Yesterday I asked the Majority Leader without notice if either of the deputies of members of the Commission had sat as members of the Commission when tenders were being discussed—the two deputies concerned are Mr Rodda and Mr Wardlaw. He replied that he would advise me. Can he now present that advice?

ANSWER

At two Commission meetings dated 17 April 1975 and 5 May 1975 Mr Rodda and Mr Wardlaw sat in attendance to the full time Commissioner during discussions on housing tenders. That is to say, they sat in as advisors.

519 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TUXWORTH—

When will a Tourist Promotion Association be formed on Bathurst Island?

ANSWER

The formation of a Tourist Promotion Association on Bathurst Island would be a matter for the people of Bathurst Island to decide at their own leisure. However, if the honourable member feels it would be of any help, I would be only too pleased to assist him to do this.

520 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

At any time when any of the deputies sat in an advisory capacity to the Commission, has the firm of Crooks, Michell, Peacock and Stewart been one of the firms engaged in applying for a tender contract?

ANSWER

I believe the answer to the honourable member's question is no. They sat in on discussions for housing tenders and the firm she alluded to is not concerned in housing tenders. However, I will take note of the question and check it out.

521 Mr STEELE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Would he call on the Minister for Northern Australia to investigate the difference in prices which exists between Valuer-General valuations and private valuers?

ANSWER

I have taken note of the request and I will do so.

522 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Can he now advise me whether the Police Commissioner has ever instructed any members of the force to patrol beaches for the purpose of either warning or apprehending people driving motor vehicles on prescribed beaches?

ANSWER

Following her question yesterday, I took up the matter with the Commissioner of Police and I asked him if any charges had been made against persons driving motor vehicles on beaches. He replied that there had been no charges. I also asked him whether police carry out regular patrols in relation to the above matter. His reply was that there are regular patrols from Casuarina Police Station with intermittent patrols from Darwin Station. There are specific instructions at Casuarina Police Station in relation to this matter.

523 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is he aware of the serious situation presently existing regarding the illegal use of beaches by people driving motor vehicles, with a consequent danger to life and limb, especially of young children?

ANSWER

I have no personal knowledge of this type of offence being carried out on this particular beach. However, I have received complaints which indicate that there are vehicles using these beaches illegally to the detriment of people in the area.

524 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

Has the Majority Leader been provided with a financial report as to the operation of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to 30 June 1975?

ANSWER

I am not quite sure what the honourable member means when he speaks about a financial report. Is he talking about an audit report or what particular type of financial report does he mean? Perhaps he might be able to clarify his question.

Mr STEELE:

The report referred to is under section 58 of the Darwin Reconstruction Act: "The Commission shall as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year prepare and furnish the Minister a report of the operations of the Commission during that year, together with financial statements in respect of that year in such forms as the Treasurer approves".

Dr LETTS:

I have not received any final documents of this type yet. The auditor's report goes to the Minister who then is obliged to table it in the Federal House within a certain period of time. I know that the Auditor-General has been very active in the Commission and it is probable, though I am not certain of this, that he has completed his report and it may now be in the Minister's hands.

525 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK—

This question is asked on behalf of the Member for Elsey. Can he advise whether the proposed Aboriginal Lands Bill can be presented to this Assembly prior to presentation to the Federal Parliament?

ANSWER

A formal request has been made by the Minister for Northern Australia, Dr Patterson, to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs asking that copies of legislation pertaining to Aboriginal lands, associations and incorporations be forwarded to the appropriate executive members of this Assembly prior to presentation in the Federal Houses. As yet, no copies have been received and I am unable to say when they may be received.

526 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Who is responsible for classifying the classification of prisoners for suitable people to be placed at the Gunn Point Prison Farm?

ANSWER

As I understand it, the general classification is made by the superintendent of particular prisons. In Darwin, it would be made by the Superintendent of the Fannie Bay Gaol on the recommendation to the Controller of Prisons who then would carry the responsibility for the decision. Of course, any transfer of prisoners is with the consent of the Administrator.

527 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is the person at present occupying the position of principal architect with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission employed as a consultant? Is he a full time staff member employed under public service regulations with normal procedures applying? Was that person appointed by the Commission as a whole or, if not, by which members and on what authority?

ANSWER

I can't answer all the question at the moment but I can answer the last part of it in a similar way to the answer I gave yesterday. The position of Chief Architect was not a matter of appointment by the Commission as a whole but he would have been appointed as a staff member under delegation given to the Chairman and Acting General Manager. I have indicated before that the Commissioners themselves are only concerned with individual appointments at what we might call the Second Division level. This particular appointment has not been before the Commission as a whole.

528 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

The Majority Leader did say in his reply that this person was appointed as a staff member. Would he clarify that? Is this a permanent appointment as a staff member and, if so, when people are so appointed, are they directed to sever all connection with any other firm that they may have had? Obviously there could be a conflict of interests or a divided loyalty.

ANSWER

I can be a little more explicit. As I understand it, the permanent appointment of Second Division positions would come before the Commission but somebody acting or temporarily engaged in that position would not necessarily do so. The likelihood in this case is that it is only an acting position that we are talking about. I will find out and inform the honourable member later.

529 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING—

Have tenders been let for the proposed 20 new government homes in Katherine?

ANSWER

I have made inquiries about this question as I was given prior notice of it but I have not received an answer at this stage. I will endeavour to make one available later this day.

530 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

When will arrangements be made to erect a security fence around the Fannie Bay gaol?

ANSWER

In many respects, I would hope never. There are no arrangements to erect a fence around the Fannie Bay gaol at the moment. The situation of the prisoners has been one of considerable concern. It has been of concern that no firm decisions have been made in relation to what is going to happen. I have seen several press reports on this matter in the last couple of weeks. In one, the Attorney General advocated the reconstruction of the fence around the Fannie Bay prison. I have not been able to gain any advice about any moves for the reconstruction of a fence around the prison. In many respects I hope that they will not be able to use the site much longer at all.

531 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

How many persons have indicated to the Commonwealth their preparedness to surrender land in Darwin to the Commonwealth? How many formal offers to surrender have been made? How many surrenders of land have been effected? In how many cases in which the surrenders have actually been made has compensation been paid?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Port Darwin had a similar question on notice which came to my attention several weeks ago. An answer was given on that occasion with regard to the formal offers and surrenders that had been made at that date. I will endeavour to obtain updated information in that regard for him. His first question related to how many indications of blocks have been made. I am aware that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission through the agency of the Department of Northern Australia did conduct a survey some time ago in which people were asked to indicate how many blocks would be available for surrender. I was of the opinion at that time that well in excess of 1,000 blocks were indicated as being available; however, I will endeavour to obtain a full and accurate answer for the honourable member at these sittings.

532 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

What steps, if any, have been taken to upgrade the school buildings and teacher accommodation at Roper River Mission?

ANSWER

I do not have that information available at the moment but I will endeavour to reply during tomorrow's question time.

533 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that no member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission can be described as a business man and has any member of the Commission any experience in business and commerce?

ANSWER

I do not think that any members of the Reconstruction Commission have been asked to give their occupations. I certainly have not seen any list as to whether they are business men or business women. Certainly some of them are engaged in businesses of one form or another.

534 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is the Commission as a whole aware that people who are occupying senior staff positions are members of consultancy firms who are being funded by the Commission and who are applying for tenders and contracts?

ANSWER

The Commission has been concerned at the question of possible conflict of interests and is having this matter thoroughly investigated to make sure that in any future appointments no conflict of interests will occur.

I have some answers to questions which the honourable member asked yesterday which clarify the relationship of certain people in acting positions on the Commission with outside firms and I intend to give that information at the end of question time.

535 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN—

Is any firefighting appliance available at Mataranka and, if not, what is supposed to be done in the event of a fire?

ANSWER

I do not have the answer to that question. I will be in contact with the Fire Chief and endeavour to give an answer later in the sittings.

536 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is there a boxing control body in the Northern Territory and, if not, what steps have been taken to form such a boxing control body to assist trainers, referees, youth and sporting bodies?

ANSWER

I am not able to answer the question as I am unaware whether there is a boxing control authority in the Northern Territory. Perhaps, the honourable member for Community Development may be able to give an answer. Perhaps the best way around it is for the honourable member to put the question on notice.

537 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has the Administrator's Council yet considered the appointment of a Parole Board? If so, have they approached members of the Public to be appointed to the Parole Board and when is it expected that the board will be appointed?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Nightcliff asked similar questions at previous sittings. I indicated to her that certain aspects of the matter were under investigation by an interdepartmental committee and I did ask the honourable member to place her question on notice which she has not done. I again ask her to place her question on notice.

538 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr KILGARIFF—

He alluded yesterday to the formation of an industrial relations council. Is it intended that this council will operate in Alice Springs and, if so, what effect does he consider that would have on industrial relations in that centre?

ANSWER

There is an Industrial Affairs Council formed in the Northern Territory now; the inaugural meeting was held in Darwin some weeks ago. It is hoped that areas such as Alice Springs will either form themselves into branches of this particular council or participate in the council itself. I believe that an Industrial Affairs Council in Alice Springs can foster good relations in industry. Regarding Alice Springs, it is my intention to meet people in industry in the near future. I would invite the honourable member for Gillen to make suitable arrangements in Alice Springs whereby members of industry, unions and so on, can be asked to a meeting where the whole matter can be discussed.

539 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr SPEAKER—

What is the present position regarding the printing of daily Hansard and bound Hansard?

ANSWER

With regard to the printed Hansard, honourable members will have received this week the first volume covering the November 1974 and the January 1975 meetings. Bulk supplies of this volume should be available within the next week. I understand that a full statement covering all outstanding printings of Hansard will probably be coming from the Publications Committee next week and I will leave that detail for that report.

With regard to the unrevised edition, I do not think it will be possible to produce this as a daily copy until such time as the Hansard offices are fully repaired. Nevertheless, I think honourable members can look forward to a faster publication than previously. I hope that future publications will be within a week of the sitting.

540 ANSWER TO QUESTION—

Mr KILGARIFF: The honourable member for Ludmilla asked a question regarding the Compensation and Repatriation Department and he asked me to ascertain whether there had been instructions not to pay any further cheques to businesses. The answer is that there have been no instructions whatsoever not to pay cheques to businesses. If the honourable member has any specific matter in mind, I would ask him to refer it to me.

541 ANSWER TO QUESTION—

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked whether the Acting Chief Planner was an employee of the Commission or of the Melbourne based firm Crooks, Michell, Peacock and Stewart Pty Ltd. The answer is that the Acting Chief Planner is a salaried member of the Sydney based firm Crooks, Michell, Peacock and Stewart Pty Ltd. The head office is given if she is interested in that information.

542 ANSWER TO QUESTION—

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked whether I was aware that the Acting Deputy General Manager was a consultant from the Melbourne based firm of Crooks, Michell, Peacock and Stewart and whether the full Board of the Commission appointed him and, if so, on what authority. The answer is that the Acting Deputy General Manager, Mr John Nairn, is a salaried director of the Sydney based firm Crooks, Michell, Peacock and Stewart Pty Ltd. The appointment to the position of Acting Deputy General Manager of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission was made by the Chairman of the Commission, Mr Powell, in consultation with the Acting General Manager. That part confirms the advice I gave yesterday.

543 ANSWER TO QUESTION–

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Ludmilla asked whether the Darwin Reconstruction Commission would make a public statement on the levels of assistance it has advertised and proposed to the public, particularly the tying down of caravans and the screwing down of roofs. The Darwin Reconstruction will be making a public statement on the levels of assistance to the private sector in Darwin when the proposals at present under consideration by the government have been determined. It is proposed in the next week or two to produce a booklet suggesting a suitable method for tying down caravans. This booklet will be available free to the public. The cost of tying down the caravan will be met by the owner of the caravan. The Commission has a continuing programme under way for the screwing down of roofs through its agent the Department of Housing and Construction. The Commission proposes to supply at cost cyclone shelters for persons on request.

544 ANSWER TO QUESTION–

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked whether I could advise on the assistance being given to the private sector by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and, in particular, whether the DRC has a list of approved builders and whether it will build a house on private land using the client's privately prepared plans. The further information I have is that assistance to the private sector by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is provided in a variety of ways: the Housing Advisory Service, Government Housing Plans, Technical advice through Housing Advisory Service and area managers, sale and loan of buildng manuals, assistance in clean up, etc. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission does not have a list of approved builders and is not able to construct a private house using privately prepared plans on a private block. I do not believe that this alters the part of the answer I gave yesterday which indicated that I understood it was the policy of the Commission to assist through using its agents, when available, for private rebuilding programs.

545 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Would he advise the Assembly later this sitting day the names of the architects in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission who have advised the Commission on each of the four occasions on which they have been considered housing contracts? There have been four separate contracts let and I would like the names of the architects who advised them in each case.

ANSWER

I do not know that there were 4 occasions on which they sat to consider housing contracts because, while I know that there are 4 principal contractors who have been involved, I think that they were dealt with collectively at one sitting. But I understand what she wants and I will endeavour to have the information by lunch time.

546 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise when and where the next Rural Roads Conference will be held?

ANSWER

I believe it will be held in Katherine in November or thereabouts.

547 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

With reference to the waiting list for Housing Commission and Government accommodation, how many applications for accommodation does the Housing Commission have and how many does the Government have? When do they expect to be able to satisfy the people on the current accommodation waiting list?

ANSWER

I was present at an accommodation co-ordination committee meeting last week where figures of this nature were tendered. The figures given at that meeting were that the Housing Commission waiting list was 849 and the Department of Northern Australia waiting list was in the order of approximately 700. It was also indicated to that committee that there were 92 families on board the Patris which would involve some 255 people. On board the Patris there were 486 single people at that date. I understand that caravans and demountables have been on order for some time by the Department and they are being distributed roughly on a 50-50 proportion between the Department and the Housing Commission. There was at that date a figure of 1,172 caravans and demountables in transit or awaiting handover in Darwin.

548 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr KILGARIFF—

Would he advise me when the police station will be built at Bathurst Island?

ANSWER

I am unable to give a definite answer to the honourable member. The Government has indicated that, if isolated communities wish to have police sations, then they should make representation. I understand Bathurst Island has made representation. I can say no more than that but perhaps in the next few days the situation will become clearer.

549 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

Is it his intention to table a full report on the recent meeting of the Australian Transport Ministers' Conference which he attended as the Northern Territory representative?

ANSWER

I had not intended to table a report.

550 Mr DONDAS to Mr KILGARIFF—

How many applications have been received by the Home Loan Finance Department this year? How many applications to date have been received?

ANSWER

The honourable member gave notice of that question this morning and I have referred it to the Home Finance Officer. He is now ascertaining the figures and I will have the answer for him later today.

551 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

In his capacity as a member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, can he tell me for whom the 1,300 houses now under construction are destined? How many of them are for use by the Housing Commission and how many for the Commonwealth Public Service and how many for use by private persons?

ANSWER

I assume that the honourable member for Port Darwin is talking about the 1,300 houses that were announced in 4 contracts, 3 of 400 and 1 of 100. I assume that is what he is talking about because there are other contracts for housing that are being negotiated or being let. As I understand it, all of those houses are being constructed for the public sector and the allocation will be within the province of the Department of Northern Australia. The authorizations for construction for the Housing Commission are handled separately.

552 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I refer to open government in which I know he believes. Is the Country Liberal Party parliamentary wing policy that when executive members attend various conferences in that capacity they present a report to the Assembly?

ANSWER

I do believe in open government and so does my party. The answer to the honourable member's question is that it depends on the type of conference which members attend. If I take the case of the Constitutional Convention, at the open plenary session of the convention I believe that the Assembly delegates, the honourable member for Port Darwin and myself, would be obliged to give this Assembly a detailed and documented report on what took place. When it comes to the meetings of the executives of the convention, certain matters are discussed that are confidential subject to final decision by the Prime Minister and, while a report in general can often be given in that situation, you cannot get down the fine print and detail. When it comes to the standing committees of the constitutional convention which report to the executive, there is little information from those standing committees which is public knowledge to anybody outside the standing committee.

Advertising to Commonwealth-State Ministers Conferences, there are large numbers of these and in no case that I know of do the ministers attending those conferences go back and make a report to their state parliaments. Rather, they make a report to their Cabinet because in most cases there is legislation of some sort considered at those meetings which does not become public knowledge until it is drafted and introduced into the legislature in the normal way. In any report that was given of attendance at one of those conferences, there would be some general information that could be released and there would be some confidential information that could not be. The approach in advising the Assembly would have to be on that basis.

553 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK—

Would he obtain for me the total amount of money paid to housing consultants by the Aboriginal housing associations in the Northern Territory since 1 January 1973 and the number and value of houses built as a result of their advice?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice. I am not able to say whether I would be able to get the information or not.

554 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it true that the old DCA cottages in Parap Road are to be demolished in the near or immediate future? How many people are currently occupying these houses as temporary accommodation and where will they be relocated?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to seek a reply.

555 Mr PERRON to Miss ANDREW—

It is reported that schools in the Territory are closing an hour earlier today as a result of the strike by teachers. Would she please explain the reasons for this strike?

ANSWER

I think that the sentiments behind this strike are most commendable. It arises from a deep concern by the Teachers Federation for education in the Territory. Their concern is that in the forthcoming budget there will be considerable cuts in the field of education in the Territory. It has taken a long time to get education anywhere near on its feet and they are concerned that any cuts in comparison to the Schools Commission's recommendations will be disastrous.

556 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

What action has he taken to require the Administrator to indicate his assent or to reserve the Cattle Prices Stabilization Ordinance, and does he know why the Administrator has failed to act in the matter?

ANSWER

I have not taken any action directly to ask the Administrator or to suggest the Administrator might hasten assent to this ordinance. I have had a number of discussions with leaders of the cattle industry in the Northern Territory and also senior departmental officers about the implementation and administration of the ordinance. I believe that, as it is presently worded in relation to the price of cattle in the Northern Territory, it is virtually impossible to implement and operate. The ordinance was drafted and introduced at the end of last cattle season, a time when beef prices were in the order of ten and eleven cents a pound. Within the same range, we are now talking about four, five, six cents and the actual calculations contained in the ordinance mean that the lower figure would drop off the bottom of the map as it were. Taking a four cent price, you have not enough room to make the adjustments that the ordinance suggests so that in the present economic situation that particular ordinance cannot work. It would either have to be amended or the price of beef lifted before it could be operational.

557 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

What action has he taken to have the recommendations contained in the McKinna Report on the police force put into effect? Has he communicated with the Minister or ministers as the case may be on the matter?

ANSWER

I have directed to the Commissioner of Police a question on similar lines. At present, I have not received an answer but when I do I will make it available to the honourable member.

558 Mr PERRON to Mr KILGARIFF—

Can he explain why copies of many NT ordinances are not available to the public and what is being done to rectify this serious situation?

ANSWER

I can answer the honourable member but I cannot give him a particular happy picture. There are no prints available of this year's legislation. Printing of numbers one to fifteen are under way. In the meantime, the Legislation Branch is making photocopies available to meet public demand. There are no copies at all of a number of items of previous years' legislation. A number of reprints to include some of the missing items are underway but no one knows when these will be completed and printed. The general rule is that no more than one copy of any piece of legislation is made available to a person from Darwin supplies. If more are required, they must be obtained from Brisbane where bulk stocks of legislation are now held. The legislation that had been held in Darwin has been transferred to Brisbane. These are incomplete. I would also point out that the rule for one copy is a rule for emergent circumstances.

559 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Has he any intention to reform the laws of the Territory relating to the possessions of firearms? If so, can he give any indication when he intends to present the legislation and would he be willing to indicate the type of reform he has in mind?

ANSWER

I cannot, looking specifically at the review of the Firearms Ordinance, but there is a general review being carried out now with those people who are assisting me. I have two assistants, the member for Jingili and the member for Gillen, and they have contact with the various organisations associated with law and are assisting me in a review of legislation. When this is completed, legislation will be introduced. At the same time, I will have in mind that the firearms legislation should be reviewed.

560 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

I asked him a question without notice yesterday with regard to a fence around Fannie Bay Gaol and he was unable to answer me and I ask him the same question today. When will arrangements be made to put a fence around the Fannie Bay Gaol?

ANSWER

I am still trying to gather information and, as I said, I trust that a fence will never be erected around that site. I might add that I hope that next week I will be able to make a full statement in relation to prison matters.

561 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

How many journeys out of the Northern Territory have members and staff of the DRC made in the last 2 months?

ANSWER

I do not think that is a reasonable question to be asked without notice. In most circumstances, I would ask the honourable member for Port Darwin to place it on notice but, in view of the expected course of our program in this Assembly over the next day or so, I will endeavour to find out that information and furnish him with a reply later today.

562 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Are the current shipping cargo rates available from the Darwin Trader? If so, can he supply a list of the cubic capacity rates, container rates; that is, ordinary, refrigerated, vehicle and power boat charges?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

563 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Would he be prepared to table the terms and conditions under which consultants are engaged by the DRC? There must be a general policy of terms and conditions under which most consultants are engaged.

ANSWER

Although I know that the Commission has asked the staff to prepare such a document, I am not sure whether it has been finalised. I am also in the position whereby, if it is a general ruling of the Commission sitting as a

body, any particular piece of information is for the time being the property of the Commission and I am not free to table it here. I will check the matter out and, if it is at all possible, I will comply with the request of the honourable member.

564 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

Towards the end of May, a report was produced concerning recommended or projected usage of rural lands from Berrimah to Adelaide River. Can he advise me what has been the Reconstruction Commission's reaction to this plan, whether they have adopted it en masse or whether there is available from them any statement of their view about this?

ANSWER

In my capacity as the Majority Leader's deputy on the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, I was present at the subcommittee meetings which looked at the rural land proposals as outlined in the Pak Poy Report, copies of which I believe have been available for perusal. That report was considered by the subcommittee which made a number of recommendations relating to specific areas. I am aware that those motions and recommendations were finalised probably some 3 to 4 weeks ago but, at this stage, I am not aware of any subsequent action that has been taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission with regard to those subcommittee recommendations.

565 Mr PERRON to Mr POLLOCK—

Has the honourable member received a complete list of Aboriginal land claims from the Northern Land Council or whoever makes Aboriginal land claims.

ANSWER

No.

566 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

What departmental action is proposed for the restoration of government owned flats in Smith Street between McLachlan and Daly Streets? How many of these flats are currently occupied?

ANSWER

I do not have the information but I will endeavour to obtain it today and advise him at this sitting.

567 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

At least in this Assembly there have been calls for the meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to be open other than for the purposes of discussion of tenders and contracts which clearly would have to be in camera. Has there been a motion put forward to the Reconstruction Commission for such action? If so, how many times?

ANSWER

The suggestion that the meetings should be open to the press has been brought forward to the Commission on several occasions. I formally moved a motion to that effect which was duly seconded but it was not carried by a majority of the Commission. I subsequently pursued the matter and, with the help of the Minister for Northern Australia, eventually was able to get the press admitted to part of the sessions of the Reconstruction Commission although they are not there for a number of items which are regarded as restricted or confidential.

568 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Other than for the discussion of tenders and contracts, whose decision is it that other subjects for discussion shall be regarded as classified and not open to the press?

ANSWER

I believe that the recommendation for classification of material comes from senior staff who prepare much of the material that comes forward as agenda items. The draft agendas and the synopses of the individual items are seen by the Chairman of the Commission before they are brought to the Commission. I take it that he puts his final approval on the classifications that have been recommended by the staff.

569 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

Why should large stocks of Northern Territory legislation be held by the Department of Northern Australia in Brisbane where it would be of very limited use?

ANSWER

Frankly, I cannot understand why bulk supplies of legislation were transferred to Brisbane. It was decided by the Department that the Legislation Section should be tranferred to Brisbane. When the move became known, the Majority Leader indicated his concern to the Minister and to the Department. It is considered that the transfer of the Legislation Section from Darwin to Brisbane is detrimental to this Assembly and the people of the Territory.

570 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

Has he any word on when the sealing of the South Australian section of the Stuart Highway may commence?

ANSWER

At a conference I recently attended in South Australia, I was able to have informal discussions with the Federal Minister for Transport and the South Australian Minister for Transport on the subject of the Stuart Highway in the north of South Australia. They informed me jointly that money would not be made available for the sealing of that road until the Eyre Highway had been completed. It would appear, at this time, that nothing will be done constructively on the Stuart Highway in South Australia until the end of next year or early in 1977.

571 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr KILGARIFF—

When will the proposed new police boats for the Northern Territory be completed and delivered and for what purpose will they be used?

ANSWER

I do not have the answer to hand but I will obtain it for him.

572 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

My question relates to two incidents of violence at Aboriginal camps, which have occurred recently and which have received some press coverage. Would he advise the Assembly at some early date, how many police are engaged in the investigation of these incidents and what is their rank?

ANSWER

At the moment, I have a question directed to the Commissioner regarding this matter. When I have an answer, I will advise the member.

573 ANSWER TO QUESTION—

Miss ANDREW: I would like to answer a question from the honourable member for Arnhem regarding Roper River. My answer is and I quote: "An extensive restoration and maintenance as well as a new works contract of approximately $115,000 was let late last year by Housing and Construction for the upgrading of the school building and residences. The contractors subsequently withdrew without having started on the job. Tenders were called again and the contract has now been let. This contractor is currently on site. In addition, a contract has been let for the erection of two 3-bedroom houses, and two 2-bedroom houses and work is under way. Additional transportable classrooms have been ordered to provide accommodation. Work has commenced on siting two transportable units.".

574 ANSWER TO QUESTION—

Miss ANDREW: The member for Stuart Park asked: "Who authorised the removal of soil from Pilot Hill on the foreshore of Frances Bay? What is the soil being used for and have the environmental and tidal aspects been studied?" My reply is that the land is part of block 2453 with the company Northern Research as lessee. The manager of Northern Research authorised the removal of certain sections to provide a base area for a long-planned company extension. The soil was sold to the Department of Works by Morandini Contracting Ltd who implemented the removal. The tidal aspects have been studied and, at present, the ground is being reduced to approximately the 11 metre mark. It seems that no environmental study was carried out.

575 ANSWER TO QUESTION—

Mr KILGARIFF: The honourable member for Jingili asked whether owners of blocks in the surge line can obtain insurance against tidal wave and all flood risk. I discussed the matter with insurance authorities and the answer is: "Owners of domestic residences, irrespective of whether they are inside or outside any surge line area, have never been able to obtain householder's insurance against damage by tidal wave and or flood risk. It could be possible for owners of commercial properties, under a fire policy not under a householder's policy, depending on payment of an appropriate premium applied by the underwriter. Approaches are being made by the insurance companies to consider forming a national disaster fund, funded not only by the Commonwealth Government but also insurance companies. No reply has yet been received from the Federal Government.".

576 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I refer to an answer given to a question concerning the acquisition of a block of land for the sum of $115,000. The answer intimated that this block had been bought for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for the purposes of reconstruction. For what specific purpose did the Darwin Reconstruction Commission require that block?

ANSWER

I will obtain the information during the course of the day and relay it to the honourable member today or tomorrow morning.

577 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

In view of the apparent lack of funds in last night's Budget for the Community College, could she please tell me what the future of the Community College is now?

ANSWER

This morning I have been making extensive inquiries trying to determine exactly where the allocations for the Community College for permanent restoration or rebuilding on a new site are to come from. In his speech, Mr Beazley made reference to $2.3 million for capital works. However, it seems that this will be swallowed up in Alice Springs, the Linguistic Centre in Batchelor plus temporary restoration in Darwin. I ask the honourable member if I could give him the information at a later date.

578 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK—

Honourable members will be aware of the community creche in the northern suburbs which is conducted in the premises of the former Essington House. There are rumours that the creche is to be evicted from those premises. Can he advise me of the nature of the tenure of the premises held by the creche and will that tenure be confirmed or other satisfactory arrangements made if they are to be evicted?

ANSWER

I will try to find some information later in the day.

579 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

I asked the Majority Leader a question: "When permanent staff are appointed to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, will they be directed to sever all connections with outside firms?" The answer to the question was no. Who made that policy decision? Was it the Minister for Northern Australia? Was it the Commission sitting as a whole or, if not, which officers of that commission?

ANSWER

I believe the answer given by the Majority Leader was based on information supplied by the Acting General Manager. However, I would ask the honourable member for Nightcliff to perhaps be more explicit in the phrasing of the actual question. I do not think that it is, in itself, sufficient.

580 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Who made the policy decision within the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that, when permanent staff are appointed, they will not be directed to sever connections with private firms?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide that answer. I do not know.

581 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

In view of the fact that international flights have resumed operations through Darwin, what action is being taken to repair the international passenger facilities at the Darwin Airport?

ANSWER

So far as I know, there is no particular action taking place with regard to the airport facilities. I intend to follow this up over the next week or two and to exert pressure to have the terminal facilities repaired and put in a reasonable state for an international airport.

582 Mr DONDAS to Mr KILGARIFF—

Which department is administering the sale of land and houses that the public servants indicated that they wished to purchase prior to December 24? Which department values this land and when will the people in this position be able to have their land?

ANSWER

I will have the information researched and answer him at a later date.

583 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

In regard to the staffing of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, under sections 36 and 37 of the Darwin Reconstruction Act, he will be well aware that officers and employees shall be appointed as determined by

the commission with the approval of the Public Service Board. Was the approval of the Public Service Board obtained for the policy decision which was indicated previously; that is, that full time officers will not be directed to sever connections with private firms?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Public Service Board has been approached with regard to the number of positions and levels of positions. I am unable to give a full answer with regard to the implications of other relationships and, as I have already indicated, I will endeavour to obtain this information for the honourable member.

584 Mr VALE to Mr KILGRAFF—

Can he supply details concerning the recent announcement in relation to police carrying firearms?

ANSWER

I have had no communication from the Commissioner of Police but I understand that the ruling is that members of the Northern Territory Police Force are no longer allowed to carry their own personal firearms. I also understand that members of the Police Force are not allowed to carry firearms on duty except on midnight shift, on escort duty and on other occasions when there is a call out. I understand that there is some dissension in the police force regarding this matter and I understand that it relates to the fact that the police of the Northern Territory are unable to carry their own firearms. The reason for this is that the Police Force of the Northern Territory is still issued with the .38 Smith and Wesson. I understand that the pistols that are still on issue go back to the 1914-1918 war. A newer pistol is on issue but it is of the same manufacture, without any modifications, as those of the last war. These pistols are old and inefficient. I understand the police forces in the other states are equipped with a .38 Smith Special. A report on the Northern Territory Police Force recommends that equipment and pistols should be updated. If a modern type pistol was issued, there would be little dissension.

585 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

The member has indicated that he will present a report to the Assembly on this issue. From the press reports of the incident in Alice Springs, one would assume that a citizen had been firing shots in a built-up area. If this was the case, is it a breach of the law and are charges pending?

ANSWER

I have not any definite information to give but, according to the press reports, there was turmoil and disruption in the northern part of Alice Springs. My understanding is that there were firearms discharged at a person's place. I understand that the police were called and, since they had no firearms themselves, they returned to the police station to equip themselves. I will get the facts for the Assembly and will table the information as quickly as possible. Regarding the other part of the question, it is illegal to discharge a firearm in an urban area.

586 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TUXWORTH—

I have been informed that national mining companies presently operating in the Northern Territory have had applications for exploration licences under the Mining Ordinance before the administration for 9 or 10 months without action. Is it the policy of the government to refuse further new exploration licences altogether and, if so, why is this policy not made public so that waiting exploration companies may take their money to some place where such an embargo does not exist?

ANSWER

The answer in most cases would be yes. However, I will get full details and provide a comprehensive answer later this sitting.

587 Mr PERRON to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it a fact that the Department of Housing and Construction built 240 houses in 9 months in Alice Springs to house Americans? If this is so, why has the Department not been called upon to repeat the performance in Darwin?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain full information with regard to any activity by the Department of Housing and Construction in Alice Springs for provision of homes for Americans connected wtih the Space Base. With regard to a repeat performance in Darwin, I am aware that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has entered into considerable negotiations with the Department of Housing and Construction and has the matter of contract housing under constant review.

588 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

I refer to the Newcastle Waters causeway and the adjoining overflow on the road. Has initial planning and the engineering investigation been completed with regard to the bridging of this area and is it likely that the whole work will be completed by 30 December?

ANSWER

I believe that planning for the up-grading of the road at Newcastle Waters is under way with the Department of Housing and Construction although I do not think it has progressed very far. At the moment, the proposal is before the Parliamentary Works Committee which only met in the Northern Territory a couple of weeks ago. If the approval is given by Cabinet to proceed with the up-grading of the Stuart and Barkly Highways as outlined in the next 3-year program, the Newcastle Waters causeway will receive priority. However, the nature of the job is such that it will require quite extensive engineering planning and it certainly will not be finished by 30 December this year. In fact, it will not be started by then. I would not expect actual construction to take place until the second half of next year.

589 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW—

Is the honourable member aware that the supply and pressure of water at the Darwin Primary School is so poor that insufficient water is available to service lavatories leading to the probability of a health hazard being created in the very near future? Will she say whether any urgent requisition has gone to the Department of Housing and Construction and, if so, when?

ANSWER

I do not have the information available. I will get it as soon as possible and recommend to the Department that immediate action be taken.

590 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Can he advise how last night's allocation of $4.7 million to the Australian Atomic Energy Commission will be spent in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

No, but I will be only too pleased to find out and advise him later this day.

591 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN—

Is the honourable member aware that the supply and pressure of water in the Darwin Primary School is so poor that insufficient water is available to service lavatories leading to the probability of a health hazard being created? Will he say whether an urgent requisition has gone to the Department of Housing and Construction and, if so, when something can be done about it?

ANSWER

I was not aware that this situation existed and therefore an urgent requisition has not been put forward. However, with my colleague, the executive member for Education and Consumer Affairs, I will follow this problem up.

592 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

This question is asked on behalf of the member for Elsey. What is the cost of processing beef in Katherine, the average per beast, and how does this compare with the price to the producer?

ANSWER

I cannot give any precise information in relation to the Katherine processing costs but, if my memory serves me right, the Darwin abattoir is compelled by law to slaughter cattle on behalf of producers who take cattle there. I think that the rate the last time that they slaughtered cattle was something in the order of $20 per head. This is approximately the same value the producer gets from a 450 pound cow. That is the full return that he gets these days.

593 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he aware of the signs that are presently polluting the landscape and apparently put up by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission? I refer to the litte blue and white signs scattered throughout the municipality. Was the approval of the Corporation of the City of Darwin sought and, if not, are the signs to be removed and at whose expense?

ANSWER

I have noticed the signs which are displayed around the town. I am not aware of whether the Corporation's approval was sought. I am aware the corporation is co-operating with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission on the current clean-up campaign. I will endeavour to obtain a reply and bring the honourable member's opinions to the notice of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission management.

594 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it a fact that approximately 400 departmental residences have been repaired to a standard which would house families and keep them dry in the coming wet? If this is a fact, why have these homes not been released for habitation?

ANSWER

I am not acquainted with the numbers that the honourable member alluded to. I will discuss this matter with the management of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and with the officers of the Accommodation Co-ordination Committee of which I am a member and where I have not seen any statistics of that proportion. I will certainly bring it to their attention and give a further answer to the honourable member.

595 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF–

Can he advise when the stipendiary magistrate will be holding court hearings in remote areas of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The Senior Magistrate and the Director of Law, in the last few weeks, have been preparing for a magistrate to sit in various isolated areas. At the moment, it is possible that some time in September courts will be held in various areas according to the necessity. At the present, they are working on a tentative itinerary for courts in such places as Nhulunbuy, Alyangula, Maningrida, Bathurst Island, Garden Point, Snake Bay, Hooker Creek, Warrabri, Papunya and Yuendumu. It is quite likely that, if courts are required in other parts of the Northern Territory, the magistrates will go to those areas. It would be difficult, under some circumstances, to have a magistrate go to an isolated area with very little warning.

596 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW–

Having read the BUDGET Papers, she will be aware that there is no provision for the re-building or repair of the Nightcliff Primary School. This is a somewhat glaring omission. Was this surprising decision taken completely within the Department of Education in their castle in the T & G building? If not, with whom did they consult prior to making the recommendation? Did they consult with her or any community group representing the Nightcliff area or with the Nightcliff principal? They did not consult with me. How did they come to this rather alarming conclusion that Nightcliff Primary School was no longer needed?

ANSWER

Anticipating the honourable member for Nightcliff's concern about the lack of allocation for the re-building of Nightcliff Primary School, I have made inquiries in the Department. My advice is that, initially, this school was in the primary surge zone. Research was done and they decided that the department should look at the relocation of the school on the oval.

Mrs Lawrie: It is not in the primary surge line.

Miss ANDREW: This is my advice from the department. Currently, preparation of plans for a new school on the present site are under way. Before a brief can be prepared, a report is needed from the Darwin Reconstruction Commission on population trends in that area. Then, in consultation with the parents and people of Nightcliff, a decision will be made as to whether there will be a two tier or three tier system adopted for the Nightcliff area. There is still no report from Housing and Construction as to the use of the buildings there and transportables. However, as many transportables as possible will be put on site to cater for the needs of the Nightcliff children next year. These are due to arrive in Darwin in November. They will be placed so the children can use the transportables whilst the building ofthe new school is in progress.

597 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Twice or three times the question has been raised of the DRC publishing its agenda for forthcoming meetings. Has this been formally raised within the Commission, and if so, what was the result?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, the matter has been discussed by the Commission and the agenda of the non-confidential or non-restricted items has been agreed to be made available to the media attending meetings of the Commission. I believe it is the chairman's policy to decide the priorities of agenda items and which items will be made available to the press. At the last couple of meetings, items that were classified on the confidential or restricted agenda were brought forward at the beginning of that meeting at the request of Darwin members and the meeting then made public. There is no policy to make the full agenda public.

598 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

Can he advise me whether any unemployment benefits are being paid at present in Darwin?

ANSWER

I have looked at the matter but, unfortunately, I have not got the answer right at the moment. I will answer at the end of question time.

599 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

Can he name the authority who promised compensation for land holders in the Darwin area wishing to surrender leases?

ANSWER

I believe that the Minister for Northern Australia made a press statement in which he invited people to indicate if they wished to surrender their leases. In the second planning document of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, the Minister for Urban and Regional Development, Mr Uren indicated the desirability of people to do this. Thus, the intention was indicated by two federal ministers.

600 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it a fact that no moneys are available for this purpose?

ANSWER

In yesterday's debate on the Budget, it was indicated that in the vote for the Department of Urban and Regional Development, there was an indication of an allocation for the 1975-1976 year of $2,000,000 for buying surrendered leases in the Darwin area. Information that has been supplied to this Assembly indicates that the funds of the previous year $1,000,000 and the $2,000,000 have already been fully committed on some 182 leases surrendered. The indications are that a total of 1,600 leases were indicated as being available for surrender.

601 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Miss ANDREW—

Can she advise me when will further electricity reticulation be made available for private landholders along and off Humpty Doo Road?

ANSWER

I am advised that estimates were done by the ESU. These were unsatisfactory and they have received a request from the Department of Northern Australia to update the estimate. The date of request was 29 July. No money has been received to put in electricity in this area to date. It is in the pipe-line. However, I can assure the honourable member for Tiwi that I will take this matter up at a later date.

602 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN—

In view of the fact that there has been a vacancy in the membership of the Port Authority since April, why has the Administrator's Council delayed so long in filling the vacancy?

ANSWER

The reason for the delay is that there has only been one Administrator's Council meeting, caused by the absence of the Administrator and the absence at times of the Acting Administrator. There is an Administrator's Council meeting tomorrow.

603 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that the price to producers for cattle at Katherine meatworks has dropped by nearly 2c per pound?

ANSWER

I cannot be absolutely certain of this answer but I have heard this morning that the price being offered to producers at Katherine meatworks has dropped by 2c a pound; on a 400 lb cow that would be $8. I understand that the net profitability on many of the cattle moving to Katherine meatworks is around about $6 to $7 per head and a drop of the nature referred to in the question would make those movements quite unprofitable.

604 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

In the *Gazette* of 10 July 1975, under Department of Northern Australia and Queensland, there is an advertisement for a public service job as a Clerk Class 6. The duties are "either individually or as a member of a team to undertake the less complex activities associated with projects directed towards promoting departmental efficiency through the examination of office procedure and establishments." Would he elicit from the Minister for Northern Australia how this person can, from 2,000 miles away, examine and report on office procedures in the Department of Northern Australia?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to elicit that information from the Department, and I will add that stranger things have happened.

605 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that it costs nearly $50 per head to process a beast at the Katherine Meatworks?

ANSWER

A similar question was asked yesterday and I said that I did not know the information in relation to Katherine but I related it to the Darwin Meatworks where the published cost of killing is a known fact. I was probably somewhat misleading because the killing charge at the Darwin Meatworks was simply a charge for slaughtering and quartering of beasts whereas, at Katherine the operation goes into much greater degrees of processing, including boning out and packaging. I understand, subject to confirmation, that the charge for the full processing operation at the Katherine Meatworks is in the order of $50 per beast.

606 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN—

On Wednesday of last week I asked a question in relation to whether or not there was a fire appliance on site in Mataranka. The honourable executive member answered in the affirmative. Is this in fact the case and, if it is not the case, upon what basis did he answer the question in the affirmative on Wednesday of last week?

ANSWER

It has since come to my notice that there is not a fire fighting appliance in Mataranka. The answer to the question last week was supplied by the Acting Chief Fire Officer who answered on the knowledge that when he was here once before, he assigned a unit to Mataranka. However, he did not check through his files and find out that the unit was in fact unserviceable and is in Katherine for repairs.

I would just like to read a report which is made monthly on the Mataranka Fire Service. It is quite pertinent to the question. This report was written by the Chief Fire Officer on 28 May 1975, and it is to the Secretary of the Mataranka Progress Association.

"As you know, the fire fighting equipment issued to your team has proved to have some degree of unserviceability at each monthly visit since March 1974. The pump has been in Katherine for some time for repair. The equipment has suffered from neglect for over a year, quite apart from the fact that no members of the community have come forward for training and instruction. There are dangers in this situation in that a false sense of security is produced, and also if a fire does occur valuable time is wasted in trying to bring defective equipment into use. We wish to remedy the situation and protect the area but we cannot without the support of the community. It is considered that we have to think of revoking the fire district and not replacing the fire fighting equipment. We do not wish to do this and are very prepared to consider any remedies that may be suggested by your association."

That is similar to each monthly report. I would suggest that the people in Mataranka pull their socks up and start taking an interest in their own affairs.

607 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

Did the Darwin Reconstruction Commission refuse to use any temporary accommodation provided in the form of mini-homes, preferring to import demountable houses from interstate? If it has so refused, is the reason related to any supported defects in the mini-homes? If it is not, why is a local manufacturer not given some encouragement, if not preference?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide an answer but I will endeavour to provide one later this day.

608 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr KILGARIFF—

In view of the apparent instruction to members of the Northern Territory Police restricting their carrying of sidearms, is it envisaged similar instructions will be given to members of the Commonwealth Police who constantly wear sidearms at the Darwin Airport?

ANSWER

I take notice of the question. It seems to be an anomaly that one section of the police force cannot carry arms but another can but I will look into the matter and advise him.

609 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

In the *Gazette* of 10 July 1975, we see a position advertised for an Executive Officer Class 10 "to direct the work of the legislation research and policy section undertaking high level investigations, direct the preparation of ministerial and other high level correspondence, represent the department at high level conferences and meetings. The above position will be temporarily located in Brisbane for a period of 4 years". Are the high level conference and meetings referred to meetings with the Majority Leader, as this deals with legislation specifically? If so, has he been asked to travel to Brisbane or is the relevant officer to travel to Darwin to consult with him? If the Majority Leader does intend travelling to Brisbane will the travel come out of the government vote or will it come from some vote of this Assembly?

ANSWER

I have had no indication at all from the Minister or the department as to what arrangements will be made to implement the sections of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report which referred to the negotiations and the setting up of the committee to carry further the guidelines contained in that report. I have had no indication at all nor have I had any indication at all of the government's attitude to the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report. I understand a question was asked in the House of Representatives about this yesterday and the answer was given by the Minister for Northern Australia that the matter had been referred to what was described as a "high level inter-departmental committee" which had been charged with the responsibility of preparing some Cabinet advice on the matter. I regard that as an unnecessary and very unsatisfactory method of dealing with this situation.

610 Mr WITHNALL to Mr KILGARIFF—

In view of my inability to find any reference in the Budget to continuing finance to complete the compensation scheme for Darwin cyclone victims, will he ascertain what amount of money will be available this year to complete the payment of compensation to persons who have claimed for damage to their premises or property?

ANSWER

I take note of the question and I will advise the honourable member later today.

611 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

In view of the consolidation of Commonwealth statutes which is presently issuing, is a consolidation of Northern Territory statutes in contemplation and, if so, when is it likely to happen?

ANSWER

The consolidation of Northern Territory statutes is a matter that is being reviewed by the Executive. At the moment, I have people looking at the matter and future action will be advised. A revision is being made of the various Northern Territory ordinances and, as soon as I have further information, I will give it to the member.

612 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

How much has the Warramunga Pabulu spent in 1973-74 and 1974-75 and how many houses have been completed?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

613 Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me a question concerning the purchase of a block of land next to the Town Hall for $115,000 for reconstruction purposes. The information that I have is that the Department of Services and Property acquired block 622 Mitchell Street on the basis of the government announcement released in February 1975 that it would purchase residential land from owners who wanted to sell their blocks as a result of Cyclone Tracy. The specific future use and priority of acquisition was not established prior to the acquisition. However, the lot is suitable for a number of purposes connected with the reconstruction of Darwin. The uses which could be accommodated on the lot range from housing to community amenities. An example of this is the proposal that the lot be developed in conjunction with the site of the old Town Hall as a community centre as suggested by the City Corporation.

Attached to that answer is a short recapitulation of the Minister's statement in February 1975 which also covers the question which the honourable member for Arnhem was asking earlier of the Executive Member for Community Development. It is an extract from the Northern Territory News of 5 February 1975; "Government buys land. The Government is drawing up plans to buy back some residential land from owners who want to sell their blocks as a result of Cyclone Tracy. The Minister for the Northern Territory, Dr Patterson, said a number of people had indicated that they were prepared to voluntarily offer their titles back to the Government for some form of compensation. He said the Government would have to concentrate its immediate land purchases in areas most advantageous to the Reconstruction Commission rebuilding program, but cases of hardship in other areas would also be dealt with. Existing ordinance did not provide compensation for all the cases which had come forward for consideration. So that a uniform approach could be made, it had been recommended that, although the surrender of such land would be voluntary, the provision of the Lands Acquisition Act be adopted to pay out by agreement the site value of the land. It

was proposed that this land should be paid for at its unimproved value as at 23 December 1974. Applications to surrender the land under the scheme would be dealt with through the Departments of the Northern Territory and Services and Property in Darwin."

ANSWER TO QUESTION

614 Miss ANDREW: I am advised that the Education Department is aware of the deficiencies in the water supply at Darwin Primary School. Some of the pipes were ripped up during post cyclone clean-up and this matter was brought to the attention of the Department of Housing and Construction. A minor new works requisition was authorised to upgrade the sewerage at the school in 1974-75 program; it was raised, in fact, in August last year. In addition, a special urgent minor requisition was raised authorising Housing and Construction to replace ten taps on 29 July 1975. A contract has been let and work is expected to commence on Friday 22 August 1975 to upgrade the existing water main supplying the school from a 1 inch pipe to approximately a 2½ inch pipe. This should ensure that the supply of water is adequate and will overcome the health hazard that could exist as a result of the limitations of the supply.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

615 Miss ANDREW: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked who took the decision not to rebuild Nightcliff School. No decision has been taken not to rebuild it. Before any briefs could be prepared, certain structural investigations had to take place. It is conceded by the department that the school is too severely damaged for reparation and the decision was taken by the department to replace the damaged building with a new school. When it was thought that the surge zone restrictions would be rigidly enforced, the DRC planned to acquire land in the primary surge zone and establish a recreation area on that land which would have meant the present Nightcliff Oval site would be available for the construction of the new school. Had this become effective, the present school site would have eventually become available for housing and other purposes. However, the relaxation of the restrictions on building in surge areas meant the new school could be built on the present site.

When the latest population projections from the DRC are made available, the Education Department will immediately be able to make recommendations as to whether the present type of school will be provided or whether the 3 tier system will be provided. I am advised that before any decision is made the principal, parents and the Nightcliff community in general, will be contacted and their advice and ideas sought. Only when a decision is made can a brief be prepared. However, they are aiming to have the school included in the 1976-77 capital works program. In the meantime, the transportable units that I mentioned yesterday will be put into immediate operation for both Nightcliff and Rapid Creek children.

The second part of her question asked if I was consulted. The answer is no. I am advised four meetings were held with the Nightcliff principal, a representative group of parents, and a representative of the department including the Director, Mr Jim Gallagher.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

616 Mr KILGARIFF: The honourable member for Jingili asked whether unemployment benefits are being paid in Darwin. The answer is that unemployment benefits are paid in Darwin to those persons who qualify. I have been advised that at present there is one person being paid unemployment benefits in Darwin.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

617 Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me a question about a number of signs that have been erected around Darwin with regard to the cleanup campaign and whether the approval of the Darwin City Corporation was sought. The answer is that approval to use signs promoting the cleanup campaign was sought from the Town Clerk, Mr Tom Abbott, on 12 August 1975. His approval was given on the same day.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

618 Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member also asked me a question relating to sections 36 and 37 of the Darwin Reconstruction Act that state that officers shall be appointed to the DRC with the approval of the Public Service Board. The question was, "Has this approval been obtained for those officers appointed to date?" The answer provided is that the approval of the Public Service Board has not been obtained in the matter of officers appointed to date because it is not necessary for the board to approve such appointments.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

619 Mr TAMBLING: A further question was asked by the honourable member for Nightcliff. Dr Letts informed the Assembly that staff were not directed to sever previous business connections when they were engaged by the DRC and she asked which person or persons made person policy decision. The answer is that the commission has no policy on this matter.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

## August 1975


Aborigines—
housing associations (Kentish) 553
land claims (Tungutalum) 382; (Perron) 565
Lands Bill (Vale) 525
violence at camps (Lawrie) 572
Accommodation, waiting lists (Dondas) 547
Acquisition area (Steele) 475
Airconditioning of Chamber (Kentish) 512
Air fares (Everingham) 505
Atomic Energy Commission (Vale) 590
Ballot list, caravans (Lawrie) 377
Bathurst Island, police station (Tungutalum) 548
Bathurst Island Tourist Promotion Association (Tungutalum) 519
Beaches, motor traffic (Lawrie) 507, 509, 522, 523
Berrimah School (Tungutalum) 499
Borroloola, electricity and water (MacFarlane) 392
Borroloola, service station site (MacFarlane) 391
Boxing control bodies (Ballantyne) 480,536
Burketown Crossing, Borroloola (MacFarlane) 384,385
Cattle Prices Stabilization Ordinance (Lawrie) 556
Clerk Class 6 (Lawrie) 604
Community College (Dondas) 577
Compensation, business sector (Dondas) 492, 540
Compensation, cyclone losses (Withnall) 610
Compensation for surrendered leases (Kentish) 599, 600, 613
Consolidation of N.T. statutes (Everingham) 611
Court hearings in remote areas (Vale) 595
Croker Island, loading ramp (Tungutalum) 402A
Darwin airport, international facilities (Perron) 581
Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund (Steele) 97
Darwin Hospital, doctor shortage (Dondas) 503
Darwin Primary School, water supply (Withnall) 589, 591, 614
Darwin Reconstruction Commission—
Acting Chief Planner (Lawrie) 496, 541
Acting Deputy General Manager (Lawrie) 495, 542
agenda to be published (Lawrie) 597
allocation of houses under construction (Withnall) 551
assistance to private persons (Withnall) 498, 544
clarification of assistance available (Steele) 514, 543
consultants (Lawrie) 472, 563
Crooks Michell Peacock and Stewart (Lawrie) 520, 541, 542
deputies (Lawrie) 500, 520
directions from Minister (Withnall) 394
financial report (Steele) 524
land vested in (Withnall) 393
members experience in business (Withnall) 533
mini-homes from local manufacturer (Withnall) 607
open meetings (Lawrie) 567, 568
policy on rural land use (Kentish) 564
Principal Architect (Lawrie) 527, 528
Public Service Board approvals (Lawrie) 618
Rodda and Wardlaw, Messrs (Lawrie) 501, 502, 518
signs erected (Lawrie) 593, 617
staff connections with private firms (Lawrie) 579, 580, 583, 618, 619
staff journeys outside N.T. (Withnall) 561
staff members of consultancy firms (Lawrie) 534
tenders and contracts (Lawrie) 476, 518, 545
Darwin reconstruction program materials (Dondas) 266
Darwin Trader, cargo (Ballantyne) 562
DCA cottages, Parap Road (Dondas) 554
Demolition squad (MacFarlane) 250
Demountables (Dondas) 269
Departmental residences repaired (Lawrie) 594
Drug offences (Ballantyne) 371
Education Department (Withnall) 200
Electricity charges (Dondas) 264
Electricity supply delays (Dondas) 508
Elsey Homestead (MacFarlane) 180
Essington House creche (Everingham) 578
Executive members, reports on conferences (Lawrie) 522
Executive officer class 10 (Lawrie) 609
Exploration licences (Withnall) 586
Fannie Bay Gaol security fence (Dondas) 530, 560
Finniss River Cattle Co (Steele) 479, 515
Firearms legislation (Lawrie) 559
Food stocks for emergency (Lawrie) 504
Gove airport telephone (Ballantyne) 403A
Gove Hospital, specialist in gynaecology (Ballantyne) 395A
Gunn Point prison farm (Dondas) 526
Hamilton Downs Homestead (Vale) 506
Hansard (Kilgariff) 539
Harvey Brothers (Kentish) 517
Home Finance Trustee (Steele) 99
Home finance, surge area (Steele) 491
Home building loans (Dondas) 263, 550
Home purchase assistance (Dondas) 260
Housing and Construction Department, building in Alice Springs (Perron) 587
Humpty Doo Road, electricity supply (Tungutalum) 601
Industrial Relations Council (Robertson) 538
Katherine—
electricity and water connections (MacFarlane) 292
flats (MacFarlane) 176
housing (MacFarlane) 148
meat works, beef prices and costs (Vale) 592; (Kentish) 603, 605
sewerage (MacFarlane) 126
20 new government homes (MacFarlane) 529
Key personnel, housing (MacFarlane) 191
Lot 622 Mitchell Street (Lawrie) 474, 576, 613
McKinna report on police (Lawrie) 557
Mataranka—
diesel generators (MacFarlane) 386
firefighting appliance (Robertson) 535, 606
health centre (MacFarlane) 388
McArthur River crossing (MacFarlane) 385
Medibank (Steele) 280
Newcastle Waters causeway (Kentish) 588
Nightcliff Primary School rebuilding (Lawrie) 596, 615
Northern Territory Medical Service (Steele) 279
Office accommodation for members (Dondas) 510
Ordinances, availability (Perron) 558; (Everingham) 569
Parole Board (Lawrie) 537
Patris (Dondas) 272
Permit information (Lawrie) 399A, 473
Photographic dossiers (Withnall) 381
Pilot Hill, soil removal (Perron) 574
Police boats (Ballantyne) 571
Police firearms (Vale) 584; (Lawrie) 585; (Ballantyne) 608
Police uniforms (Robertson) 511
Port Authority vacancy (Withnall) 602
Public servants, home purchases (Dondas) 582
Registered letters to home owners (Withnall) 379
Rent determinations (Robertson) 516

Residential blocks offered to government (Withnall) 470, 531
Roper River school buildings (Kentish) 532, 573
Rural Roads Conference (Vale) 546
Ships for freight (Dondas) 267
Shoal Bay, street signs (Tungutalum) 401A
Smith Street flats (Dondas) 566
Stock squad (MacFarlane) 390
Stuart Highway-repair (Kentish) 493; sealing (Everingham) 570
Surge area (Steele) 491; (Everingham) 494, 497, 575
Surrender of land (Withnall) 470, 531
Swimming pools (Lawrie) 378
Swop blocks (Steele) 513
Teacher's strike (Perron) 555
Tindal (MacFarlane) 124, 170
Transport ministers' conferenace (Lawrie) 549
Unemployment benefits (Everingham) 598, 616
Valuations (Steele) 521
Warramunga Pabulu Housing Association (Dondas) 612
Yirrkala Medical Centre (Ballantyne) 395

## PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed numerical order.
An index to questions appears at the end of Part II.

63 Mr KILGARIFF to Mr TAMBLING—

1. What is the Housing Commission building programme for Alice Springs for 1974-75 and 1975-76?
2. What is the government housing programme for Alice Springs for 1974-75 and 1975-76?
3. How many applications are on the current waiting lists for Alice Springs Government and Housing Commission homes, and what is the estimated waiting time for each?
4. How many serviced blocks are available in Alice Springs for home builders this financial year and how many will be available in the following financial years?
5. How many houses have been sold to date under the Housing Commission home sales scheme in the Territory and how many applications to purchase are being dealt with now?
6. When will low interest finance for home building similar to that provided in the States be made available in the Territory? Are sales of Housing Commission homes restricted by government policy and, if so, to what extent?

ANSWER

1. The Commission's programme of new work in Alice Springs for 1974-75 was 113 dwelling units.
   The Commission's programme of new work in Alice Springs for 1975-76 is likely to be 49 dwelling units.
   Expenditure in 1974-75 in Alice Springs was $2,533 million, including expenditure on work carried over from 1973-74. The number of dwellings completed in 1974-75 was 130 of which all but one were carried over from 1973-74.
   112 uncompleted dwellings have been carried over from 1974-75, of which 12 have now been completed.
   In 1975-76, budgeted expenditure will be $2,125 million, including $1,434 million work in progress carried over from 1974-75.
2. The Government Housing Program for Alice Springs for 1974-75 was 60 houses and 24 two-bedroom flats. The program for 1975-76 is 100 houses, 48 town houses and 20 bachelor flats.
3. (a) The Housing Commission's waiting list for Alice Springs is as follows:

| | Houses | 2-Bedroom flats | 1-Bedroom flats |
|---|---|---|---|
| No. of applicants | 86 | 66 | 79 |
| Waiting Times | 6 mths | 9 mths | 19 mths |

   (b) There are 152 applicants on the Government Housing list and the waiting period is approximately 22 months.
4. Service blocks available at Alice Springs for home building in 1975-76 and other years are as follows:—
   Subject to the completion on time of sub-divisional contracts, it is proposed to auction 100 blocks in 1975-76 period and 120-130 in the 1976-77 period.
   It is hoped to increase the number for future auctions beyond 1976-77.
5. 1,173 Housing Commission houses have been sold in the Northern Territory and 265 current applications have not yet been processed, of which about 200 are in Darwin, the outcome of which is uncertain at this stage.
6. The Commission was advised in December, 1974 that the Department of Treasury is prepared to recommend that funds borrowed by the Commission would be at 4% similar to that provided for the States, the only major outstanding question being the upper limit of income eligible for housing provided with 4% funds. The terms and conditions under which 4% funds will be made available to the Commission have not yet been finalised although the Commission has assumed in calculating rents of houses completed in the last 12 months that interest charged on the funds borrowed from Treasury will be at 4%.
   The sales of Commission homes is not restricted by Government policy although the amount of the repurchase instalments will be governed by the interest rate on the funds borrowed from Treasury for building the houses.

103 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Are there any plans for the Housing Commission to provide public housing at Nhulunbuy, and, if so, when?
2. If the Commission has no plans, will he bring the present shortage of houses at Nhulunbuy to the attention of the appropriate authorities and inform the Assembly of their plans to overcome the shortage?

ANSWER

1. There are no immediate plans for the Housing Commission to provide public housing at Nhulunbuy, although initial steps have been taken to ascertain whether the Commission would commence operations operating through an agent in the first instance. It is expected that if a suitable agency can be established, sufficient information may be available within 6-12 months to indicate whether the Commission should commence operations at Nhulunbuy and the approximate date of commencement.
2. The purpose of establishing an agency would be to provide a firm indication on the actual demand for Housing Commission houses at Nhulunbuy.

Note: When the actual demand is known methods to meet it can be considered. There are difficulties at Nhulunbuy which do not arise at other urban centres as the town is on a leasehold by a mining company.

289 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr TUXWORTH—

In answer to a question asked without notice in 1970 (see February/March Hansard page 103) steps were said to be afoot to promote tourism in the area centred around Katherine embracing Roper River, MacArthur River, Victoria River, Mary River, Daly River and Katherine River. Were any steps taken and, if so, what were they?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Tourist Board promotes the Northern Territory as a whole. In the Katherine region, the Board has encouraged the formation and development of the Katherine Regional Tourist Promotion Association also assisting financially. It is now a strong, effective body in its field. The Association has also been offered assistance in the printing of brochures for tourist attractions in the Katherine region.

The area has been vigorously promoted by the Board itself through the medium of commercial advertising. When Darwin was excluded to tourists after the cyclone, every effort was made to cope with the concentration of tourists in the Katherine region particularly, by ensuring the optimum utilisation of tourist facilities while also attempting to protect the tourist attractions in the region which had suddenly to accommodate the extra tourists.

Enhancing tourists' impressions of the natural attractions by providing an acceptable standard of facilities is considered good promotion. This has been done to the full extent possible with funds available.

369 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

1. Do the forms of application for special educational benefits show the last school attended by the child the subject of the application?
2. If so, how many children who attended school in places other than Darwin in 1974 are now attending school in Darwin?

ANSWER

The application forms for special eduation benefits are designed to indicate the schools attended in 1974 and 1975 by the applicant's children.

It is not possible to gain a true assessment from the applications for special benefits of the number of children now attending school because such persons, are reconstruction workers not eligible for special education benefits, have brought their families to Darwin since cyclone "Tracy". However, a survey was conducted in Darwin schools on 18 April with the following result:

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of children attending in 1974 | 5,917 |
| No. of children not attending in 1974 | 280 |
| Total enrolment 18.4.75 | 6,197 |

These figures include St John's and St Mary's.

383 Mr PERRON to Dr LETTS—

Will he make available information which has been supplied to the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch containing details of the persons involved in a decision to bury livestock and equipment on Mr P. Syrimi's farm after cyclone Tracy.

ANSWER

No information can be provided regarding action which was taken on the emergency situation at the Syrimi poultry farm after Cyclone Tracy and which is the subject of a claim on the Government.

387 Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. Has research been completed in the areas at Borroloola fenced for the purpose in the 1960s, and the findings made public?
2. Is it the intention of the Government to continue research and if so, when?

ANSWER

1. As part of its extension work the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the Department of Northern Australia has undertaken a series of pasture trials in recent years in the Borroloola area with a view to observing results from species which have given worthwhile results in comparable areas of the Northern Territory.

There has been no specific publication released regarding this pasture work but the information is available to assist local pastoralists in deciding the most economical and effective way of establishing improved pastures.

2. The work will be continued as interest in pasture improvement in the area increases.

When it is considered worthwhile, newly developed pastures which show promise of being suitable for the area will be introduced.

389 Mr MacFARLANE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Was $92,000 allocated to develop the Bulman River area for and by Aboriginals?
2. What amount of this $92,000 was spent on air charters?

ANSWER

No information on a specific amount of $92,000 allocated to develop the Bulman River area has been found.

In 1974-75 the following funds were provided:—

(a) Weemoll Community Inc. Housing Association $110,000
(b) Gulperan Pastoral Property Cattle project $283,480
(c) Weemoll Community Inc. Development of Airstrip $11,000

In both (a) and (b) above, there were no individual payments of $92,000 made.

398A Mr MacFARLANE to Dr LETTS—

1. How many cattle per year over the last three years have been killed at Katherine, Darwin and Alice Springs?
2. How many marketable cattle are there in the NT for 1975?
3. How many cattle will be killed at Katherine, Darwin and Alice Springs in 1975 for—
   (a) local trade
   (b) export?

4. Is there a surplus of breeding heifers in the NT, if so, how many?
5. What effect would the slaughter of breeding cattle have on the NT beef industry?
6. What steps has the Government taken to encourage export cattle industry?
7. Is the export cattle industry adequately catered in the proposed freight subsidy and cattle price stabilization scheme?

ANSWER

1. The statistics for kills at the three main Territory abattoirs for the last three years are:
Abattoir kills–

| | Darwin | Alice Springs | Katherine |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1972-73 | 16,301 | 5,752 | 39,265 |
| 1973-74 | 12,802 | 5,612 | 20,744 |
| 1974-75 | 3,956 | 6,488 | 30,427 |

2. No detailed survey has been undertaken to determine the number of marketable cattle available over the whole of the Northern Territory in 1975. A survey undertaken in mid-75 in the environmentally sensitive Alice Springs area revealed about 75,000 marketable cattle. There are many indications that the total Northern Territory figure would not be higher than usual due to the holding over of cattle from 1974 and the almost complete absence of an interstate market for Northern Territory store cattle.
3. It is estimated that the kills at Katherine, Darwin and Alice Springs abattoirs in 1975 will total in the order of–
   (a) local trade 10,000
   (b) export 24,000
4. Due to a trading recession in 1974 and in this year it is believed that on a number of properties there would be a surplus of breeding heifers. In terms of the pastoral potential of the Northern Territory however in the overall there could not be considered to be a surplus of breeders.
5. The effect of slaughtering breeding cattle would vary with the circumstances of individual station herds. Selective slaughter of older and inefficient breeders would be to the longer term advantage of many properties.
6. In addition to efforts by State Governments the Australian Government has been active in promoting the export of live cattle through Department of Overseas Trade activities in a number of countries, through trade delegations, by assistance to exporters negotiating with overseas buyers and by inviting members and officials of interested Governments to tour Australia to see the cattle under offer.

Locally, the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the Department of Northern Australia offers extensive veterinary and advisory services to exporters and is making every effort, including sending veterinary officers to accompany shipments, to help develop a stable and satisfactory live export trade.

7. The proposals put forward by Northern Territory producer associations for freight subsidy and price stabilization schemes do not cover cattle intended for live export.

400A Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW–

1. Have tenders been called for the proposed Yirrkala school?
2. If so, what is the estimated cost of the complex?
3. Has a completion date been fixed?
4. Is it possible to obtain a copy of the proposed plans?

ANSWER

1. The target date set for the calling of tenders for Yirrkala school is September 1975. It is expected that tenders will be accepted in November 1975.
2. An amount of $6,500,000 has been allocated in the 1975-76 financial programme for the Yirrkala complex.
3. The target completion date is December 1977.
4. The Department of Education has requested copies of the Yirrkala school floor plans from the Department of Housing and Construction which has advised that the plans may not be immediately available. A copy of the plans will be forwarded to me as soon as copies have been received.

471 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING–

1. Did the Department of Northern Australia purchase lot 668 at the corner of the Esplanade and McLachlan Streets for $155,000, and, if so, was Ministerial approval obtained prior to the purchase?
2. If Ministerial approval was not obtained who authorized the purchase of the block and for what purpose has it been acquired by the Department of Northern Australia?

ANSWER

1. No. The Department of Services and Property acquired the lot for $140,800, on behalf of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, following an approach by the Manager of Burns Philp in response to the advertisement of the Government's decision to purchase properties, if owners wished to voluntarily surrender them.
2. See answer to Question 1.

477 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS–

1. How many positions are there on the establishment of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?
2. How many of the positions are occupied?
3. How many resignations have been received since the Commission was set up?

4. Will he provide me with a copy of the organization chart for the Commission?

ANSWER

1. The establishment of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is continually under review but there are about 100 positions identified at this stage.
2. At the close of business on 3 October 1975:

| | |
|---|---|
| DRC Staff | 70 |
| Staff Seconded (On loan) | 9 |
| Pending Staff Appointments (Offers made but personnel yet to take up duty) | 9 |
| Consultants (In established positions) | 2 |
| Vacant positions | 10 |
| | 100 |

3. At the close of business on 3 October 1975 there have been 14 resignations from the Commission.
4. A copy of an organization chart is provided for the Member as prepared by the then Acting General Manager. The newly appointed General Manager is reviewing the top organization structure and will be making some changes shortly. A supporting structure is currently being prepared for the General Manager.

478 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS—

1. How many private homes are being restored in the 40 km zone controlled by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?
2. How many of these homes are being rebuilt in accordance with the new Darwin Area Building Code?
3. How many new homes are under construction in the 40 km zone and how many will be completed by September?

ANSWER

1. (a) As at 7 October 1975, 729 Building Permits have been issued for permanent repairs in the 40 km zone of the Darwin Area.
   (b) As at 3 October 1975, there have been 920 registrations for temporary work up to $5,000.
2. All 729 permits issued comply with the Darwin Area Building Manual.
3. There are 179 new homes under construction in the 40 km zone. 25 new homes have been completed as at 3 October 1975. (These figures do not include new houses being built by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the N.T. Housing Commission).

481 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

What are the current shipping cargo rates for the coastal ship "Darwin Trader" on the basis of cubic capacity, for containers (refrigerated and unrefrigerated), for vehicles and for power boats?

ANSWER

Current shipping cargo rates for the "Darwin Trader" on the east coast run to Darwin effective from 1 August 1975 are as follows:

(a) per 6.1 metre container (17.5 tonne payload capacity)— at full container rate—non refrigerated

| | Old Rate | New Rate as from 1/8/75 | Amount of Increase |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $ | $ | $ |
| Ex Melbourne | 1,020 | 1,323 | +303 |
| Ex Sydney | 960 | 1,288 | +328 |
| Ex Brisbane | 900 | 1,100 | +200 |

(b) 6.1. metre container—full container rate—refrigerated

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $ | $ | $ |
| Ex Melbourne | 1,145 | 1,448 | +303 |
| Ex Sydney | 1,085 | 1,413 | +228 |
| Ex Brisbane | 1,025 | 1,225 | +200 |

(c) 6.1 metre containers—limited container load, non-refrigerated

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $ | $ | $ |
| Ex Melbourne | 44.00/cu.m. | 60.50/cu.m. | +16.50/cu.m. |
| Ex Sydney | 43.10/cu.m. | 55.75/cu.m. | +12.65/cu.m. |
| Ex Brisbane | 38.50/cu.m. | 51.25/cu.m. | +12.75/cu.m. |

(d) Standard freight rate on private vehicles which in most cases are stowed in containers

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $ | $ | $ |
| Northbound from all main east ports | 355 | 497 | +142 |
| Southbound to all main east ports | 275 | 385 | +110 |

(e) Power boats in most cases are shipped in containers at the limited container rate per cubic metre as stated above at (c).

482 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK—

What is the total amount paid to housing consultants and accountants by Aboriginal Housing Associations or Town Councils in the Territory since 1 January 1973 and what is the number and value of houses or other buildings built as a result of their advice?

ANSWER

The total amount paid to housing consultants by Aboriginal Housing Associations since January 1, 1973, is $1,259,594. This comprises $375,249 paid to accounting consultants and $884,345 paid to technical consultants.

Aboriginal Housing Associations have not undertaken valuation assessments on their houses or other buildings, so I am unable to provide any information in this regard. Records show a total of 103 houses completed at June 30, 1975 with a further 152 under construction at the same date. Another 118 houses have also been transferred from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to the control of the Housing Associations.

483 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

How many public servants have declined the offer of a departmental caravan?

ANSWER

35 public servants have declined the offer of a departmental caravan.

484 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Referring to my question on Notice No. 399 and your reply, who are the "authorised persons" who have access to the information collected and held under the permit section which operated under the Emergency powers legislation?

ANSWER

"Authorised persons" who have access to information derived from the Permit Section are:

(a) Officers of the Department of Northern Australia who were concerned with the administration of the Emergency powers legislation; and

(b) accounting and audit personnel.

485 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Is it a fact that the lid or cover on the water tower at Rapid Creek was not secured and because of this was blown off the tower during cyclone Tracy causing extensive damage to surrounding property?

ANSWER

No. The original hatch cover is still hinged in place at the top of the tank.

486 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Has the Adminstrator's Council started the appointment of a Parole Board for the Northern Territory and, if so, when does it expect that the Parole Board will be formally appointed?

ANSWER

The Administrator's Council finally considered the question of appointments to the Parole Board of the Northern Territory on 22 August 1975. On 25 August 1975 His Honour the Administrator on the advice of his Council appointed Sister Eileen Heath, Captain Alan Richard Walker, Mr Jonathan Martin Isaacs and Mr Edward Quong as members of the Board.

The instrument of appointment will be gazetted on 29 August 1975. His Honour, Mr Justice Forster, as Senior Judge of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory is Chairman of the Board. Mr Robert Francis Donnelly has been appointed as Secretary to the Board.

487 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

In the past month, has the Commissioner of Police given any instruction to members of the Northern Territory Police Force concerning the use and carrying of firearms; if so, what are those instructions?

ANSWER

Yes. On 25 August 1975, the Commissioner of Police issued Circular Memorandum No. 10 of 1975. The wording of the Circular reads as follows:—

"FIREARMS"

"Upon the amalgamation of the Police Forces, it is proposed that there will be a uniform policy for the carrying of firearms by the Australia Police.

For the present, in the interim period, the Members of the Northern Territory Police Force who comprise part of the Australia Police may carry only departmental firearms on duty.

During day and evening shift, such firearms are to be concealed when carried.

Concealment of firearms does not apply to members whilst on money escort duty, etc."

The Circular Memorandum is signed by the Commissioner of Police.

488 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

As at 1st September 1975—

(a) What was the strength of the NT Police Force, not including recruits in training;

(b) How many of those members are permanent officers, that is, not on probation;

(c) How many are Commissioned officers;

(d) How many members of the Force own their own pistol or revolver;

(e) How many Commissioned officers own their own pistol or revolver;

(f) How many members have a pistol or revolver the property of the Force on personal issue;

(g) How many Commissioned officers have a pistol or revolver on personal issue;

(h) How many pistols or revolvers does the Force own;

(i) How many of these are Smith and Wesson .38 revolvers, military type;

(j) What is the most recent date of manufacture of any of these revolvers;

(k) What type of holster is provided to members for use with .38 revolvers;

(l) Is this holster and revolver easily concealed; and

(m) Is it a reasonable assumption to say pistols and revolvers owned by members of the Force are more modern and appropriate for use than the normal firearm available to them at Police Stations?

ANSWER

(a) The strength of the Northern Territory Police Force as at 1 September, 1975, was 423.
(b) 331
(c) 26
(d) 178
(e) 9
(f) Nil
(g) Nil
(h) 157
(i) 80
(j) Smith and Wesson .38 military type revolvers, patent December 1914. These revolvers were manufactured between 1939 and 1945 in the United States of America on a lend-lease basis to the Australian Armed Forces. The Smith and Wesson .38 Special with a 2 inch barrel was manufactured in 1973. The Beretta .32 automatic pistols were manufactured in approximately 1960. The Browning 9 mm automatic pistols were manufactured in 1966.
(k) A leather flap lock hip holster is provided for members use for .38 military type revolvers. Holsters are not provided for use with the .38 Special revolvers.
(l) The Military type .38 revolver and holster is not easily concealable, not is the firearm on its own. The .38 Special either with or without a holster could be carried in the pocket and is easily concealable. The .32 Berettas either with or without a holster are easily concealable. The Browning 9 mm automatic pistols are not easily concealable.
(m) No.

489 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

As of 1 September, 1975—

(a) Is it the policy of the Registrar of Firearms to issue pistol licences to members of the NT Police Force for use in association with their duty;
(b) Has there been any recent change in this policy; if so, what was the previous policy;
(c) Is it intended the Registrar will renew Pistol Licences to members of the Police Force seeking renewal of licences, if not, why; and
(d) Is it intended, or is consideration being given, to compensating members of the Force who own pistols but are not able to renew licences?

ANSWER

(a) Pistol licences are issued to Members of the Force whose appointment has been confirmed, for purposes ancillary to their duty. However, the policy is under review.
(b) There have been no recent changes in policy, although, upon amalgamation, it is anticipated that there will be a uniform policy in regards to the use and licensing of firearms.
(c) It is intended at the present time to renew pistol licences to Members of the Police Force. However, the policy is under review.
(d) No.

490 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK—

(a) How many persons in non-urban areas (but including Warrabri and Yuendumu) of the Stuart Electorate are receiving unemployment benefits?
(b) Where do these persons reside?

ANSWER

There were 47 payments of Unemployment Benefit made to persons residing in the Stuart Electorate in the week ending 1st October 1975. Location of these persons are listed below.

| Location | No. paid in week ending 1/10/1975 |
|---|---|
| Aileron | 1 |
| Alcotta | 1 |
| Derry Downs | 3 |
| Hamilton Downs | 1 |
| McDonald Downs | 13 |
| Mt. Riddock | 1 |
| Murray Downs | 3 |
| Napperby | 10 |
| Neutral Junction | 2 |
| Stirling | 5 |
| Waite River | 3 |
| Warrabri | Nil |
| Yuendumu | 4 |
| Total | 47 |

620 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Has a Southern Land Council been formed and, if so, who are its members and what areas and groups of people do they represent?
2. Who was responsible for the original Aboriginal land claims in Alice Springs and the southern part of the Territory and what organization/s do they represent?

ANSWER

1. A Central Land Council has been formed with an Executive of Charles Perkins, President; Mr Sandy Jurra Jabaltjari and Mr Wenten Rabuntja, Vice Presidents; plus a Council of twenty-two members. This Council, which has additional membership (as members require), is totally representative of all land owners on a tribal basis in Central Australia, according to boundaries and requirements of the Woodward Report.
2. Claims for some areas have been filed by Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, and the Central Land Council. The town claims initially advertised were based on a misunderstanding of the likely claims which the Central Land Council would advise. In fact, the Central Land Council has now lodged town claims of a different nature. The claims notified on 9 October 1975 are the only town claims.

752 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

How many meetings of the Building Board have been held since December 1974?

ANSWER

There have been 11 meetings since December 1974. A twelfth is to be held on 16 October, 1975.

753 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

In the light of the approaching wet season, what steps has the Director of Meteorology taken to liaise with the ABC (Radio Darwin) to announce regular daily weather forecasts for Nhulunbuy (Gove)?

ANSWER

1. The Regional Director for the Northern Territory has liaised with the ABC on several occasions concerning the regular radio broadcast of daily weather forecasts for Nhulunbuy. Although the broadcast of such information could be handled without difficulty by the ABC, the Bureau, until recently, has been unable to undertake the provision of any new services due to staffing difficulties. The relocation of the observation site from Yirrkala to Nhulunbuy was also involved.
2. With present staff levels it will be possible to commence a daily forecast service for the township of Nhulunbuy with effect from 1st November, 1975. It is pointed out, however, that should staff numbers fall to the point where priorities have to be allocated, consideration might have to be given to ceasing the issue of forecasts for specific places.
3. The Regional Director stressed that in any circumstance, warning services for all areas of the Northern Territory will continue to be given top priority as these are the services that could save or minimise loss of life and property. He referred in particular to the issue of warnings of tropical cyclones.

621 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

I refer to a section of the Stuart Highway under repair between the airport entrance and the Bombing Road. This repair began about 1974 and is still in progress; there seems to be some movement on it at present. Can he advise me when this section of road is likely to be completed?

ANSWER

I think this is the fourth time this subject has been raised in question time. He is correct in his assumption that work has once again started on this section of the road. Unfortunately I have not received—or have not asked; I don't receive anything without asking—the latest information as to when the contractors would expect to finish the road. I will get this information and pass it on to the honourable member later on in these sittings.

622 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

He is well aware, as are we all, of the serious shortage of nursing and medical staff at the Darwin Hospital. I ask him in this context if it is a fact that there is no money available in the Department of Health budget to advertise for positions?

ANSWER

I would find it difficult to believe that there has not been money allocated for the advertising of staff because over the years there has been a need to advertise consistently for staff. As the honourable member has stated, there is generally always a serious shortage of staff of health services of the Territory.

623 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

How many caravans have the Housing Commission rented up to Friday 10 October 1975? How many caravans does the Housing Commission have available for immediate tenancy, and what is the current waiting time for a person applying for accommodation with the Housing Commission?

ANSWER

I am informed that the Housing Commission has been allocated as at the 10 October 366 caravans. I believe there is a problem with some of these vans in the connection of electrical services and some 70 of these were rectified this weekend. This would make a total of 123 which are tenanted and another 70 now available. I believe that there is a waiting time of some 2 to 3 months for caravans which will be less if technical problems are solved. There is an indefinite delay with regard to 2-bedroom demountables. The Housing Commission is waiting for the supply of 3-bedroom demountables and expects some 73 of them this month. With regard to flats and housing, the Housing Commission is not able to fix waiting times and there are indefinite delays. However, it is expected that 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom flats should be available shortly in some instances.

624 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is he aware of a press statement made last night by a senior police officer indicating that a number of Northern Territory officers were in favour of joining the Australia Police?

ANSWER

I understand a senior person of the Northern Territory Police Force did make a statement last night and I understood him to indicate that there was a section of the Police Force which wished to be associated with the proposed Australia Police Force. I would think that that person would have the right to indicate that as being a minority report. I spoke to 2 delegations from the Police Force in this last week, from the Commissioned Officers' Association and from the Northern Territory Police Association, a delegation of some 8 people, and they advised me that as far as the Commissioned Officers' Association was concerned 80% were in favour of not being associated with the Australia Police Force. I understand there are 25 commissioned officers so that makes 20 of the commissioned officers not in favour of being associated and 5 being in favour. With the Northern Territory Police Association, 83% of that association do not wish to be associated with the Australia Police Force which leaves 17% who I understand wish to be associated with the proposed force.

625 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Will the Department of Northern Australia involve the Department of Housing and Construction in the rebuilding of homes for persons in the private sector?

ANSWER

The Minister for Northern Australia recently announced that he is considering the allocation of the houses currently under construction by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, and what proportion of these will be distributed between the public and private sectors is still a matter for his decision. A number of those houses are under construction by the Department of Housing and Construction either through day labour or in a supervisory capacity acting as agents for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I am not aware either of any move by the Department of Northern Australia or the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to act in a client capacity for people from the private sector.

626 Mr KENTISH to Mr KILGARIFF—

The honourable member will I think recall a statement by one Mr Bob Hawke, 18 months or 2 years ago, that at a certain level of unemployment the present Labor government would have to go or be removed. He was supported at that time by senior cabinet ministers with similar statements. Can the honourable member advise me what was the level of unemployment indicated at that time by Mr Hawke?

ANSWER

I recollect the statement being made. I am going by memory but I understand the figure was 200,000.

627 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING–

What action has he taken to require the Administrator to take certain action as provided in the Northern Territory (Administration) Act, section 4V(4) regarding a bill which was passed through all stages of this Assembly relating to the sale of Housing Commission homes? This bill passed all stages at the last sitting and was presented to the Administrator in August. My question is specific, what action has he taken to require the Administrator to take the action as provided by the ordinance?

ANSWER

I took no specific action with regard to the Administrator. However, I did initiate a number of departmental enquiries on this matter and I was informed informally last week that the bill had been assented to.

628 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN–

Have Commonwealth Railways retrenched or transferred any of their Darwin staff since the iron ore export stopped and the railways here lost the majority of their work?

ANSWER

The railways have not retrenched many of their staff, due mainly to the fact that the cyclone was instrumental in a lot of their staff leaving, and I believe that the current work force strength out there is approximately 30 less than it was prior to the cyclone and prior to the cessation of operations at Francis Creek. I also believe that some of the rolling stock which became redundant at that time would be possibly used at other points throughout Australia.

629 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr KILGARIFF–

Is it true that the Alice Springs police are equipped with submachine guns, automatic rifles and special riot armaments? If so, for what purpose will those firearms and special equipment be used?

ANSWER

This equipment has hit the headlines I think in the last few days. This is only normal equipment that has been supplied to all police stations in the Northern Territory. The honourable member will remember that in 1973, through action in the Legislative Council, the McKinna Report was brought in. In this report, Mr McKinna indicated that the Northern Territory Police Force had been run down through lack of funds from the Department of Interior which looked after it in those days. He made a recommendation on page 63 of the report referring to firearms: "There is a divergence of opinion as to the type of firearms which should be supplied for use at stations. There should be standardization of firearms throughout the force, and a survey is required to determine the most suitable types of pistol for general use, bearing in mind the availability of spare parts and ammunition. The display of firearms is undesirable and for that reason a concealed weapon carried in a shoulder holster under the coat or shirt is preferable if a pistol must be carried. As a 9mm Browning is a standard Army pistol the ammunition is identical to that of the Owen, it must be considered. Certain other weapons are required at police stations for destroying dogs injured cattle etc. Police must be prepared for any emergency and there is no room for complacency. Therefore a variety of weapons must be kept in station armoury for use in unusual cases. As far as possible it would be wise to standardise on the weapons used by the armed services. This would ensure that the weapons, spare parts, ammunition and the technical knowledge with respect to repairs are always available. An adequate supply of ammunition for each weapon should be maintained". The commissioner went on to indicate the number of guns that should be supplied to various places–Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and so on–and indicated pistols, the SLR rifle, sniper rifle, shotgun, Owen gun, gas gun, gas canisters. There is a complete table there as to how the commissioner saw that they should be issued. And so it is really a false assumption to assume, as has been done in this particular news item, that they are there for the purpose stated in the press statement. Not at all; this is standard equipment for these police stations in a case of general emergency. The emergency which brought about this report was the hijacking in Alice Springs.

630 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN–

Is it a fact that a decision has been taken that the building construction function of the Department of Housing and Construction will be closed and that all personnel in the relevant section of that department have been instructed that they must transfer to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission or be retrenched?

ANSWER

I am not aware of such an event taking place, however I will make some enquiries during these sittings and answer later.

631 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING–

Does the Department of Housing and Construction act as agent for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission at the present date in relation to building construction?

ANSWER

Yes.

632 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH–

Has he any information about reports prepared by the Water Resources Branch concerning underground water supplies in Alice Springs and possible recharge difficulties?

ANSWER

I have no knowledge of any reports available that have been done by water resources. I will make investigation to see if they are a public document and if they are I will make them available to members.

633 Mr KENTISH to Mr KILGARIFF—

As the level of unemployment indicated by Mr Hawke as the level of abdication for the government appears to have been exceeded, can he advise me if a new level has been set and, as the government is still obviously in office, what new level of unemployment is required before the government will abdicate its authority?

ANSWER

I am unaware of any new levels of unemployment having been set, and I am unable to indicate to the honourable member the exact situation. If a new level has been set, it has not been disclosed.

634 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

With the intended closure of the Angliss meatworks, can he tell the House where northern growers are likely to get their cattle killed in the future?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Ludmilla has brought to light a very serious problem. Some honourable members will recall that when the Abattoirs Ordinance was constructed back in 1958-59, provision was made to eliminate the small abattoirs around Darwin and substitute a large abattoir in what is called the "licensed abattoir area" which extends for quite a large radius out from Darwin. One of the terms and conditions in that ordinance was that that abattoir should slaughter on behalf of other producers of livestock. With the closure of the Angliss Darwin abattoir, there will in fact be nowhere in the Top End where the individual owner-producer can legally seek to have his livestock slaughtered except by co-operative arrangement with another abattoir such as Katherine or Meneling. This is particularly serious for the pig producers. There is quite a large pig and bacon industry in the top end of the Territory at the moment which employs something like 50 or 60 people. We are hopeful that the Meneling abattoir will be able to take some of the responsibility for killing these local livestock by arrangement. This is not absolutely certain because the 2 remaining abattoirs, at Katherine and Meneling, are suffering the difficulties which abattoirs all over Australia are suffering and unless means can be found to continue their liquidity situation and to enable them to operate, then the whole of the local producers who have animals killed for specialised purposes, such as for the provision of veal and pig meat, could be left in a great hole with nowhere to go. But we are examining the situation to see what can be done.

635 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

In the light of the approaching wet season, what steps has the Director of Meteorology taken to liaise with the ABC to announce daily weather forecasts for Gove?

ANSWER

I know of no such steps. I would ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

636 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

Can he advise the reason for the delay in the processing of applications by pastoralists for carry-on finance?

ANSWER

There are delays extending up to 3 months before some of these claims are routinely processed and there are various reasons for this. Under the guidelines set down for approving claims for carry-on finance, certain things have to be established including the fact that the enterprise has a chance of viability and this requires considerable investigation by the Primary Producers Board. This board is quite limited in numbers and has to try to assess the position of each individual applicant. There are therefore some delays which, under the present guidelines, are unavoidable. However, after the PP board has finished its work, it has to transmit the documentation to Brisbane to the office of the Department of Northern Australia which takes care of the processing of the final payments there. There is a delay of 3 weeks in that situation which I regard as being quite unwarranted and unnecessary.

637 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN—

How many meetings of the Building Board have been held since December 1974?

ANSWER

I ask him to put the question on notice.

638 Mr PERRON to Mr TAMBLING—

How many applications have been lodged with the Building Board of Darwin since the new building code came into force, how many of these applications have been approved and how many buildings have been commenced?

ANSWER

I am a member of the Accommodation Co-ordination Committee of the Department of Northern Australia and in that capacity I have received information which will assist me in answering this question. As at the 3 October, the Building Board had received 1,217 applications of which 930 had been approved. These related to a wide range of building activity right through from accommodation and housing through offices, shops, warehouses, factories. In the sector that relates specifically to housing, there have been 1,052 applications of which 804 have been approved. At the same time, the Building Board has noted registrations for work in the private sector, for those people who were doing repair work of under $5,000 per house. As at the 26 September, the statistics that were available in that respect were, for permanent repairs, 2,230 registrations and, for temporary work, 925—that is a total of 3,155.

The latter part of the question is rather hard to answer, but I am informed that a recent survey of residential lots by the Department of Northern Australia reveals that building activity on privately owned leases in Darwin was in the order of some 600. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission currently has work in

progress on 672 sites. That is made up of: new houses on new allotments, 351; new houses on previously occupied land, 100; repairs to existing properties 151; and restoration of existing properties, 70. I believe the Northern Territory Housing Commission is currently working on 265 sites in Darwin.

639 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is he aware that, due to the operation of the plant at Nabalco, there is extensive damage to Melville Bay and irreversible damage at Drimmie Arm? This damage occurred because Nabalco had not kept to their original agreement to mix sufficient sea water with the red mud. If he is not aware of that, would he appraise himself of those facts from the department? If he is aware of it, would he advise this Assembly as to what environmental and pollution control measures are presently being undertaken in Melville Bay and how many environmental officers are stationed there to monitor such procedures?

ANSWER

I am generally aware that there is some concern about pollution arising from the disposal of waste at the Nabalco project at Gove. I am aware that the Environmental Council in Darwin has drawn attention to this on various occasions. In order to obtain a complete answer, I would ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

640 Mr PERRON to Mr KILGARIFF—

I understand that the honourable member delivered a paper on Territory laws which relates to industrial relations at a meeting recently in Darwin. Would the honourable member be prepared to table the paper in this House?

ANSWER

I have delivered a paper on industrial law and I will table it in this House within the day.

641 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS—

How many staff has he at the present time and in what capacity do they work for him? Does he find this staff sufficient to carry out his duties without strain on his physical and mental processes as the Majority Leader and senior member of the Administrator's Council?

ANSWER

I don't think that the honourable member for Jingili was referring solely to me in relation to this question. He probably has in mind the organisation proposals for the executive that were put forward some 12 months ago to the Minister. At the time that they were put forward, there was a provisional arrangement for 2 staff to be seconded to the executive for their use and consideration given to the organisation proposed in respect of 19 staff members which included 7 secretarial typists. In fact, no staff position for the executive has yet been approved by the Minister and only one of the two people promised on secondment was seconded and is still with us. At the moment, we have one staff member on secondment who assists us with our legislation work and about whom no praise could be too high with the tremendous burden that he has carried. We have 5 steno/secretarial assistants who help us with typing and preparation. That is the total amount of staff. Undoubtedly, this lack of staff has placed a very heavy burden on the whole of the operation of the executive members in the discussions and consultations with other departments in relation to legislation and has in fact affected the working of this Assembly. I have recently had to return legislation proposals to the department of origin because we were simply unable to cope with the further processing of them at that time because we were snowed under with the program already on our plate for this meeting and the next meeting.

642 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is it a fact that, although members of the Parole Board have been gazetted, the ordinance has not yet been commenced and therefore the Parole Board cannot meet and in fact does not exist? If this is a fact, is it because there has been no budget allocation for the operation of the Parole Board and, if that too is a fact, what action has the honourable member taken in this matter?

ANSWER

It is a fact that the Parole Board has been appointed. I believe that the particular legislation has not been commenced. I think that it is also a fact that finance has not been made this financial year for the operation of the Parole Board. What action have I taken? I have been in correspondence with the Administrator and the Department and I have received a message back from the Administrator indicating that he has received my letter and has forwarded it to the department for further advice. I hope that advice will indicate that the Parole Board is convened and the legislation is going to be brought into operation very soon. When I receive this information, it will be passed on to her.

643 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

I refer to Local Government Bill Serial 44 on the notice paper. How many organisations would be in a position to apply to the Corporation of the City of Darwin for a rate rebate if this ordinance is brought into operation in the next month?

ANSWER

I do not have that information readily available. However, I will endeavour to obtain a list of special purpose leases in the Darwin municipality and make it available to the honourable member.

644 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

How many persons in the Darwin area are receiving unemployment benefits through the Department of Social Security?

ANSWER

There is one female receiving unemployment benefits and 9 males. The last time the honourable member asked that question the answer was one.

645 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

I have a further question for the honourable member for Finance and Law. Can the honourable member advise whether there is an enforceable building code in operation in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

I have received some advice on the matter and as far as I am aware, that manual has not been the subject of any action under the Building Ordinance and therefore would not appear to have any force as law in the Northern Territory. However, under the extensive powers granted to it, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission could use it as an enforceable guideline. I ask the honourable member to place that question on notice so that an accurate answer may be obtained.

646 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

My question follows on a reply given to me by the member for Alice Springs concerning bikes being ridden on Casuarina Beach. The reply states that one difficulty that has been evident is that the majority of persons that have been apprehended are from interstate and had no knowledge that their vehicles were not permitted on the beach. It seems that many of the signs were destroyed during the cyclone and action should be taken by the responsible authority to replace those signs. Has the honourable member for Community Development any knowledge of any requests to any responsible authority to replace the signs at the earliest opportunity?

ANSWER

I did raise the matter with the departmental head of the Local Government Section of the Department of Northern Australia who informed me that there were provisions to provide signs in that particular area, but that there were budgetary and physical constraints in getting them up at this time. I will pursue the matter and get a more up to date answer for the honourable member.

647 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is he aware of the statement made by the Acting Commissioner of Police late yesterday in which the Acting Commissioner asserted that the official police view was in favour of an amalgamation of the Northern Territory Police Force with the Australia Police? If so, is that the view of members of the police force in the Northern Territory or would he consider that to be the view of the Federal Government and expressed by the Acting Commissioner on instructions from that government?

ANSWER

As I indicated yesterday, the Commissioned Officers Association and the Northern Territory Police Association have come out jointly and indicated that they wish to be divorced from the proposed Australia Police Force. Yes, I did see a statement made by the Assistant Commissioner in which he stated that the policy of the Northern Territory Police Force is that they are not against a federal body. I would presume that an official policy means a policy established by the minister in charge of that police department and of course means that it is the government's policy. And so in answer to the honourable members question, it is obviously government policy that the police are to become part of the Australia Police Force, but the majority of members of the Northern Territory Police Force do not wish this to happen.

648 Mr PERRON to Mr TAMBLING—

How many of the existing caravan parks in Darwin comply fully with the Caravan Parks Ordinance? How many residential properties in Darwin have more than 2 caravans sited on them? How many orders have been issued by the Chief Inspector under the Caravan Parks Ordinance since it came into force? Are there any statistics maintained in respect of the number of caravan parks in Darwin?

ANSWER

In relation to the first three parts of that question, I am informed by the inspector that of the existing caravan parks none comply with the Caravan Parks Ordinance. With regard to more than 2 caravans on a residential site, I believe there are 35 such sites in Darwin with more than 2 caravans on them. To date no orders have been issued by the Chief Inspector of Caravans. In July the department stated that owing to the lack of alternative caravan sites available action under the ordinance would not be taken before December 1975.

With regard to the latter part of the question in relation to statistics on caravan parks, I don't believe there are any formal statistics maintained, but several surveys have been carried out by the Department of Northern Australia and the Department of Health and I believe that there are some 670 caravans in 12 formal caravan parks, and I believe that the government has some 840 caravans sited in Darwin. It is also believed that on privately owned residential blocks there are 1,208 caravans.

649 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Will the resignation of Mr Rex Connor mean a change in government policy in the Northern Territory, particularly with respect to uranium mining?

ANSWER

Yesterday I was delighted to hear of the appointment of Senator Wriedt to the portfolio of Minerals and Energy and I sent him a communication expressing congratulations and asking his attitude towards the development of oil and uranium in the Northern Territory. I have not yet had a reply but I would warn members that the policy previously pursued by Minister Connor was a party policy and not a personal one and it is highly unlikely that it will change.

650 Mr KENTISH to Mr TUXWORTH—

How many craft of the Fisheries Branch are involved in inspection work on the Northern Territory coast? Will the high-speed boat due to be delivered this year be commissioned? How will coastal inspections be maintained if the Fisheries Branch is not provided with the craft?

ANSWER

There is one inspectorial boat operating on the coast at the moment. There was provision in this year's budget for a high-speed craft of 55' to be made available to the Fisheries Branch for inspection of the 1200 miles of coast that we have. I have no knowledge of this having been taken out of the budget or not being made available this year and I shall check with that department during the course of the day. In reply to the last part of the question, I do not know, but I will attempt to get an answer from the department during the day.

651 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS—

Has action been taken by the Department of Northern Australia under section 118 of the Crown Lands Ordinance to bring about the removal of people who are trespassing on crown land in Darwin?

ANSWER

I understand the answer to that question is that no action has been taken under section 118 of the Crown Lands Ordinance by the government or its agents to bring about removal of people who are trespassing on crown land in Darwin.

652 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

How many officers in the Department of Northern Australia are employed in the Environment Section of that Department?

ANSWER

I am not quite sure of what the honourable member for Nightcliff includes in the expression "Environment Section". There is a branch of the Department of Northern Australia, I understand, still known as the Forestry Fisheries Wildlife and National Parks Branch, I do not know whether that is the area she is referring to or another section again. Perhaps she could clarify what this section is and where it is located.

Mrs LAWRIE: I understand there is no Environment Branch any more; there is a section. I ask how many officers are employed in that section. Perhaps the honourable member could also advise what is their status and their capability for appointment to the job.

Dr LETTS: I have not got the information available now, but I will find it out for the honourable member and inform her during the sittings.

653 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Is the Darwin Hospital short of anaesthetists?

ANSWER

Yes, the Darwin Hospital is short of anaesthetists. At the end of this month there will not be one full time anaesthetist on the staff at the Darwin Hospital; the hospital will be relying completely on a locum service provided by anaesthetists from southern hospitals. I believe the Royal Brisbane and the Austin are two hospitals that are providing staff, and of course this is quite an expensive operation. The main reason that we are having difficulty in finding anaesthetists, apart from the world wide shortage, is that the salaries offered in the Territory are quite below those offered and available elsewhere in Australia. The Public Service Board does not seem to be able to assist or get on with the job of helping us.

654 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

When will the Rapid Creek Primary School be repaired and restored to its normal use as a primary school?

ANSWER

The Rapid Creek Primary School is at the moment being used for a migrant education service, and there is some degree of uncertainty as to when it will be fully repaired and fully operative. It is hoped by the Education Department that it will come into operation next year. However there seems to be certain minor difficulties involving the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

655 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr KILGARIFF—

How many members of the Northern Territory Police Force have been transferred out of the Northern Territory in recent months?

ANSWER

Since Cyclone Tracy 12 members of the Northern Territory Police Force have been transferred to the Australia Police Force, one on medical grounds.

656 Mr WITHNALL to Mr SPEAKER—

Who is responsible for the delay in the provision of the relocatable offices and buildings that are to be provided to members of this Assembly and when is it now expected those buildings will be ready for occupation?

ANSWER

I propose to make a statement on this matter later in the day.

657 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

Yesterday I asked him if it was a fact that the Health Department in the Northern Territory had no money for advertising and he replied that he didn't think so because they always did have. I repeat my question. Is he now in a position to say whether in fact there is no money to advertise for filling positions for medical staff.

ANSWER

Yes, I am in a position to answer the question. The amount provided in Appropriation Bill No. 1 for advertising for the Northern Territory Hospitals in 1975-76 was $40,000. This compares with $61,874 in 1974-75 which included $27,000 to undertake a special advertising campaign during the year to attract nurses. As at 13 September 1975 the expenditure under the vote amounted to $29,406. The remainder has been committed. Further allocation of funds for this appropriation is being sought from Treasury. Basically at the moment there is no money for advertising for nursing positions.

658 Mr KENTISH to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is it correct that two mobile police complexes are to be made available this financial year?

Where are they to be sited? When is a police station to be constructed at Oenpelli?

ANSWER

Two mobile police complexes are to be provided under the Civil Works Program this year at a cost of about $340,000. It is expected that they will be available in the Territory in January. One will be sited at Oenpelli and the other one at Hermannsburg. They will be on site as soon as transport and site arrangements can be completed by the Department of Housing and Construction. At present the authorities are looking at the possibility of constructing a police station at Oenpelli in 1976-77.

659 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I address my question to the Majority Leader as senior member of the Administrator's Council. Following passage of the relevant legislation on "free areas", what action has the Administrator's Council taken to give notice of declaration of any area under the ordinance?

ANSWER

The Administrator's Council has at present the matter under consideration. It has some further investigation it wishes to pursue and a conclusion may possibly be reached before the end of this year.

660 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Of those persons who had an application to purchase a Housing Commission home prior to December 24 last year, when would it be possible for such applicants to recommence negotiations to purchase in line with the Housing Commission policy changes since December 1975?

ANSWER

Providing a satisfactory solution can be found regarding the Housing Commission's financial problems relating to the use of low interest rate funds from the Commonwealth Government for building commission homes, and subject to satisfactory settlement of certain aggrieved principals relating to commission insurance claims, the commission will be submitted a proposed new sales policy within the next 3 months, following which legislation will be necessary. Then the commission would proceed with existing tenants who qualify under the conditions of the new policy.

661 Mr KENTISH to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is he aware that the Town Council of Oenpelli has for some time offered two homes for use of police officers at Oenpelli and that there are firms in Darwin which, to mention one, Webbmaster, could construct a mobile gaol within a month?

ANSWER

I have been unaware of this offer made to the police of two houses at Oenpelli and the fact that mobile gaols can be constructed very quickly in Darwin. I will refer the matter to the Commissioner of Police for his consideration.

662 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW—

How long after the completion date of the new class rooms at Nhulunbuy Area School can the Education Department arrange for the removal of the present temporary class rooms?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to procure the answer before the end of the day.

663 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

What facilities are available in Darwin for children who are wards of the state and what action can he take to facilitate provision of such facilities.

ANSWER

The situation in relation to wards of the state in Darwin at the moment is relatively serious because, as far as I am aware, the homes that were here in pre-cyclone times have all been demolished or blown away. It is causing the Department of Social Development some considerable concern. They are working to see what they can do to provide facilities. I know that in the estimates for this financial year there is provision for a facility here in Darwin and one in Alice Springs. I will try and find some more information and advise the member later.

664 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise the number of times both the Yuendumu and Plenty River roads have been closed in the last 2 years and the length of those closures?

ANSWER

I don't have that information available at present. I will get hold of it and advise the honourable member later on in these sittings.

665 Mr KENTISH to Mr KILGARIFF—

In view of the massive and increasing unemployment in Australia, far beyond expectation and prediction, has the honourable member any knowledge of why Mr Bob Hawke has not acted on his previous expressed intention to liquidate the present Labor Government?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, while I am in receipt of very many communications and press statements from around Australia, Mr Hawke does not seem to have my name on his list. So the answer is no. But yesterday he asked me regarding unemployment figures and I have a little more information for him. As at 5 October the persons registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service was 246,094 and the seasonal adjusted figure increased to 202,715 or 5.10% of the workforce.

666 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

How many juvenile prisoners are at present being held at Fannie Bay Gaol and how are they being segregated?

ANSWER

I don't know how many are there just at this moment. I know that during the crisis we had a fortnight ago, when the prison officers went on strike, there was one juvenile and he was kept separate from the other prisoners by keeping him basically at Casuarina Police Station cells while the other prisoners were held at the Darwin Police Station cells. There are some facilities that can be used at Fannie Bay, and the remand prisoners and the juveniles, when we are unfortunate enough to have a juvenile in custody in Darwin, are kept separate from the prisoners under sentence. There are only a handful of prisoners under sentence in Darwin itself.

667 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

Can he tell me whether negotiations for the purchase of Connair Pty Ltd are under way between that company and the Department of Northern Australia and, if that is a fact, whether it is true that the Department of Northern Australia would be directly operating Connair Pty Ltd after the purchase takes place?

ANSWER

I don't have an answer to the honourable member's question. I will attempt to find out the answer to this question and pass it on later in this sitting.

668 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

What steps have been taken by the Department of Health to bring the nursing staff at the Gove District Hospital up to full strength?

ANSWER

The situation at Nhulunbuy is quite serious in relation to nursing, there is a shortage of nurses there; it has been a consistent shortage. There have been a number of advertising campaigns in an endeavour to gain nursing staff but at the moment no campaign can be undertaken because there are insufficient funds.

669 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH—

I have a question to ask on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey under the heading of tourism. I refer to yesterday's announcement that the Katherine low level caravan park has been closed and ask what proposals have been put forward by the Government, or anyone else for that matter, to provide alternative land to replace the Katherine low level caravan park and to cater for caravaners and campers who have been denied that facility?

ANSWER

I don't know, I will endeavour to have an answer by the end of this sitting.

670 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

The honourable member would be aware of the existence of a so-called town plan for Darwin in 1974 and previously, and the promulgation of certain other town plans during the course of this year. Would the honourable member tell me whether there is any enforceable town plan in operation for the city of Darwin at the present time?

ANSWER

I have looked at the matter and, as far as I am aware, that plan has not been the subject of any action under the Town Planning Ordinance and therefore would not appear to have any force as a law of the Northern Territory. Under the extensive powers granted to it, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission could use it as an enforceable guideline. I must ask the honourable member to place the question on notice so that I can look at the matter more fully.

671 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Has he any information pertaining to the issue of uniforms to the Northern Territory Police Force?

ANSWER

Members will be pleased to hear that the latest advice on the uniform issue that has been quite controversial in the last few months is that it is now expected that the first issue of uniforms will be available from the Government Clothing Factory in mid-November.

672 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Is it the intention of the Department of Northern Australia to relocate the Fannie Bay Gaol at the abandoned Frances Creek iron ore mine in the near future?

ANSWER

The question of the relocation of the Fannie Bay Gaol has been with us for some considerable time. Also we have the situation at Frances Creek where a mining settlement which has some 26 homes and other facilities is empty. Consideration is currently being directed to perhaps turning these facilities into some sort of a prison or prison farm or retention centre. No basic decision has been made to move the prison service to Frances Creek. I think possibly greater consideration will be given to using the Berrimah site, and consideration will be given at a later stage to Frances Creek. It is quite undecided at this stage. I can assure the honourable member that every effort is being made at the moment to come up with something to get away from Fannie Bay.

673 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

Is it a fact that the Department of Health vote for overtime has run out and that within the next few weeks there will be no money available for payment of overtime for staff, which would mean that radiologists called on duty at night could not be paid for attending.

ANSWER

I am unaware of that situation. However, I do know the member for Alice Springs was asking some questions the other day privately on this matter. As I understand it, he received the assurance from the department that in relation to overtime for the medical staff there was no need for concern in that area at all.

Mrs Lawrie: You had better check up.

Mr Pollock: If you want me to check up you had better ask.

Mrs Lawrie: I have.

674 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK—

Can the honourable member advise me how long on the average it is taking to process a claim from the Northern Territory against Medibank, whether by a patient or a doctor, and how long on the average it takes for the patient or doctor to receive a cheque in his hand from the date of treatment?

ANSWER

Quite honestly I do not know. I have not received any complaints or heard of any complaint in the Territory. I have heard numerous complaints through the media of the situation interstate. It was said initially that everything would be fixed up in no more than 5 days. The mail service in the Territory is taking more than that anyway, so I imagine it would be quite a deal longer than they proposed it would be. Of course in the Alice Springs area we are not quite as affected because there are so few general practitioners to be able to utilize the service.

675 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK—

I ask the Executive Member for Social Affairs whether he could get an answer to my question.

ANSWER

I will get an answer.

676 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr KILGARIFF—

I am sure he will agree that there is a disparity between the statement issued by the Assistant Commissioner and that issued by the Police Association and the Police Officers Association. Does he consider that the Assistant Commissioner's statement was designed to mislead the public as to the true wishes of the Northern Territory Police Force, and does he consider that the statement does in fact do that?

ANSWER

I think the best I can say on this particular issue is that there is a disparity between what the Assistant Commissioner says and what has been put out by the combined Police Associations. In the first statement put out by the Acting Commissioners, as reported in yesterday's "News", it is said: "The Northern Territory Police element of the Australia Police has not been subjected to continuous interference in its day-to-day operations. Nor have operational controls been imposed by Canberra-based police officers".

I have before me a statement which I understand has been sent to the Prime Minister, various ministers of the government, members of parliament, the Legislative Assembly, etc. In that statement part of their concern is the "almost daily receipt of instructions from the Australia Police Headquarters signed by sundry Commonwealth assistant commissioners, superintendents and inspectors, clearly indicating that this force is regarded in no different light than other police regions formerly Commonwealth police districts under their control." "There is a strong indication that Commonwealth Police assistant commissioners are watchdogs of Northern Territory operational matters and are able to vet, control, question, call to account, require explanations, etc., regarding those procedures." "Thirdly, the frequent direct instruction and imposition of operational controls from Australia Police Headquarters to the Commonwealth Police element of the Northern Territory region of Australia."

677 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

Has any cash been allocated to commence the next three-year programme on the Stuart and Barkly Highways which was approved by the Federal Government last week.

ANSWER

To my knowledge there has been no cash allocated for this job. I believe if the government does not make the funds available to start this programme early next year we will see unemployment in that particular field. I made representation to the Minister for Northern Australia several weeks ago and have not received any answer.

678 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Since he is obviously concerned about the integration of the Northern Territory Police Force with the Australia Police, has he communicated directly with the Minister, Senator Cavanagh, on the matter asking him just precisely what the procedures will be, and what the degree of autonomy in the Territory will be?

ANSWER

No, I have not been in contact with the Minister for Police and Customs, regarding the proposed Australia Police Force. It is my understanding that probably this week legislation is to be introduced in the Australian Parliament relating to this matter. When we have a copy of this bill, which I hope we will see, we will have a better understanding of it. This matter will be further debated in a motion of mine later today.

679 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is he aware of a recent Four Corners programme shown both in Darwin and Alice Springs based on a recent court case in Alice Springs? What is his attitude to that programme? In view of criticism in the programme, will the method of interrogating Aboriginals be changed?

ANSWER

Yes, I am aware of the TV programme. I was not in Darwin when it was shown here and I was not in Alice Springs when it was shown there, so I only have second-hand information. I have had my attention drawn to this TV programme and I have taken it upon myself to get statements and transcripts of evidence of the court case which was held in Alice Springs some weeks ago. The result of the court case was that the people charged were found not guilty and released. I can only say that, on reading the transcripts, there is certainly a variation, statements that do not agree with other statements. Particularly, medical evidence did not appear to have been followed up. I have taken up the matter with the Acting Commissioner of Police and he informs me that this medical evidence, presented by a doctor from the Alice Springs Hospital, is now being considered by the police and further investigation is being carried out. I also understand that the judge who heard the case indicated that guidelines for interrogation are soon to be made public by him. I think that is as far as I can go at the moment.

680 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK—

As the Executive Member is no doubt aware, the prison officers at Fannie Bay Gaol and Gunn Point Prison Farm were on strike for a week recently. Is he able to advise the house of the reasons for this industrial trouble and whether they have now been resolved.

ANSWER

Basically, there were two reasons for the industrial trouble. One was in relation to a flow on of salaries and the other to conditions at Fannie Bay Gaol and Gunn Point. In relation to the conditions at the two establishments, the problems there have been satisfactorily overcome. In relation to the salary situation, negotiations are still going on. This is a matter which is presently before the Arbitration Commission in relation to indexation. The history of the matter is that the Northern Territory prison officers have for many years been akin to the New South Wales service in salaries. The New South Wales officers have received a series of increases of salaries in the past 12 months and the Prime Minister's Department, the Department of Labour and Immigration amongst others have decided that they will get into the act in relation to Northern Territory salaries and the prisons officers determination. They decreed that the rises that were granted the New South Wales officers were not within the bounds of indexation and therefore could not be passed on without further negotiations. These negotiations are going on and we are awaiting a decision by Mr Justice Moore of the Arbitration Commission.

In relation to the industrial trouble it is worthy of note that during that time, the prisoners had to be detained at the Darwin Police Station for a period of some 6 or 7 days. They did conduct themselves particularly well and at my instigation, recommendation was made to the Administrator and he has approved that all prisoners who were held during that period of the strike will have their sentences remitted by 3 days.

681 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING—

Why has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission found it necessary to remove the gold-lettered sign over at the front of "Big Al's" and replace it with that abomination of a sign that is there now?

ANSWER

I gather the honourable member is referring to the new "logo" of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission which I believe emanated from the office of the chairman as a matter of design. I cannot answer why the gold gilted sign has been removed and replaced with the new one. I have heard various comments in the last few days. Some say that perhaps it is the design for the new dancing academy from the hieroglyphics that are contained on the "logo". Another comment that was made to me was that the actual design is very similar to the Chinese character for trouble due to hardship. Another person has pointed out that if a house was built in accordance with the illustrated design it certainly would not meet the requirements of the new building code.

682 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

What are the current Darwin Reconstruction Commission plans for development and progress in the rural areas under their control?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has considered plans within four categories within the boundary of the 40 kilometre zone. The Darwin city zone is already well publicised. The proposals for the Berrrimah area are now on display for a period of one month under the appropriate sections of the act. The area formally called the 32 square mile acquisition area has not received any planning decisions at this time due to the complications caused by that particular acquisition. For the area bounded roughly by Howard Springs, Noonamah and Humpty Doo an indicative plan has been prepared for administrative purposes and is on display in Moonta House. It indicates to landholders in that area the types of land uses that are under consideration. The more general rural policies are being pursued in conjunction with the Department of Northern Australia as they were prior to the cyclone.

683 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Is he able to give any information of what stage the establishment of a Northern Territory Health Commission has reached?

ANSWER

Yesterday, I received a telegram from the Director General of Health advising me that the discussion papers for the establishment of the Northern Territory Health Commission are presently with the Minister for Health. He anticipates that the Minister will agree to wide circulation in the near future and he will ensure that a copy is available to this Assembly. At least, the papers have got to the stage where they are with the Minister and we are hoping that he will not take too long to process them.

684 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

When is legislation likely to be introduced into the Federal Parliament concerning land rights for Aborigines?

ANSWER

I have it on reliable authority that the Aboriginal Land Bill will be introduced into the House of Representatives today.

685 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Can he advise me whether copies of that legislation will be available today or upon introduction to members of this Assembly?

ANSWER

I received information just before we met this morning to the effect that the bill will probably be introduced today. I contacted the office of the local Director of Aboriginal Affairs in Darwin and asked him whether

copies of the legislation would be made available. The answer was that no provision had been made for the legislation to be made available to members of this Assembly. I asked whether we could borrow a copy in order to have it further copied. He said that he thought that was possible but he would have to check up to see whether his copy was the same as the one which is to be introduced into the federal house.

686 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

Is there a firm timetable for electrical reticulation for subdivisions for freehold sections 462, 463 and 475 in the Humpty Doo area?

ANSWER

I cannot advise at the moment. However, I will endeavour to seek that information and relay it this afternoon. I would like to say that the ESU has been under considerable difficulties in arranging electrical connection especially in that area owing to a shortage of linesmen and the inability of the department to attract them to the Northern Territory.

687 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Has the Corporation of the City of Darwin made any approach to him to have legislative changes introduced into this Assembly to allow them to lease land presently held by them in trust for the general public? If so, will he be prepared at an early date to release the precise terms upon which they would like the legislation amended?

ANSWER

I am unaware of any request. However, I will check today to see if there is something in the system but I do not recall any such request.

688 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

On a recent trip to Wave Hill I observed an unsatisfactory state of the contract on the sister's quarters and clinic. I wonder if he could report any progress on the situation?

ANSWER

I can give the up-to-date report on this matter briefly because of correspondence received yesterday; the letter starts off "Dear Goff" and is signed "with all good wishes. Gough". The quarters and clinic were due to be completed in January 1974 and November 1974, respectively. The Prime Minister informs me that the Health Clinic is now completed and the joint inspection to hand over for occupation purposes was carried out on 25 September. He also informs me that there will be some further delay on the nurses' quarters but there is a chance that they may be ready for occupation by the end of January 1976.

689 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

The Member for Community Development would be aware of the influx of people to areas east of Berrimah and the desire of these people to build a Community Hall. When and where can the DRC provide an area of land for such development as they envisage?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Rural Landowners Association and other interested parties in the rural area have made an approach to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for a community hall. I believe that continuing negotiations are taking place between those interested parties, the Department of Northern Australia and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and I believe that they are proceeding with satisfactory performance on all parts.

690 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is it true that the processing of progress claims by the Department of Housing and Construction in relation to contracts in the Alice Springs area is taking up to 2 months and over whereas the stipulated period in these standard works for Housing and Construction contracts is 14 days from architect's certificate? Further, is he aware that the processing of rise and fall claims payments involving amounts in excess of one hundred thousand dollars to individual contractors is taking between 6 and 9 months? If this is true can he get something done about expediting them?

ANSWER

There is a slowing down in payment, not only in contracts but generally throughout government these days. I have not been able to ascertain the reason but, over the last few weeks, I have been consistently working on behalf of various centres and organisations getting these money matters tidied up. I will go into the matter he has referred to in regard to Alice Springs but I would ask him to give me further information. I am aware that in some contracts the rise and fall payments are taking a long time to be paid. There have been negotiations going on between some of these firms and Housing and Construction. It is my hope that these matters may have been signed by now and so those firms which had outstanding money for some time will be relieved. Generally, action is being taken in an endeavour to get these problems overcome. These problems do occur and anyone who has problems should bring them to my notice so that I may negotiate with the various departments and have the matters cleared up.

691 Mr VALE to Mr SPEAKER—

Can you advise the House when repairs to the airconditioning and other areas of the building will be carried out?

ANSWER

A contract has been let and the contractor is due to start work any day. The completion of the contract will not be before February. Air conditioning is one of the things which is most required, but we cannot look forward to the completion of the contract until February.

700 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise me if the southern access roads into the Northern Territory will be in any better position in this coming wet than they were in the 1973-74 wet and the 1974-75 wet season?

ANSWER

I do not believe that the roads will be in any better condition. The road into the Northern Territory from South Australia has had no upgrading on it in the last 12 months and I consider that the same situation will arise if the weather gets bad down in that area. The maintenance of that particular section of the road is particularly bad. The roads from South Australia therefore, will be no better. If the weather is bad in that region, we will be subjected to closures and delays. The same situation applies to those sections of the Queensland roads which give access to the Northern Territory and which are not sealed. If they have bad weather in these areas I am quite confident that these roads will once again be closed.

701 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

I refer to a question I asked last week about a bill which passed through this Assembly and which he assured me had been assented to. I ask him if in fact it has been assented to and if so, what was the date of assent. If it has not been assented to, what action is he taking to ensure that it is either assented to or assent is not given?

ANSWER

I indicated last week that I had been informed informally that the bill had been assented to. I must apologise in as much as my information was totally incorrect on that occasion. The information I should have supplied to the honourable member was that officers of the department had informed me that approval in principle had been given by the appropriate policy dissections of the department and presented to the Minister. I am still unable to provide any reason as to why the bill has not yet been assented to, and I am just as shocked and horrified as the honourable member for Nightcliff that this matter seems to be yo-yoing between Darwin, Brisbane, Canberra and the Minister's office.

702 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

I appreciate that answer and following that answer I ask whether it is the practice that when bills have been introduced by Executive Members, fully debated and passed, they are then sent to the relevant departments in the Department of Northern Australia and do the rounds there, waiting for approval from public servants before the Administrator or the Governor-General, whichever the case may be, will assent?

ANSWER

I am not aware whether this is the routine or common practice but when this is done it is a matter which I deplore and believe should not happen.

703 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

What is the current staff situation of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission? How many permanent staff does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission employ? How many temporary staff does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission employ?

ANSWER

As at 17 October, the staffing position of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is: staff appointed, 73: staff seconded or on loan, 10: there have been offers of engagement issued to 7 people and there are currently 2 consultants for contractors with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. There are currently also 14 vacant positions.

704 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Can he tell me if consideration is being given to the surfacing of the road from Dhupuma College to the Gove Airport?

ANSWER

I do not have an answer to the honourable member's question. I ask that he put it on notice.

705 Mr PERRON to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is it a fact that the Attorney-General's Department refused to provide transcripts of evidence given at inferior courts in Darwin?

ANSWER

I draw the honourable member's attention to the Record of Depositions Ordinance. Section 13 does indicate you can make application for the papers. However I draw the honourable member's attention to section 13(2) which reads: "Nothing in the last proceeding subsection requires or permits the clerk of the court to furnish a copy referred to in that subsection to a person not being a party to the relevant proceedings unless the clerk or a stipendiary magistrate of the Territory is satisfied that there is good reason for that person being furnished with a copy". If the honourable member would see me later I can give him further information on the matter.

706 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

Realising how dependent the centre is on Adelaide markets, what steps are being taken to convert present killing facilities in central Australia to export standards?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any steps being taken to convert the Alice Springs abattoir at the moment to export standards. I am aware that the history of the Alice Springs abattoir was that it was built initially as a government abattoir and that subsequently it was leased out to private enterprise to operate. I understand that that is still the situation. It would probably be the decision of the lessee as to whether further upgrading of the

present standards was warranted and could be economically met. My understanding also is that the Alice Springs abattoir, like virtually all other abattoirs in northern Australia suffers from problems of liquidity, depressed prices, depressed export markets, and I believe that the chances of extra expenditure of $100,000 or more being applied to upgrade to an export standard in the light of the economics of abattoir operations would be pretty remote.

707 Mrs LAWRIE to MR KILGARIFF—

At the last sittings of this Assembly, I asked the Executive Member for Finance and Law a question which I again ask him. Following press reports from the Alice Springs district where a citizen is reported to have discharged a firearm to warn off people, has any charge been laid against that person for the discharge of a firearm in a built-up district?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the person has not been charged. I regret that previously I said that I would look into the matter further; I did overlook the matter, I will do it as quickly as possible.

708 Mr PERRON to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is it a fact that many businesses in Darwin have not been paid money owed them by the Government since well before June this year?

ANSWER

I think I touched on this last week. There are very many matters being referred to me at the moment from Darwin and Katherine and other places, and it does appear that there is a large amount of money owed by various departments. At the moment I am in touch with the department but I have had no answer at the present. But some of the amounts of money that people claim or firms claim as being owing to them for several months, runs into quite large figures. If this is the case, and it appears that it is the case, it is regrettable that the government has not paid the money earlier. Quite obviously, if money is owed before June these accounts should have been paid by them. As I have said before, I am looking at the situation. I hope that by tomorrow I may have more definite information for the honourable member.

709 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Is he able to tell me when the cafeteria in block 8 will reopen?

ANSWER

I am unable to say. I do not think that anybody really knows. As you will be aware yourself, Mr Speaker, you asked questions on this matter earlier in the year. The first time the question was asked, the department advised that certain repairs were going to be made to the place and it would be open in a few months. Since then it has become a showroom for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I have again approached the department and they tell me that it needs a lot of repairs and updating of equipment and that during the cyclone period when it was used as a cafeteria some of the equipment was damaged and it will have to be repaired and renovated. They have come up with a conglomeration of excuses.

710 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr KILGARIFF—

In light of the heated conflict and contradiction which appears to be going on in the media via various press releases between the Minister for Police and Customs and the various police bodies, could he explain the true position vis-a-vis those two organisations and people?

ANSWER

I have today asked the Northern Territory Police Association for a copy of their last statement. I understand from the media that they have refuted a statement made by Senator Cavanagh, the Minister in charge of Police and Customs. I understand that they have refuted his statement that the Northern Territory Police did not wish to be dissociated from the Australia Police Force. I will get a copy of the statement as quickly as possible.

711 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

Is she able to tell me when the Nakara Primary School is opening?

ANSWER

The department informs me that the Nakara Primary School will probably be ready next year. There is still some degree of uncertainty, not the least of which is the number of families who will be living in the area and wishing to send children to that school.

712 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me to comment on "a strong and well-founded rumour that within 12 months water rates and electricity rates will almost double". Water rates and electricity rates will be reviewed. Information is currently being collected regarding electricity rates. When some decision is made it has to be approved by the Administrator's Council and it is not expected that an announcement will be made within 6 months. Nothing has yet been done about water rates.

713 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked me about the removal of temporary classrooms at the Nhulunbuy Area School. I am informed by the Department of Education that no definite decision has been made regarding the completion of extensions to the Nhulunbuy Area School. Therefore, no decision has been made about the temporary classrooms.

714 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): The honourable member for Arnhem asked about electricity reticulation on sections 462, 463 and 475 at Humpty Doo. A decision is expected within a week by the Department of the Northern Territory.

715 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): The honourable member for Jingili asked whether or not the Department of Northern Australia was negotiating with Connair for its purchase. I directed this question to the department and I have been advised that it has been referred to the secretary in Canberra. In view of the anticipated delay and possibly even the disappearance of the question, I suggest that the honourable member now place that question on notice so that we will be assured of getting an answer.

716 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): The other question related to whether or not the Department of Housing and Construction had transferred all of its building construction section personnel to the DRC or whether they had been retrenched. The answer is that the section is still operating within the Department of Housing and Construction. There have been a few transfers and secondments to the DRC but there have been no retrenchments and the Department of Housing and Construction still has a building and construction section.

717 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS–

Can he advise me if the Department of Northern Australia has made available copies of the Aboriginal Land Bill and the second-reading speech to members of the Assembly?

ANSWER

The answer to the honourable member's question is yes and no. Late yesterday morning, I received from the local office of the Director of Aboriginal Affairs one copy of the bill and one copy of the second-reading speech. I certainly did not receive enough to be made available to all honourable members, but I have through our own limited resources arranged to have a copy duplicated. I trust that by tomorrow morning there will be sufficient copies of both the bill and the second-reading speech available, so that the Assembly may undertake some consideration of the matter.

718 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

The reason given to the fall of from $10 to $40 per head at Gepps Cross last Thursday was the completion of the 1975 export season and a necessity to wait for the 1976 season prices. What can the Australian Meat Board do to eliminate such fluctuations either by introducing cattle price stabilisation scheme or other means?

ANSWER

I was aware of the sharp fall in prices at Gepps Cross and I understand that part of the reason for this was a lack of liaison between the Australian Meat Board and the meat exporters in that the Australian Meat Board set a date for the final shipment of beef to the USA under the quota system this year and did not consult the exporters in advance. There was a temporary feeling among the market that they could be caught with meat that could not be shipped in accordance with the quota within the given time for this year. That situation would only be a temporary problem and it would be more than counterbalanced in the immediate future by the fact that Japan has announced a further expansion of her quota and that news will be welcomed by the industry and will probably be reflected in a restoration of those prices.

I believe that the Meat Board's activities in market promotion are probably reflected in this expansion of the Japanese quota. As far as a meat stabilisation plan is concerned, it is not really a matter for the board although they may give advice to government on this problem. If a comprehensive meat stabilisation price scheme was to be introduced in Australia, it would be similar to the approach used in the wheat stabilisation plan and, in so far as it would have to be an Australian-wide scheme, that would mean that it would require federal legislation as well as state legislation. Some people who are represented on the Australian Agricultural Council have been trying for some months to see if it is possible to devise a meat stabilisation or equalisation plan. Both Queensland and New South Wales have taken draft plans to the Australian Agricultural Council but they have not yet met with common approval. I do not know the details of these plans because the Northern Territory is not fortunate enough to have a representative on or an invitation to attend the Australian Agricultural Council meetings.

719 Mr WITHNALL to Mr SPEAKER—

Are you able to say when the provision of newspapers for the use of members will be resumed?

ANSWER

The Clerk has endeavoured to secure a satisfactory arrangement with the newsagent. However, the newsagent demands payment in advance and refuses to give the Legislative Assembly credit. We are examining the situation more closely and we hope that newspapers will be provided very shortly.

720 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

Can he report progress on the pilot farms scheme at Adelaide River?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

721 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN—

I refer to the answer which he gave to my question yesterday about a retrenchment of members of the Department of Housing and Construction. Will he take steps to convey to members of the Department of Housing and Construction building section that, notwithstanding statements to the contrary made by some officers in the department, the executive member has been assured that there is no intention to disband that section?

ANSWER

I will pass on that information.

722 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

What is the unit price for a 3-bedroomed Housing Commission dwelling and how will economic rent for such a dwelling be computed? Are they on the new contract for loans or if not will they be spread over the whole establishment of Housing Commission homes?

ANSWER

I would ask that she place the formal sections of her question on notice. I am aware that the Housing Commission contract prices are in the order of $32,000 to $35,000 per house. With regard to the determination of rents, this is done annually by the Housing Commission and sanctioned by the Administrator's Council. I will endeavour to obtain information about the manner in which this will be done for the coming year.

723 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

Last week's Centralian Advocate contained a letter concerning a pastoral property in Central Australia known as Supplejack Downs. The letter averred that there had been undue delay in processing an application made by an occupier for a lease under the Crown Land Ordinance and inferred that the Administrator's Council may have been involved in that delay. Can he advise whether this is correct?

ANSWER

I am aware of the contents of the letter which attempted to trace the history of the occupancy of the pastoral property known as Supplejack Downs and drew attention to the present delays in finalising the matter. As far as I am aware, this matter has not been officially brought to the Administrator's Council as yet.

724 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is he aware of the bank up in service of process and levying of execution in both the supreme and local courts in Darwin? Although there is a supposed establishment of three bailiffs, there is in fact one bailiff carrying out the task. If the honourable member is aware of the position, what is going to be done about it?

ANSWER

This matter has been brought to my attention. I am going to the authorities to see what action has been taken to ensure that the number of bailiffs is brought up to the establishment of three.

725 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

I am sure that he is well aware that the Australian Legal Aid Office in Darwin is woefully inadequate and privacy cannot be accorded to clients. What action is being taken to remedy this?

ANSWER

I have personally inspected the offices in the MLC building. I have taken up the matter with Property and Services to endeavour to have more space made available. I have also drawn to the attention of the Attorney-General the present poor conditions for his staff.

726 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK—

Is that member aware of the statement attributed to the Minister for Repatriation in yesterday's paper that Medibank claims are taking 8 days to process and does he have any comment on the accuracy of this statement?

ANSWER

The member asked me a question last week about delays in the payment from Medibank and I did institute some inquiries which are continuing. The state manager for South Australia/Northern Territory of the Health Insurance Commission advised me last Wednesday that claims made by Territory residents are being processed within a week of receipt at the Adelaide office. Bulk billing is marginally faster because it is a computer based process and does not have as much manual handling as a patient claim. The manager was unable to say how long it was taking for payment of the claims even though they were processed within a week in Adelaide because payment was transcribed by computer to Canberra and he had no executive control over the situation there. The secretary of the commission was unable to tell me how long it was taking claims to be paid. He was going to institute inquiries and advise me in four or five days but he has not advised me as yet. I inquired at the local office of Medibank as to how long it was taking and the lass who was working there said she had a claim submitted for five weeks and she had not received payment. If you work in the place and you cannot get your claim through under five weeks, it is pretty crook.

727 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Is he aware of a detailed and comprehensive report on the Mereenie aquifer in Central Australia at present held by the Federal Minister? If so, would he be prepared to make copies of that report available to members of this Assembly?

ANSWER

I advised the house the other day that I am aware of the study being undertaken by Water Resources Branch for the Minister on the future of the Alice Springs water reticulation. To the best of my knowledge, that report is not due to be finished until late November early December. However, I will contact the Department concerned and ask whether the report is finished. If it is finished, I will ask whether it can be tabled and if it is not finished, I will ask that it be tabled when it is complete.

728 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS—

Is the change in the occupancy of the ministry of agricultural portfolio likely to enhance, in the Majority Leader's opinion, Legislative Assembly chances of representation on the Australian Agricultural Council?

ANSWER

I think I can answer that without having to give it as a matter of opinion which, of course, is outside standing orders.

Representation of executive members of this Assembly on Commonwealth State ministerial councils was sought through the then Minister for Northern Australia Dr Patterson, who strongly supported the case for this and was successful in respect of most of these bodies in getting executive members the right to attend. The one in which we have not had any success so far has been the Australian Agricultural Council. Senator Wriedt, the then Minister for Agriculture, has indicated to me on several occasions that he thought that it would create a precedent which he was not prepared to do. I know that Dr Patterson has continued to make representations to Senator Wriedt on this matter and I believe that, with the change of ministry, our chances of being represented on that council will be much better.

729 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr KILGARIFF—

What action is being taken to police our coastline and isolated airstrips to prevent illegal importation of drugs and the introduction of exotic diseases such as foot and mouth disease?

ANSWER

There are actions being taken by the airforce and navy and surveillance of the coast is undertaken to some degree. I will seek a full statement on the matter.

730 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr KILGARIFF—

In a recent AM broadcast, it was stated quite clearly that the illegal export of Australian birds was being carried on, by people given a return ticket to Singapore. In return, they strapped these birds in metal canisters to their bodies and, hidden by their clothes, they smuggled them to Singapore. I ask the honourable member if any particular measures are being taken at Darwin airport to prevent this and, if not, would he attempt to have measures instituted?

ANSWER

I am not aware of what action is being taken by the authorities but I know that the authorities are taking the matter very seriously as can be seen by prosecutions against people who commit this offence throughout Australia. If this sort of thing is being carried on from Darwin to Singapore, I will have the matter thoroughly investigated and I will report back to this Assembly.

731 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

What is the designation and address of the officer in Brisbane or Melbourne to whom Darwin residents should address queries concerning their electricity accounts?

ANSWER

I will provide it for the member later today.

732 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Who has overall responsibility for the development occurring in the Railway Dam area? This includes roads, bulldozing of mangroves with insufficient drainage to allow the mangroves to survive and to have proper salt water inundation. Various activities are being carried on in the Railway Dam area with no overall attitude towards the proper preservation of the area.

ANSWER

I will seek details from both the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the Department of Northern Australia. I am not aware of any leases in that area being vested in local government although I am aware that some specific claims have been made to the Aboriginal Lands Commission for land close to the Railway Dam area. I will seek further information.

733 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

There has been resealing of the Stuart Highway in the Coonawarra/Berrimah area. Can he advise what grade of aggregate was used in that resealing, what is the recommended grade of aggregate on such a road and who is responsible for supervision of the contractor to ensure that the proper grade was used? In explanation, perhaps I should say that in one day there were twenty-six broken windscreens.

Mr SPEAKER—

It is quite obvious that many questions are being asked, which should be placed on notice. I direct honourable members' attention to standing orders which outline the procedure. I direct the honourable member to put that question on notice.

734 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

I am sure he is aware that on Housing Commission blocks where there are two caravans in many cases there have been no laundry facilities provided. How is this problem to be overcome?

ANSWER

I am aware of the problem. It has been looked at by both the Accommodation Co-ordination Committee and the Housing Commission. At this stage I am unable to give her any specific information as to what action has been taken for the provision of laundry facilities. I will endeavour to obtain further details of their proposed action this day and advise her.

735 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

This question is asked on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. What progress is the Mount Isa Mine group making with development programs at McArthur River of the silver lead zinc deposits, and what action is being taken to control fishing in the gulf area around Borroloola?

ANSWER.

Mount Isa Mines has embarked on a $13m development program this year. Unfortunately, in the last week, during the development of the underground workings, water has broken into the mine and the pumps have been unable to contain the amount of water coming in. Mount Isa Mines as a result of this has withdrawn for the rest of the wet and will be closing the operation there for a complete revaluation of the situation. To the best of my knowledge the Fisheries Branch have an inspector stationed at Borroloola to try and maintain a surveillance over the rivers. There is no boat control in that area because the Fisheries Branch only have one boat. It is not possible to do the 1200 miles of the coastline with one boat.

736 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

I understand that a liquor commission has been set up in the ACT. Will the Northern Territory follow suit?

ANSWER

Legislation has been introduced in the ACT and a liquor commission has been formed. As members know, we are looking at legislation for a Northern Territory liquor commission and we are hopeful that it will be introduced early next year. We are studying the ACT report. I think one section of the report says that they have 24-hour trading. I do not think we will be recommending that to this Legislative Assembly.

737 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr KILGARIFF—

I understand he has received a delegation from the Northern Territory Chamber of Industries regarding the indebtedness of the Commonwealth of Australia to private persons and contractors in the Territory. Can he report on the results of his discussions?

ANSWER

I have received a delegation from the executive members of the Chamber of Industries in Darwin. They have indicated that there is a large amount of money owing up to 30 June 1975, something like $300,000. After that period there would be much more. It is my intention now to call the various departments together in conference with the Chamber of Industries to see if the matter can be satisfactorily resolved. This conference will be of benefit to the traders in Darwin because in some cases they possibly are unaware of the various procedures of government financing. A conference between both parties will be beneficial to all.

738 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr KILGARIFF—

Does a similar situation exist in Alice Springs? If so, what can be done to alleviate the problem there?

ANSWER

To some degree the situation is the same in Alice Springs and other places. It is my intention to be in Alice Springs this weekend and I invite the honourable member, if he receives complaints, to send those people to see me. I understand that the Chamber of Industries is in Darwin to invite people from the Alice representing various organisations to attend the conference.

739 Mr VALE to Mr KILGARIFF—

Is it true that local government package deals are soon to be made to both Katherine and Tennant Creek?

ANSWER

Package deal offers have already been made to Tennant Creek and Katherine. I think the offer was made some 18 months ago. They asked for further negotiations. Katherine I think rejected the package deal unless the department was prepared to put in rise and fall clauses. Next week in Tennant Creek, members of the Local Government Branch of the Department of Northern Australia will meet with the Town Management Board in Tennant Creek to further negotiate the package deal. I will attend that meeting. In Katherine on Tuesday there will be further discussions between the department and the Town Management Board with possibly an answer coming from the department back to the Town Management Board relating to these queries. I will also be attending those discussions.

740 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

When is it expected that a commission will be appointed to conduct the proposed inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance?

ANSWER

Inquiries have been carried on since the last sitting of this Assembly to find a suitable person or persons to conduct the inquiry. Those inquiries are still being made.

741 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

Is it his intention to introduce legislation regarding the use of poker machines?

ANSWER

I have no intention of introducing any legislation and I don't know of any legislation in that field that is contemplated. I have not heard any discussion on the matter. I do not feel poker machines are in any way warranted in our community.

742 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN—

This question is addressed to the honourable member in his capacity as Chairman of the Road Safety Council. It results from a matter of concern raised by the honourable member for Elsey. Has the Northern Territory Road Safety Council looked into the situation with the Lindsay Street proposed intersection in a proposed new sub-division in Katherine? If so, have they formed an opinion as to the safety of that proposed intersection in its present form?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not know if the Road Safety Council has been informed of the situation in Lindsay Street. You yourself made me aware of the situation and since you spoke to me earlier this week I have been unable to get hold of a map of the proposed changes to that particular intersection. I am inclined to agree that, since the subdivision is not yet built and will not be built for 3 years, it is an unnecessary change to the intersection at this stage. I have started discussions with the department. I intend to continue with these and also bring it to the notice of the Road Safety Council.

## ANSWER TO QUESTION

743 Mr RYAN (by leave): The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a question concerning the highway out at Berrimah. I could have answered part of that question myself the other day except for the grades of the aggregate used and the recommended grades. The information has been supplied to me. The grade of aggregate used was 12mm to 18mm the recommended grade of aggregate is 14mm to 16mm. The supervision of the contract was undertaken by the Department of Housing and Construction.

The honourable member raised a matter concerning the breaking of glass—this was part of the question which I felt I could have answered—that there were a large number of windscreens broken. While the size of the metal will have some effect on this, the main reason the metal is thrown up is the speed of the vehicles. Unfortunately, as I mentioned in a speech the other day, people in Darwin do not necessarily worry too much about other people on the road, so a vehicle speeding in one direction will throw a piece of metal up and a car going the opposite direction can run into it. The car going in the other direction has to be travelling at a fairly reasonable pace to break the glass. While it is unfortunate that we get this situation occurring with a resealing of the road, it is something we have to put up with; people have just got to be a little more careful until the excess gravel is taken off the side of the road.

744 Mr STEELE to Mr SPEAKER—

You would have heard on the radio that the TLC and the Australian Labor Party are going to march on the Assembly tomorrow. I was wondering if you have had any communications in this regard and whether you have prepared the Assembly for such an assault?

ANSWER

No answer made.

745 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr KILGARIFF—

In view of recent drug thefts from the hospital, doctors' surgeries and chemists around Darwin has the incidence of drug charges increased over the last 3 months in Darwin, and do the Northern Territory police have a drug squad in Darwin to counter this problem?

ANSWER

In this last few months more drugs have been stolen from chemists and I believe extra precautions have been taken. I do not know if there has been any increase in people being charged with the use of drugs. I will look at the matter. There is a drug squad in the Northern Territory and in Darwin, and I will enquire what the present establishment is. Some time ago I considered the establishment too light, and I would have my doubts, with the restrictions that have been brought in on staff ceilings in the last 2 months, that there would be a large number in the squad. I will get further information for the honourable member.

746 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

When is it likely that full facilities will be restored at the Darwin airport for domestic travellers as well as overseas travellers?

ANSWER

I wish I could give a satisfactory answer but it is almost like the question the honourable member for Arnhem used to ask every sitting, as to when the road was going to be started again at Berrimah. Well, it has finally started. But with regard to the airport, the honourable member, like the rest of us, is obviously concerned with the situation that greets visitors to the town. They walk through the doorway into a place that is falling down around their ears. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has let a contract to repair the overseas section. This has been going on for some weeks although the announcement was only made last week. The contract for repairs to the transit lounge was under way when I inspected the place 5 or 6 weeks ago, and I assume that it is almost finished. I believe there are proposals to spend about $1m in repairing the facilities out there. I do not know when this is going to be done. I believe it is being considered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission but whether or not any firm commitments or plans are being made I do not know. The Department of Transport certainly do not appear to be particularly interested and we can only keep pressuring the departments concerned for action and I will continue to do so.

747 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN--

Does he know if, when the bar facilities are restored, they will be made available to internal passengers, or restricted to overseas flights? That is the latest rumour around Darwin.

ANSWER

As a regular visitor to the airport, I can assure the honourable member for Nightcliff that I will be doing everything possible to see that ordinary passengers get the use of the facilities. I believe that there is a small bar in the international section. It appears to be a bar but I do not know if it will be used as a bar. This would mean they have their own facility. I have not heard any rumours that the existing facilities, that the one which was always used as a general bar, would be only open to international passengers. I certainly would create as much fuss as possible to see that it is open to the public because they are the majority of the people travelling and they need the sustenance.

748 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW--

Is it necessary that the gas turbine alternator in Darwin be used continuously at the present time? Will the honourable member agree that the level of noise from this installation is well-nigh unbearable? Will she endeavour to arrange for the machine not to be used unless effective silencers are fitted?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to put the question on notice.

## ANSWER TO QUESTION

749 Mr KILGARIFF: Yesterday I was asked whether I was aware that there is only one bailiff at present on the strength of the local courts in Darwin, despite a supposed establishment of 30. The answer is that the Supreme Court uses the services of the sheriff's office and as far as is known there are no problems in this respect. The local court bailiffs are Commonwealth Police, now Australia Police. Until this week there was only one such officer. As from Monday, there have been 2. There were proposals in the Commonwealth Police for two officers as bailiffs. It is not known at this time what proposals for this service have been made in the Australia Police. Outside Darwin, the services are performed by Northern Territory Police and there have been recent problems with this service in Alice Springs.

I would just like to make comment on that. Where it says local court bailiffs are Commonwealth Police now Australia Police, I do not think the answer is quite correct. There is no Australia Police Force as there has been no legislation passed to establish it.

## ANSWER TO QUESTION

750 Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a question relating to the environmental issues surrounding the railway dam area. I am informed that the Department of Housing and Construction utilised the area adjacent to the Dinah Beach Road for dump purposes up to 30 June, but since that date there has been no dumping of a legal nature in that area. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has officers investigating the environmental problems that have now been raised by the honourable member and I hope to provide her with further information within the next few days.

751A Mr RYAN (by leave): The honourable member for Jingili asked me a question and I did not expect to get an answer so quickly so I asked him to put it on notice. I think I should give the answer to the Assembly seeing that the department has now provided it. The question referred to the negotiations under way by the Department of Northern Australia to purchase Connair and asked whether Connair would be operating that company after that date. The answer that I have got from the Department of Northern Australia says that the company has offered the airline to the government and the government is actively considering the offer but no decision has been made.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

## October 1975

(Questions with the suffix "N" will be found in the Questions on Notice section)


Aboriginals—
  Bulman River funds (MacFarlane) 389N
  Housing consultants (Kentish) 482N
  Four Corners Program (Vale) 679
  Land Bill (Kentish) 717
  Land rights legislation (Lawrie) 684, 685
Adelaide River, pilot farms (Steele) 720
Agriculture Council, representation (Everingham) 728
Airconditioning, Assembly (Vale) 691
Airport, bar facilities (Lawrie) 747
Airport facilities (Lawrie) 746
Alice Springs—
  abattoir, export standards (Vale) 706
  claims, Housing and Construction Department (Everingham) 690
  firearm discharge (Lawrie) 707
  firearms, riot armaments (Ballantyne) 629
  housing policies (Kilgariff) 63N
  Mereenie aquifer (Vale) 727
  water supplies (Vale) 632
Anaesthetists, Darwin Hospital (Dondas) 653
Angliss meatworks closure (Steele) 634
Australia Police, amalgamation (Robertson) 647, 676, 710; (Vale) 624; (Lawrie) 678
Bailiffs (Everingham) 724; (Kilgariff) 749
Berrimah, community hall (Kentish) 689
Bills, procedure (Lawrie) 702
Birds, illegal export (Lawrie) 730
Borroloola—
  fishing control (Vale) 735
  pasture research (MacFarlane) 387N
Building Board (Withnall) 637, 752N
Building Board applications (Perron) 638
Building Board minutes (Withnall) 694
Building code, enforceable (Everingham) 645
Building construction, Department of Housing and Construction (Withnall) 630, 721; (Ryan) 716
Bulman River, development allocation (MacFarlane) 389N
Cafeteria, block 8 (Dondas) 709
Cargo rates, Darwin Trader (Ballantyne) 481N
Caravans, Housing Commission (Dondas) 623
Caravan parks, Darwin (Perron) 648
Caravan, public servants (Lawrie) 483N
Carry-on finance (Vale) 636
Casuarina beach, bikes, signs (Lawrie) 646
Cattle (MacFarlane) 398A N
Cattle prices (Vale) 718
Central Land Council (Vale) 620N
Chamber of Industries (Everingham) 737; (Robertson) 738
Coastal inspections (Kentish) 650
Coastline, airstrip surveillance (Ballantyne) 729
Connair Pty Ltd (Everingham) 667; (Ryan) 715, 751A
Connor Rex, resignation (Vale) 649
Consultants, Aboriginal housing (Kentish) 482N
Corporation of Darwin leases (Lawrie) 687
Darwin hospital, staff advertisements (Lawrie) 622, 657
Darwin Reconstruction Commission—
  establishment (Ballantyne) 477N
  rural plans (Kentish) 682
  sign (Steele) 681
  staff (Dondas) 703
Darwin town plan (Everingham) 670
Darwin Trader cargo rates Ballantyne) 481N
Department of Housing and Construction (Withnall) 631
Depositions (Perron) 705
Drug thefts (Ballantyne) 745
Elcho Island, police station (Kentish) 699
Electrical reticulation, Humpty Doo (Kentish) 686; (Andrew) 714
Electricity account queries (Kentish) 731
Electricity and water rates (Lawrie) 692, 712
Environment section (Lawrie) 652
Firearm discharge, Alice Springs (Lawrie) 707
Firearms, police (Vale) 487N
Firearms, riot armaments Alice Springs (Ballantyne) 629
Free areas, notice (Lawrie) 659
Gaol, relocation (Dondas) 672
Gas turbine alternator (Withnall) 748
Gove hospital, nurses (Ballantyne) 668
Government accounts unpaid (Perron) 708
Health Commission (Dondas) 683
Health Department, overtime (Lawrie) 673
Homes, 40 km zone (Ballantyne) 478N
Home rebuilding, private sector (Dondas) 625
Housing Commission—
  laundry facilities (Lawrie) 734
  plans, Nhulunbuy (Ballantyne) 103N
  sales (Dondas) 660
  sales legislation (Lawrie) 627, 701
  unit price and rent (Lawrie) 722
Housing policies, Alice Springs (Kilgariff) 63N
Humpty Doo, electrical reticulation (Kentish) 686; (Andrew) 714
Humpty Doo, roads (Kentish) 696
Industrial relations (Perron) 640
Juvenile prisoners (Lawrie) 666
Katherine—
  caravan park (Robertson) 669
  Lindsay Street intersection (Robertson) 742
  tourism promotion (MacFarlane) 289N
Land Bill, Aboriginal (Kentish) 717
Land lease, Darwin Corporation (Lawrie) 687
Legal Aid office (Lawrie) 725
Library facilities (Perron) 695
Liquor Commission (Everingham) 736
Local government, Katherine and Tennant Creek (Vale) 739
Lot 668, purchase (Lawrie) 471N
Lottery and gaming commission (Lawrie) 740
McArthur River silver lead zinc deposits (Vale) 735
Majority Leader, staff (Everingham) 641
March on Assembly (Steele) 744
Mereenie aquifer (Vale) 727
Medibank claims (Everingham) 674, 675, 726
Melville Bay, pollution (Lawrie) 639
Nakara Primary School (Dondas) 711
Newspapers for members (Withnall) 719
Nhulunbuy—
  housing commission plans (Ballantyne) 103N
  nurses at hospital (Ballantyne) 668
  road surfacing (Ballantyne) 704

temporary classrooms removal (Ballantyne) 662; (Andrew) 713
weather forecasts (Ballantyne) 635, 753N
Oenpelli, police homes (Kentish) 661
Parole Board appointment (Lawrie) 486N
Parole Board, ordinance (Lawrie) 642
Pasture research, Borroloola (MacFarlane) 387N
Permit information, access to (Lawrie) 484N
Pistol licences, police (Vale) 489N
Poker machines (Lawrie) 741
Police force strength (Vale) 488N
Police, mobile complexes (Kentish) 658
Police station, Elcho Island (Kentish) 699
Police transfers (Ballantyne) 655
Police uniforms (Vale) 671
Power cuts (Everingham) 698
Prison officers strike (Everingham) 680
Railway Dam (Lawrie) 732; (Tambling) 750
Railways, staff (Perron) 628
Rapid Creek Primary school (Everingham) 654
Rapid Creek, water tower cover (Lawrie) 485N
Rates rebates (Lawrie) 643
Relocatable offices (Withnall) 656
Roads, southern access (Kentish) 700
Roads—Yuendumu, Plenty River (Vale) 664
School attendance 1974 (Dondas) 369N
Stuart and Barkly Highways (Vale) 677
Stuart Highway, aggregate (Lawrie) 733; (Ryan) 743
Stuart Highway, reconstruction (Ryan) 697
Stuart Highway, repairs (Kentish) 621
Supplejack Downs (Vale) 723
Syrimi farm, burial of livestock (Perron) 383N
Teacher recruitment (Ballantyne) 693
Tourism promotion, Katherine (MacFarlane) 289N
Trespassers on crown land (Everingham) 651
Unemployment benefits (Everingham) 644; (Vale) 490N
Unemployment level (Kentish) 626, 633, 665
Wards of the State (Lawrie) 663
Water supplies (Vale) 632
Water tower cover, Rapid Creek (Lawrie) 485N
Wave Hill, nurses' quarters (Steele) 688
Weather forecasts, Nhulunbuy (Ballantyne) 753N
Yirrkala school (Ballantyne) 400A N
Yuendumu—Plenty River roads (Vale) 664

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order.

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

397A Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH—

Has the Tourist Board considered tourist promotion for the Nhulunbuy/Gove area during 1975 and, if so, in what form will it be promoted?

ANSWER

(a) No.

(b) The extent of tourist promotion activities of the Tourist Board is limited by the subsidy provided by the Government.

(c) Furthermore, to effectively promote tourism in regional areas of tourist potential, requires a full study of all resources, access, services and the development of an effective marketing strategy.

(d) A Tourist Development Study of the Northern Territory is expected to be undertaken during the 1976/1977 financial year, and such action as is then recommended in the final submission, will be considered for implementation by the Tourist Board.

751 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Was a meeting between representatives of Nabalco and the then Department of the Northern Territory held at Gove on 28 June 1974 to discuss pollution and did an officer of the Department of the Northern Territory state at that meeting "that it would be greatly to Nabalco's and the Department's disadvantage if the public knew the degree of pollution occurring at present"?

ANSWER

(1) A meeting was held at Gove on 28 June 1974 between Nabalco staff and the then Northern Territory Department officers. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss environmental matters in connection with the operation of the alumina plant and associated works.

Subsequent to the meeting Nabalco agreed to carry out works to improve environment control. In the fifteen months since the above meeting most of these have been completed satisfactorily. A consultant is presently engaged by the Company to examine and recommend means of effecting further improvements.

(2) The Department is unable to comment on the second part of this question as details of any discussions at the above meeting are regarded as confidential.

754 Mr PERRON to Mr POLLOCK—

1. How many buildings on Aboriginal settlements or reserves belonging to either government or semi-government organisations have been destroyed by fire in the last ten years?

2. What was the construction cost of these buildings?

3. What was their replacement value?

4. What types of buildings were damaged?

ANSWER

1. Seventeen buildings have been destroyed by fire.

2. The approximate construction cost of these buildings was $214,500.00.

3. Three residences have been repaired at a cost of $9,000.00.
A contract for $334,056.00 was let to rebuild Oenpelli Hospital (not completed).
A contract for $358,200.00 was let to rebuild Umbakumba Infirmary, as a hospital (not completed).
Cost to date for replacing Warrabri School is approximately $508,814.00 including landscaping.
Two schoolrooms at Bamyili were replaced by transportable classrooms costing $63,486.00.

Warrabri Hospital cost approximately $232,352.00 to rebuild (not completed).

Rebuilding and relocating of the Maningrida Sawmill cost approximately $100,000.00 including equipment.

Total cost—approximately $1,605,908.00.

4. Types of buildings damaged were:—

3 Residences
3 Schools
4 Aboriginal Houses
1 Clinic/Stores
1 Sawmill
1 Aboriginal Single Quarters
2 Hospitals
1 Infirmary
1 Cottage

755 Mr PERRON to Mr POLLOCK—

What have been the monthly outpatients attendance figures at the Tennant Creek Hospital over the last 3 years?

ANSWER

| | 1972/73 | 1973/74 | 1974/75 | 1975/76 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| July | 1,445 | 1,620 | 1,626 | 2,438 |
| August | 1,339 | 2,619 | 1,512 | 1,557 |
| September | 1,276 | 2,547 | 1,069 | 1,795 |
| October | 1,424 | 2,016 | 1,504 | |
| November | 1,340 | 1,476 | 1,432 | |
| December | 1,386 | 1,340 | 2,514 | |
| January | 1,071 | 1,276 | 1,584 | |
| February | 1,320 | 1,412 | 1,413 | |
| March | 1,387 | 1,380 | 1,171 | |
| Aril | 1,464 | 1,457 | 1,489 | |
| May | 1,839 | 1,384 | 1,711 | |
| June | 1,428 | 1,128 | 1,868 | |

756 Mr PERRON to Mr POLLOCK—

1. Do Aborigines in isolated parts of the Territory co-operate with other Territorians in the control and prevention of bush fires?
2. Is it a fact that Aborigines refuse to fight fires unless they are paid overtime?

ANSWER

1. Generally speaking, Aborigines in isolated parts of the Northern Territory co-operate with other Territorians in the control and prevention of bush fires. As is the case with other people in the Northern Territory, it is likely that there are exceptions to this and it is known that some Aborigines have in fact caused bushfires in the pursuance of their traditional way of life. Wherever possible, this practice is discouraged and attempts are made to have them understand the environmental dangers inherent in this practice.
2. There are many instances throughout the Northern Territory of Aborigines having taken an important part in fighting bush and other fires without having sought or been paid overtime. No doubt there are Aborigines who like some non-Aborigines would expect to be paid overtime. The attitude of these people would probably be that if there are other workers as against property owners, who receive such remuneration such as grader drivers etc. then they would expect the same sort of conditions.

757 Mr PERRON to Mr POLLOCK—

Does the Department of Aboriginal Affairs have an active fire prevention service or regular fire brigade operation on any settlement or Aboriginal reserve?

ANSWER

At present, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs has no regular fire brigade operating on Settlements or Aboriginal Reserves. However, it is proposed that locally based firefighting teams be trained by the Fire Brigade. This training will be reinforced by regular inspections of Fire Brigade officers who will provide additional training to volunteers.

There is already an auxiliary service manned by volunteers at Bathurst Island (which can service Melville Island if required).

A proposal has been made that a one-bay station be built to serve communities of 500 persons or more. The planning of these stations is to be carried out jointly by the Chief Fire Officer and officers of the Department of Housing and Construction.

About 30 Aboriginal communities could warrant need of this training programme. Letters of advice have been sent to all Aboriginal communities and missions in terms of the type of fire fighting equipment required.

762 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

1. When was Lot 4967 excised from Lot 265, Nightcliff?
2. For what purposes was it excised, what is its present zoning and is it still under the control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin?

ANSWER

1. Lot 4967 was never excised from Lot 265. It was surveyed as a separate lot for the purpose of a car parking area. This did not eventuate and the lot was subsequently included in the adjoining reserve.
2. See answer to Part 1 above. Lots 4967, 265, 532 and 207 are included in Reserve No. 1243 for the purpose of the recreation and amusement of the public, proclamation of which appeared in the Northern Territory Gazette dated 4.12.1968. The Corporation of the City of Darwin is the trustee as appointed by notice appearing in the Northern Territory Gazette dated 26.2.1969. Darwin Town Plan zoning is Public Recreation Reserve and Darwin Reconstruction Commission Planning Guideline shows the land as Open Space I.

763 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Has consideration been given to the surfacing of the road from Dhupuma College to Gove Airport?

ANSWER

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs advises that it has not programmed for the surfacing of the road from Dhupuma College to Gove Airport.

765 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

1. Is the Mereenie Basin from which Alice Springs draws its present domestic water supply adequate for the town's future needs?
2. Can the Mereenie Basin sustain a small farm area with irrigation in addition to providing an adequate town supply?
3. What investigations are being made by the Water Resources Branch to locate additional ground water supplies to assist the resettlement of small farmers and what priorities have been given to this work?
4. Will copies of reports prepared by Water Resources Branch be made available to Members of the Legislative Assembly?

ANSWER

1. The Mereenie Sandstone is but one bed within the Amadeus Basin. The Mereenie Sandstone Aquifer by itself is an enormous storage containing more water than Alice Springs would be likely to use in 1,000 years. Although sufficient water will always be available, by about 1983, when regard is given to economical pumping costs, pumping from the present borefield is likely to be more expensive than the cost of establishing a new borefield. Assuming a second borefield is established then, these two borefields would be adequate until the year 2,000 when a third borefield could be required. The Mereenie aquifer is able to support many of these borefields.
2. The Mereenie Sandstone is accessible at points along the James Range some 60 km south of Alice Springs. Development of borefields or even single bores along the James Range might sustain quite large farm areas. Bores at the James Range would not affect water storage at the town borefield. The scope for development at James Range is under investigation.
3. Water sources better suited to irrigated agriculture than the Mereenie Sandstone aquifer are known. But, presumably the question concerns farmers working 15 ha or smaller blocks, such as might be suited to horticulture or fruit growing. Since a near town location is preferred by most of these farmers Water Resources Branch currently is working on an assessment of the availability of water suited to irrigation in the present farm area or adjacent areas. The work has an immediate prority.
4. Reports of water resources investigation are available for perusal. However, not all are in a form suitable for public distribution.

766 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW—

1. Is the use of the gas turbine alternator necessary for the supply of electricity in Darwin at the present time?
2. Is the high noise level from the installation normal for this equipment or does the equipment require adjustment?
3. Can silencers be fitted and, if so, will the use of the equipment be restricted until the silencers are fitted.

ANSWER

1. At present the No. 5 generator (23.5 MW) at Stokes Hill Power Station cannot be utilised due to maintenance and repair of cyclone damage to the unit's chimney. This means the maximum output of the remaining four sets at the station is 47 MW. As maximum demand to date this year has been 42.3 MW it is necessary, when one of the above units is out of operation or cannot be run to maximum level, to supplement supply by use of the gas turbine.
2. The noise level of the unit is currently abnormally high as the original silencer has had to be removed due to metal deterioration.
3. Action is currently being taken for the procurement of a new and improved silencer for the turbine.

   The noise pollution problem is recognised and, while the silencer is not fitted, every endeavour is being made to restrict the use of the gas turbine to occasions when its use is absolutely essential.

768 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

1. At what Capital City airports throughout Australia is there provision for parking for a period in excess of 24 hours?
2. Why is there no provision at Darwin Airport for parking for a period in excess of 24 hours and up to seven days?

ANSWER

1. Adelaide.
2. Space allocated on Darwin airport for civil air operations inadequate for car parking requirements.

771 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss Andrew—

What steps are being taken to bring the Land and Business Agents Ordinance 1974 into operation? This ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council. When is it likely to come into operation?

ANSWER

This particular ordinance has been under review for the last 6 to 8 months and it is impossible to implement it in the Territory under present circumstances. Discussions have been held with the Real Estate Institute on several occasions and research is now being carried out into interstate legislation which indicates that many changes have to be made. It is hoped we will bring in new legislation or considerable amendments to the current ordinance in February.

772 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

At the previous sittings of this Assembly there was some discussion on possible use of the former Frances Creek mining site as a temporary jail. Has any further discussion ensued on this and, if so, what is the outcome?

ANSWER

It is true that the Frances Creek mining site has been considered and, in fact, it has been inspected by myself and officers of the Department of Northern Australia including the Administrator and representatives of the Prison Officers Association as a possible site for a prison. At this stage, the situation has not advanced any further. I understand that the former government was seriously considering acquiring the site to use for something but, whether it ends up as a prison or not, I could not say at this stage. I have my doubts because I think that the facilities that we planned for Berrimah could serve the Territory quite adequately in the immediate future. No final decision has been made and the area is being kept in mind as a possible site for a prison farm or training centre.

773 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

There was an announcement that a fence would be put around Fannie Bay Gaol. How much money has been authorized to be spent on the so-called rehabilitation in the short term at Fannie Bay and for how long is it expected that the remnants of Fannie Bay will be used as a jail?

ANSWER

I am unable to say exactly how much money has been allocated because this has been a matter for some conjecture for some weeks. A fence is to be built around Fannie Bay Gaol. It will be gold colorbond. The material is being assembled at the moment and it is hoped that it will be erected in the immediate future. Two demountable units have been placed at the jail to be used as offices and a medical centre. Temporary repairs have been effected to two of the blocks which are fit for use and some repairs are to be effected to the kitchen and dining area. Originally about $50,000 was spoken of but I think that these repairs will cost more than that. Just how long it is to remain there is a matter of concern. I have been emphasising that it should be an absolute minimum period. We have previously heard in this Assembly that it may be for 2 years but I would hope that it would not be for a longer period. It is a matter of planning and the provision of funds for the facilities at Berrimah which would obviate the need for any use of Fannie Bay.

774 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

When will the remnants of the Rapid Creek Infant School be made safe? There is a drive to make private premises safe but this must be the worst hazard in the entire area?

ANSWER

I believe there is a program within the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and in co-operation with various government departments to upgrade and made safe all public buildings. I will pursue the specific matter that the honourable member raises and make information available to her.

775 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

Can she give any explanation for the frequent power cuts in the central city area of Darwin which do not seem to be connected to normal maintenance and repairs?

ANSWER

The ESU have considerable difficulty with vandalism around the Darwin area. For example, wire and other debris has been thrown over power lines causing failures. I cannot give the honourable member the reason for the power cuts in the centre of the city but vandalism added to the fact that many of the electricity connections around Darwin are of very poor quality at the moment have caused many failures. However, I will endeavour to provide further information for him this afternoon.

776 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

How many motor vehicles has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission purchased or leased in the last 6 months?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain the information and make it available to the honourable member.

777 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

What steps are being taken to provide parking space at the Darwin Airport for a period of longer than 4 hours?

ANSWER

I do not know that there are any steps being taken to extend the parking time at the airport. I only became aware of the fact that there is not 24 hour parking when I was given a ticket. I believe that one of the reasons that they do not want 24 hour parking is that they consider that the present parking facilities are inadequate and it would cause congestion during the normal day to day flights. I will speak to the people concerned and see if there is any possibility of getting 24 hour parking.

778 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Is he aware of the shortage of nursing staff at Katherine Hospital?

ANSWER

I am aware of the situation there. The Katherine Hospital nursing staff later this month will be reduced from an authorized strength of about 44 down to 26. This is a matter of concern to the Health Department and to all members. A motion was passed at the last sitting of this Assembly expressing concern that the staffing of hospitals would become critical if something was not done to provide adequate facilities and conditions for employees. The former minister and the department have been unable to heed the Assembly's advice so far and, as a result, the situation is becoming grave in Katherine and throughout the Territory.

779 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

When will the Alawa Preschool re-open?

ANSWER

I do not have that information available. However, I will endeavour to provide it by the end of the day.

780 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS—

In the light of the present election, will steps be taken to streamline the Electoral Office's services for towns remote from Alice Springs and Darwin in the case of future snap elections?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Nhulunbuy has raised a matter which has troubled members of this Assembly and interested members of the public over many years: the difficulty in trying to ensure that people in the remoter parts of Australia have the opportunity to vote at elections. This becomes particularly difficult with elections held at short notice and the out-back mail services simply do not cater for a situation where you have nominations closing a fortnight before an election and postal votes have to be sent out and returned within a certain time. All that we can really do is continue to bring to the Chief Electoral Officer's notice the problems that exist and to make suggestions as to how they might be solved. I do not think that the Northern Territory will ever fit neatly into the Australian Electoral Act and Regulations which are designed with a view to places where mail services are more regular and people are more accessible. We have found out at past elections over several years that it is quite clear that some hundreds of people do not vote—people who would like to vote—because they do not receive their postal vote in time or they cannot get it back in time. I do not know what the full answer is except that we must keep working closely with the electoral officer to try to improve the system.

781 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

In view of the fact that some ordinary home builders are paying fees up to $2,000 for architectural and engineering advice before they can commence building, when will the Building Board carry out its own assessment of these things?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has been periodically looking at the provisions of the Building Manual. There is an assessing group looking at that particular document at the moment to facilitate the private sector applications in Darwin. As to the timing of any relaxation of requirements with regard to an engineering certificate, I am unable to give any indication as to when this might happen.

782 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Have any citizens in the Darwin area been prosecuted for illegally operating caravan parks?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

783 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

I refer to a bill on the notice paper dealing with the lowering of the time limit for P plates on cars. Has he referred this legislation to the Road Safety Council and, if so, have they indicated support or any other feeling on the matter?

ANSWER

I have not referred it to the Road Safety Council. I spoke with the police and members of the Transport Planning Branch of the Department of Northern Australia. I am the chairman of the Road Safety Council and nothing has been said to me about it. The police are quite happy with the bill.

784 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

Does the chairman of the Hospital Advisory Board in the Northern Territory require permission before escorting visitors on inspection tours of hospitals?

ANSWER

I don't know the formalities of the requirements for chairmen of advisory boards before inspecting hospitals. I would imagine that, as a common courtesy, before an inspection he would communicate with the person running the place to ensure that it would be convenient. However, I will make some further inquiries and advise the member.

785 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS—

You will have heard of the infestation of the oriental fruit fly on Bathurst and Melville Islands. What steps are being taken to eradicate the flies from these and other affected areas?

ANSWER

This matter is of great importance to the Territory's future potential in things like tropical fruit production. I do not have the full details as to how the department believes that this pest was introduced to Bathurst and Melville Islands. The normal way for introduction of such a pest is through infested fruit which leads one to think that controls on the introduction of fruit from others parts of South East Asi to the northern coast of Australia are not as tight as they should be. I will check this matter out with the department. There had been hopes that the Northern Territory tropical fruit production could extend to supplying things like mangoes and pineapples to the southern states. The addition of an extra pest such as this to our range would make that more difficult. On the side of comfort, there are many ecologists who believe that pests such as this find their own natural limits as the tick appears to have done in Australia. Probably this pest may not be able to survive in a more temperate climate. Despite that hope, it is necessary to take strict action for its detection and eradication. The Department of Northern Australia Agriculture Branch in conjunction with the Queensland authorities have imported a considerably quantity of pesticides. At the moment, they are endeavouring to trace and eradicate any signs of this particular pest from Bathurst and Melville Islands. I will see if they have any more up-to-date details and inform the Assembly at a later stage.

786 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW—

What action has been taken to recover or to assist in the recovery of moneys which were paid by members of the Darwin community to the organisation known as Seatoun and what steps have been taken for the prosecution of the person responsible for the fraud?

ANSWER

We have been in touch with the authorities. I will endeavour to provide the information before lunch time.

787 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW—

Under the new regulations, how are five-year-old children to be enrolled in the new school year?

ANSWER

Last week, the Department of Education issued a new policy on enrolment of children. This has been to some extent misunderstood by the community. Any child who is 5 years before the 1 February 1976 will automatically be admitted to a school. However, any child who reaches the age of 5 after 1 February must go to

a pre-school and it is then up to the teacher of the pre-school in consultation with the parents and the authorities of the local school as to when that child is admitted into grade 1.

788 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Under what regulation are children required to attend pre-school? She said they must.

ANSWER

It has been a practice that children enter school at the age of 5 years. This is a departmental directive. Children are not required to go to school before the age of 6, therefore no school is forced to admit them before that age. However, they do at 5 and it is departmental policy.

789 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise me if plans are in hand to increase the parking space at the Darwin Airport and also the parking area for the light aircraft at the Darwin Airport?

ANSWER

The same question was asked yesterday by the honourable member for Jingili and I think the honourable member for Arnhem was here yesterday for question time. I did explain that there are problems out there, as we all know, and that I would be speaking to the Department of Transport to see what is being done. I did not give any undertaking to give an answer during this session, but I did advise the Assembly that I would follow it through and see if there was going to be any extension to the car parking area and whether or not the car parking times would be extended to 24 hours and in excess of 24 hours.

790 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

I have asked this question both on notice and without notice at every sittings. What action is being taken to erect signs making the public aware that the riding of motor vehicles on Darwin's beaches is prohibited?

ANSWER

Following the last occasion that the honourable member addressed this question to me, I raised the matter with the Local Government Branch of the Department of Northern Australia who have informed me that there was not a budget provision at that stage to erect the signs but that they would endeavour to meet the requirements and see what they could do. I have not followed it up from that date but I will certainly do so.

791 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he able to tell me whether the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has a set plan for the reconstruction of the northern suburbs and, if there is such a plan, will they make it public?

ANSWER

The honourable member's question is in very general terms and it is rather difficult to give him a specific answer. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has advertised a general town planning scheme. At this stage it has not been endorsed formally by the Minister as required under the act. However, it is being used as the town planning guide and I would draw his attention to it.

792 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. When will a motor registration office be opened in Katherine, and what action has been taken to eliminate traffic light hazards in Katherine at Lindsay Street and Cemetery Corner?

ANSWER

The situation with Lindsay Street is that I have approached the departments and pointed out that it is felt that Lindsay Street intersection should have been left more open at present because the road servicing the subdivision was not really going to be used for several years. I haven't as yet had any further remarks from them but I will attempt to get a definite answer from them tomorrow as to what plans they have for that intersection.

I will endeavour to find out about the motor registration office and give an answer tomorrow.

793 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS—

Can he advise what progress has followed the resolution of the Assembly to set up a commission to inquire into lottery and gaming, and has a commissioner yet been appointed to conduct the inquiry?

ANSWER

A commissioner has not yet been appointed. Approaches have been made to a number of people who were regarded as suitable to carry out an inquiry such as this. The Attorney-General's Department in Canberra was unable to assist but a couple of people on the final short list have been approached and we expect to get confirmation of their availability within the next week or two and that the appointment can proceed in the near future.

794 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

I previously asked the honourable member then responsible when the parole board would become operative and I was advised that there were no funds in this year's budget to allow it to commence operation. I now

ask if funds have yet been made available so that the parole board may be formally called together and commence its operations.

ANSWER

I will endeavour to ascertain the information today.

795 Mr WITHNALL to Mr SPEAKER—

Can you inform members of the Assembly when demountable units for office purposes will be made available?

ANSWER

I have received a letter from the Director of Housing and Construction. It says that the supply of the 5 office accommodation units for the Legislative Assembly has fallen behind schedule and it is expected that the units will be one week late arriving in Darwin. Depending on the state of the rail road communications between Adelaide and Darwin, it is now anticipated that the units will be installed by 19 December 1975.

796 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

I direct my question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is it a fact that mail sorted and ready for despatch on Friday has to wait in post offices until the following working week commences?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer that question. I suggest that it be put on notice.

797 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS—

How do public become aware of grievances of elected members made public in adjournment debates in this Assembly?

ANSWER

Honourable members would be aware that most legislatures produce a daily Hansard, and in fact that used to be the custom with the legislature until the disruption to the printing services brought about 11 months ago. We still produce a daily Hansard but it comes out a few days late. My understanding, in answer to the honourable member's question, is that the Department of Northern Australia receives several copies of this daily Hansard. They have a particular officer appointed to be a liaison officer with the Legislative Assembly. I think it is Mr George Parker. Part of his duties is to examine the contents of the Hansard, extract comments and criticism directed at various branches and departments, and to forward them to those destinations. How effective this method is I am not sure and I am certain it will be ah improvement when we can improve the production time schedule of the daily Hansard and probably widen its distribution.

798 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

I ask a question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is it a fact that the new caravan Park in Cameron Street, Katherine will merely be a substitute for the low-level caravan park and will still leave the town short of accommodation for travellers?

ANSWER

I am unable to give a specific answer to that question. I will endeavour to obtain the information from the department today.

799 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

I ask another question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. When is television likely to be provided for settlements such as Mataranka which are close to transmitting towers on the microwave link from Mount Isa to Darwin?

ANSWER

In view of the difficulty in trying to get an answer to that question before we rise, I suggest that the question be placed on notice so that we can get an accurate and full answer.

800 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW—

My question without notice is also asked on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is there a need for a search and rescue unit in the police force, and when will the stock squad be reformed?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain those answers today. Otherwise I suggest that the questions be placed on notice.

801 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

I have a further question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is there any plan to station a highway patrol at Daly Waters in line with the recommendations of the McKinna report, in view of the increasing number of fatalities on the Stuart Highway?

ANSWER

I do not have any information regarding the fatalities in that particular area. Once again, I would suggest that the question be placed on notice.

802 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

Can the honourable member advise me the current position on Home Finance Trustee loans being made available to persons owning residential property in the primary surge area?

ANSWER

Members will be aware that the Home Finance Trustee scheme is administered by the Department of Northern Australia. It is therefore under the direct control of the Minister for Northern Australia. Under the previous instructions of the Labor Party ministers, finance is not available in the primary surge zone. I am aware of a number of submissions through both the Department of Northern Australia and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to relax that situation. However, the present Minister for Northern Australia is hampered inasmuch as he cannot reverse the policy decision during the term of the caretaker government. The matter I am sure will receive speedy attention after 13 December.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

## December 1975


Aboriginals—
  bush fires control (Perron) 755
  fire brigades, settlements (Perron) 757
  settlement buildings, fires (Perron) 754
Adjournment debates, action on grievances (Everingham) 797
Airport parking (Everingham) 768, 777; (Kentish) 789
Alawa preschool re-opening (Dondas) 779
Alice Springs water supplies (Vale) 765
Beaches, signs, vehicles (Lawrie) 790
Building Board, assessments (Kentish) 781
Caravan parks, prosecutions (Dondas) 782
Daly Waters, highway patrol (Everingham) 801
Darwin Reconstruction Commission—
  motor vehicles (Dondas) 776
  northern suburbs reconstruction (Dondas) 791
Demountable offices (Withnall) 795
Electoral office, snap elections (Ballantyne) 780
Enrolments, five-year-olds (Vale) 787
Fannie Bay Gaol (Lawrie) 773
Frances Creek mining site (Lawrie) 772
Gas turbine alternator (Withnall) 766
Gove, pollution (Lawrie) 751
Highway patrol, Daly Waters (Everingham) 801
Home finance loans, primary surge area (Everingham) 802
Hospitals, inspection tours (Ballantyne) 784
Katherine—
  caravan park (Everingham) 798
  motor registration office (Ballantyne) 792
  nursing staff shortage (Dondas) 778
  traffic lights hazard (Ballantyne) 792
Land and Business Agents Ordinance 1974 (Everingham) 771
Lots 4967 and 265 Nightcliff (Lawrie) 762
Lottery and Gaming Commission (Everingham) 791
Mail despatch (Ballantyne) 796
Nhulunbuy—
  road surfacing (Ballantyne) 763
  tourist promotion (Ballantyne) 397A
Oriental fruit fly eradication (Tungutalum) 785
Parole Board funds (Lawrie) 794
Police—search and rescue unit and stock squad (Vale) 800
Power cuts, central city (Everingham) 775
P Plates legislation (Lawrie) 783
Preschool attendance (Lawrie) 788
Rapid Creek Infant School (Lawrie) 774
Schoolchildren, enrolments 5-year-olds (Vale) 787
Search and rescue unit (Vale) 800
Seatoun, recovery of moneys (Withnall) 786
Stock squad (Vale) 800
Tennant Creek hospital, outpatients (Perron) 755
TV for settlements (Everingham) 799

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order.

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

758 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

(a) Is he aware of the fact that due to Nabalco's operations at Nhulunbuy there has been irreversible damage to Drimmie Arm and extensive damage to Melville Bay?
(b) If he is not aware of the fact, will be appraise himself of it?
(c) If he is aware of the fact, would he advise this Assembly what measures the Department of Northern Australia is taking so that there is no further pollution?
(d) What officers of the Department of Northern Australia are stationed at Nhulunbuy to monitor pollution? If there are any, how long have they been stationed there and what is their status?

ANSWER

The following information was supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

(a) Technical advice provided by the Department of the Northern Territory indicates that, due to accidental causes, some pollution has occurred. However, it could not be described as irreversible damage.
(b) See above
(c) The Department of the Northern Territory, through its Mines Branch, has had extensive discussions with Nabalco, resulting in measures being taken by the Company to contain any caustic spillage and to ensure the security of the red mud ponds. In addition, the Department has four branches charged with monitoring responsibilities in the area. They are Forestry, Fisheries, Wildlife, Environment and National Parks Branch, Water Resources Branch, Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch and Mines Branch.
Fisheries Section of the Forestry, Fisheries, Wildlife and National Parks Branch monitors caustic levels in the cooling drain discharge on a twice daily basis, and once a month monitors the magnesium levels of inshore waters, as well as the condition of mud fauna and the characteristics of mud in the discharge from the red mud ponds. It also checks sea floor sediments.
Water Resources will operate a station that will shortly be constructed for the continuous monitoring of all effluent discharge. In the meantime it conducts water quality tests on the cooling drain effluent on a monthly basis.
Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch, per medium of the Mines Inspector, monitors soil and sand use as well as sand dune erosion.
The Mines Branch, apart from its own mining inspection responsibilities, which include checking on rehabilitation of mined land, co-ordinates the monitoring duties of the other branches.
(d) Mines Branch has had an Inspector of Mines, who is a Mining Engineer Class 3, engaged on monitoring the whole Gove operation since January 1973. He has been permanently stationed at Gove since September 1974. This senior officer is responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring activities of all Branches.
The Fisheries Section monitoring program began in November 1970, conducted from Darwin under the direction of a Biologist Class 2. Since early 1975 officers of Fisheries have been permanently stationed at Gove and one of these, a Technical Officer Class 1, has continued to conduct the monitoring program.
Both Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch and Water Resources Branch have senior officers available to visit Gove for monitoring purposes on request from the Inspector of Mines. Officers of Water Resources have been permanently stationed at Gove since early 1975 and they will operate the monitoring station when completed.

759 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

1. With reference to beach and dune erosion at Wallaby Beach Nhulunbuy, what steps have been taken to revegetate or otherwise reinforce the Beach end of the Wallaby Beach drain?
2. With reference to the quarry at Drimmie Head (Gove), what steps have been taken to make the walls of this quarry safe?

ANSWER

The following information was supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

1. Areas of sand behind the Wallaby Beach dunes were mined during the period of construction of the Gove plant complex and town. Mining no longer takes place there and the area is rapidly being restored by filling with dry industrial waste and replanting with chosen species of vegetation. An additional replanting was undertaken there late in 1975 to take advantage of the Wet Season rains. Nothing has been done to reinforce the beach end of the Wallaby Beach stormwater drain as, after careful monitoring, nothing has been found necessary. No erosion of either the dunes or the beach has been observed and no action to divert the stormwater drain is seen to be necessary at this time.
2. The Drimmie Head quarry was brought into a safe condition during the latter part of 1974 by Nabalco. Under the supervision of the Department of the Northern Territory's resident Inspector of Mines, the quarry walls were terraced and large rocks were removed as necessary. The quarry is now being used permanently for swimming and other recreational activities.

761 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

In relation to Melville Bay, has the Australian Government Department of Environment been advised that major pollution of the Bay has occurred from pollution from the cooling water drain because attempts to control and contain spills of highly polluting and expensive effluent at the source have proved at best only partially successful?

ANSWER

The following information was supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

As the Commonwealth Department of Environment has no direct legislation or control on matters of pollution and as the area is not at present subject to an Environmental Impact Statement under the provisions of the Environmental Protection (Impact of Proposals) Legislation 1974-75, that Department has not been advised on any matter relating to the potential pollution of Melville Bay.

There has been instances of caustic spills in the past and the matter has been receiving priority attention from both Nabalco and the Department of the Northern Territory. Approximately $400,000 has already been spent and further plant modifications costing well over $1,000,000 are being examined with a view to eliminating any further loss of caustic solution to the environment. The modifications are designed to achieve this by total containment of spent solutions within the treatment plant and tailing dam circuits.

The new dam design allows for all spent caustic solution to be pumped to the treatment plant for re-use to obtain the full benefit of expensive treatment chemicals. The pumping lines will be monitored for breaks using low-pressure sensors and automatic pump cut-outs.

764 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK—

What action has been taken or is being planned for the future in regard to Industrial Health referred to in the Report on the Requirements of Hospital and Medical Facilities for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The following information is supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

"It is assumed that this question related to the recommendation at paragraph 7.93 of the Report of the Industry of the Inquiry into the Northern Territory Health Services prepared for the Legislative Council in August, 1972.

That recommendation related to:

(a) Amendments to the Silicosis and Tuberculosis (Mineworkers & Prospectors) Ordinance to extend its provisions to cover pneumoconiosis;
(b) the provisions in the Workmens Compensation Ordinance making 7B fully compensatable; and
(c) the need for adequate legislation for control of dust diseases and compensation for such diseases.

The Department of Health is not directly concerned with workmen's compensation and these comments are therefore restricted to the occupational health aspects of the recommendation.

Amendments to the Silicosis and Tuberculosis (Mineworkers and Prospectors) Ordinance extending the provisions of that Ordinance to all forms of pneumoconiosis were, in fact, approved by the then Minister of Health and instructions issued to the Legislative Draftsman as long ago as 1970. There were delays in drafting the amendments, however, and in the meantime our investigations into the need for legislation covering all occupational dust hazards indicated that little purpose would be served by the essentially stop-gap measures which those amendments represented—particularly as the Federal Government had announced its intention to introduce a national "no-fault" compensation scheme within the near future.

In February, 1974 the Legislative Draftsman was asked to disregard the instructions for the amendments to the Silicosis and Tuberculosis (Mineworkers and Prospectors) Ordinance and forewarned of the intention to proceed with more comprehensive legislation covering all occupational dust hazards. Unfortunately, since then, little progress has been made with this proposed new legislation.

This is primarily due to the need to concentrate on legislative proposals of a more urgent nature, however it is also partly due to the need to correlate the legislation to compensation provisions in other legislation and this has been made difficult pending final acceptance of the national compensation scheme proposal.

The present situation then is proposals for new legislation imposing controls over occupational dust hazards are being prepared, however because of other demands on our resources and the need to relate the proposals to the possible basic change in the compensation system, it is unlikely that the proposals will be finalised for some time."

770 Mr PERRON to Mr RYAN—

1. Where does the Darwin Fire Brigade get its self-contained breathing apparatus cylinders recharged?
2. What standard does the air have to meet and how often is it tested?
3. Are there any Government facilities in Darwin where the public can have compressed air analysed?

ANSWER

The following information was supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

1. The Darwin Fire Brigade recharges their own portable breathing apparatus cylinders from three large cylinders coupled together. The compressed air is obtained from C.I.G.
2. The standard is that set by the Australian Department of Health—mainly water content. The Fire Brigade does not test the quality of the air but accepts C.I.G. products as meeting the Health requirements.
3. There are currently no Government of Commercial facilities in Darwin for the analysis of compressed air for the public. Samples would be sent south for analysis.

803 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH—

At what stage are plans for the development of the proposed new Ayer's Rock Village?

ANSWER

The following information is supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

"On 21 August 1975 six selected town planning consultants were engaged by the Department to undertake the development of preliminary proposals for Ayers Rock Tourist Village.

A sub-committee of the Ayers Rock Advisory Committee will be analysing these six preliminary proposals on 4-6 February 1976 and their recommendation on selection of the final consultant will be considered for endorsement by the full Ayers Rock Advisory Committee at its next meeting, currently scheduled for 18 February 1976.

It is envisaged that selected town planning consultants will be engaged to undertake the full brief in March 1976 and the final report, including the Environment Impact Statement and Town Planning Scheme should be completed by the end of January 1977."

804 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS—

Recently, a study was undertaken to locate an area near Alice Springs suitable for market gardening. Has this study been completed, if so, what were the findings; if the study is not yet complete, when is it expected to be completed, and the results announced?

ANSWER

The following information is supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

The Water Resources Branch is engaged on two separate projects aimed at providing water for irrigated agriculture at Alice Springs.

One seeks to prove a supply having the high water quality necessary for horticulture. This market-garden type activity desirably should be close to markets and the labour supply. The study is not complete. The final report will not be available until 1977.

The other aims at defining an area of suitable soils having access to water adequate for the irrigation of fodder crops. Three possible areas have been examined. A fourth area in the vicinity of James Range south of Alice Springs is on the draft investigation programme for 1976-77. A report would be available mid 1977.

805 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

There is a telephone service connected to Iwupataka (Jay Creek):—

(a) When was this service connected?
(b) At what cost and at whose cost was this service installed?
(c) Since January 1975, on how many occasions has the service been unserviceable?
(d) Is the Telecommunication Commission taking any action to improve the reliability of the service?

ANSWER

The following information is supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

(a) The telephone service to Jay Creek was connected on 7.12.74. The cost for the connection of this service was $1,820.00 and the cost was borne by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.
(b) Since January, 1975 the telephone has been unserviceable during the following periods:
5.8.75 to 22.8.75; 21.10.75 to 12.11.75; 13.12.75 to date.
(c) The Telecommunication Commission has advised that they are doing everything in their power to improve the reliability of the service, but it is not known when the service will be restored.

806 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

1. Does the Department of Northern Territory intend proceeding with the Brinkin Sub-division?
2. Has the Department of Northern Territory issued a Lease to the developers?
3. If so, what area is involved and what are the conditions of such lease?

ANSWER

The following information is supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

Parts 1 and 2
After negotiations with the Department and consideration of applications for a Town Lands subdivision lease advertised on 14 July 1971, the Minister for the Northern Territory granted a lease to Hooker Estates in May 1974.

Part 3
The area of the lease is 188.6 hectares and the conditions are as set out in the brief below—

(i) The company will use the land only for the purpose for which it was leased, viz, for the purpose of subdividing Lot 6247 Town of Nightcliff in accordance with plans and specifications as may be approved by the Administrator.

(ii) That it shall complete the works specified below within five years of the commencement of the lease or for such further period as may be allowed by the Administrator.

(iii) The company shall construct
- all roads and drainage works within the subdivision in accordance with Plan No. UD15/36 previously approved by the Administrator
- all water and sewerage reticulation works within the subdivision in accordance with a plan approved by the Administrator
- a lake on the site delineated in Plan No. UD15/36 previously approved by the Administrator
- the lake and the revetment wall and other lake edge treatment which works shall meet structural, aesthetic and maintenance standards that are satisfactory to the Administrator in all respects
- a bridge and weir at a location approved by the Administrator
- develop parklands, playing fields and lakeside recreation areas on the sites delineated in Plan No. UD15/36 previously approved by the Administrator
- and provide a site for a kindergarten (pre-school) on the location delineated in Plan No. UD15/36 previously approved by the Administrator.

The lease also contains conditions regarding the construction of internal roads and parts of external roads as well as for the handover of the item above to the Commonwealth on completion.

807 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

With reference to the Renal Dialysis machine located at the Darwin Hospital—

(a) when was this machine installed at the hospital;
(b) what was the cost of the acquisition and installation of this machine;
(c) were all costs incurred met by the Commonwealth Department of Health;
(d) how many people have used this machine;
(e) how many people are presently using this machine;
(f) has the Department of Health made the existence of this machine known to private medical practitioners?

ANSWER

It should be clarified at the outset that the Renal Dialysis machine located at the Darwin Hospital is a unit designed for home dialysis and would normally be installed in the home of the patient and would be serviced and the dialysis procedures carried out by the patient and the patient's family.

This home dialysis unit was located at the Darwin Hospital because of special medical circumstances of the patient concerned. Such patients require a prolonged period of training in a major southern hospital before they are assessed as suitable for home dialysis and it was with great reluctance that the southern hospital concerned agreed to the location of the unit in the Darwin Hospital setting.

Such home dialysis units are provided for the exclusive use of an individual patient.

Specific answers to the questions are—

(a) The machine was installed at the hospital in August 1974.
(b) The machine was purchased for $4,000.00; installation costs were $1,770.00.
(c) All costs were met by the Commonwealth Department of Health. It should be noted that the provision of home dialysis units is heavily subsidised by the Commonwealth Government in the States and solutions used are available under the Pharmaceutical Benefits scheme.
(d) One person has used the machine. This is the principle involved in the provision of the home dialysis unit.
(e) The machine is not presently in use as the patient for whom it was provided died during the first week of February 1976.
(f) The existence of the machine was not advised to private medical practitioners as it was provided for the use of one patient. It is not suitable for use by other patients at the same time.

808 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

In evidence given by a Mr J. C. McDonnell, Department of Northern Territory to the House Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs on 5 February 1974, Mr McDonnell mentioned a report compiled by the Department of Northern Territory which he described as an "environmental study on the disposal of red mud waste from alumina production at Gove".

Would the Honourable Member table a copy of that report in this Assembly?

ANSWER

The following information was supplied in answer to the Member's question:—

Yes—a copy of the report, which is known as "Gove Land Use—Study of the Conservation Aspects" by Professor J. S. Turner, is made available to the Honourable Member. The report may be treated as a public document.

It is pointed out that according to official records a copy was made available to the Honourable Member as well as a copy being provided for the Legislative Assembly Library.

827 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

Why were children admitted to Wagaman Primary School on 2 February when virtually no repairs had been effected and no telephone installed? When will the school be repaired?

ANSWER

I am advised that the children were admitted to Wagaman School because the department felt it best that children attend school in their own area and judged it better for them to remain in one location throughout the term even with some intitial inconvenience. The structure was proved to be sound and not in any way dangerous and the principal and staff were willing to open. A grounds contract was unable to be carried out before the opening of the school because of wet weather. However, the grounds have now been mowed and are acceptable. The parents are assisting in the establishment of the school through working bees. During the months from April to September inclusive, there is a proposed program of total restoration and upgrading of the school and preschool. This program may be reviewed, however, subject to government policy.

828 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

My question concerns the 307 housing loans applications approved. What was the date on which further approval ceased to be given; in other words, what was the cut-off date after the 307 had been approved?

ANSWER

I am unable to give an answer on the specific date since which approvals have not been granted. The first date on which it was brought to my attention was 14 January.

829 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

What happened to the money donated by the Australian waterside workers to the Darwin waterside workers after the cyclone?

ANSWER

So far as I know, nothing has been done with the money that was donated to the Darwin waterside workers from the other waterside workers' organisations around the country. I believe an amount in excess of $100,000 was involved. To my knowledge, no wharfie in Darwin has received any benefit from this fund.

830 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

What post-election promises has the member had from the present Federal Government that the promise of statehood for this part of Australia in five years will be honoured?

ANSWER

I have a statement prepared to deliver to the Assembly following question time and the answer to the honourable member's question will be in part covered by that statement.

831 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN—

Is it a fact that Commonwealth Railways are intending to close the northern section of the north Australia line from Larrimah to Darwin?

ANSWER

I will attempt to find out the information and clarify the situation in an answer later in these sittings.

832 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON—

Can he advise me concerning the progress of light installation on section 462, Hundred of Strangways, Humpty Doo?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get the information during these sittings.

833 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

Has the Minister administering the Darwin Reconstruction Act ever approved any scheme pursuant to section 9(1) of the act?

ANSWER

No.

834 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

What proposals for the development and construction of any part of Darwin have been advertised by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission under section 8 of the Darwin Reconstruction Act?

ANSWER

I became the Assembly's delegate to the DRC in September but I believe that the information sought by the honourable member for Port Darwin is that the town planning guidelines and proposals that were prepared by the DRC in the early days of February and March were in fact put up for public planning exhibition and discussion in March, and accepted in the terms of section 8(1) of the Darwin Reconstruction Act.

835 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON—

Can you advise me when lights will be established at the intersection of Stuart Highway and Farrell Crescent?

ANSWER

The problem of the lights being installed at the Stuart Highway and Farrell Crescent intersection has been one of concern to me for some time, and I have been endeavouring to get the relevant departments to have the job executed as soon as possible. The last I heard, some three months ago, was that it was to be done within a fortnight, that finance had been allocated, that the job had actually been put on a program. The department seems to express surprise at the moment as to why it has not been done. The fact is that it has not been done, and this passing the buck, as it were, by some departments doesn't seem to be helping the situation very much. The corner of Farrell Crescent and the Stuart Highway is very dangerous at night unlit and it has never been lit. It has been the scene of many accidents. I will continue my endeavours to have the lights installed as soon as possible.

836 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Can he state that the attitude of the last government, that laws governing the Northern Territory and many non-federal areas ought to be made in the Federal Parliament, will be reversed by the present government so that laws for the government of the Northern Territory and non-federal affairs may be made in the Territory by the elected members of this Assembly and not in Canberra by Ministers who try to gain their understanding of the people and the problems of the Northern Territory by one-day flying visits.

ANSWER

The honourable member is well aware that I cannot state exactly what any Australian Government or Federal Government will do, nor can I be held to account for their actions, but I can assure him that I will continue to join him, as we have over many years, in exhortation and pressures on the present government to refrain from legislating in fields which are properly the fields of this legislature. I anticipate that we will have much more success with the present government than we had with the previous one.

837 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

Is it a fact that the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has announced his intention to proceed with the Aboriginal Land Bill in the Federal Parliament with minor amendments only, and has the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs expressed the view that laws relating to Aboriginal land rights should be made by the Federal Parliament and not by this Assembly?

ANSWER

Certain words were used in the phrasing of the question and I cannot be quite sure that they were the words actually used by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Viner. I think he did make it public in the early days of his ministry and during his tour of the Northern Territory that he was anxious to proceed with Aboriginal land legislation as quickly as possible, and that it was his view at the time that the legislation would be along similar lines to that proposed by Mr Justice Woodward and framed in legislation by the Labor Government. How soon the Minister will be able to proceed in the matter and in what form he will proceed is probably not his choice alone; I would believe that it is a matter that Federal Cabinet will decide. Although Mr Viner may have certain personal views they will have to be qualified in the light of what his Cabinet colleagues think.

As to where the legislation will be processed, Cabinet has not yet made any final commitment to the best of my knowledge. Mr Viner did give an indication on his visit to the Northern Territory that his thinking was that it would be processed, as before, in the Federal Parliament but he did also indicate that he was listening to suggestions and open to suggestions and that he would take those into account. Well, he certainly has plenty of suggestions since then, from all sides, not only to him but to some of his federal colleagues. I will still continue to press for the legislation to be made in the Northern Territory and I will press as firmly and as constantly in that direction as I can.

838 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH—

What recent discussions have taken place concerning the proposed Alice Springs refinery?

ANSWER

Although I have not been included in any discussion, I am aware that the Minister for the Northern Territory has had discussions with the chairman of Oilmin, Mr Bill Siller, and the chairman of Magellan Petroleum, Mr Roy Hopkins, in Brisbane of recent weeks to discuss the feasibility of the Alice Springs oil refinery going ahead. Further to that, I am aware that, on the Minister's visit to Alice Springs early in February, he visited the proposed refinery site and had discussions in the town with the Alice Springs Corporation and the MLAs who are pressing very heavily for this project to go ahead.

839 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

There has been an announcement that $5m worth of capital works will not be now commenced this year owing to budget cutbacks instituted by the Prime Minister. Will the relevant Executive Member table a precise list of exactly what capital works will be affected and will not now be commenced.

ANSWER

I have not been acquainted with the details of the expenditure cuts; I will endeavour to obtain them and I will make a submission to the Minister to see if they can be tabled in this House.

840 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

How many applications under the Trespassers (Temporary Provisions) Ordinance have been instituted through the magistrates court of Darwin for the eviction of trespassers?

ANSWER

I am advised that one case is proceeding at the moment and one other case will be commencing on the 18th of this month.

841 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

She will be aware that there was an incident at the Paspalis Drive-in during which a thirteen-year-old boy was seriously wounded. Have any charges been laid as a result of this incident?

ANSWER

I don't have precise information but I will endeavour to obtain it for the honourable member later today.

842 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK—

Has he any—and, if so, what—information as to action taken to secure wage justice to the medical and nursing staff at the Darwin Hospital? Will he take steps to have the Minister for Health intervene at the highest level to secure that the hospital staff, who in the interests of humanity are deprived of the strike weapon, be given at least wage levels equal to those paid in other states.

ANSWER

I can assure him that I have already on many occasions over the last 6 to 9 months taken this matter up with the Minister for Health and in particular the former Minister for Health who had many thoughts on the matter but did little. The present Minister for Health has taken the matter up with the highest authorities——

Mrs Lawrie: What has he done?

Mr POLLOCK: I was assured as recently as this morning that the matter is at the moment in the hands of the Prime Minister who has given directions that the matter be treated with urgency. There is a hearing to be had before the full bench of the Arbitration Commission as a matter of urgency——

Mr Withnall: It does not need to go to the commission.

Mr POLLOCK: . . . and the Prime Minister and the Minister for Industry and Employment are also negotiating other measures that might be taken outside of the commission to alleviate the situation in areas other than salaries.

843 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

Can the honourable member procure for me the total enrolment at Aboriginal schools in the Northern Territory for the years 1972-1976 inclusive?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be put on notice please.

844 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

What is the present status of the unit titles legislation passed through this house after about 10 years of waiting?

ANSWER

I believe the unit titles legislation has been reserved. I have had discussions with departmental officers in the last couple of days in an attempt to have assent granted to these bills as quickly as possible. I have indicated my party's stand that, if there are any administrative or procedural amendments that would be required, we would be happy to process them in this Assembly.

845 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

Upon what date was the Strata Titles Ordinance reserved by the Adminstrator?

ANSWER

I am unable to give an answer. However, I was informed this morning that it appeared in the latest Gazette.

846 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN—

What firm and positive arrangements have been made by the Postal Commission for the conveyance of surface mails into Alice Springs and other centres from southern and eastern states during the present disruption to service transport into the Territory?

ANSWER

I do not have the answer to that question. I will attempt to find out and inform the Assembly at a later stage of the sittings.

847 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Is the police stock squad still in operation? What are the qualifications required for the issue of the cattle brands in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

As far as I know, the police stock squad is still in operation, to the limited extent that it ever was in operation. The last information I had was that it was a one man unit and it did not have a bush vehicle. I do not think it has reached very far and wide in its effects. I will check that it is still in operation and on the state of its equipment and activities.

As far as the issue of brands in the Northern Territory are concerned, the person who applies for a brand has to be the holder of a suitable portion of land—a pastoral lease or an agricultural lease—or have the permission of somebody who does hold such land to register and use a brand on that area.

848 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS—

With respect to order of the day number 4 standing on the order of business for today, the Land Acquisition Bill of 1975, has he sought from the Government approval for an amendment to the Northern Territory (Administration) Act so that a bill in the terms of this bill or a similar bill may pass this Assembly?

ANSWER

Orders of the day numbers 3 and 4 are linked together—the Stabilisation of Land Prices Bill and the Land Acquisition Bill. I can foreshadow to the Assembly that it is my intention to seek the withdrawal of this legislation. I do not believe it would be the intention of the present government to proceed with that kind of legislation that was introduced into the House of Representatives by the previous government. On that assumption, I don't see the need for us to have this legislation or to seek an amendment to the Northern Territory (Administration) Act which would have been required to make——

Mr Withnall: I do.

Dr LETTS . . . these laws operable. If the honourable member for Port Darwin has a different view, I would be happy to discuss the matter with him.

849 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

When will work commence on the Newcastle Waters causeway and when will such work be finished?

ANSWER

The Newcastle Waters causeway work is tied in with the second three-year road program for the upgrading of the Stuart and Barkly Highways. This program has not yet been started. It was planned to go ahead about September this year and, if that is still the case, Newcastle Waters causeway will be finished early in 1978. I would like to point out that I am trying to get the program committed earlier if possible. It is fairly difficult under the present situation but the importance of the upgrading of these particular sections of the Stuart Highway justifies attempting to get an early commitment for this job to go ahead.

850 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN—

When will that atrocious mile of road on the other side of the light aircraft entrance at the airport be brought to a condition in which it is usable without the result of broken bones or broken goods carried in vehicles or is it the intention of the Department of Works to try for the Guiness Book of Records for the slowest piece of road construction in the world?

ANSWER

This is the fourth meeting that I have been asked that question. I do not know whether I should stick my neck out again and say when it is going to be finished. So far as I know, the holdup is due to the non-availability of the hotmix machine. The road was open for a short period of time; unfortunately, it was not completed with hotmix. In an attempt to get the road open early, the Department of Construction just used a bitumen and metal surface. Unfortunately, due to the amount of moisture, it immediately started to break up. They closed the road and now they intend to put a surface on it with the hotmix machine which would solve the problem. I was told about a week ago that this could be expected to be finished in a month.

851 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

My question concerns order of the day number 1, the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Bill 1975. Has he been able to discuss this legislation with Senator Ivor Greenwood and, if so, has he any indication whether the legislation would be assented to?

ANSWER

I do not want to pre-empt discussion in debate and information which I will be giving the Assembly when we come to this item. Discussions have not yet been held with the Minister for the Environment. I have asked the Minister for the Northern Territory to arrange that discussion as early as possible and I have separately written to Senator Greenwood explaining the situation and asking for a discussion to be held. I hope to have some response in the near future.

852 Mr KENTISH to Mrs LAWRIE—

Has she made provision for any amendment to her Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill concerning the exercising of bitches on heat? This refers to the stipulated one hour in 24 for exercising dogs? There is another problem that has confronted a person who has had 30 to 40 stray dogs dumped on him; he is wondering if there would be any exemption for him?

ANSWER

I have had a series of discussions with the Majority Leader and representatives of various canine associations. We are still in the second reading and I have the right of reply closing the debate in which I intend to answer all his queries.

853 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

When will the Darwin Community College buildings lying idle since the cyclone be repaired?

ANSWER

I am aware that the rehabilitation of the Darwin Community College is on the financial program of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the major proportion of that work will be carried out in the next financial year.

854 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): Yesterday a question was asked about the railway from Larrimah to Darwin. I have been in touch with the Minister's office and he has denied that there is any intention at this stage to close down the Australian Railways link from Larrimah to Darwin. There is an in-depth study being done at the moment by the Railways Commission into rail and road transport in the Northern Territory and when this is completed it will be laid before the Minister. Thus, the rumour had no foundation whatsoever.

855 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is the executive member aware that a swamp-type bulldozer registered number ZTS-135 was clearing on Lot 1785 Fannie Bay? Did the DRC authorise this action and, if not, who owns the bulldozer?

ANSWER

The matter of the bulldozing on this lot at Fannie Bay was brought to my attention yesterday. I sought information from the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and was informed that no authority or permission was requested of officers of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. The bulldozer is owned by the parks and maintenance section of the Department of the Northern Territory.

856 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS—

What steps are the government taking to control noxious weeds such as hyptis on crown land?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Tiwi has asked me a difficult question by making specific reference to hyptis. The problem of controlling hyptis in the Top End would be something like the problem of controlling white ants; I think it is going to be with us for a long while to come. However, more generally, the Government has the responsibility for controlling weeds on crown land. I haven't got any detailed information on their program at the moment but I will endeavour to obtain it and provide the information to the honourable member later this sittings.

857 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

In line with the priorities placed on completion of the mothers' home in the suburb of Tiwi, could he give any indication as to when this facility will be operational?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to give an answer later today.

858 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

My question concerns a report in the NT News that there has been a recommendation from the DRC for core-units to be placed in an area adjacent to the East Point reserve. Was this an agenda item at the last Commission meeting when the decision was taken?

ANSWER

The last meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's agenda was a very comprehensive one which basically centred around the 1976-77 Civil Works Program. The general items of that agenda included an item with regard to caravan and camping grounds.

859 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

What is the present stage of the nursing training school in the Northern Territory, what future plans have been formulated to streamline the training school and will training schools be set up at all major hospital centres in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Nursing training is currently undertaken only at Darwin Hospital. This hospital has been approved as a school of nursing for general nurses. A course is provided leading to a general nursing certificate and at present there are some 49 student nurses attending this school.

It is intended that in April of this year nurses aide training will commence at the Alice Springs Hospital. The matter of training of nurses in other areas of that profession is one which is constantly before the department and of concern to myself as facilities such as the new Alice Springs Hospital and the Casuarina Hospital come to fruition. I am certain that nursing training will expand and legislation for this has in fact recently been processed through this House.

860 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission considered the alternative of selling the 80 core-units perhaps by auction at suitable reserve prices immediately for mining companies?

ANSWER

The question suggested a fine alternative to what may be done with these core units. In answer specifically to his question, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has not at this stage considered the sale of those units.

I personally did discuss the matter yesterday with the General Manager, and asked him to look into the implications of such a proposal.

861 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON—

How many electrical inspectors does the ESU have and what is the waiting period for electricity installation?

ANSWER

The current waiting period for electrical connections in Darwin is about 15 days. This is an average period because there are items which receive priority and these tend to throw the program out a little bit as far as connections to domestic premises are concerned. Those type of items are concerned with things like the school year starting.

The current establishment for inspectors is 11 and 9 of these positions are filled. Three positions have only been filled within the last week or so and those 3 men will have a period of training to go through. I would like to point out that some of the problems the ESU are experiencing in getting electrical inspectors is the fact that the salary determinations are below that of the electrical organisations elsewhere in Australia. This creates some difficulty in getting staff. However, they are permanent positions and conditions such as housing can make the offer a little more attractive. This is not so with linesmen who are also directly involved in the delays in connecting electricity to houses. The linesman situation is much worse than that of inspectors. They are considerably short on establishment staff; the positions are day labour positions only, the salaries are much lower than elsewhere in Australia and there is no public service housing permanently available to these people. Until something can be done about salaries and conditions, we are going to experience problems for some time.

862 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

Does he intend to press, at the next Australian transport minister's conference, for the upgrading of the Bruce and Flinders Highways in Queensland, especially between Rockhampton and Mackay and Hughenden and Cloncurry so that the Territory's communications with the east coast can be kept open during the wet season?

ANSWER

Yes, I intend to take this matter up wherever I can, not only the ATAC conference. There was an announcement made which, I think, is relevant to the question asked by the honourable member for Jingili. On Monday this week, an announcement was made by the Highways Minister in Queensland that they were going to seal the final sections of the Flinders Highway which will give the Northern Territory a sealed link with the eastern states. It is not as yet an all-weather road but with the continued up-grading of the Stuart and Barkly Highways, which we hope to get under way shortly, together with, I am sure, the up-grading of the Flinders and Bruce Highways in Queensland, it will eventually give the Territory an all-weather road link. I will be taking every opportunity I get to press anybody concerned so that this goes ahead as quickly as possible.

863 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he aware that there has been a press release stating that the Acting Administrator for the Northern Territory, Mr Dwyer, has laid down new conditions regarding leases? I quote it: "Under these arrangements, all present lessees of Darwin Town Area leases who have not yet started to build on their land and whose improvements are incapable of satisfactory restoration, have until April 1977 to commence building. The lessees will then have 15 months in which to complete building so that the target date for completion of all private buildings will be 1 July 1978". Is he aware of this? If he is, and there is no finance, how are people expected to comply with this ridiculous condition?

ANSWER

I am aware of this press release having received one on Monday. I am unable to provide the specific answers requested by the honourable member. I do share her concern and indicate that there was no consultation with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission or myself with regard to the timetable proposed in this press release.

864 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

In the light of that reply, would he take this matter up with the Minister at the earliest possible opportunity, and would he assure this Assembly that he will appraise the Minister of the difficulties facing the people in Darwin at the moment?

ANSWER

The answer is yes. I believe some of the reserves sought by the honourable member are inherent in the latter parts of that press release. However, I will pursue the matter fully.

865 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK—

An Alice Springs group met on 9 February to seek funding for the care of drunks and the establishment of rehabilitation and remedial centres. Have they approached the breweries, distilleries, and hoteliers on the assumption that these people sell the poison and should partly finance the cure?

ANSWER

I don't know if they have done that. In defence of the breweries, I point out that there is a considerable amount of excise paid by these people to the Government and I suppose it is reasonable that the breweries expect that some of that be used in this field.

866 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

Mr Speaker I direct this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey.

Realising that the first 14 miles from the Stuart Highway to Maranboy is the bottle neck affecting the lives of 2,000 people who live in the area served by the main road, has any representation been made for urgent action to improve this section to all-weather standard?

ANSWER

I have not made any representation although I believe some representation has been made to the Minister on this particular matter. I have no doubt that the road in question does cause problems. However, with regard to any up-grading or repair of that section, it would have to be examined in the light of priorities that now exist in view of the shortage of money for expenditure on the road program. Certainly, the point is noted that this area does cause concern to the people there and I will be taking what opportunity I can, particularly at any future rural road conference, to raise the matter as forcefully as possible.

867 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he aware of the provisions of the new government's policy on federalism and is he taking steps to arrive at an approach to the policy on behalf of the Territory?

ANSWER

I am aware that the policy is currently being determined by the Government on its new federalism policy. Through the newly formed consultative committee, I will be pursuing the Northern Territory issues strongly. I also hope within the next month to make a trip to Canberra to speak with the Treasurer and the Minister assisting the Prime Minister on federal affairs and with various state treasurers on the implications of this new federalism policy.

868 Mr WITHNALL to Mr SPEAKER—

Has your attention been drawn to the front page story on yesterday's Northern Territory News containing certain allegations in regard to the recent Alice Springs by-election? In the interests of the member concerned and in order to protect the reputation of this Assembly, are you able to initiate action to confirm or deny these and other allegations which are being made concerning this by-election?

ANSWER

I am aware of the newspaper article and the allegations. I doubt that the Speaker of this Assembly has any authority in this case but I will make inquiries and report back to the Assembly later today.

869 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

Has any progress been made in appointing someone to inquire into lottery and gaming legislation and its administration in the Northern Territory as a result of the resolution of this Assembly last year?

ANSWER

The matter has been actively pursued by the Administrator's Council ever since the resolution was carried by the Assembly. The progress was somewhat interrupted by the events surrounding the federal election and the change of government because it required a government to approach. I now have the authority of the Administrator and the Administrator's Council to inform the Assembly that persons have been selected for appointment and will be appointed subject to the necessary formal arrangements being made through the office of the Prime Minister. It is hoped that the inquiry can be got underway in the near future. A person has been selected to act as secretary to the inquiry and necessary arrangements will be made with the Attorney-General's Department to assist if the person appointed to the inquiry deems that desirable. Present thinking is that the cost of the inquiry will be in the region of $20,000 to $30,000.

870 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON—

Can he inform me when work will be undertaken to get into operation adequate street lighting along Trower and Rothdale roads?

ANSWER

I have some information relating particularly to Rothdale Road in Jingili. I believe the honourable member's question referred to Trower Road as well but I do not have that specifically; I can perhaps follow that through for him. But as far as Rothdale Road goes, the proposition to install highway-standard street lighting along the median strip in Rothdale Road was put to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission last November and appeared, I believe, on the 1975-76 DRC works program. To date the Electricity Supply Undertaking people have not received a design order from the DRC for them to carry on and design the works completely so the work can be executed. Because of that it appears the work will not commence in this financial year.

871 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

Will he make representation to obtain additional funds for rural reconstruction? The original allocation is now exhausted and I understand many applications for this assistance remain undecided through lack of funds. Can he also ascertain why the Territory's allocation on a comparative basis is so much lower than the state allocations?

ANSWER

In answer to the first part of the question, I will certainly make representations if the honourable member would like to supply me with full details of the matters where he considers I should make representations to the Minister. With regard to the second part of the question, I am unable to give an answer as to any difference in proportions of grants as they are made; I will endeavour to seek full information on this for him.

872 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

I address a further question concerning the press release to which I alluded earlier. Under the terms of the Darwin Reconstruction Act, it appears that the Crown has five years in which to rebuild its part of Darwin. Why is this term not extended to bona fide private residents?

ANSWER

I am unable to give the honourable member an answer as I was not privy to any of the deliberations or considerations concerned.

873 MR DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

When will the police receive their issue of uniforms? Is it correct that some police have been issued with army trousers and shirts as an interim measure? If and when uniforms are issued, will firm arrangements be made for members, particularly outside Darwin, to have alterations made to their uniforms?

ANSWER

In the continuing saga of police uniforms, the issue was last year destroyed by Cyclone Tracy. The delay has been due to a lack of materials. However, part of the uniform has been completed; trousers have been cut out from the first batch of material but as yet there is no delivery date. It is true that army trousers and shirts were issued as an interim measure because these were found to be the closest to the police uniform. No firm arrangements have been made for alterations because uniforms are made to measure and should not require them.

874 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Can he give an indication when alterations and renewals and additions to agricultural type leases, which have been virtually suspended by the previous Minister, will again receive normal processing?

ANSWER

I will ask the honourable member to place that question on notice. He has not given me any forewarning on it otherwise I might have been able to make some enquiries and provide some information for him. The only light I can throw on it, off the cuff, is that I understand that some of the additions he refers to were in cases where agricultural leases were judged to be of uneconomic size, and the Crown Lands Ordinance of the Northern Territory provides for additions to those leases from adjoining crown land, where it is available and where it would bring the lease up to an economic size. We are all aware that there was a complete administrative freeze on vacant crown land imposed by the previous Government at the time the Woodward Report was tabled. That freeze was to last until January 1976 and did, in fact, do so. I have heard that in the last days of the previous Government a further directive was issued to extend the freeze on vacant crown land further into 1976. If that is so, it would still be the policy governing the activities of the department until it is changed by the new Government. If the honourable member will place the question on notice, I will try and find out what exactly the position is and advise him in the usual way.

875 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

The honourable member will recall the passage through this Chamber last year of the free-beach legislation. The implementation of this legislation, whilst not of the first priority, could obviously be carried out without any great degree of funding being necessary. When will a free area be declared in the Darwin region? Can he give any indication in what area it will be declared?

ANSWER

I am authorized by the Administrator to indicate that the advice tendered by the Administrator's Council has now been accepted and I believe a press statement will be issued later today that a free area will be declared. The proposed area is that area of Casuarina beach on the Nightcliff side of Sandy Creek through which the road traffic entry point is—the road that goes behind the Lions Club park and up a mile or so, roughly in that area. Signs, we hope, will be put up in accordance with the provision of the ordinance as soon as possible.

876 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

It is well known that work had been done within the DRC on the location of the contentious core units in the area of Dripstone. Could the honourable member indicate to this Assembly the amount of time and money spent by the DRC in formulating that recommendation? That was the Dripstone recommendation.

ANSWER

I do not believe that I could obtain that information without a special request to the General Manager who, in turn, would have to look at the administrative arrangements made by his staff. Judging from the detailed submissions that were put before the commission on the actual proposals by very senior staff, I would envisage that it took some considerable time of senior professional staff to prepare that proposal.

877 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr SPEAKER—

Whilst it is a matter of notorious fact the honourable member for Port Darwin is not partial to water unless it is mixed with the most famous product of Scotland, has there been some discrimination against him in that he has not been provided with a thermos of water in this Chamber?

ANSWER

I understand the honourable member for Port Darwin likes ice in his water.

878 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

What detailed submissions were put to the commission when they were considering the new proposal to locate the core-units at East Point?

ANSWER

The answer is none.

879 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

For how long did the discussions ensue on that particular agenda item which, apparently, was not an agenda item in its own right?

ANSWER

It would not be proper for me to talk about the timetabling and normal arrangements of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission other than those items which are classified normally as general agenda items. Fortunately for the honourable member, this particular item was considered part of the general agenda of the last meeting of the Reconstruction Commission. There was considerable debate and discussions with regard to the Fannie Bay proposal once the matter was raised. However, it was certainly at a very late stage of that meeting.

880 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is the honourable member prepared to tell this House at what time the last Darwin Reconstruction Commission meeting commenced and what time it finished?

ANSWER

The last meeting of the DRC commenced at 9.30 am. There were breaks for lunch and an evening meal and I think it finished shortly before midnight.

881 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

A contract for $20,900 has been let to Jackson and Spring Pty Ltd, Rocklea, Queensland for the transport of donated timber for cyclone relief. What does the Department of the Northern Territory intend doing with this timber and is it in Darwin?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

882 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

What amount of insurance was paid to the Commonwealth as a result of claims for damage to Commonwealth housing, whether as owner or mortgagee, as a result of Cyclone Tracy?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

883 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it a fact that proposals for the location of core-units at Dripstone were circulated to community groups who then gave advice to the Commission and this was considered?

ANSWER

I am not aware how many groups were consulted with regard to the proposals of a Dripstone location. I am aware that, attached to the submission considered by the commission, there was an indication of support for that site by the Northern Territory Environment Council.

884 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

At what stage are plans for the extension of the Darwin Community College? Are negotiations being continued to acquire further land in the area of the Brinkin subdivision and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

I believe that this matter has now left the Darwin Reconstruction Commission; they decided to continue the original lease arrangements of both the Community College and the Hooker lease. Negotiations could be opened between the Darwin Community College and representatives of the Hooker Company and I am advised that an emergency meeting of the Community College Council will be called in the next week to discuss those negotiations.

885 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

What is the future of the Legal Aid Office in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I am advised by the Attorney-General that as yet no decision has been made on this subject. However, there is a meeting on Friday of state Attorneys-General to discuss the law society scheme, the Legal Aid Office, and various other state legal assistance schemes.

886 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Would she attempt to obtain and table in this House precise schedules showing the areas and amounts in cutbacks of expenditure to be experienced by the Department of Education for this financial year.

ANSWER

I will attempt to table that information.

887 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

As the oriental fruit fly has been found to be widespread and apparently well-established in the top of the Territory, what active and positive measures have been or are being taken to ensure it is not allowed to spread to the southern areas of the Territory and the rest of Australia. And, for the well-being of the multi-million dollar fruit industry of southern and eastern Australia, does not he think it reasonable that persons leaving the Top End should be subjected to reasonable checks to ensure fruit and vegetables are not removed from the quarantine area?

ANSWER

The question of the oriental fruit fly which has been raised in this Chamber before is indeed a very serious one from the economic point of view for the whole of Australia and for the Northern Territory's future. I will not go on at any length in answer to this question because it is my intention to make a statement at greater length, probably on the next sitting day or the day after. But, very briefly, precise steps to restrict the spread of the fruit fly and to protect the southern part of the Territory and the rest of Australia are difficult to take at the moment because we have no real idea of the distribution and spread of this pest. One might put up a road block, say, at Katherine only to find that a week later the pest was at Elliott. The first most essential task of any program is to attempt to define the limits of its present spread. That will be given high priority. It can be done even in the wet season by trapping with some difficulty and at greater expense. Extended trapping has been arranged on the periphery of the known area and beyond to attempt to better define and map the limits of the pest.

As far as the second part of the question is concerned, I guess it all depends on the interpretation of the word "reasonable". What might be reasonable will depend on having a greater knowledge of this pest. One must take into account a number of factors including the fact that the fruit being produced in Darwin from backyard trees and the like at the moment is only a very small percentage of what the backyard grower of pawpaws, bananas and mangoes would normally be producing. It is probably about 51% of the normal Darwin situation, so the possibility of an outflow of fruit is accordingly reduced. Some people in some other states seem to think that we should have gone direct to a series of road blocks and to the examination of all baggage at the airport of all passengers leaving Darwin. My personal belief is that those kinds of extreme measures are not warranted. Certainly not until we know about this pest, its habits, its distribution and the nature of the problem.

888 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

How many houses has the DRC handed over so far?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain the answer for the honourable member.

889 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

How many enrolments has the Education Department in Darwin received for school children for the school year beginning 1976?

ANSWER

The total enrolment is 8,681 students, 827 of whom are preschool, 5,407 primary and 2,447 secondary students.

890 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH—

Does the Australian Atomic Energy Commission currently hold any exploration licences in the Northern Territory? If so, does the Australian Atomic Energy Commission plan to dispose of these licences in accordance with Deputy Prime Minister's indication that the Atomic Energy Commission will cease exploration activities within the Northern Territory? Thirdly, if the AAEC do plan to dispose of these exploration licences, how do they plan to relinquish them?

ANSWER

The Atomic Energy Commission does not hold any exploration licences within the Northern Territory. The exploration activities of the commission have been conducted under section 39 of the Atomic Energy Act which gives it the right to explore for prescribed substances anywhere in Australia. As it does not hold any exploration licences, there is no necessity for the Atomic Energy Commission to dispose of them but the areas they have been operating in within the Northern Territory are still reserved by the Crown. That answer would also answer the third part of the member's question.

There is also an additional part to that question. The areas that are still under reserve have yet to be disposed of by the Crown for exploration and discussions are currently being held within the department. The department is also seeking expressions from the industry on the most satisfactory method of relinquishing the areas from the reserve of the Crown and making the land available for private exploration.

891 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr PERRON—

Will he please supply me with details of the systems of raising bonds for the supply of electricity in city and rural areas around Darwin?

ANSWER

The system of raising bonds for the supply of electricity in rural areas, or "guarantee accounts" as they are called by the Department of the Northern Territory, exists because prior to supplying electrical reticulation to a subdivision, the Department of the Northern Territory wishes to ensure that there will be sufficient revenue from such a service to make the line viable. What is normally done is that an estimate of the size of the subdivision is carried out when reticulation is planned and the number of applicants who have applied for electricity is taken into account. If the costs of the reticulation is over $2,000 per applicant, there is a request for a bond issued. If the number of applicants in the area means that the cost of reticulation would be under $2,000 per applicant, no bond is raised. The bond which the honourable member for Tiwi is particularly questioning is one in the Valhalla Estate and the consumers there are being asked to sign a guarantee of $400 per annum for 5 years. The department is currently looking at the situation, which they consider unfair in some aspects because consumers who move into the area after those who are already there have signed bonds, are not subject to any of the provisions of having to pay an extra amount above their consumption should the electricity in the area not be consumed at the rate anticipated. People who move into an area after the bonds have been signed and electricity is on do not have to provide any guarantee to the department as to minimum consumption.

892 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

I preface my question by reading section 58 of the Darwin Reconstruction Act: "The commission shall, as soon as practicable after the end of each financial year, prepare and furnish to the Minister a report on the operations of the commission during that year, together with financial statements in respect of that year in such forms as the Treasurer approves. The report shall set out all exercise of the powers of the commission given by the Minister to the commission during the year to which the report relates". Has such a report been made? Has the Treasurer approved any form for the financial statements? In view of the importance of the people knowing what has been done by the commission under this extradordinary act, can we expect that such a report will be forwarded to the Minister to be published in the near future?

ANSWER

I perused a draft copy of the annual report of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission some months ago, which I believe satisfied all the requirements as to its form and nature. I am not aware of the reasons why it has not yet been made available, but will endeavour to find out when it is to come off the printing press and to be made available for the honourable member.

893 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mrs LAWRIE—

I have a question directed to the honourable member for Nightcliff in her capacity as the member in charge of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill 1975. In her second-reading speech, the honourable member stated, and I quote: "The Administrator has given certain guidelines on the appointment of inspectors and I can assure honourable members that unreliable and unskilled people will not be liable for appointment". Can the honourable member indicate where in her bill, or the principal ordinance, this assurance of guidelines is given?

ANSWER

It is in section 15(1) of the principal ordinance.

894 Mr VALE to Mrs LAWRIE—

Her Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill 1975 proposes to make all police officers inspectors under the ordinance. Has she checked this point with the Commissioner of Police to discover whether he sees any impediment to it? As the police will then be concerned with the bill as a whole, has she had any discussions with the Commissioner about the bill generally?

ANSWER

I find it a little unusual that these matters are being raised when the second reading of the bill has not yet concluded. As I remarked in reply to a question earlier, my main discussions have been with the Majority Leader. If they checked with him as to what discussions have ensued, then they would be better informed.

895 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Can he give me any information regarding the fence construction around the Fannie Bay Gaol?

ANSWER

A contract of about $52,000 has been let for the construction of a fence at Fannie Bay Gaol. The project is under way, all the footings have been dug and the holes drilled. I was there the other day and I saw that section of the work was completed. I am advised that the contractor hopes the work will be completed in 2 or 3 weeks time.

896 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

Can she advise me whether counsellors have been appointed under the Family Law Act of 1975 to act in the Northern Territory jurisdiction of the Family Law Court and if not, why not? Is there any indication as to when they may be appointed?

ANSWER

I am advised by the Attorney-General's Department that no establishment is fixed for the Northern Territory. The head of counselling for the welfare service and family court has been in touch with the marriage guidance people here. The volume of work has not warranted the employment of an establishment. As in Tasmania, they are having great difficulty in filling any vacancies. In April, a workshop will be held with the marriage guidance council in Darwin by the head of counselling of welfare services and family courts. Some decisions will emanate from that workshop as to the employment of counsellors.

897 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

Can he make a statement on what assistance the beef industry in the Northern Territory can expect towards debt reconstruction, carry on finance, freight subsidy and cattle price stabilization schemes?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to make a statement available during the course of these sittings.

898 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN—

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Did the causeway across the MacArthur River giving access to Bessie Springs Abattoirs function as planned?

ANSWER

I will attempt to find out the answer.

899 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING—

Can he obtain from the DRC a list of the assistance which it has given to the Australian Government in determining the desirable extent, nature and purposes of the use and development of the Darwin area under section 6A of the act?

ANSWER

I am not aware that such a list exists. However, I will endeavour to seek the information sought by the honourable member from the General Manager of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

900 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

Is it correct that the time for processing applications for incorporation of companies is taking about 3 months and, if so, why? What is being done to shorten the time being taken?

ANSWER

I can neither confirm nor deny whether these applications are taking 3 months. I will endeavour to give that information by the end of the day.

901 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

Can he give any information on the appointment of a Director of Correctional Services?

ANSWER

As from last Monday Mr Jack Larcombe was appointed Acting Director of Correctional Services. The position has been advertised throughout Australia and New Zealand and interviews are to be held shortly. An Assistant Director Controller of Prisons has also been appointed and he commences duty in Darwin next Monday. An administrative officer has also been secured for that branch and it is hoped that he will start within a month.

902 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS—

Is it the policy of the Northern Territory Reserves Board to encourage only fauna and flora natives to a particular national park or reserve area? Is it correct that the board has adopted a policy for the Katherine gorge reserve to remove certain flora and fauna including some baobab trees from that reserve?

ANSWER

I can't be absolutely certain about the present policy of the Reserves Board as far as having non-indigenous flora and fauna on their reserves. I can tell the honourable member that that was not always so. Indeed, I did hear a discussion of certain members of the Reserves Board some years ago when they were talking about introducing some tigers to the old telegraph station at Alice Springs. I hope that what the honourable member says is generally true. On a national park or reserve of the type that the Reserves Board manages, there is not a great place, in some cases there is not any place, for introduced species. The areas are set aside particularly for indigenous fauna and flora.

I do not know the answer to the question about the so-called baobab tree. While that is not exactly native to the Katherine area itself, it certainly is to the Victoria River district, coming as far as the gorge of the Victoria River and extending across into the Kimberleys. In other words, it grows to within a distance of probably some 100 miles of Katherine and it probably has more right to be there than some exotic species. I do not think anybody would quibble much about having a baobab there as a specimen tree. I certainly would not.

903 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH—

Firstly, what was the cost of operation of the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau's interstate offices for the last complete financial year ended 1974-75? What was the actual amount of total sales through these offices for the same period? Thirdly, what was the actual profit on sales through these offices for that period?

ANSWER

The bureau's office in Sydney had an operating cost of $76,000, Melbourne had an operating cost of $85,000, Adelaide's operating cost was $34,000. Sydney sold $190,000 worth of tickets, Melbourne sold $344,000 worth of tickets and Adelaide sold $115,000 worth of tickets. The commission from Sydney was $13,000, the commission from Melbourne was $26,000 and from Adelaide $8,000. As the figures indicate, there is a discrepancy in each office of cost over income of a very large amount of money. The Northern Territory Tourist Board is most concerned at the costs of running these offices in return for the revenue they receive. The board is currently re-assessing its position in regard to the present operation and at present deciding whether they should be in wholesale travel or retail travel.

904 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

When will a decision be made to permit persons in the now non-existent surge area to receive loans from the home finance scheme?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Department of Northern Territory and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and a number of members of this Assembly have all made separate submissions to the Minister asking for a relaxation of the loan conditions to enable loans to be granted in the primary surge area. I have not yet been informed as to the Minister's decision or a likely date for the adoption of such a policy.

905 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

This follows on questions I have asked at each sitting concerning the operation of the Parole Board. Has the Parole Board yet commended operations? If not, why not and when is it expected that it will be so?

ANSWER

The Parole Board has not got under way yet. There have been some problems in association with finance. The secretary of the Parole Board has been appointed. The Secretary is Mr Donnelly who has been appointed the Controller of Prisons and he will be in Darwin next week. With the appointment also of an acting Director of Correctional Services, we hope that work will be done towards implementing what we desire in this field of correctional services. I too will be keeping an eye on those moves.

906 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN—

This follows on from discussions I have had with the honourable member for Elsey and I would preface my question by saying that, as a result of certain innuendoes made by union organisers that the present Government has instigated an economic review into the North Australia Railway, the public seemed to have formed the opinion that it is the policy of that Government to abandon the railway. Could he advise me whether or not it is a fact that the economic survey of the North Australia Railway was commenced on or about the middle of 1975 by the previous Labor Government?

ANSWER

I am not aware as yet whether the investigation started by the last Government is still continuing or whether in fact there has been a new investigation instigated by the present Government. I intend to take the matter further and approach the federal Minister for Transport and get a full report if possible as to what the exact situation is with regard to the future of the line from Darwin to Larrimah.

907 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW–

Can she given any details concerning the attack last week on the manager of Montejinni Station?

ANSWER

I do not have any details at the moment but I have asked the Commissioner of Police to forward me further information which I will present to the House when I receive it.

908 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN–

Is he aware that there are some Taiwanese nationals working in Darwin for a dollar per hour? If this is so, what can be done about it?

ANSWER

I believe that this situation does exist. I was approached by the vigilance officer of the Waterside Workers Federation with this information and I intend to follow it up with the firms that have been indicated to me as utilising Taiwanese labour. I feel it is definitely not a situation that we would encourage in view of the number of unemployed in our own town. I will, therefore, make investigations and give an answer to this.

909 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN–

When will work commence on the widening of Trower Road between Nightcliff Road and the Rapid Creek Bridge? The funds for this were allocated in the last budget.

ANSWER

I am not sure whether, in fact, funds were allocated in the last budget. However, I am sure the job concerned was on a program to be carried out. I will make enquiries of the Department of Construction, or possibly the DRC, and find out what has happened with this matter and see if something can be done to repair or fix up this section of the road which does constitute a traffic hazard.

910 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH–

Can he tell me if the copper smelter at Tennant Creek is going to reopen? If so, has there been a date fixed for the opening?

ANSWER

I will have to say that no one can ever be sure whether the smelter will reopen. I can just say that the smelter closed as a result of increased costs compounded by a fall in the price of copper. Costs have continued to increase and it is my understanding that copper will have to return to at least $2,000 per ton before the smelter will be a viable proposition. It is also my understanding that the projection of copper price in the next 18 months to 2 years is that it will not obtain that level. The only thing that would force copper back to a price of $2,000 a ton is a war, and I don't think anybody wants to see a war, although everybody would like to see the $30m smelter reopen. In short, the answer is, hopefully in 2 years' time.

911 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING–

Has the Australian Government made any determination in relation to the development, construction and land use in the Darwin area as is provided for in section 6(b) of the Act?

ANSWER

Since my membership of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in September, I am not aware that specific requirements have been met in accordance with section 6(b).

912 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING–

Is it a fact that the NT Housing Commission is experiencing problems in obtaining additional staff to assist in their rebuilding program?

ANSWER

It is obvious that the Northern Territory Housing Commission is experiencing problems of a similar nature to those mentioned yesterday by the Majority Leader with regard to staff for the executive members of the Legislative Assembly. The Northern Territory Housing Commission, I believe, has made probably more than 8 approaches to the department for a review of its establishment in the last 12 months. It has not had a satisfactory answer with regard to its increased establishment, particularly for those additional officers that it requires to assist in its building program.

913 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING–

What action is being taken to erect signs on public beaches saying that motor vehicle traffic is prohibited?

ANSWER

I have not been informed of the department's action in this regard since the last session but we may now be able to get an opportunity to have these signs erected. They may like to add them to the signs declaring the free beach. It may be one way that we will get the signwriting done and save the department a bit of money.

914 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

Is it a fact that the Attorney-Genertal's Department has continued to allow the fishing vessel "Mariana" to rot in Doctor's Gully since the disposal of the appeals against conviction by the persons involved in the offences which occurred in connection with that vessel well over twelve months ago? Secondly, does the Attorney-General's Department or the Customs Department have any information as to its value as at the date of seizure? Thirdly, does either of those departments have any information as to its value today? Fourthly, do either of those departments have any information as to the cost of the vessel's reinstatement as at the present time?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get that information before the end of the sittings for the Honourable Member for Jingili.

915 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON—

Will all aspects of the electricity supply in the Northern Territory be brought under a single authority to stop the absurd situation which exists at present with all the different departments involved?

ANSWER

Arrangements were being made last year to investigate the formation of an electricity supply authority to cover all aspects of the generation and distribution and charging for electricity in the Northern Territory. My information is that the investigation was shelved just prior to the last federal elections. I have written to the Minister for the Northern Territory asking him to arrange for the inquiry to go ahead as soon as possible. The subject of a single electricity authority in the Northern Territory will no doubt be discussed further when the consultative committee is founded as recommended by the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report.

916 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN—

Is he aware of the cuts in air services by TAA and Ansett between Adelaide, Alice Springs and Darwin? If so, what is he going to do about this?

ANSWER

I am not aware that there have been any cuts to scheduled flights to Alice Springs. If this is the case, I will be making every effort to find out why the cuts were instigated, whether they were justified and, if not, to have them reinstated immediately.

917 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Alice Springs asked a question about the handling of surface mail when rail and road transport into the Northern Territory is held up. I have been assured by the District Postal Manager that, under these circumstances, it is the Postal Communication's method to transfer mail to the airlines. They do not necessarily do this immediately the road closes. Anybody who sends mail by surface mail is not necessarily in any great hurry for it. They try to assess how long the rail or road system is going to be cut and, if it looks like it is going to be extended, they do air freight the mail. This is happening at the moment from both Mt Isa and Adelaide.

918 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON—

Will he advise the House when new consumer protection legislation will be introduced in accordance with the 1972 select committee report on this subject?

ANSWER

I understand that legislation similar to that existing in other states of Australia has been prepared by the Prices and Consumer Affairs Department, but I have not seen a copy of the bill as yet. I hope that it will be available shortly for introduction in this House. The Consumer Protection Council, which exists under present legislation, has been pressing for this legislation for some years now and it is probably well overdue.

919 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Will she attempt to obtain and table in this House, precise details of the areas and amount of cutbacks in expenditure to be suffered this financial year by the Attorney-General's Department so far as it relates to the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

I will endeavour to do that.

920 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Following on a question I asked last week, I asked the cut-off time for approval of loans under the 6% home finance scheme. The honourable member advised me that he believed it was about January. Has he more specific information?

ANSWER

I do not have any additional information. I will endeavour to seek it today.

921 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS—

I ask a question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Realising that Northmeat require firm bookings of cattle in mid-April, will carry-on finance be available to enable mustering camps to be organised in the intervening 6 weeks?

ANSWER

It is beyond my power to give the Assembly an assurance that finance that comes from the Commonwealth Treasury will be available for any particular purpose within a particular time. I do recognise the need to which the honourable member for Ludmilla has drawn my attention on your behalf and I will reactivate requests which I have made to the Australian Government to have a clear announcement made about the carry-on finance position.

922 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING—

Is he aware that the Central Australian Racing Club have received a grant of $75,000 to assist that club in its transfer from its existing site north of the township to a site south of the township? Is he also aware that, despite several applications for settlement of progress payments amounting to $32,000 to date no moneys have been received? If he is aware of this, can he explain why and what length of delay in receiving future payments and settlements can be expected by that club?

ANSWER

I am aware of the financial arrangements between the Department of Northern Territory and the Central Australian Racing Club and that the total amount is in the order of $75,000. I have had representations made to me with regard to the progress settlements and was informed by the finance officer of the Department that the progressive payments lodged up to 31 January had all been endorsed and had gone to Brisbane for the cheques to be issued. Therefore, they ought to be received by that club very shortly. The finance officer also informed me that it would be normal to expect delays of 3 to 4 weeks from the time of receipt of invoicing to the time of the cheque being dispatched to the club if all things are in order.

923 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Has the Treasurer actually advanced the extra $4.8 million needed to cut the outstanding approved loan applications or is the advance only covering month by month progress payments due?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to seek clarification from the Minister with regard to the supply of funds for the Home Finance Trustee.

924 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW—

Is she able to advise me of the position in relation to assent to the Justices Ordinance 1975 which related to the trial of indictable offences by magistrates with the consent of the accused?

ANSWER

The Justices Ordinance was reserved on 13 August 1975 on advice from the Attorney-General's Department. Discussion has since been held between the Attorney-General's Department and the Executive Member for Law to consider problems and to determine whether amendment is necessary and negotiations between the two departments are taking place.

925 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON—

Is he aware that the Alice Springs sewerage ponds are exhibiting seepage, particularly into the swamp at the foot of the McDonell Range and so endangering the health of the inhabitants close by?

ANSWER

The sewerage treatment ponds at Alice Springs are designed to discharge treated effluent onto the ground nearby for evaporation. The discharge of effluent is intermittent so that evaporation occurs before the mosquito breeding cycle is complete. Unfortunately, the weather pattern in Alice Springs over the last 3 or 4 years has been somewhat unusual and evaporation has not occurred as expected. The sewerage system in Alice Springs is operating as designed but the weather is just not cooperating.

926 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING—

Can the honourable member advise me whether an auction of residential and commercial land will shortly be held in Darwin and, if so, approximately when?

ANSWER

I am informed by the Department of the Northern Territory that auctions are proposed both for industrial land and residential land and it is hoped to hold the auctions either in late March or early April. I believe that at the first auction approximately 100 residential lots will be offered and that there will be subsequent auctions before 30 June.

927 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS—

I ask this question on behalf of the Honourable Member for Elsey. What assistance can peanut growers in the Katherine District expect this season?

ANSWER

I will need to obtain the information from other sources. I will endeavour to do so rather than ask the honourable member to place the question on notice. I will try to find out the answer and advise him during these sittings.

928 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Can he advise when an announcement will be made as to whether or not additional funds will be made this financial year for the 6% home loan scheme? I am not talking about the $4.8m loans already approved, I am now talking about loans which have been processed but not yet approved—where applications have been made.

ANSWER

I have made representation to the Minister but I am not able to give an answer to the honourable member.

929 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING—

My question concerns the Aboriginal camp set up at Knuckeys Lagoon after the cyclone. Do the camp buildings meet Building Board and DRC requirements? Is it a fact that the camp is expanding mainly due to government grants? Has a decision been reached as to whether this will become a permanent settlement or will another site be chosen? If the Knuckeys Lagoon camp or some other site becomes part of the town plan, what steps will be taken to ensure that all buildings and layout conform to acceptable town plan standards?

ANSWER

I am aware that certain camp structures have been built since the cyclone but I am not able to say whether they have been built in conformity with Building Board or DRC requirements. I will endeavour to ascertain what applications for building approvals have been lodged. I am not aware that the camp is expanding mainly due to government grants. In fact I was not aware in the 1975-76 Budget of any appropriations either to the DRC or to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs for this particular area. The 1976-77 Budget is still in the process of being determined and I do not know what provision will be made for any expansion. I believe that whether the site becomes a permanent settlement or not depends largely on an application that was made to the Interim Aboriginal Lands Commissioner. That matter, I assume, will be in abeyance until such time as the Aboriginal land legislation question is determined and a determination is finally made about any land grant in the area. I would assume that all buildings built with government funds would be designed and checked by the appropriate government authorities and would be in conformity with building standards.

930 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW—

Would she be able to advise later this sittings whether as at this date, 24 February, it is the intention of both the Department of Education and the Department of Housing and Construction to build a new Nightcliff Primary School on the present site?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to furnish that information later this sittings.

931 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW—

Is she aware that the third Queen's Counsel to be appointed to the Northern Territory is in fact a Victorian barrister?

ANSWER

Yes, I am aware that a Mr McLelland has been appointed Her Majesty's Counsel for the Northern Territory. Unfortunately, there seems to be no one in the Northern Territory who was aware of this prior to the appointment, which was made by Sir Roden Cutler on 20 January.

932 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING—

Can he advise me what legislative actions followed the recommendations of the Nimmo Report?

ANSWER

I have had considerable discussions with officers of the Department of the Northern Territory with regard to possible amendments to the Town Planning Ordinance, and these discussions are continuing. I hope, at a later session of the Assembly to be able to introduce legislation that will implement the recommendations of the Nimmo Report.

933 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING–

Why is Block 3, the building next to this Assembly, vacant and when will it be rehabilitated and occupied?

ANSWER

The information sought by the honourable member will have to be obtained from other sources and I would, therefore, ask him to place the question on notice; I will then refer it to the Department of Administrative Services.

934 Mr MANUEL to Dr LETTS–

In view of the substantial damage being done to the soil and earth surface in the Alice Springs area, particularly the MacDonnell Ranges and including some reserves and pastoral leases, will the Majority Leader undertake to have reports from appropriate authorities to substantiate my argument that limitations should be placed on the activities of trail bike riders and other off-road vehicles capable of seriously damaging the environment and soil conservation in the area discussed?

ANSWER

I accept that question even though I believe that it should more properly have been directed to the Executive Member for Resource Development who has an established liaison with the soil conservation people in regard to his portfolio; there is some overlap between his interests and my interests there. The question referred to reserves and pastoral leases. In the case of reserves, if they include, as I suspect they do, the reserves under the control of the Northern Territory Reserves Board such as the Simpson's Gap Reserve, then the matter should be catered for, the authority to control such activities should be there in the form of the bylaws of the Reserves Board. In the case of pastoral leases, the authority is already present in the Crown Lands Ordinance and the Soil Conservation Ordinance. If the problem is of a general nature, then I will draw it to the attention of those authorities so that they may examine it and see whether they can apply the enforcement powers that they already have. If there are any specific instances that the honourable member can bring to my attention, I will also pass them on to the authorities concerned.

935 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS–

I refer to a stock squad action in the Finiss River area during the past year where a person was to be charged with unlawfully branding calves which were not his property. Why was the case withdrawn and who ordered the withdrawal?

ANSWER

I cannot inform the honourable member on either of those counts. Once again, the question is one that might more properly have been directed to the Executive Member for Education and Law. I shall make sure that she receives a text of the question and see if she can obtain some information from the appropriate authorities.

936 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING–

My question concerns statements which have been made quite properly concerning a single housing authority for the Territory. Is such an authority to be set up and will economic rents be charged for the houses?

ANSWER

I believe the question is perhaps a little premature. The consideration with regard to a single housing authority is merely at the discussion stages. The Minister is certainly looking at it with regard to the future activities of the Public Utilities Branch and the Housing Commission of the Northern Territory and my party is certainly looking at such legislation. For these reasons, I am unable to give a satisfactory answer to the honourable member at this time.

937 Mr STEELE to Mr SPEAKER–

Can you inform the Assembly of the result of the Assembly's application to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for the reservation of land at Larrakeyah for the purpose of building a future parliament house?

ANSWER

Two letters have been sent to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission on this subject, the first in August last year, and the latest in December last year. The latest advice was that the matter was still waiting to be considered and I will be informed in due course.

938 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN—

Could he advise whether the present standard of road construction accepted as a minimum in the Alice Springs region is a 15 year replacement? In view of the change of seasons in the Central Australia region, could the method of construction and the specification standard be upgraded?

ANSWER

I will contact the Department of Construction and attempt to get that information for tomorrow's sittings.

939 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Many moons ago, legislation was passed to allow tenants of 5 years standing to purchase their Housing Commission homes. Could he advise of the status of this legislation and whether it is ever likely to receive assent?

ANSWER

I am unable to give an answer about the specific bill the honourable member refers to which must have been passed in the previous Legislative Council. I am able to inform her that my party is currently proposing to introduce legislation for an unrestricted sale of houses to people who have had a qualifying period of five years. I hope to introduce that legislation at the next sittings of the Assembly and I will certainly have discussions with the honourable member before I do so.

940 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW—

What action is being taken by the police in Katherine, following representation by Aboriginal leader, Mr Smiler Major, that the police were ignoring drunken people making nuisances of themselves in public places?

ANSWER

I am advised by the Commissioner of Police that there is no record of any written representation having been made by Mr Smiler Major regarding police ignoring drunken people in Katherine. Two weeks ago, Mr Smiler Major spoke to Sergeant Gilroy and informed him that he had spoken to an ABC representative in Katherine. Mr Major said he knew the police were hampered with the lack of legislation regarding drunkenness, vagrants and moving people on and would have to take the matter up to have the legislation amended and new legislation passed regarding drunkenness. I am assured by the commissioner that the police are doing all they can under present legislation.

941 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING (by leave): The honourable member for Port Darwin asked how many houses had been handed over by the DRC. I am informed that as at close of business on 23 February 1976, 14 new houses had been handed over, 8 had been handed over with power connected and there were 6 completed but awaiting power connection. Of the rebuilding housing program, some 80 houses were satisfactorily completed, 61 had been handed over with power and 19 were completed but awaiting power connection. That is a total of 94 houses.

942 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin also asked about activities of the Reconstruction Commission under Section 6 (a) of the Act. I am informed that the commission came into being with assent of the Act on 28 February 1975. The commission has determined from 28 February the extent, nature and purpose of land use and development of the Darwin area in the formulation of planning proposals for the area of its 40 kilometre responsibility.

943 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin also asked a question relating to the function of the DRC under section 6 (b) of the Act. I am informed that the commission determines planning proposals on drawings DRC/32 (a) 75, DRC/32 (2a)/75, DRC/32 (3)/75 and DRC/32 (3b)/75. The scheme was forwarded to the Minister in 1975 but never ratified.

944 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): A question was asked about the Montejinni incident. I am advised by the Police Commissioner that, on Tuesday evening 10 February, Mr William Tapp of Killarney Station contacted Katherine police by radio telephone. He stated that he had been informed by Mr James Robertson, station hand at Montejinni, that he and another station hand had been threatened by Aborigines at the station and requested police assistance. Robertson was contacted and he advised that 6 Hooker Creek Aborigines, three male and three female, had arrived at the station in a drunken condition and threatened to take over the station and do injury to himself and his companion. Stones were thrown striking Robertson on the head. The Aborigines claimed to have a firearm but it was not produced. At that time, the Aborigines were quiet and camping away from the homestead. On 11 February, Sergeant Brooks and Constable Rowe went to Montejinni to inquire. An Aboriginal, Nugget Robertson, aged 32 years, was arrested for common

assault and taken to Katherine. Evidence indicates that Nugget Robertson was the cause of the trouble and the ring leader. There was no evidence that other Aborigines took part in the assault. The Aborigines had no firearms. Nugget Robertson appeared in the court on Friday 14 February. Bail was set and no plea taken. The matter has been adjourned until 27 February.

945 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON (by leave): The honourable member for Arnhem asked if I could advise him regarding the progress of the electrical reticulation to residences in Section 462 Hundred of Strangways. I have been advised that the Electricity Supply Undertaking have a design order from the DRC to proceed with the electrical reticulation in this section. When the design has been completed, a decision will be made as to whether the ESU have the resources to do the job themselves or whether it should be put to tender.

946 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): The honourable member for Arnhem asked whether I could give an indication when alterations, renewals and additions to agricultural type leases, which have been virtually suspended by the previous Minister, will again receive normal processing. I have now received further information from the Lands Branch. The processing of applications for lease renewals and alterations in rural areas are still proceeding normally. As the embargo on alienation of vacant Crown land proposed following the former government's acceptance of the Woodward Report refers specifically to vacant Crown land, the existing interests or rights of individuals under the Crown Lands Ordinance were not affected by the embargo of alienation of Crown land. It will be recalled that the press statement in July 1974 by Dr Patterson indicated that, despite the downturn in the rural economy of the Northern Territory and especially for beef producers, normal lease administration would continue but special consideration would be given in default situations depending on circumstances. Thus, there has been no suspension of processing applications, the subject of the question.

I must say that the answer itself raises new questions in my mind. From my knowledge of the time that some people have been waiting for progress on applications, if processing of applications is proceeding normally, it is time that the normality was changed and something a bit abnormal was brought into the system.

947 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK (by leave): In reply to a question asked by the honourable member for Casuarina in relation to the Tiwi Mothers Home, I have to advise him that this building is still in the hands of the contractors. It was originally constructed under contract for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. There are problems associated with the construction of the building, particularly in relation to the airconditioning, and until these are rectified, the Department of Construction will not accept the building from the contractors.

948 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS—

Is he able to indicate when or if an Administrator is to be appointed to the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I am able to indicate that an Administrator is to be appointed to the Northern Territory. I am unable to indicate when but I can advise her that the matter is under very active consideration.

949 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS—

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Will the Primary Industry Branch animal health staff be rendered inefficient on programs already committed to disease eradication by restrictions on travel?

ANSWER

I ask him to place that question on notice.

950 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK—

In view of the increased numbers to be accommodated at the Fannie Bay Gaol through the closing down of Gunn Point Prison Farm, does he feel that present security at Fannie Bay Gaol is adequate?

ANSWER

The present security at Fannie Bay is barely adequate. There are, unfortunately, a number of maximum security prisoners who should be in another place in more secure circumstances. There are also quite a large number of prisoners who would be in the trusted class and would be normally at Gunn Point but unfortunately that institution is temporarily closed. I should perhaps explain that all prisoners are at the moment being accommodated at Fannie Bay; they are not being returned to the police cells but are remaining overnight in cell accommodation which is available at Fannie Bay. Extra officers have been rostered on duty at night for security reasons and, with the completion of the fence around the jail in the next couple of weeks, the security will be increased. However, the security of other prisoners is a matter of concern. Unfortunately, at the moment, there are no funds to transfer any maximum security prisoners elsewhere.

951 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN—

Can he give me any assurance that the commencement of the construction of the bridge over the Todd River will not be delayed by Government restrictions in expenditure?

ANSWER

I am unable to give any assurance as to whether or not that particular job will be affected by the cuts. I have made some approaches to the department—and the whole position with the construction of the Todd River bridge is related to funds. The Department of Construction anticipate that they will be ready to go to tender by the end of March. Under the present situation, whether this will in fact take place, has yet to be ascertained due to the funding position.

952 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

My question refers to a question I asked on the first sitting day which was: "Will he obtain and table a precise account of the capital works cuts to be experienced by the Department of the Northern Territory". Has he been able to obtain the information and, if not, when will it become available?

ANSWER

I telexed the Minister with a request along the lines sought on 19 February. I have had no acknowledgment and therefore I am not in a position to table the information.

953 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

When does the Education Department expect to have the Nakara Primary School operational?

ANSWER

The roof has to be removed and replaced because it is unsafe. Nakara is expected to open in early 1977.

954 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS—

I would like to ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Will he investigate the problems being experienced by the Primary Producers Board where some members have received no remuneration for many months and some new members are unable to travel because of financial restrictions?

ANSWER

I will investigate that. Yesterday, I arranged to have a meeting with the board members next week to discuss a number of matters of concern to them.

955 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING—

How many houses have been built at Snake Bay on Melville Island in the last financial year.

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain some sort of reply for him today.

956 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW—

Is it true that the Wagaman School is without a telephone?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, it is true that Wagaman School does not have a telephone. The Education Department did not see fit to apply for an installation until 30 January of this year although the school was occupied on 2 February. This is a disgusting oversight although I know that there was some doubt as to whether the school would be occupied. I consider a telephone of great importance to any organisation especially with children concerned.

957 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS—

I ask another question on behalf of the member for Elsey. What are the intentions of the consortium which propose taking over the Alice Springs Abattoirs and will they be in a position to process all grades of meat?

ANSWER

I ask him to place that question on notice.

958 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK—

In previous sittings I asked him if he would table in the Assembly or make public a report on the new jail which is being presented to the Minister. He undertook to approach the Minister. What was the result of his approach and does he intend to table the report?

ANSWER

I am unable to recall the member actually asking in the House for the tabling of the report. A report has been received from the Correctional Facilities Committee and it is with the Minister.

959 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING—

Does the Department of the Northern Territory intend re-introducing the sale of government homes to government employees?

ANSWER

I cannot speak for the Department of the Northern Territory on this matter; it is a matter of policy for the Minister to determine. However, I can indicate that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has recommended that the sale scheme for both government and Housing Commission homes be reintroduced and that the construction status of any home ought not to be a disqualifying factor to any eligible purchaser.

960 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN—

Can he advise what steps will be taken by the Post Office to re-establish mail services to isolated areas?

ANSWER

I will contact the department concerned and endeavour to get an answer for the honourable member for Stuart and pass it on to him as soon as it is available.

961 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW—

Can she tell me whether any moves are being made to ensure that English is made a compulsory subject in all Northern Territory schools.

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question. I would have my doubts but I will do some research and I ask him to place that question on notice.

962 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK—

In the light of the information supplied to me yesterday by the Executive Member for Municipal and Consumer Affairs that nothing can be done about the seepage from the Alice Springs sewerage ponds, can he assure me that those people in whose charge the ponds are, are concerned and involved in preventing damage to the environment? Can he also assure me that adequate precautions are being taken to limit health risks created by the sewerage seepage into the swamp?

ANSWER

In relation to the environment, perhaps the question might be more suitably answered by the Executive Member responsible for that area. This particular problem is in my electorate and also has some concern to me in relation to the health aspect and other aspects. Frankly, I do not accept that there is seepage from the sewerage ponds; there is deliberate overflowing from the sewerage ponds into the swamp and the departments responsible for this seem to be running around in circles to try and get around the situation instead of tackling the situation properly and getting on with the job of overcoming the deliberate discharge of

effluent into the pond near Ilpapa. The people in that area do face a serious health risk as a result of this overflow of sewerage waste. In fact the area is more like an airport with a fleet of Concordes coming in, with the number of mosquitoes there at the moment.

963 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS—

Can he give me further information on whether a person who received a registered brand in the Finniss River area did in fact qualify as a landholder to have such a brand? If he received the brand with the permission of another landholder, does the brand section of the AIB currently hold this written permission?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Arnhem did give me some notice that he would be following this matter up and I have been able to get some information for him. It is rather a tricky situation. As I advised before, in order for somebody to register a brand on a particular property or area, the person registering the brand has to either be the owner of the land or have permission in writing from the owner of the land. In this case, the land concerned is an Aboriginal reserve under the control of the Director of Aboriginal Affairs in the Northern Territory. Part of the property was to be run by permission by an Aboriginal company as a pastoral exercise and written permission was received from the Director of Aboriginal Affairs for the person concerned to register this brand, in other words from the landholder to the person who made the application, and the brand section of the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch does hold a copy of this written permission.

964 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK—

Can he tell me if there are any funds allocated to the Family Planning Association? If there are, how much money could be allocated to this association, and are the medicos working in that group paid for their services, along with the assistance of nursing staff?

ANSWER

I do not know. I ask that the question be placed on notice.

965 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING—

Is it a fact that the present chairman of the DRC has resigned?

ANSWER

I am aware only of a report in yesterday's Australian newspaper, in which it was said that the present chairman of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, Mr Clem Jones, is considering resignation.

966 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): I was asked a question on behalf of the member for Elsey about the assistance that would be available for peanut growers at Katherine. The information I have received is that Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch staff are working in close cooperation with growers to provide an active extension effort and specialised branch machinery is to be made available to growers on hire. The Primary Producers Board is considering providing a loan to the Northern Territory Producers Cooperative Limited for the purpose of minor repairs to processing machinery and for harvest advances on the peanut crop. This loan has not been formally approved; it depends on the submission of a formal application and further information on the size and marketing of the crop.

967 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): The second question related to assistance available to the beef industry. The information provided is, firstly, under the heading "Carry-on assistance to the beef industry": the Primary Producers Board has approved in excess of 50 applications from producers for carry-on loans for the 1975-76 financial year, fully committing the allocation. Payment under these loans is progressing and will continue for the rest of the financial year although in some cases payments cannot be completed until security documents are finalised. The Government has approved in principle the continuation of the Commonwealth-states carry-on finance scheme for the 1976-77 financial year. Details of funds available to the Northern Territory have still to be decided following discussions between the state governments and the Federal Government. Under the heading "Rural reconstruction", the information is as follows. Several early applications for rural reconstruction have been recommended by the Primary Producers Board for ministerial approval. These applications will fully commit the 1975-76 allocation. A further number of applications have been received and investigation of these is continuing, but at a slow rate because of their complexity. Priority of the limited board staff resources is being given to consideration of producers' immediate needs for carry-on finance. The present rural reconstruction scheme expires on 30 June 1976 and no decision has yet been made as to its continuation.

968 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): I was asked a question in relation to the oriental fruitfly. The information which I provide in relation to that matter is, first of all, under the heading of "Monitoring". That is to do with the establishment of the distribution of the fly in the Northern Territory and Northern Australia. During January 1976, the northern island and coastal areas and the Darwin, Daly River, and South Alligator and

Roper River areas were being trapped and the oriental fruitfly was found at most sites. During February 1976 the trapping programme was intensified in the original areas and extended south to Tennant Creek, east to cover the Gulf and Barkly Tableland district and west to Kununurra. Traps have also been forwarded to Alice Springs to set up a survey grid in that area.

The second heading is "Host collection", which refers to the fruit which the fruitfly might live and breed in. In order to obtain information on the host range of the oriental fruitfly periodic collections of fruit have been made in the Darwin area and on Melville Island. Oriental fruitfly has not to this point in time been reared from cultivated or commercial fruits and has been reared from only one native host, Opilia amentaceae, a creeper in all forests on Melville Island.

Finally, under "Quarantine", which was one of the main areas of concern in the question the information is as follows. It was recommended by the Exotic Fruit Fly Working Party (Entomology Committee) and the Standing Committee on Agriculture—that is a Commonwealth-states body—that there was a need for some sort of quarantine at the airports of Darwin, Nhulunbuy, Groote Eylandt and Katherine, and on the highways which lead to Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. Since oriental fruitfly has been gazetted as a notifiable disease under the Northern Territory Plant Disease Control Ordinance, it is an offence to take fruit or vegetables which can be infested from areas in which the fly occurs. Recommendations for the implementation of quarantine procedures are currently being investigated. A publicity campaign, including the erection of warning signs at the airports and the handing out of warning notices with the issue of airline tickets, is already in progress.

969 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked a question concerning a causeway on the McArthur River. I may or may not have the right answer here, Mr Speaker, but I have an answer referring to the culverts installed near the McArthur River Station. I do not know whether this was the area which was concerned; I believe the question originated from you, Sir. The answer which I received concerns that particular causeway. The culverts which were installed before this weather are to a height above the stream bed of 3 metres, and cost approximately $40,000. The river in the area has been known to run to a depth of about 20 metres. This does indicate that there is a possibility that flooding is still very likely. I am not familiar with the area myself, but during this wet season the approaches to the culverts have been washed out and temporary repairs have been made to restore the access. The Department of the Northern Territory is being approached to make permanent repairs at a cost of $5,500 and these repairs will be carried out after the wet.

970 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): The honourable member for Gillen asked me a question concerning the closure of the railway and whether or not an investigation had been instigated by the present Government or the last Government. I can inform him that there is no investigation being instigated by the present Government into the railways.

Mr Robertson: Was there one by the previous Government?

Mr RYAN: I have not been able to ascertain that. I think it is more important that it was not done by this Government.

971 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): A question was asked whether Taiwanese nationals were working on fishing vessels in the harbour. This was, in fact right; they were employed, unbeknown by a fisherman. However, the immigration people have been notified and have approached the Taiwanese fishermen and told them they were unable to work owing to their status in the town. Steps have also been taken to ensure that they have sufficient food on their own vessels; supplies will be made available so that they do not have any excuse for having to work to make money to buy food.

972 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): Another question from the honourable member for Jingili concerned the widening of Trower Road to Rapid Creek. This is another area affected by the allocation of funds at present and until such time we get some clarification as to what the road programme will be, I am unable to give an answer.

973 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): A question was asked by the honourable member for Alice Springs concerning the design of roads in Alice Springs. The roads are designed for the traffic that would be expected in 20 years. They do not design the roads, as was suggested, for a 15-year replacement; the roads are designed to carry traffic over the next 20 years. The actual design of the road, with regard to the weather does not change. The main change relative to the weather conditions is in the drainage, taking into consideration, not so much the rainfall over a period, but just how intense the rain is when it comes. The roads are designed to handle traffic that would occur over the next 20 years, and the drainage is sorted out by the amount of weather that occurs. There could be some variation if the weather continues to maintain its present pattern in Alice Springs.

974 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING (by leave): The honourable member for Tiwi sought certain information regarding building in the Knuckeys Lagoon area in relation to an Aboriginal camp. Further information has been supplied to me by the DRC with regard to his question whether the buildings at that site meet the DRC or Building Board requirements. The answer is no. He also asked whether a decision had been reached as to whether this will be a permanent camp. The information I am given is no. He also sought information as to whether moneys had been sought for development of this particular area in either the 1975-1976 or 1976-1977 years and again, the answer supplied is no.

975 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): The honourable member for Nighcliff asked whether it was the intention of the Department of Education and the Treasury to build a new Nightcliff Primary School on the present site. I am advised by the department that it is their intention to build a new primary school, but whether government finance will permit it in the immediate future is unknown; it is on their 1976-1977 capital works proposal. Had financial restrictions not been imposed recently, work would have gone ahead. I also seek leave to table the precise schedule of allocations for the 1975-1976 financial year indicating the cut-backs in expenditure for education. This schedule was provided for me by the Department of Education.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

## February 1976


Aboriginal Land Bill (Withnall) 837
Aboriginals and school enrolments (Kentish) 843
Administrator (Lawrie) 948
Agricultural leases, alterations and additions (Kentish) 874, 946
Airport, road construction (Withnall) 850
Air services, cuts (Everingham) 916
Alice Springs—
  abattoir take-over (Manuell) 957
  byelection allegations (Withnall) 868
  environmental damage (Manuell) 934
  market garden area (Robertson) 804
  refinery (Vale) 838
  rehabilitation centres for drunks (Kentish) 865
  road construction standards (Manuell) 938, 973
  sewerage ponds seepage (Manuell) 925, 962
  Todd River bridge (Manuell) 951
Animal Industry Branch staff travel restrictions (Manuell) 949
ATAC (Everingham) 862
Atomic Energy Commission, exploration licences (Manuell) 890
Attorney-General's Department, expenditure cutbacks (Lawrie) 919
Australian waterside workers' donations (Vale) 829
Ayers Rock village (Robertson) 803
Beaches, signs prohibiting traffic (Lawrie) 913
Beef industry, assistance (Vale) 897, 967
Bessie Springs abattoir, causeway (Ballantyne) 898
Block 3 (Ballantyne) 933
Brinkin Subdivision (Dondas) 806
Bruce and Flinders Highways, upgrading (Everingham) 862
Bulldozer, Lot 1785 Fannie Bay (Steele) 855
Capital works cutbacks (Lawrie) 839, 952
Carry-on finance for cattlemen (Vale) 897, 967; (Steele) 921
Central Australian Racing Club (Manuall) 922
Compressed air cylinders (Perron) 770
Consumer protection legislation (Dondas) 918
Core units, location (Lawrie) 858, 876, 878, 879, 883
Core units, sale by auction (Dondas) 860
Darwin Community College repairs (Everingham) 853, 884
Darwin Hospital wage levels (Withnall) 842
Darwin Reconstruction Act—section 9 (1) (Everingham) 833; section 8 (Withnall) 834; section 6(a) (Withnall) 899, 942; section 6(b) (Withnall) 911, 943
Darwin Reconstruction Commission—
  annual report (Withnall) 892
  chairman's resignation (Lawrie) 965
  houses handed over (Withnall) 888, 941
  meeting time (Lawrie) 880
Darwin Town Area leases, covenants (Lawrie) 863, 864, 872
Director of Correctional Services (Dondas) 901
Drive-in incident (Lawrie) 841
Drunks, rehabilitaiton centres funding (Kentish) 865
Electrical inspectors (Dondas) 861
Electricity installation (Dondas) 861
Electricity supply authority (Dondas) 915
Electricity supply, bonds (Tungutalum) 891
Education Department, cutbacks in expenditure (Lawrie) 886
Education Department, enrolments (Dondas) 889
English language teaching (Kentish) 961
Family law counsellors (Everingham) 896
Family Planning Association (Ballantyne) 964
Fannie Bay Gaol (Dondas) 895, 950; (Lawrie) 958
Farrel Crescent, lights (Kentish) 835
Federalism policy (Everingham) 867
Finniss River, unlawful branding (Kentish) 935, 963
Fire brigade, compressed air cylinders (Perron) 770
Free beach (Everingham) 875
Gaol report (Lawrie) 958
Gove environmental report (Lawrie) 808
  (See also under Nhulunbuy)
Government home sales (Dondas) 959
Home Finance Trustee loans—see housing loans
Housing authority (Lawrie) 936
Housing Commission, purchases by tenants (Lawrie) 939
Housing Commission, staff (Dondas) 912
Housing loans (Lawrie) 828, 920, 923, 928; (Dondas) 904
Humpty Doo electricity installation (Kentish) 832, 945
Incorporation of companies (Everingham) 900
Industrial health (Vale) 764
Insurance payments (cyclone damage) to Commonwealth (Everingham) 882
Iwupataka telephone (Vale) 805
Justices Ordinance 1975 (Everingham) 924
Katherine—
  peanut growers (Ballantyne) 927, 966
  police and drunks (Robertson) 940
Knuckeys Lagoon, Aboriginal camp (Tungutalum) 929, 974
Land Acquisition Bill 1975 (Withnall) 848
Land auction (Everingham) 926
Legal Aid office (Dondas) 885
Legislation for NT (Withnall) 836
Lottery and gaming legislation (Steele) 869
McArthur River causeway and culverts (Ballantyne) 898, 969
Mail service (Manuell) 846, 917; (Vale) 960
Maranboy road improvements (Ballantyne) 866
"Mariana" fishing vessel (Everingham) 914
Melville Bay, pollution (Lawrie) 761
Montejinni station incident (Vale) 907, 944
Nabalco, pollution (Lawrie) 758, 671
Nakara Primary School (Dondas) 953
Newcastle Waters causeway (Everingham) 849
Nhulunbuy, pollution (Lawrie) 758, 761; erosion (Lawrie) 759
  (See also under Gove)
Nightcliff Primary School (Lawrie) 930, 975
Nimmo Report (Kentish) 932
North Australia Railway, closure (Lawrie) 831, 854; (Robertson) 906, 970
Northern Territory laws (Withnall) 836
Noxious weeds (Tungutalum) 856
Nursing training school (Ballantyne) 859
Oriental fruitfly (Vale) 887, 968
Parliament house (Steele) 937
Parole Board (Lawrie) 905
Peanut growers, assistance (Ballantyne) 927, 966
Police uniforms (Dondas) 873
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill (Kentish) 852; (Everingham) 893; (Vale) 894
Primary Producers Board, remuneration (Manuell) 954
Queens Counsel (Robertson) 931
Renal dialysis machine (Lawrie) 807
Reserves Board, flora and fauna policy (Vale) 902
Rural reconstruction funds (Kentish) 871

Snake Bay housing (Tungutalum) 955
Statehood (Withnall) 830
Stock squad (Kentish) 847, 935, 963
Strangways—see Humpty Doo
Strata Titles Ordinance, reservation (Withnall) 845
Street lighting (Everingham) 870
Stuart Highway, Farrell Crescent lighting (Kentish) 835
Surface mail disruptions (Manuell) 846
Surge area and home loans (Dondas) 904
Taiwanese seamen (Dondas) 908, 971
Tennant Creek, copper smelter (Ballantyne) 910
Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Bill 1975 (Lawrie) 851
Timber for cyclone relief (Dondas) 881
Tiwi Mothers Home (Dondas) 857, 947
Tourist Bureau costs (Everingham) 903
Trail bike riders (Manuell) 934
Trespassers Ordinance applications (Everingham) 840
Trower Road widening (Everingham) 909, 972
Trower-Rothdale Roads lighting (Everingham) 870
Unit titles legislation (Lawrie) 884; (Withnall) 845
Wagaman Primary School (Everingham) 827; (Dondas) 956
Waterside workers' donations (Vale) 829

**PART II**

# THE QUESTION PAPER

**Questions are printed in numerical order**

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

## QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 5 APRIL 1976

FROM 17 FEBRUARY 1976

809 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

1. Will he obtain from the Department of the Northern Territory a summary of all correspondence initiated by that department and any other department relating to the initial proposal to reserve and the actual reservation of the Prices Regulation Ordinance 1975 and the Crown Lands Ordindance (No. 4) 1975 indicating the designation of the officers concerned, their section and branch?

2. On how many occasions have the presentation copies of Ordinances been lost and when this has happened did the loss occur in the Darwin, Brisbane or Canberra offices of the department?

810 Mrs. LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Further to the answer supplied to question 758 -

(a) does the pollution of Melville Bay include a deposit on the sea bed of Magnesium Chloride and has this deposit killed off seabed marine life in its vicinity;

(b) if the killing of seabed marine life is not irreversible damage by what means, either natural or through measures to be applied by Nabalco, is the marine life to be reactivated and what reasonable measures can be applied;

(c) did the pollution of Melville Bay take place over a period of many months or years with both Nabalco and the Department of the Northern Territory knowing that it was taking place and, if so, how can the spillages be described as "accidental";

(d) how in fact is the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch involved in the area if it only acts "per medium" of the Mines Inspector: and

(e) do the Branches of the Department of the Northern Territory publish the results of their investigations or are they not available to the public at all?

811 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

When will the protective works at Gove be finished to the point that no further pollution will be possible?

812 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Further to the answer to question 759 -

(a) under whose supervision is filling and restoration of mined sand areas behind Wallaby Beach being done: and

(b) who carried out the work?

## QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 5 APRIL 1976

813 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

1. What effects do the current travel and work restrictions placed on the Public Service have on the Department of the Northern Territory's ability to work at Gove?

2. Is the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch staffed to an adequate level to enable it to work effectively at Gove?

814 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

With further reference to Nabalco's operations at Gove -

(a) has any monitoring of pollution been conducted around the general area of Drimmie Arm and, if so by whom and are the results available;

(b) has the release of effluent combined with the level of magnesium raised the alkalinity of the sea water around Drimmie Arm to a pH above 10;

(c) in view of the estimated seventy years of effective life of the Nabalco project, have any studies by the various branches been carried out on the changes in the mangrove vegetation fringing the Arm, or the beds of sea grass located in the Arm; and

(d) have the levels of chromium and lead taken from samples of red mud and of fish been abnormally high, and, if so what action does the Department intend taking to reduce, or assisting Nabalco to reduce, the high levels?

816 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

1. On what occasions have caustic soda spillages occurred in Nabalco's operations, since February 1973?

2. What was the source and area and estimated volume of each spillage?

3. Where was the caustic soda deposited in each case?

4. Where deposition took place outside the operating plant, was any monitoring carried out before and/or after, who carried out the monitoring, if any, and are the results available?

5. Has the monitoring been carried out at varying distances from the discharge points in the open Bay?

6. What was the average daily discharge of caustic soda for the fiscal years 1974 and 1975 and the average daily discharges for the six months ended December 1975?

7. On what occasions have the security pond gates been opened to allow release of effluent and what was the estimated volume of each release?

8. Was any monitoring carried out before and/or after each release?

9. Has the Department of the Northern Territory advised Nabalco to strengthen the security pond walls and, if not, how are future conditions of possible breaching of the security pond walls to be met, or is it assumed that the recycling of the various solutions and/or mud will reduce the volume of effluent and therefore reduce the storage holding of the ponds during the wet?

FROM 24 FEBRUARY 1976

817 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission furnished to the Australian Government any and, if so, what advice with respect to matters relating to the expenditure of public and private moneys in and in connection with development and construction in the Darwin area?

FROM 31 MARCH 1976

822 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

When will the rehabilitation of Administration Block 3, Mitchell St. Darwin, be completed and when and by whom will it be occupied?

824 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS -

I refer to the consortium which proposes to take over the Alice Springs abattoirs and ask: what is their programme for the operation and development of the abattoirs and is it intended to process all grades of meat?

760 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

(a) How many Environmental Impact Statements have been called for within the Northern Territory?

(b) What officers prepare such statements?

ANSWER

(a) No Environmental Impact Statements have been called for within the Northern Territory in the terms of the Environmental Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974-75 which is administered by the Minister for Environment Housing and Community Development. Projects within the Northern Territory for which E.I.S.'s or other environmental studies and reports have been, or are being, prepared in response to government policy are:

Ranger Uranium Mines,
Darwin's Second Powerhouse,
Gove Red Mud Leases,
MacArthur River Mines Project,
Marrara and MacMillans Road Industrial Sub-divisions (suspended following Cyclone Tracy),
Darwin's New Town Development (also suspended).

(b) The preparation of Environmental Impact Statements is the responsibility of the proposer of the project requiring a statement. The preparation of the statements and reports referred to in (a) above have involved a wide variety of professions both within and outside of government service.

767 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TUXWORTH -

What plans does the Water Resources Branch, or any other department, have to provide water for the 50 000 gallon elevated tank installed near subdivided freehold Sections 462, 463 and 475 Hundred of Strangways?

ANSWER

The Water Supply Undertaking has no 50.000 gallon elevated tank installed in this area. There are no immediate plans to provide reticulated water supply to these sections.

769 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

Concerning the 1,500 sheets of high-quality teak ply wood given to the people of Darwin from the Government and people of Burma -

(a) How many of these ply wood sheets have been distributed;

(b) By whom were they distributed;

(c) To whom were they distributed;

(d) When were they distributed;

(e) Where are the remaining sheets being held; and

(f) To what purpose is it intended to put the remaining sheets?

ANSWER

(a) Eight of a total of 1,500 sheets.

(b) At the request of the Department of Northern Australia.

(c) To Mr A.C. Helberg, an aged pensioner, to enable him to repair furniture which was damaged in the cyclone.

(d) Early August 1975.

(e) Distribution of the remaining plywood has been placed in the hands of the Corporation of the City of Darwin. All plywood is stored under cover at the Municipal Depot.

(f) As there is not sufficient plywood to make a general distribution to the people of Darwin, it is intended to allocate it to organisations which will be able to use it in projects which will benefit the citizens of Darwin. All requests for plywood in response to applications which were called on 6 June 1975 have been referred to the Corporation. Distribution of plywood in response to these requests has not yet been made as the organisations concerned, while they have suitable projects in mind, have not yet commenced this work. An example of the type of project for which the plywood will be used will be the lining of a feature wall in the Civic Centre on which a plaque will be mounted, commemorating the gift from the people of Burma.

815 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

1. What role is the Department of the Northern Territory adopting in the negotiations presently underway with the Aboriginal communities of Arnhemland for further land to be used for Nabalco's operation?

2. Is the land in question envisaged for future use as a red mud pond or as a security pond?

3. What areas, including mangroves, are envisaged for future use within the next seven years and what total area does this involve?

ANSWER

1. The Department of the Northern Territory's role in the negotiations between Nabalco and the Aborigines is to ensure that the interests of both parties are preserved as far as is consistent with the overall national interest.

2. A small portion of the land will be used for the security pond, but the principal use will be for the disposal of ferro silt.

3. In the next 7 years about 160 hectares will be used for disposal of ferro silt, none of which will be in the mangroves area.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

818 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer to the contract of $20,000 for the transport of donated timber by Jackson & Spring Pty. Ltd. of Rocklea from Queensland to Darwin and ask, what does the Department of the Northern Territory intend doing with this timber and is it in Darwin?

ANSWER

All the timber donated by the people of Coffs Harbour (190 tons) has been carried to Darwin at the expense of the Federal Government. It has been delivered to the Corporation of the City of Darwin for distribution and use as the Corporation sees fit.

The Corporation advises that it decided to limit the use of the timber to Corporation purposes and public buildings because the timber was of varying sizes and there was insufficient for a general distribution. Use has been delayed because of the severe wet season conditions, but approximately one-third of the timber has been so used.

819 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

1. Why did the Home Finance Trustee delay approval of the loan application of J.C.S. & M.E. Francis, Lot 4625, Daniels Street, Ludmilla submitted on 12 November 1975?

2. Why was approval not given?

3. When will approval be granted?

ANSWER

1. The Home Finance Trustee did not unduly delay approval of Mr & Mrs J.C.S. & M.E. Francis's loan.

2. J.C.S. & M.E. Francis of Lot 4625 Daniels Street, Ludmilla submitted an application on 12th November 1975. The papers were filed and submitted to the appropriate interviewing officer on 13 November 1975.

   While the necessary investigations to determine eligibility were being carried out, an announcement was made that all available funds under the 6% concessional loan scheme had been committed, and that no new approvals could be given until additional funds were allocated.

   Mr & Mrs Francis's application was still processed up to the approval stage and submitted to the Home Finance Trustee awaiting approval.

3. Application by Mr & Mrs Francis was approved by the Home Finance Trustee on 4 March 1976.

820 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

1. Is any section of the police force currently investigating allegations made by Mr Clyde Reborse of the Finniss River Cattle

Company that his stock has been interfered with and illegal branding has taken place?

2. If investigations are being made which section of the force is conducting them?

ANSWER

1. No.

2. See Part 1 above.

821 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

1. What funds have been allocated to the Family Planning Association by the Federal Government and how much was made available for expenditure in the Territory?

2. Do medical officers and nursing staff assisting the association receive payment for their services?

ANSWER

1. Family Planning Associations are jointly funded by Health Department and Social Security Department.

Social Security Department funds the clinical services of the Association, which is by far the largest component.

Health Department provides funds for administrative costs.

Health Department funds for State and Territory Associations totalled $183,450 of which $1,164 was for the Northern Territory Association. Expenditure so far this financial year totals $970

$250,000 was allocated to the Australian Federation of Family Planning Association. Of this amount $10,950 was earmarked for the Northern Territory. The actual sum expended by the Australian Federation in the Northern Territory will not be available until audited accounts are received after the end of the financial year.

In addition to direct grants by Health Department, additional funds were made available in the form of Health Programme grants totalling $885,913 for State and Territory Associations. The Northern Territory's allocation from this sum was $12 680.

$24,794 was made available for expenditure in the Northern Territory as per details above.

2. Medical and nursing staff are paid on a sessional basis when attending clinics.

823 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS -

Will the disease eradication programmes to which the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch is already committed be adversely affected by restrictions on staff travel and, if so, to what extent?

ANSWER

The Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Eradication Programmes of the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory have been relatively unaffected by restrictions on staff travel to the present time. This is because stock movements and musterings are at their usual seasonal low point.

Once the normal dry season movements and musterings increase markedly from April onwards, staff travel will increase. In addition requests for new whole-herd T.B. control programmes are being received. Funds for travel to service both these programmes are expected to be adequate.

976 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK -

1. At what stage of construction is the sewerage scheme at Papunya?

2. When is it anticipated it will be completed?

3. What are the reasons for delay in completing the scheme?

4. Are some construction projects at present under construction at Papunya - for example, hospital and houses - designed to utilise the sewerage system before they can be put into use?

ANSWER

1. Work completed includes reticulation, pump station and lagoons. Still outstanding is pipe works at lagoons and commissioning of complete system.

2. It is anticipated that work will be completed by July 1976.

3. Failure of a contractor resulted in cancelling of the contract and the need to make alternative arrangements.

4. It is expected the sewerage system will be operational prior to completion of the hospital.

977 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK -

1. At what stage of completion are the following houses being constructed at Papunya -

   a) Atco type homes

   b) brick homes similar to present Department of NT design: and

   c) Dowsett contract?

2. When are the houses expected to be completed?

3. Are the houses designed with individual septic tanks, or for connection to the sewerage scheme at Papunya?

ANSWER

1. a. Atco type homes for Department of Education are complete.
   b. Brick Department of N.T. design houses are 90% complete.
   c. Dowsett Homes - Company has been placed under receivership. At the time of failure of the contractor 4 residences were 95% complete, 2 residences were 50% complete.

2. a. Atco now complete.
   b. Estimate late April.
   c. Estimate 6 months to complete work from acceptance of tender.

3. The sewerage system is for the collection of septic tank effluent by a reticulation system. Therefore houses are designed with individual septic tanks which will be connected to sewerage system.

978 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

Can the honourable member advise me whether it is a fact that in schools run by the Department of Education in Darwin children will be left unattended by their teachers for a period of 2 hours?

ANSWER

Schoolchildren will not be left unattended. Each principal has ensured that a skeleton staff will be there so that adequate supervision will be available for any children who attend school whilst teachers are out on strike.

979 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

Is the Majority Leader able to give any indication as to when the Minister for the Northern Territory will appoint an Administrator for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I regret that I am unable to provide a satisfactory answer. When an Administrator of the Northern Territory is appointed, I presume the announcement will be made by the Minister for the Northern Territory. I understand that considerable progress has been made in the matter, to the point of selection, and it is at the stage now where formal ratification is probably all that is needed. In view of this, I expect that there will be an announcement within a few days; but I did hold expectations of that sort earlier which were not realised.

980 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS -

Is the Majority Leader aware that the opening of the Katherine Meat Works has been postponed from late April to June?

ANSWER

I have not heard any definite announcement to this effect from the meatworks management but there are strong and fairly authoritative rumours to that effect circulating in the Top End. I believe that there is still some doubt on the opening of the works. This is extremely bad news for an industry that is already in critical circumstances and I am hopeful that tomorrow's sitting day may present another opportunity for some debate on the state of the beef industry and I can provide whatever information is available to me at that time.

981 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise when and where the next Rural Road Conference will be held?

ANSWER

The date for the next Rural Road Conference cannot be set until such time as the programmes are known.

982 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr SPEAKER -

Last week I received a telegram advising this Assembly would reconvene on Tuesday. On Monday morning, I heard on the ABC that the sittings had been postponed till this day and I received that advice late Monday. Why was the ABC advised of the change of date before the members of this Assembly or at least this member?

ANSWER

I have had some forewarning of this question. On Saturday afternoon, the 27th, the Whip of the Majority Party rang me and requested that the Assembly meeting be postponed till Wednesday from the original meeting date of Tuesday because he was unable to guarantee that all Country-Liberal Party members could be present due to the shortness of the notice of the special meeting and because of airline interruptions. Unwillingly, I agreed that it was a reasonable request. However, as Mr Clerk is not on the phone, I was unable to contact him until Monday at 8 30 am and he sent telegrams out immediately. Perhaps the delay of the honourable member receiving her notice of the change of date of the meeting should be brought to the notice of the honourable Executive Member for Transport and Secondary Industry in his capacity as being responsible for PMG matters. However, I do apologise for my indiscretion in allowing the media access to the information before all honourable members had been notified.

983 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware of any proposal or discussion relating to the introduction of a bill to increase stamp duty?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any proposals or discussions to increase stamp duty.

984 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise when the rail line between Alice Springs and Port Augusta will be reopened?

ANSWER

I do not have that information at the moment but will endeavour to find out later today and have the answer for the honourable member tomorrow.

985 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise me why, in view of the delays of up to and over 3 months, in many instances, in telephone connections in the Darwin area and throughout the Territory generally, private subcontractors should not be able to install telephone equipment at the subscriber's expense and to PMG specifications?

ANSWER

I did have prior knowledge of this question and contacted the Telecom Australia manager in Darwin. It is not the general practice of that department to have private contractors install their equipment. The only time that this happens is in the installation of special telephone systems - such as PABX etc - which are installed by the manufacturer or the subcontractor and supervised by the PMG. I agree with the honourable member for Jingili that perhaps it would be a way of overcoming the problem, but at the moment the Telecom people do not intend using private contractors, at this stage to try to catch up on the backlog of telephone installations. This applies to the whole of Australia.

986 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

I address this question to the Majority Leader on behalf of the member for Elsey. Will the honourable member investigate the possibility of establishing a canning factory in the Northern Territory for the purpose of assistance to the beef industry and to supply a demand from countries to the north of us for canned food?

ANSWER

Yes, I will make inquiries through and with the department to see what advantages such a cannery would offer to the Northern Territory. Some honourable members will know that the question of canneries is one that has been alive and raised over many years now. It is probably something like 15 years ago since the Federal Government and Department of Territories, as it was then known, made a site available for a cannery near Darwin. That site was never taken up. Since then, the matter has been raised and pursued on a number of occasions, particularly by the former member for Jingili in the Legislative Council. The department does make periodic investigations into the feasibility of such a project; I will check on the latest views and convey them to the honourable member.

987 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Is it a fact that although the Northern Territory has 4.5 per cent of the Australian cattle population, it received only 1.5 per cent of carry-on finance and 0.0018 per cent of rural reconstruction finance? Was this because the states matched Commonwealth financial assistance and the Northern Territory, having no Treasury of its own, was unable to provide funds, or is this the reward for being a federal responsibility?

ANSWER

I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the figures used by the honourable member for Arnhem but I can say that the amount allocated by the Commonwealth Government to the Northern Territory for rural reconstruction purposes was, on a pro rata basis - whichever way you look at it - lower than the amount allocated to the various states. The reason for this is probably the second

suggestion advanced by the honourable member, that we are a federal responsibility and we have not got the protection of state powers and the extra muscle which a state has in these matters.

It is not the first time we have suffered from this kind of situation. Some honourable members who have been connected with agriculture may well remember that, over a long period, some 20 years, when the Commonwealth Government disbursed money to the states for what they called the "Commonwealth Extension Services Grant" which provided special advisory services for the benefit of farming throughout Australia, this territory received not one cent out of approximately $7m or $8m which was given per year to the other states for this purpose. As a consequence, agricultural extension services of the Northern Territory are in a run down and decrepit condition, far below anything which exists in the states. Until we make progress in the direction of responsible self government we are going to suffer the kind of disadvantages which are represented by the low allocation of funds to rural reconstruction and other cases which we have seen in the past.

988 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is it a fact that Borroloola has an airmail service from Darwin and Mt Isa and does Gulf Transport convey mail etc, in excess of what can be carried by air to Borroloola each week from Darwin?

ANSWER

I do not have that information available. I will attempt to find it out later today and advise the Assembly.

989 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

How much of the budget of about $100m has been committed by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and has there been a decision made that no further money will be committed this financial year?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission budget figure for 1975-76 was of the order of $98m. It has been necessary for the Reconstruction Commission to approach the Government for an increase in that cash amount to increase the figure to $110m to meet all present contractual requirements of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. In fact, the whole $110m now appropriated will be paid out by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

990 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr SPEAKER -

You would be aware that the Assembly is without a photograph copying machine. Is it intended that the facilities provided by the Assembly in future will include such a machine?

ANSWER

You probably are aware that a photocopier was part of the equipment of the Legislative Council. I consider it to be a fundamental piece of equipment of the Assembly. Unfortunately, the machine used by the Council is now beyond repair and funds have been sought from Treasury to provide a new one. In recent weeks I have had a communication from the Treasury querying the need for these funds and I have protested most strongly at the intention of the Treasury to exclude these funds.

991 Mr MANUELL to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that the Northern Territory Apprenticeship Board has insufficient funds to permit day release in Alice Springs and Darwin Community Colleges and that some trade classes are having to attend block releases interstate? If the answer to these questions is yes, what is the plan for funding in the future and does the appropriation plan include proposals for day release for recognised trades?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Apprenticeship Board does not have sufficient funds as it received a further appropriation of funds last October. The Darwin Community College arranged the courses. Problems have been experienced with regard to staff and a large apprenticeship increase of 300 per cent to the normal annual intake. The Apprenticeship Board does not consider that Treasury would pass the travelling expenses of pupils to attend day releases. Pupils do attend block releases interstate and will do so in the future as there are no facilities here for some trades. I have taken up this matter with the Minister for Education and I am awaiting an answer.

992 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

My question concerns the Cattle Price Stabilization Ordinance 1975 which is of some interest to the member for Elsey. This Ordinance was passed in April 1975 and reserved on 26 August 1975. I believe members have had advice from the Acting Administrator that questions of basic policy will need to be resolved in discussions between Federal Government departments and the Assembly before further progress will be possible with respect to the question of assent. I ask if these discussions have started, are ensuing and, in fact, what is the general status of that legislation?

ANSWER

Taking the last part of the question first, the legislation is largely one for the industry itself as well as the Government. In order to make the scheme work, there has to be a certain number of known participants who are willing to go along with that form of assistance. At meetings of the Cattlemens Association and the Cattle Producers Council in recent times the indications have been that the priorities which the industry accords to assistance take the form of a better system of carry-on

finance as an urgent requirement, both in the terms of the ceilings of the loan and the renewal of loan conditions. They also stress attention to debt reconstruction and the need for constant pressure on the government to give consideration to some kind of freight assistance. The industry would find these forms of assistance of greater advantage than the implementation of the beef cattle price stabilization scheme at this stage. At the time the legislation was framed, the economic situation of the industry was considerably different. By the time the legislation could have been commenced, the price of 6c or 7c per pound of beef had sunk to a level which virtually made the scheme unworkable in the form in which it was passed here. It has been generally agreed in discussions with the officers of the department and the minister that, for the scheme to become workable again, there would have to be a substantial increase in the level of the base price of beef towards the cost of production, probably something in the order of 15c or 16c a pound. At this moment, we do not have a firm indication of what the starting price for beef this year will be or even whether there will be one in the event of the Katherine Meat Works not opening. The matter is still under consideration but the views of the industry have been taken into account in discussion and these lean towards other forms of assistance at this time.

993 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

In view of the Federal Government's intention to ban all cigarette advertising on electronic media is he able to give me any indication when the ban will take effect in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the proposals will be operative from 1 September this year and will apply throughout Australia. It has been pointed out that a ban on this form of advertising on electronic media which the Federal Government does control is discriminatory against other forms of media advertising. This is a matter which will be further discussed at the conference of the State and Commonwealth Ministers of Health in June in Adelaide. I hope to be represented at that meeting and these matters will be further discussed then.

994 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise me whether it is in fact correct that the Attorney-General of Australia will be visiting the Northern Territory during the month of April and, if so, will arrangements be made for members of the Assembly to meet him?

ANSWER

The Attorney-General does plan to visit Darwin between April 21 and April 23 and I have asked his private secretary and the Attorney-General's Department in Darwin if time can be made available shortly after his arrival for members of the Assembly to speak with him.

995 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

I have a press release for the Northern Territory dated 17 July 1974: "The Minister for the Northern Territory Dr Rex Patterson today said steps were being taken to set up a Liquor Commission in the Northern Territory. Dr Patterson said it was expected that the Liquor Commission would be appointed and in operation in the near future." We know what has happened to Dr Rex Patterson, but could the honourable member tell me what has happened to the Liquor Commission?

ANSWER

The words of the former Minister were all well and good but to provide a Liquor Commission you must have legislation. Since he made those statements, he was in a position to assist by providing the necessary manpower to draft legislation for this Assembly. However, nothing further eventuated. In the last few months, more work has been done on this matter and there is presently before the Executive a submission on the complete review of the Licensing Ordinance, including the establishment of a Liquor Commission. I hope that, within the not too distant future, we will have the green light from the Executive and sufficient draftsmen to prepare this legislation.

996 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware of a transfer of funds in excess of $100,000 being made to the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress in recent days? If so, can he give me any indication on what these funds are to be used for?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the transfer of funds of this proportion. I would ask that the honourable member place this question on notice.

997 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

How much money is allocated by the Federal Government to operate the Australian Legal Aid Office in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I would ask that the question be placed on notice.

998 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise the southernmost region of the Northern Territory in which the oriental fruit fly has been detected?

ANSWER

The oriental fruit fly seems to be proceeding on its merry way and every meeting I am able to give a progress report. It has now been discovered at Newcastle Waters and that is the southernmost limit of its range. Traps have been set along the Victoria

Highway out as far as Timber Creek and further west and also along the Barkly Highway towards Mt Isa. The collections from these districts have not yet been processed. The work is going on all the time and the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch keeps me closely informed about what is happening.

The views of the entomologists are that they may be getting somewhere near the limit of this pest's range at the present time in the Northern Territory. However, they cannot be sure of that for a while yet. I might mention that I have had notification from the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch that there are some flaws in the Plant Diseases Ordinance of the Northern Territory which may need to be corrected in order to cope with situations which might arise for some greater activity on the quarantine front. Following discussions, I will probably be introducing legislation on that matter in the near future.

999 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

My question refers to the Motor Vehicles Ordinance 1975 which was given urgency when introduced by the member for Jingili. It appears that advice has been received from the Acting Administrator that it has been reserved as it became apparent that objections raised by Treasury and the Underwriters Association warranted detailed consideration and considerable progress has been made towards the drafting of legislation to replace this ordinance. Has he been involved with discussions with the relevant department and/or any other organisation as to the drafting of legislation to supersede the ordinance? If so, can he give an indication as to when it is likely to be introduced and if urgency will be sought?

ANSWER

In reading a report from the Acting Administrator, I was a bit concerned with the words "considerable progress". I do not really feel that there has been "considerable progress" made. I have been involved in discussions with the Department of the Northern Territory Transport Planning Branch. There is a paper which has been referred to the insurance organisation and an attempt will be made to come up with satisfactory legislation. I am presently waiting for a meeting to be arranged between the officers of the Department of the Northern Territory, the insurance companies and myself to try to implement some satisfactory legislation. There are many problems involved in the framing of an ordinance which will cover this particular problem particularly those events which have taken place in the past where companies have in fact gone broke. I hope that legislation will be introduced in the latter half of this year.

1000 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

In view of the fact that the Majority Leader advised this House a few moments ago that the oriental fruit fly has penetrated as far south as Newcastle Waters, can he advise me if it, too, is held up by the flooded causeway in that area?

ANSWER

I cannot answer this although I would like to take the credit for it if our road is in fact holding it up. It would be the only good thing that has happended at Newcastle Waters this year, so far.

1001 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

I refer to the half mile of the Stuart Highway from the airport gates to Bombing Road, which has been under construction since 1974, about 18 months altogether. Is there a possibility that this road will be available to the public some time during this year?

ANSWER

It is just that I should be asked that question once more because I can positively say, in view of the fact that the contractors have been working on the road since last Saturday, that unless something unforeseen happens within the next week or so. that road will definitely be opened. I hope this is the last time I will have to answer a question about that piece of road.

1002 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that an employer of an apprentice cannot terminate the employment of an apprentice on the ground that the employer is no longer able to pay wages? Is it also a fact that an employer must physically close down the business and not re-enter that business in order to be relieved of responsibility to the apprentice? If the answer to those two questions is no, would she please make sure that the officers of the Apprenticeship Board are aware of it?

ANSWER

I was given some forewarning of this question and I contacted the Acting Chairman of the Apprenticeship Board this morning. He advised me that the answer is, in fact, no. Indeed, at the moment we have several apprentices from Brisbane up here seeking employment because they are no longer in the employment of the person to whom they were originally indentured. I will ensure that members of the board are aware of this.

1003 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Has there been any case in which the oriental fruit fly has found to have actually infested fruit in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, every case of identification has been made from flies caught in fly traps. I know of no case in which the fly has been recovered from infested fruit. I am pretty certain of that information in relation to what I might call domestic fruit anyway, fruit grown in gardens. I am not quite so sure in relation to native fruit. There is a pretty strong

suggestion amongst the entomologists that the fly is not behaving as pathogenically as it does in a place such as Hawaii, where it has been a major pest of the fruit industry, and there is no evidence, I believe, as yet to suggest that it is behaving in this kind of way in the Top End of the Northern Territory. This is an area which will require considerable further investigation which may take some time. I will check on the answer and inform the honourable member precisely.

1004 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is the Darwin Reconstruction Commission preparing to call tenders for construction of new homes in the next financial year?

ANSWER

I am not aware that the 1976-77 budget has yet been finalised. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has put forward its estimates and requirements and they certainly included proposals for the construction of new homes, for the repair and maintenance of damaged homes, and for a large proportion of rebuilt homes on existing decks to be reinstated. It would be foolish of me to predict what the contracts will be because they will be totally dependent on the 1976-77 budget and the honourable member will be aware from the report in yesterday's newspaper that the General Manager of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is in Canberra today having discussions with Treasury with regard to the 1976-77 program.

1005 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns the caravans bought by the Australian Government for use as temporary accommodation I believe this matter is being handled by the Department of the Northern Territory. Can the honourable member advise the number of caravans presently being held in the store yards and not being used at all, the number of caravans on site but not yet connected, and the reason for these caravans not being utilised given the present housing shortage?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not have that information readily available. I will seek it and make it available to the honourable member.

1006 Mr MANUELL to Miss ANDREW -

What is the proposed opening date of the Braitling Primary School in Alice Springs, and is it planned to accommodate the students from the Ross Park School, while the Ross Park School is being revamped in the Braitling Primary School? Is there also a proposal to commence upgrading the Ross Park School immediately those students vacate the Ross Park School?

ANSWER

I am advised that the Education Department is taking over Braitling Primary School at the end of this year and hopefully the opening date will be February 1977, that is at the start of the 1977 school year. Yes, students from Ross Park School will be accommodated at the Braitling Primary School if the Ross Park School is revamped; this is dependent on whether money is available. Regarding the proposal to commence upgrading the Ross Park Primary School immediately, this is of course dependent both on funds and the quick letting of the contract.

1007 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is the honourable member aware of, or has he had any discussions on, the removal of subsidised rent on Austalian Government Public Service Homes in the Northern Territory; that is, the introduction of economic rent?

ANSWER

I have not been acquainted with any studies in this regard. I will certainly make inquiries of the Department of the Northern Territory to find out if there are any departmental reports or studies going on and make the information available to the honourable member.

1008 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it true that the Department of the Northern Territory are charging full rent to government employees for accommodation which is substandard because of cyclone damage?

ANSWER

No, it is not true to say that full rent is being charged on substandard dwellings. The manner in which the department determines the rent of buildings in Darwin at the moment is that in residential housing there are several categories, I believe three, each with a maximum rent which is charged depending on the assessed status of that particular building. A very poorly constructed, lack of facilities type of home attracts a maximum rent of $10 a week; the inbetween home where the electricity and linings are in the building but perhaps not up to full standard has an inbetween figure. Where a house has been restored to pre-cyclone standard or is a new home, then the maximum rent charged at the moment is 10 per cent of salary with a maximum of $25 a week. From discussions with departmental officers, I have learned that there have been cases where incorrect assessments of the building's status have taken place: however, these have always been adjusted when brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

1009 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

It has come to my attention that the Department of Health may well be charging pensioners who are in-patients of the Darwin hos-

pital if they elect to continue to avail themselves of the services of their own doctors. As I recall the position, an undertaking was given to this House by the honourable member on behalf of the department, before the time of the introduction of the Medibank charging legislation that we approved last year, that expectant mothers and pensioners would be permitted to retain the services of their own doctors in the hospital without any daily bed charge being made. In fact I understand that they are being charged $20 per day. Is it a fact that old age pensioners are being charged for the occupation of a bed whilst under treatment in the Darwin Hospital and wishing to retain the services of their private doctor?

ANSWER

This is a matter which has been going on for some considerable time, as the member for Jingili has mentioned, and was the subject of some considerable negotiation between members of this Assembly and the Department of Health at the time that legislation to implement the Medibank system in the Territory was passed by this Assembly. The situation in relation to the pensioners is that the Department of Health agreed for pensioners to be treated free of charge, without the $20 per day being imposed on them by their own private doctor, on the understanding of course that the doctor entered into an agreement with the hospital in relation to payment; that is, that the doctors would be paid by the hospital on a sessional basis. The doctors, at the time of these negotiations, said that they would rather treat the patient at no charge, than enter into an agreement. Some have entered into an agreement but others have declined to enter into an agreement and in consequence it is possible that some pensioners who are being treated by their own doctor, doctors who want to charge the pensioners the fee and who are not prepared to enter into an agreement with the Department of Health, could be paying the $20 a day bed charge.

1010 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Is it true that the Births and Deaths Registration Section is short staffed, and is it also true that it takes as long as one month for a person to obtain a certified copy of his or her birth certificate?

ANSWER

Yes, it is true that the office issuing birth, death and other registration certificates is very short staffed. It is taking 3 to 4 weeks to obtain a certified copy of a birth certificate. However, I am assured that this position is improving. The problem is that only one staff member is available to handle birth, death and marriage certificates.

1011 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it not a fact that he conveyed to this House an unconditional undertaking by the Director of Health that charges would not be levied against old age pensioners in hospital under

Medibank using their own private medical practitioners?

ANSWER

I do not concede that it is a fact that it was an unequivocal acceptance of that proposal. The acceptance of the proposal has always been on the basis that the doctors would accept a fee. They are declining to do so.

1012 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware that there was some $400,000 appropriated for resurfacing the road from Gove airport to Yirrkala Mission? Have tenders been called for this road in recent times? Have any tenders been received and, in the light of the economy at the present moment, will this appropriation remain?

ANSWER

I do not have any exact details. However, I would say that, if the tenders had not been called prior to the decision being made that no further work be committed, I would assume that the job has in fact been deferred. I will check with the department concerned and find out the status of that particular contract when the decision was taken to stop all further contracts.

1013 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

On his recent trip to Canberra has the Federal Government given him any indication as to whether the Darwin Reconstruction Act will be repealed before its term is due to expire?

ANSWER

I have received no information relating to the possible early termination date of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission but I am aware that it is under review.

1014 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

My question refers to the free area. He made a statement I believe at the last sittings that such an area would be declared. I ask him when such an area would be gazetted so that objections can be received, considered and the area can proceed?

ANSWER

I am surprised that the gazettal has not yet taken place. From the information that was made available to me to use at the last session of the Assembly by the Acting Administrator, I would have hoped that by now the gazettal would have taken place. I will follow this matter up with the Clerk of the Administrator's Council to find out why there is a delay.

1015 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

When will Darwin get an area for nude bathing as provided in the Nudity Ordinance?

ANSWER

I do have some information relating to this question. There are several problems which have arisen in relation to getting a free beach for Darwin. The ordinance states that all boundaries of the proposed free beach area shall have signs erected defining the area during a period when objections can be lodged. This includes the seaward boundary. Advice from Crown Law indicates that the signs should have fine details defining the boundaries including the various degrees of the compass as one sees in applications for mining leases and the like. The signs must also be visible from any point around the boundaries of the area to be declared. Current estimates to have the required signs made, printed and installed is around $5,000 and that excluded the problem of the sign at the low water mark which will obviously be under water for most of the time. To further complicate the issue, the High Court has recently decided that some doubt exists as to the validity of state-type legislation which relates to any area projecting into the sea. Crown Law have some reservations on that aspect. In the light of these problems, unfortunately we cannot give an assurance as to exactly when Darwin will have a free beach area.

1016 Mr MANUELL to Miss ANDREW -

Is she aware that the Alice Springs Community College this year does not cater for the plumbing trade even though it did last year? If so, can she advise if it is a fact that this year no plumbing trade is available in Alice Springs because the Darwin Community College claimed the plumbing trades tutor to avoid breaking staff ceilings? Further, is she aware that plumbing trade apprentices this year have to travel to and from Brisbane for 8 week block releases?

ANSWER

It is a fact that the Alice Springs Community College does not cater for the plumbing trade this year. In 1975, following the cyclone, the Darwin lecturer in plumbing was transferred to Alice Springs Community College. Block release courses catering for all Northern Territory apprentices in plumbing were offered. The arrangement was temporary and unsatisfactory because the workshop facilities in Alice Springs were inadequate for the teaching of the plumbing trade and there was only one lecturer available at Alice Springs to teach either 40 hours per week of plumbing or 40 hours per week of carpentery and joinery.

The reason that no plumbing trade is available this year is that the plumbing lecturer on transfer to the Alice Springs Community College for 1975 was recalled to Darwin in 1976. As a result of this, no course is offered. The facilities are inadequate whereas the Darwin Community College has excellent facilities. The number of plumbing trade apprentices in Alice Springs, 7, does not warrant the cost of duplicating facilities in that centre. The college has had only 2 plumbing lecturers on establishment both assigned to Darwin by agreement when allocation of the total college establishment was made. Block release courses in plumbing which would have catered for all Northern Territory apprentices were not offered at Darwin Community College because of the great time commitment which the Darwin Community College cannot cope with along with other commitments in the plumbing trade.

In answer to the third part of the question, plumbing trade apprentices for all Northern Territory centres except Darwin travel to Brisbane for 7 weeks for full-time block courses. There are 7 plumbing apprentices from Alice Springs, 4 from other centres going to Yeronga Technical College. It costs about the same amount per apprentice to send an out-of-town apprentice to either Brisbane or Darwin for a block course; dearer air fares to Brisbane are compensated for by cheaper accommodation rates there. The costs are met by the Department of Education through the Northern Territory Apprenticeship Board. Of the apprentices scheduled to train interstate this year, about half could be trained at Darwin Community College if they were able to appoint additional lecturing staff required to mount the block courses. Regarding the college staff ceiling, it is 214 for 1975-76, 16 positions of those were allocated to Alice Springs Community College but the ceiling was reduced to 190 on 2 February 1976. The Alice Springs Community College still has its full complement of 16.

1017 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer to the cut of $10m in the Northern Territory Housing Commission's present budget. Could the honourable member advise whether this cut is affecting only Housing Commission projects in Darwin or does it affect other projects in other centres and can he advise any details?

ANSWER

The cut that the honourable member refers to is the balance of the unauthorised or uncommitted works program. It is in effect the commitment value that has not yet been agreed to for the Housing Commission's work. The cash component of that I believe is in the order of $1m required in this financial year. In the figures that I gave the House yesterday, I indicated that there was a net increase of $4.3m in the budget appropriations to the Department of the Northern Territory administration capital works. That increase was made up of a total increase to the Department of the Northern Territory's appropriations for the year of $9.9m, which included the $5.5m for the Home Finance Trustee, and a reduction in the department's estimates for the year of $5.6m therefore producing a net increase of $4.3m. I am not aware of the detail of how those figures were arrived at. I believe that the department, as a result of these decisions which were made earlier this week, will now be relaying to its various branches and statutory authorities what their program is for the balance of this year. I am also aware that the chairman of the Northern Territory Housing Commission has an appointment this morning in Canberra with the Minister for the Northern Territory to discuss the commission's program for the balance of this year.

1018 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Is it a fact that the Telecommunications Commission charges a subscriber who has only a 2-line telephone exchange more for a local call than a subscriber who has a 4-line telephone exchange?

ANSWER

I have asked the appropriate officer with Telecom Australia and he assures me that they do not charge any more; the standard charge is 9c.

1019 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise me what the shareholding is of major mining companies holding uranium interests in the Northern Territory and what Australian shareholding is the Australian Government seeking in companies mining uranium and will these companies currently operating comply with these requirements?

ANSWER

We have 4 major companies operating in the uranium province in Arnhem Land, the Peko-Ez combination is, Peko 93 per cent Aust-

ralian owned, and the Ez component 92 per cent Australian owned. Noranda, which is a totally overseas controlled company have indicated that they are willing to release 50 or 51 per cent of the equity in their operations to Australian investors. Pan-Continental, which is a consortium of companies involving Australian interests in getting oil is between 60 and 70 per cent Australian owned, and they too are prepared to increase the Australian equity if this is necessary. Queensland Mines is 85 per cent Australian owned and the Australian company Kathleen Investments which holds 50 per cent of the shares in Queensland Mines is itself 21 per cent foreign owned. This in turn reduces the Australian equity of the whole project to about 70 per cent.

In reply to the second part of the question, there is no doubt that the Australian content in any mining operation can never be enough, and in fact the ultimate that we would like to achieve is 100 per cent but this is not always possible. It is my understanding that the Australian Government will be looking for as much Australian content as the market can stand and the Australian investor can afford to put up. To my knowledge, none of the companies operating in the uranium province will be prejudiced in their operations.

1020 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN -

In light of the recent announcement by the DRC that the Darwin Airport would undergo minor surgery, when will the bar facilities be made available to the public?

ANSWER

I have it on fairly good authority that the Department of Transport and the concessionaire of the bar out at the airport have made arrangements by which the concessionaire will repair the ceilings and fixtures of the bar and the Department will repair the floor. I believe that these repairs are well under way and it is hoped that the bar will be opened around 1 May.

1021 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON -

I refer to the town of Katherine which has a pound with no pound-keeper or dog catcher. When is it likely that one will be appointed?

ANSWER

I heard a report that a private individual in Katherine had gone to the trouble of catching stray dogs on his property and delivering them to the local pound only to have them beat him home again. It seemed rather an unusual situation. Unfortunately, current legislation does not allow for a registrar of dogs to delegate his authority and all police officers are ex-officio registrars of dogs. However, it is obvious that none of these people are going to go out into the street personally and act as dog catchers as part of their duties and they cannot delegate this authority. The department is currently looking at legislation with a view to proposing an amendment that will allow a registrar of dogs to delegate his authority to go out into the

street and catch the dogs and put them into pound at Katherine. The department is also considering a total review of the ordinance which does need updating. In the light of these proposals, I cannot give any assurance as to the particular date when Katherine will get an official dog catcher.

1022 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware of rumours circulating about proposed increases in rail freights of up to 40 per cent into the central Australian region? If he is aware of the rumour, is there any truth in it?

ANSWER

I am aware of the rumour. I have not had a chance as yet to check out whether there is any substance in it.

1023 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS -

What steps are being taken to control hyptis and cyder on crown land in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The situation is far from satisfactory. In fact in the whole of the noxious weed exercise in the Northern Territory, the Department of the Northern Territory and the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch is hopelessly undergeared and has been for many years to have any real effect in this matter, either on crown land or private land. They have been working for years as a one-man-band with inadequate funds and they are unable to provide even a satisfactory advisory service to private land holders, let alone have any real impact on the incidence of weeds such as hyptis and cyder on crown land. It is a matter that does need improvement. If the Legislative Assembly had any final authority and power with regard to agricultural functions, it would give some early attention to this matter.

1024 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he able to provide any details of the Government's new home savings grant scheme?

ANSWER

I believe comprehensive details of this scheme were tabled yesterday in the Senate. I only have scant information that has been relayed to me in a discussion with Senator Kilgariff. The interesting point that I have is that a $2,000 full grant will be made available for first homes and it is interesting to note that it will also now be available to single people and with no age limit. It will be backdated to 1 January and it will be based on a $1 grant for every $3 saved providing those savings are held in an acceptable form. I believe there is also some arrangement where people have saved other amounts in shorter terms, that is, perhaps if there was a $4,000 savings in 2 years then a grant of $1,333 would be made available. The scheme that has been carried on for a number of years has helped some

350,000 young Australians and up to last year a total amount of $167m had been made available. The Federal Government's new scheme will provide benefits 3 times greater than that provided by the previous scheme and it is currently estimated that it will cost the Government in the order of $90m per annum. When I receive the comprehensive details, I will be in a position to make them available to honourable members.

1025 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware of any unsatisfactory sales activities in the Northern Territory by a Queensland real estate company called Rural Co-operative Development Society Limited?

ANSWER

I am aware of what could be termed unsatisfactory sales activity if you take "unsatisfactory" to mean that the people have lost their dough. I had representations from some 5 people approximately a month ago with regard to the sales activities of this company in the Northern Territory. I contacted the Queensland Treasurer, Sir Gordon Chalk, and sought additional information. He has advised me that 2 companies are involved, the Rural Co-operative Development Society Limited and Condamine Country Estates Pty. Limited. He has advised me that both companies are presently in liquidation and are 2 of a number of companies which are the subject of a special investigation by Mr J. MacCrossen QC who is appointed by the honourable W.E. Knox, Minister for Justice and Attorney-General pursuant to the Companies Act in Queensland. An interim report has been submitted by the liquidators and this report indicates that there is a deficiency in funds of Rural Co-operative Development Limited of over $1m. Condamine Country Estates Pty. Limited is alleged to be hopelessly insolvent. The minister has also advised that Rural Co-operative appears to have no assets and although Condamine Country Estates has real estate assets at Millmerran these assets are subject to a mortgage to a building society and the company has substantial creditors. The full extent of the activities of these companies will be known once the special investigation has been completed and more detailed information will become available at that stage.

1026 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he able to report to the Assembly the present position concerning the battle which the medical officers and nurses at the Darwin Hospital have been carrying on for months now to have their salaries raised to those appropriate in other parts of Australia?

ANSWER

In relation to nurses first, the Royal Australian Nursing Federation's case in relation to their claims for improved wages and conditions, is presently proceeding before a Deputy Arbitrator, Mr Watson. Mr Watson took evidence in Darwin between 16 and 19 March and in Alice Springs between 22 and 25 March. The case is continuing and there will be further hearings in Melbourne where

a decision is expected later this month or early in May. With respect to medical officers, I am advised that the full bench of the Arbitration Commission on Tuesday commenced hearings and there was a change of ground by the Medical Officers Association. In consequence of that, the matter was referred back to a public service arbitrator, Mr Taylor, in relation to a time table. In consequence to further discussion yesterday and some difference of opinion, I believe, as to procedures and so forth, the matter has been returned to the full bench for hearing this morning. This matter is proceeding at the moment, but I would advise the honourable member and the House that the Medical Officers Association has, in recent weeks, and particularly at this current hearing, changed its ground considerably and this is complicating the processing of the case. However, it is in hand and it is hoped that an early decision will be reached because, as the honourable member and others are aware, it is quite imperative to the medical service of the Northern Territory that this matter is resolved and we are able to recruit and keep in the Territory medical service the medical officers that we need.

1027 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Has the Northern Territory Tourist Board found a replacement for the recently resigned board member from Nhulunbuy? If so, will the replacement be from among the citizens of Nhulunbuy? If not, when will the replacement be made?

ANSWER

I would say that the Northern Territory Government Tourist Board has a policy of maintaining representation from every centre wherever it is possible. As a result of the resignation of Mr Baxter from Nhulunbuy recently, investigations are now in hand as to who may be a suitable successor to him. I am not aware of the exact date on which any appointment will be made, but I can assure the honourable member that it will be as soon as possible.

1028 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise what the present position is concerning the realignment and reconstruction of the Stuart Highway through the foothills north of Alice Springs and the reconstruction of the Stuart Highway between Smith Street and Woods Terrace in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The situation with regard to the realignment and upgrading of the road through Alice Springs remains the same as it did I think I have answered questions with regard to other sections of the highway which are not contained in the upgrading. The second 3-year program as I think everybody is aware, never had funds made available after it was approved by the Federal Government last October and it is presently amongst the jobs which are deferred. Hopefully, money will be made available in the next financial year to go ahead with the job. I could say that the

planning for the Alice Springs hill section of the road has been done and it is well up on priority so should money become available to proceed with the second 3-year program to upgrade the Stuart Highway and Barkly Highway, the Alice Springs hill will get top priority. With regard to the section of road in Alice Springs, I am unable to answer that question, I will attempt to get the information and pass it on to the honourable member after these sittings.

1028A ANSWER TO QUESTION -

Mr RYAN (by leave) : The honourable member for Stuart asked me a question yesterday about the railway between Port Augusta and Alice Springs. I have been advised that the rail line will be opened on 5 April.

1029 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Who is carrying out the duties of Administrator while the Acting Administrator is in Canberra?

ANSWER

I do not know who the actual person is who is doing this but I shall endeavour to find out and advise the honourable member later today.

1030 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS -

Is he aware of the progress of the plans to purchase the Alice Springs abattoir by a southern consortium?

ANSWER

I am aware that some negotiations are taking place and, having had an indication from the honourable member that he might ask this question, I have endeavoured to find out whether any information is available that could be made known publicly, I have not been able to get any such information as yet, but I believe that I may be able to get some during the course of the day and, if so, I will pass it on to him.

1031 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

In his official capacity, has he had consultations recently with either the Northern or Central Land Councils regarding the proposed Aboriginal land rights legislation and, if so is he prepared to state the views of those councils?

ANSWER

My consultations with these bodies has only been in relation to the Aboriginal land delegation committee from this Assembly last year. In recent times I have not spoken with these bodies directly or discussed the matters with them at all.

1032 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

Is it true that water service connections were free until 30 March 1976? Is so, did the department administering water connections advise the public that the water service connections were to be no longer free as of 30 March 1976 and that a fee of $6 would be charged as of 31 March 1976? If the public was not advised, why not?

ANSWER

The situation is not entirely as outlined by the honourable member for Casuarina. The situation basically has not changed from 31 March. The situation is that block owners who had meters removed either as a result of damage during the cyclone or as a result of damage during the clean-up of Darwin program can have reconnection at virtually any time free of charge. But if the block concerned did not have water connected to it prior to the cyclone or if the water was disconnected at the owner's request for any reason whatsoever, then a normal connection fee of $6 applies. That situation for the moment and for the foreseeable future will remain as such.

1033 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

I have a further question following up on my question yesterday morning when he advised that certain pensioner patients were being charged $20 a day in the Darwin Hospital. I preface my question to him by reading an extract from Hansard of Thursday 19 June 1975 where he said: "All patients will be provided with free hospital care but patients who elect to be treated by a private doctor of their choice will be charged the prescribed amount for their accommodation and maintenance and will be nursed in the intermediate beds. Maternity patients are to be exempt from the provision. They will be nursed in standard beds and they will be able to continue under the care of the private doctor of their choice." Further on: "I am also assured by the Department of Health, by Dr Gurd the Director, that pensioners are to be treated in the Northern Territory hospitals on the same basis as maternity cases even though this is not provided for in black and white here." Is it not a fact that the executive member conveyed to this House an undertaking by the Director of Health that charges would not be levied against pensioners in the Darwin Hospital who preferred to use the private doctor of their choice?

ANSWER

The situation in relation to maternity cases and pensioners is exactly the same. As I related to the House yesterday, pensioners can be treated at the Darwin Hospital by their private doctor at no bed cost to them provided the private doctor enters an agreement with the hospital. The situation is exactly the same for maternity cases. This is part of the whole Medibank scheme in Australia which, at that time, we had to accept. Maternity cases that go to hospital can be treated by their private practitioner but that private doctor must have entered an agreement with the hospital in relation to the payment of his fees.

1034 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

What plans have the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in hand to provide additional caravan parks in the Darwin area and does the DRC intend that these caravan parks be constructed to at least the standard provided in the Caravans Ordinance? If not, why not?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has turned its attention to caravan parks continually at every meeting. The recent actions have been to encourage private developers to establish new caravan parks. With regard to standards, there is apparently a survey going on to see whether the Queensland and, in particular, the Townsville code, would be adaptable as suitable standards for convenants on any new caravan park leases. That is not yet completed and it is being looked at in association with the Caravan Parks Ordinance to ensure that adequate standards are maintained. I believe that the Northern Territory Housing Commission has also indicated to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that it is keen to receive a grant of land to establish a caravan park. The Darwin City Corporation has also indicated that it is interested in extending the facilities at its Mindil Beach caravan park. I foresee continuing problems with regard to caravan parks in the Darwin area because of the fact that over 3,000 caravans have come into Darwin since the cyclone and, as home sites are rehabilitated, it is natural that these caravans, particularly those people who wish to use them as permanent dwellings, will look for alternative sites. I do not see any easy answers. I think it has got to be a matter of co-operation between the Reconstruction Commission, private enterprise, the Government and local government.

1035 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise me whether the present inadequate buildings at Nightcliff Primary School are to be upgraded or whether, in fact, the mooted new school will go ahead?

ANSWER

Yesterday afternoon, we were visited by a building supervisor from the Department of Education and he advised us that repairs will be effected immediately to the current buildings that make up Nightcliff Primary School. He did quote a figure of over $200,000 worth of repairs that are needed immediately. He said that a new school for Nightcliff was on the drawing boards and work would be commenced on it probably in the 1977-78 financial year.

1036 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

As it is obvious that a new Nightcliff Primary School has been recommended by the Department, is he able to advise at this stage whether or not the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has accepted that advice and recommended that the new school be built?

ANSWER

It is not proper for me to indicate fully the preliminary details of figures with regard to forward budget planning. I am prepared to say that the matter of the Nightcliff Primary School has been brought before the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the comments indicated by the executive member for Education and Law with regard to the repair requirements of the school have been carefully considered and put forward. With regard to the establishment of a new school, there has been a degree of controversy between the Education Department advisers and the technical staff of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and I am not aware that there has yet been any resolution between those 2 bodies. I have, however, noted the comment of the Executive Member for Education and Law that the Education Department would like to see it commenced in the 1977-78 financial year.

1037 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH -

Could he give details to the House of activities planned by the Darwin Tourist Promotion Association for its "Back to Darwin Week 1978"?

ANSWER

The Darwin Tourist Promotion Association has embarked on a very aggressive and most enlightened program to encourage tourists back into Darwin in the year 1978. To do this, it has centred its activities on people who were formerly in Darwin before the cyclone and those who had a very active part in the reconstruction and the clean-up of Darwin after the cyclone. The Tourist Promotion Association will be encouraging social groups such as the CWA and other womens' organisations, Apex, Lions Clubs. the various church organisations, Greek, Italian and Chinese communities to visit Darwin during this period in 1978 in the month of May. This will coincide with the school holidays in all States. With this, the Tourist Promotion Association is working hand in hand with industry to have caravan tours, package tours with both airlines and bus companies and with aero clubs and many other companies.

One other aspect that the Tourist Promotion Association is very keen to encourage is a strong participation on the part of the armed forces. The armed forces played a tremendous role in the clean-up of Darwin and there would undoubtedly be many people who worked at that time who would like to come back to see the improvement. Of course, all armed forces displays are of great public interest and attraction. The Tourist Promotion Association is now working towards encouraging industry, particularly the airline and motel industry, to reduce their prices for package tours so that the overall cost of returning to Darwin will be within the reach of southern citizens.

1038 Mr MANUELL to Miss ANDREW -

I am led to believe there are some policemen who have been noted on duty without wearing numbers and I ask whether in fact it is intended that policemen will have numbers on their new uniforms?

ANSWER

It was felt by the Commissioner of Police that the uniforms should be top priority and must be got to the Territory as soon as possible. It was discovered that these uniforms did not have numbers on them. Rather than send them back and start all over again, he decided that he would allow the policemen to be issued uniforms without numbers.

Mr Tuxworth: What happened to the old ones?

Miss ANDREW: They fell off the old uniforms because they were so old.

It seems unlikely that the practice of wearing numbers will be resumed. However, no definite decision has been taken.

1039 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW -

Is she able to advise if it is planned to re-establish the disbanded Special Branch of the Northern Territory Police Force?

ANSWER

The Special Branch was disbanded when Senator Murphy was Attorney-General. It was operating under an old charter and it had the right to look into industrial matters and communism and other bogies. It was replaced about 4 months later by a Crimes Intelligence Section dealing with the criminal aspect especially and almost al matters concerned with the Special Branch. It is still in operation.

1040 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): The honourable member for Nhulunbuy yesterday asked me a question concerning airmail services to Borroloola. I have been in touch with the District Postal Manager and he has informed me that there is an airmail service from Darwin. There is no airmail service from Mount Isa. Gulf Transport no longer carries excess mail; they apparently did in the past. So currently, Borroloola has one mail service, the airmail service from Darwin.

1041 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING (by leave): The honourable member for Nightcliff asked for details in connection with unused caravans in Darwin. I am advised by the Department of the Northern Territory that there are 63 caravans in store. About 20 of these require repair. There are 31 caravans sited and awaiting power connection. There are 13 demountables awaiting the connection of services. The department has also advised that all the units in store are earmarked for the Housing Commission although the Department of the Northern Territory has a right to them if required.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

March-April 1976


Aboriginal land councils, views on land rights legislation (Lawrie) 1030
Acting Administrator, absence (Withnall) 1029
Administrator for NT, appointment (Dondas) 979
Alice Springs Abattoir, purchase (Manuell) 1030
Alice Springs Community College, plumbing course (Manuell) 1016
Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch, travel restrictions (Manuell) 823
Apprenticeship Board, funds (Manuell) 991
Arnhem Land, land for Nabalco (Lawrie) 815
Attorney-General, visit to NT (Everingham) 994
Beef industry in NT, federal assistance (Kentish) 987
Births and Deaths Registration Section (Dondas) 1010
Borroloola, mail service (Ballantyne) 988, 1040
Braitling Primary School (Manuell) 1006
Canning factory (Withnall) 986
Caravans, numbers held by government (Lawrie) 1005, 1041
Cattle Price Stabilization Ordinance, assent (Lawrie) 992
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, transfer of funds (Manuell) 996
Cigarette advertising, government ban (Dondas) 933
Darwin Airport, bar facilities (Dondas) 1020
Darwin Hospital, staff salaries (Withnall) 1026
Darwin Reconstruction Commission -
caravan parks (Dondas) 1034
expiry date (Dondas) 1013
funds committed (Withnall) 989
tenders (Dondas) 1004
Darwin Tourist Promotion Association, plans (Dondas) 1037
Environmental impact statements (Lawrie) 760
Family Planning Association (Ballantyne) 821
Finniss River Cattle Company, allegations of illegal branding (Kentish) 820
Free beach (Lawrie) 1014; (Dondas) 1015
Fruit fly, (Vale) 998; (Everingham) 1000; (Withnall) 1003
Gove, road from airport (Ballantyne) 1012
Government housing -
economic rent (Lawrie) 1007
substandard accommodation (Dondas) 1008
Home Finance Trustee, application by J.C.S. & M.E. Francis (Steele) 819
Home savings grant scheme (Robertson) 1024
Housing Commission budget (Lawrie) 1017
Katherine dogcatcher (Kentish) 1021
Katherine Meatworks, opening (Steele) 980
Legal Aid Office, funds (Dondas) 997
Legislative Assembly -
advice of sittings (Lawrie) 982
photo copying machine (Everingham) 990
Liquor Commission (Kentish) 995
Motor Vehicles Ordinance 1975 (Lawrie) 999
Nightcliff Primary School (Lawrie) 1036
Oriental fruit fly (Vale) 998; (Everingham) 1000; (Withnall) 1003
Papunya -
housing project (Robertson) 977
sewerage scheme (Robertson) 976
Pensioners, hospital charges (Everingham) 1009, 1011, 1033
Police Force, Special Branch (Robertson) 1039
Police uniforms, display of numbers (Manuell) 1038
Plywood, gift of Burmese government (Lawrie) 769
Rail freights, central Australia (Manuell) 1022
Rail line, Alice Springs - Port Augusta (Vale) 984, 1028A
Ross River Primary School (Manuell) 1006
Rural Co-operative Development Society Ltd (Everingham) 1025
Rural Road Conference (Vale) 981
Schools, teachers' strike (Everingham) 978
Stamp duty increase (Withnall) 933
Strangways, water supply (Tungutalum) 767

Stuart Highway -
repairs in Alice Springs (Vale) 1028
repairs near airport (Kentish) 1001
Telecommunications Commission, charges (Everingham) 1018
Telephone installations (Everingham) 985
Timber, gift of Jackson and Spring Pty Ltd (Dondas) 818
Tourist Board, replacement of Gove representative (Ballantyne) 1027
Uranium interests, shareholding (Vale) 1019
Water connections (Dondas) 1032
Weed control (Tungutalum) 1023

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

FROM 31 MARCH 1976

822 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

When will the rehabilitation of Administration Block 3, Mitchell St., Darwin, be completed and when and by whom will it be occupied?

FROM 1 JUNE 1976

1120A Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

1. Is the honourable member aware that the Australian National Railway will not offer new leases in the Alice Springs Rail reserve for commercial purposes pending their decision as to the location of the new railway reserve and associated commercial sidings; and is he further aware that when this decision has been made the site will be subject to an environmental impact study?

2. Does he concede that this whole project may take 10 years to complete and, if so, would he ask the Australian National Railway Commissioner to offer alternatives to the present negative attitude to permit some badly needed commercial growth in Alice Springs now and within the next 10 years?

1121 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

In view of the fact that the ABC is to be subject to cutbacks and within the NT this may be reflected by demands to rationalise radio programmes would he be prepared to recommend that the program "Col Chuck Chunder" be removed from broadcast programs?

1122 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

1. What was the cost 1974-75 and 1975-76 of the re-sleepering program for the North Australia Railways?

2. What was the cost of post-Cyclone Tracy benefits to employees of the North Australia Railways including R & R fares, R & R paid leave, hard living allowances, lost time whilst on railway pay, but in productive work for the North Australia Railways?

3. What is the cost to date of post-Cyclone Tracy repair work for the North Australia Railways?

809 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

1. Will he obtain from the Department of the Northern Territory a summary of all correspondence initiated by that department and any other department relating to the initial proposal to reserve and the actual reservation of the Prices Regulation Ordinance 1975 and the Crown Lands Ordinance (No. 4) 1975 indicating the designation of the officers concerned, their section and branch?

2. On how many occasions have the presentation copies of Ordinances been lost and when this has happened did the loss occur in the Darwin, Brisbane or Canberra offices of the department.

ANSWER

1. Recommendations for reservation pursuant to section 4V of the Northern Territory (Administration) Act of the Prices Regulation Ordinance, 1975 and the Crown Lands Ordinance (No. 4) 1975 have been made for the following reasons:

   a) The Department of the Northern Territory considers a distinct probability exists that significant disadvantages concerning both administration and general policy will arise in relation to the procedure proposed to be established by the Prices Regulation Ordinance 1975. Time is required for an examination of the full implications of the legislation and for the consideration of alternatives.

   b) Legal advice was provided to the Department to the effect that the Crown Lands Ordinance (No. 4) 1975 was required to be reserved pursuant to section 4W (a) of the Northern Territory (Administration) Act as it is an Ordinance "dealing with the granting or disposal of lands of the Crown or of the Commonwealth" within the meaning of that section.

   The disclosure of the designation, section and branch of Departmental officers concerned in these matters would necessarily involve an identification of particular officers. The Department elects not to disclose that information.

2. This part of the answer refers only to the post-cyclone period. During this period, one presentation copy of an Ordinance has been lost, namely the Local Government (Extension of Services) Ordinance 1975, which was subsequently totally superseded and rendered nugatory by the Local Government (Post Cyclone Elections) Ordinance 1975. It is assumed that the presentation copy of this Ordinance was mislaid in the Darwin office of the Department.

810 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Further to the answers supplied to question 758 -

a) does the pollution of Melville Bay include a deposit on the sea bed of Magnesium Chloride and has this deposit killed off seabed marine life in its vicinity;

b) if the killing of seabed marine life is not irreversible damage by what means, either natural or through measures to be applied by Nabalco, is the marine life to be reactivated and what reasonable measures can be applied;

c) did the pollution of Melville Bay take place over a period of many months or years with both Nabalco and the Department of the Northern Territory knowing that it was taking place and, if so, how can the spillages be described as "accidental";

d) how in fact is the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch involved in the area if it only acts "per medium" of the Mines Inspector; and

e) do the Branches of the Department of the Northern Territory publish the results of their investigations or are they not available to the public at all?

ANSWER

a) No. The deposit is magnesium hydroxide which is not poisonous. Seabed vegetation is killed due to lack of oxygen caused by the blanket effect;

b) Seabed marine life will return as sea currents disperse the precipitate;

c) Accidental spillages occur due to plant malfunction, pipeline breakage, etc. The frequency of accidental spillages has lessened considerably with experience gained in operating the plant;

d) Through its specialist officers reporting results of monitoring and investigations to the Inspector of Mines who exercises his powers under the Mines Regulation Ordinance to require the Company to take any necessary action;

e) Some reports are published and made available to the public, others are purely internal reports necessary for undertaking the normal administrative functions.

811 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

When will the protective works at Gove be finished to the point that no further pollution will be possible?

ANSWER

It is not possible for pollution to be eliminated entirely but when all the measures presently being undertaken are completed it will be reduced to a neglibigle amount.

812 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Further to the answer to question 759 -

a) under whose supervision is filling and restoration of mined sand areas behind Wallaby Beach being done; and

b) who carries out the work?

ANSWER

a) The resident Inspector of Mines; and

b) Nabalco.

813 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

1. What effects do the current travel and work restrictions placed on the Public Service have on the Department of the Northern Territory's ability to work at Gove?

2. Is the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch staffed to an adequate level to enable it to work effectively at Gove?

ANSWER

1. None.

2. Yes.

814 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

With further reference to Nabalco's operations at Gove -

a) has any monitoring of pollution been conducted around the general area of Drimmie Arm and, if so, by whom and are the results available;

b) has the release of effluent combined with the level of magnesium raised the alkalinity of the sea water around Drimmie Arm to a pH above 10;

c) in view of the estimated seventy years of effective life of the Nabalco project, have any studies by the various branches been carried out on the changes in the mangrove vegetation fringing the Arm, or the beds of sea grass located in the Arm; and

d) have the levels of chromium and lead taken from samples of red mud and of fish been abnormally high, and, if so, what action does the Department intend taking to reduce, or assisting Nabalco to reduce, the high levels?

ANSWER

a) Yes, by the Department of the Northern Territory. Results are available;

b) For seawaters of the world, pH ranges from 7.5 to 8.4. The maximum pH recorded at Drimmie Arm during monitoring has been 7.8;

c) Studies by infra-red photography have been carried out of vegetation of the area;

d) Samples of red mud analysed by the Department of the Northern Territory do nt show high levels of the heavy metals. Fish samples have not been analysed by Department of the Northern Territory.

815 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

1. What role is the Department of the Northern Territory adopting in the negotiations presently underway with the Aboriginal communities of Arnhemland for further land to be used for Nabalco's operations?

2. Is the land in question envisaged for future use as a red mud pond or as a security pond?

3. What areas, including mangroves, are envisaged for future use within the next seven years and what total area does this involve?

ANSWER

1. The Department of the Northern Territory's role in the negotiations between Nabalco and the Aborigines is to ensure that the interests of both parties are preserved as far as is consistent with the overall national interest.

2. A small portion of the land will be used for the security pond, but the principal use will be for the disposal of ferro silt.

3. In the next 7 years about 160 hectares will be used for disposal of ferro silt, none of which will be in the mangroves area.

816 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

1. On what occasions have caustic soda spillages occurred in Nabalco's operations, since February 1973?

2. What was the source and area and estimated volume of each spillage?

3. Where was the caustic soda deposited in each case?

4. Where deposition took place outside the operating plant, was any monitoring carried out before and/or after, who carried out the monitoring, if any, and are the results available?

5. Has the monitoring been carried out at varying distances from the discharge points in the open Bay?

6. What was the average daily discharge of caustic soda for the fiscal years 1974 and 1975 and the average daily discharge for the six months ended December 1975?

7. On what occasions have the security pond gates been opened to allow release of effluent and what was the estimated volume of each release?

8. Was any monitoring carried out before and/or after each release?

9. Has the Department of the Northern Territory advised Nabalco to strengthen the security pond walls and, if not, how are future conditions of possible breaching of the security pond walls to be met, or is it assumed that the recycling of the various solutions and/or mud will reduce the volume of effluent and therefore reduce the storage holding of the ponds during the wet?

ANSWER

1. & 2. There is insufficient documented record to answer this part of the question as the spillages have been accidental and occurred at irregular intervals. The volume varied from a few litres to hundreds of litres.

3. Near the outlet of the cooling water drain.

4. Monitoring is carried out by the Department of the Northern Terri-

tory at 19 stations in Melville Bay at varying distances from the cooling water drain.

5. Yes.

6. Measurement of this is not feasible.

7. On the occasion of very heavy rain causing an increase in the volume of water in the ponds. Volumes of water were large.

8. Yes.

9. No. Releases from the security pond are made at the discretion and under the supervision of the Inspector of Mines. Recycling of liquor from the new ponds will commence shortly. The security pond will then only be used as a fail-safe system.

817 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission furnished to the Australian Government any and, if so, what advice with respect to matters relating to the expenditure of public and private moneys in and in connection with development and construction in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

Yes. A programme budget was produced from the beginning of the Commission in May 1975 for a five year programme. This was unacceptable to the Minister and was reduced towards the end of 1975 to a three year budget with an annual expenditure basis. The present basis is an annual budget covering 1975/76 and 1976/77 and 1977/78. Programme budgeting is now part of the process towards implementation of construction.

In the preparation of Budget Estimates and from time to time the Australian Government through the Minister is kept advised of all activities pertaining to expenditure in both the Public and Private Sectors. The DRC maintains a co-ordinating role to ensure that resource utilisation is related to priority needs of development and reconstruction.

The Commission has co-ordinated the expenditure of Government instrumentalities in carrying out works in Health, Education and basic services and is reflected in the expenditure of individual Government Departments on their projects.

821 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

1. What funds have been allocated to the Family Planning Association by the Federal Government and how much was made available for expenditure in the Territory?

2. Do medical officers and nursing staff assisting the association receive payment for their services?

ANSWER

1. Family Planning Associations are jointly funded by Health Department and Social Security Department.

Social Security Department funds the clinical services of the Association, which is by far the largest component.

Health Department provides funds for administrative costs.

Health Department funds for State and Territory Associations totalled $183,450 of which $1,164 was for the Northern Territory Association. Expenditure so far this financial year totals $970.

$250,000 was allocated to the Australian Federation of Family Planning Associations. Of this amount $10,950 was earmarked for the Northern Territory. The actual sum expended by the Australian Federation in the Northern Territory will not be available until audited accounts are received after the end of the financial year.

In addition to direct grants by Health Department, additional funds were made available in the form of Health Programme grants totalling $885,913 for State and Territory Associations. The Northern Territory's allocation from this sum was $12,680.

$24,794 was made available for expenditure in the Northern Territory as per details above.

2. Medical and nursing staff are paid on a sessional basis when attending clinics.

824 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS -

I refer to the consortium which proposes to take over the Alice Springs abattoirs and ask: what is their programme for the operation and development of the abattoirs and is it intended to process all grades of meat?

ANSWER

Although the Victorian interests which are currently involved in bidding for the purchase of a majority shareholding in Alice Springs Abattoirs P/L have discussed with the Department of the Northern Territory the possibility of upgrading the facilities of the abattoir to export standard, to providing for an increased throughput and the possibility of adding boning and canning facilities, there has yet been no specific proposal put forward for consideration by Territory authroities.

976 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK -

1. At what stage of construction is the sewerage scheme at Papunya?

2. When is it anticipated it will be completed?

3. What are the reasons for delay in completing the scheme?

4. Are some construction projects at present under construction at Papunya - for example, hospital and houses - designed to utilise the sewerage system before they can be put into use?

ANSWER

1. Work completed includes reticulation, pump station and lagoons. Still outstanding is pipe works at lagoons and commissioning of complete system.

2. It is anticipated that work will be completed by July 1976.

3. Failure of a contractor resulted in cancelling of the contract and the need to make alternative arrangements.

4. It is expected the sewerage system will be operational prior to completion of the hospital.

977 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK -

1. At what stage of completion are the following houses being constructed at Papunya -

   a) Atco type homes.

   b) Brick homes similar to present Department of the Northern Territory design.

   c) Dowsett contract.

2. When are the houses expected to be completed?

3. Are the houses designed with individual septic tanks, or for connection to the sewerage scheme at Papunya?

ANSWER

1. a) ATCO type homes for Department of Education are complete.

   b) Brick Department of the Northern Territory design houses are 90% complete.

   c) Dowsett Homes - Company has been placed under receivership. At the time of failure of the contractor 4 residences were 95% complete, 2 residences were 50% complete.

2. a) ATCO now complete

   b) Estimate late April

   c) Estimate 6 months to complete work from acceptance of tender.

3. The sewerage system is for the collection of septic tank effluent by a reticulation system. Therefore houses are designed with individual spetic tanks which will be connected to sewerage system.

1042 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN -

When is it intended to complete the junction where the Shoal Bay road meets the new section of the Stuart Highway?

ANSWER

The construction of the junction is expected to be completed in July 1976.

1043 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer to notice entitled "Notice of Intention to Determine Lease" being sent out from a delegate of the Administrator to Darwin town

area leaseholders and ask -

(a) was he or any other Executive Member consulted prior to a decision being made to send out the notices;

(b) were the notice sent out at the direction of the Minister or as a result of a decision by a senior public servant;

(c) is it the usual practice in the Territory for senior public servants to take this kind of action without consulting either the Minister or the Executive Member responsible in the Assembly for land administration matters;

(d) will he ensure that in discussions on the transfer of executive powers the attention of the Minister is drawn to the need for the Executive of the Majority Party to play a part in decision making on land administration matters?

ANSWER

The answer to part (a) of this question is "No" and to part (d) is "Yes". I add the following further information supplied by the Department.

(a) Notices issued by the Delegate of the Administrator on Darwin Town Area Leases since February 1976 follow the requirement in the Ordinance to administer leases in this manner. In the early post cyclone period Dr Patterson, the then Minister, suspended lease default action for obvious reasons. After an appraisal of the overall Darwin reconstruction program in February 1976, the Minister for the Northern Territory personally approved of the resumption of Darwin lease administration and as the press statement of 16 February indicated "authorised the Acting Administrator to announce arrangements for the granting of sufficient time for compliance with lease conditions". The Minister and Administrator merely took a decision to continue to exercise their powers under existing legislation.

(b) The notices resulted from the Minister's decision to resume lease administration in Darwin and were despatched some time subsequent to the Minister's written approval to this action in early February 1976.

(c) It is not the usual practice for senior public servants in the field of land administration to usurp the powers of the Administrator or the Minister. This particular decision was made by the Minister after he had been consulted on the matter and the Administrator, who holds these powers under the Ordinance and was authorised to proceed by the Minister.

(d) The Minister's attention has been drawn to the timetable for the transfer of Executive powers to the Assembly at a recent Consultative Committee meeting including those involving land.

1044 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Has any decision been taken yet on the Katherine meatworks, as to whether it will in fact open for killing this year?

ANSWER

The short answer to the honourable member's question is no, as far as I am aware; no decision has yet been taken. Negotiations are continuing constantly and continuously between the principal parties involved in reaching a decision on this matter; that is to say, the Northmeat company, the people interested in the Wyndham Meatworks, and the Government itself - they are the three principal interests. I understand and I hope that they are getting closer to a firm decision so that the people will know. To the best of my knowledge that decision may be expected within the next week or so.

1045 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH -

Is it a fact that records needed for day to day operation of the Mines Branch are still located in the Department of the Northern Territory in Brisbane?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, the registration and administration section of the branch which had been transferred to Brisbane has been progressively transferring back to Darwin in the last 6 months. The industry, the department, the Mines Branch and myself have made representations to the Minister asking that this be expedited because it is most important to the day to day operation of the industry that the filing and registration system of the branch be kept in a central point to it.

1046 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

At a previous meeting of the Assembly, the Majority Leader indicated that he had sought a meeting with representatives of the Department of the Environment to clarify the present Government's policy on national parks and wildlife, and to ascertain its reaction to the Territory parks and wildlife legislation. Has such a meeting been held and, if so, what was the outcome?

ANSWER

I can provide some information in answer to that question and, speaking generally, the news is good. Some 3 to 4 weeks ago I was able to have a discussion with the Minister for the Environment, Senator Greenwood, and the Minister for the Northern Territory, Mr Adermann. That discussion proved quite fruitful and indicated to me that it is clearly the Government's policy that they not only recognise a place for Northern Territory legislation, but also the administration of at least a great part of the wildlife and parks services being conducted within the Northern Territory. Regretfully, Senator Greenwood suffered a severe illness shortly after this meeting and I am sure that all members would join with me in expressing their concern over the unfortunate happening because Senator Greenwood is a man of great use to the Government and a man who had considerable sympathy for the Northern Territory. Since then, I have had two rounds of discussions with senior officers of his depart-

Social Security Department funds the clinical services of the Association, which is by far the largest component.

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The short answer to the honourable member's question is no, as far as I am aware; no decision has yet been taken. Negotiations are continuing constantly and continuously between the principal parties involved in reaching a decision on this matter; that is to say, the Northmeat company, the people interested in the Wyndham Meatworks, and the Government itself - they are the three principal interests. I understand and I hope that they are getting closer to a firm decision so that the people will know. To the best of my knowledge that decision may be expected within the next week or so.

1045 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH -

Is it a fact that records needed for day to day operation of the Mines Branch are still located in the Department of the Northern Territory in Brisbane?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, the registration and administration section of the branch which had been transferred to Brisbane has been progressively transferring back to Darwin in the last 6 months. The industry, the department, the Mines Branch and myself have made representations to the Minister asking that this be expedited because it is most important to the day to day operation of the industry that the filing and registration system of the branch be kept in a central point to it.

1046 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

At a previous meeting of the Assembly, the Majority Leader indicated that he had sought a meeting with representatives of the Department of the Environment to clarify the present Government's policy on national parks and wildlife, and to ascertain its reaction to the Territory parks and wildlife legislation. Has such a meeting been held and, if so, what was the outcome?

ANSWER

I can provide some information in answer to that question and, speaking generally, the news is good. Some 3 to 4 weeks ago I was able to have a discussion with the Minister for the Environment, Senator Greenwood, and the Minister for the Northern Territory, Mr Adermann. That discussion proved quite fruitful and indicated to me that it is clearly the Government's policy that they not only recognise a place for Northern Territory legislation, but also the administration of at least a great part of the wildlife and parks services being conducted within the Northern Territory. Regretfully, Senator Greenwood suffered a severe illness shortly after this meeting and I am sure that all members would join with me in expressing their concern over the unfortunate happening because Senator Greenwood is a man of great use to the Government and a man who had considerable sympathy for the Northern Territory. Since then, I have had two rounds of discussions with senior officers of his depart-

the concessionaire of the bar that the airport had made arrangements by which the concessionaire will repair the ceilings and fixtures of the bar and the department will repair the floor. I believe that these repairs are well under way and it is hoped that the bar will be open around May 1st.". My question is, which May - 1976 or 1977?

ANSWER

The information that I was given, of course, was in good faith and I believe that the operation of restoring the bar is almost completed. Obviously their assessment of the job was out by some weeks, but I would assume that it will be finished shortly.

1061 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

Honourable members may recall that, with their old uniforms, the Northern Territory Police Force always displayed a distinctive badge on which there was a number. I have noticed that, with the new uniforms, this practice of wearing a number badge has been discontinued. Will badges be coming back with the new uniforms or not?

ANSWER

Following questions at the last sittings, I have had discussions with the Commissioner of Police on the subject of numbers. It is not intended that the wearing of numbers will be re-introduced. One of the main reasons is that the uniforms would have to be returned in order for buttonholes to be put in the shirts. But apart from that, one state has already dropped the wearing of numbers as a policy decision and the Commissioner has decided to do the same in the Northern Territory.

1062 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise when and where the next Rural Roads Conference will be held? It should be noted that this is the third time I have asked him.

ANSWER

This could be the third time I answer him, but still without a definite venue or date. I did ask the department last week whether they had received any advice on the next Rural Roads Conference and to date there has been no decision made.

1063 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON -

How many complaints were lodged in 1975 with the Consumer Protection Council and how many of these complaints were considered by the Council to have some justification?

ANSWER

I do have some information on this matter. The figures that I have relate specifically to the financial year 1974/75. The total number of complaints received and acted upon during 1974/75 was 323. Two thirds of these complaints were represented by 3 specific classes of complaints: 28.5% related to the automotive industry, and motor cars, 19.8% related to building services and insurance and 18.3%

related to home appliances. As for justification of the complaints received, this is rather a difficult area and no specific statistics are kept on this matter. It is estimated that 90% of all complaints received are justified. A number of these are considered justified on moral grounds only where present legislation does not provide redress. Settlement of such cases is usually negotiated on the basis of good will and reputation. The existing Consumer Protection Council Ordinance gives the council an investigative function only to seek redress for aggrieved consumers. I point out that many complaints cannot readily be expressed in dollars and cents because they are settled on various other grounds such as warranty matters and goodwill. In quite a number of cases the complainant is advised to take legal action or to see Legal Aid and there is no specific follow through to see if the complainant actually did receive redress in the long run. The estimated amount of negotiated redress during the particular year was in the order of $45,000.

1064 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON -

Is there likely to be any decision from the Darwin City Council or the Department of the Northern Territory regarding a refund or rebate of charges such as rates and sewerage due to the destruction of property by Cyclone Tracy and the fact that people have been unable to occupy premises for which they are paying service rates?

ANSWER

I am not completely sure that I have the question clear. The subject of cyclone damage since December 1974 has resulted in considerable investigation by the Department of the Northern Territory and figures are still being compiled and investigations being made. It is a very long and complicated job to assess some of the insurance claims to be negotiated with the Australian Government as a result of damage to all services - electricity, water and sewerage - and these matters are subject to investigation. As for specific rebates in these areas, honourable members will recall there was a moratorium on water at least after the cyclone. There was a period of months for which it is not intended to levy charges against the community at all. Electricity accounts have been delayed for a considerable period of time and some are only just beginning to come out now. The Department is sending out a note saying that accounts are late and sometimes people are getting up to three accounts in the one envelope. There is a notice included with these bills stating that they do not have to all be paid within the fourteen days or the electricity will be cut off. That situation relates to the very latest bill but people can claim an extended period of time to pay the backlog. If any members of the public feel that they have legitimate complaints that they were not on their premises for any particular period of time or there were squatters on their premises after the cyclone for a long period of time who may have been using electricity, I feel sure, that, if they go to the Department of the Northern Territory and file a claim, it will be sympathetically heard because the department appreciates that people were in a variety of situations and many of them were out of Darwin for a long period of time. If the honourable member wants any further answer than that, I will be happy to speak to her and obtain information.

1065 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

I ask this question of the honourable member in view of the sort of

nebulous relationship that he appears to have with the Australian Broadcasting Commission. We have heard recently - particularly on the national news of the ABC - of the large budgetary cuts that are proposed for the Commission, and I just wondered, as a sidelight on this, whether the Executive Member could advise me whether with the axing by the ABC of the evergreen serial "Blue Hills" the Fraser Government could now be regarded as a government of reform?

ANSWER

I think the answer to that question would be a matter for personal interpretation.

1066 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON -

I should perhaps address the question to the Executive Member for Finance and Community Development, but in his absence I hope that the honourable member can deal with it. I preface this question by saying that I have nothing against the departed. However, is the honourable member aware that the main South Road from Alice Springs, the only access from the south for all visitors and tourists, is now graced by the appendage of a large area of land immediately adjacent to the western side of this South Road and enclosed by an unsightly cyclone fence? Is the Executive Member aware that the land referred to is to be used as a cemetery, that the fence surrounding this land is man-proof, and that the contractors who have erected it have made the fence so that it will not stop people getting in but simply stop those who want to get out? Will the Executive Member undertake to explain to this House why the town planner in his wisdom had to choose a site alongside the main South Road on which to site a new and depressing patch for the departed when there are plenty of preferable alternatives out of sight, away from this main road?

ANSWER

The honourable member was right that the matter would normally be handled by the Executive Member for Finance and Community Development as it is obviously a matter of town planning. I will have a talk to our town planners and ask what the situation is regarding having a cemetery right alongside a main road. It could seem to be a bit unusual. I wonder if the area referred to is within the Alice Springs town plan. If it was, it would no doubt have been on display for some months and open to all sorts of objections by any individual. If it is not in the town plan, then admittedly it could be a decision made by a department without having to go on public display. I will endeavour to seek more information for the honourable member and supply it to the Executive Member for Finance and Community Development to answer him later these sittings.

1067 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

We heard on the news yesterday morning that the "Darwin Trader" may be taken off the run from the east coast. We saw in yesterday's paper that the Australian National Line's general manager denied this. I wonder whether the honourable Executive Member can tell us which of these stories is correct?

ANSWER

I hope the second story is correct, the one given by ANL. I have sent a telegram to the Minister for Transport, Mr Nixon, asking for information relating to the statement made on the ABC news yesterday morning. I hope possibly to have an answer today.

1068 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

Could he advise what holding security facilities will be available for children from the present day until 1978 other than Fannie Bay Gaol?

ANSWER

In relation to juvenile holding facilities between now and when the projected items on the works program are completed, hopefully by the end of this year or January next year at the latest facilities will be completed in Alice Springs. Palmerston House Darwin will be available; however, the security of that place is generally quite inadequate in that it is practically no more secure than a normal home. This leaves us with the situation whereby juveniles who are required to be held in security for the protection of the community as a whole must be sent to institutions such as Fannie Bay Gaol.

There has been some concern in recent weeks about juveniles being held at institutions such as Fannie Bay Gaol but they are being held because they have committed serious offences not trivial ones. Of the children at Alice Springs, two aged 14 years are charged with carnally knowing a female mentally defective person and there are further charges pending. Other prisoners under sentence at Alice Springs include one male aged 16 years who is there for a breaking and entering, stealing, illegal use of motor vehicles; he is serving 2 months on that. Another aged 15 years is there for stealing, illegal use of a motor vehicle and a further charge of stealing and a further charge of illegal use of a motor vehicle, a further charge of stealing and one of malicious damange. Nearly all of them are there for actual illegal use and assults with an offensive weapon. Generally, the children who are being held in these institutions are being held there for serious offences.

1069 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON -

Can he advise how many nominations have been received for the Town Management Board elections in Katherine and Tennant Creek on 19 June this year and how many of those nominees are currently members of the Town Management Board?

ANSWER

The Town Management Boards in Katherine and Tennant Creek consist of 4 nominated members and 5 elected members at this stage. Nominations have actually closed for Katherine and there are 7 people nominated for the election. There are no current members of the Katherine Town Management Board standing for election again. In Tennant Creek, there have been 11 nominations received, 3 of those being members who are currently serving on the Town Management Board. I believe that by not standing for re-election members of the Katherine Town Management Board are protesting at the lack of progress made towards local government over the past 2 years. I hope that the Department of the Northern Territory takes note of that protest and increases attempts to negotiate an acceptable form of interim local government for Katherine and Tannant Creek.

1070 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK -

Under the new arrangements that concern Medibank, is he able during

this session to make a statement in relation to alterations in charges and any other matters that might affect the health situation in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I have been pursuing this matter for the last few days but to get hold of the Minister for Health and have a good yarn to find out exactly what is going on has proven rather difficult. However, I understand that there will be an approach made, in line with all other states in Australia, to have medical charges for intermediate patients in the Territory doubled from $20 to $40. This will be a matter of course which will have to receive consideration when the approach is received.

1071 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON -

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Are bread prices fixed by the Price Controller on home delivery or shop delivery?

ANSWER

Bread prices are normally fixed by the Price Controller having regard to both home deliveries and shop deliveries. My recollection is that in Darwin at least the difference between one and the other is 1c per loaf of bread. So consideration is taken of both home deliveries and shop deliveries of bread by the Price Controller.

1072 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

Why is it that Medibank does not pay out air fares from Gove to Darwin return for surgery patients referred by Gove Hospital to Darwin private specialists, who in turn use the facilities at the Darwin Hospital on a sessional basis.

ANSWER

The Department of Health meets the cost of transferring patients from hospital to hospital. Outpatient costs, including referrals, are the responsibility of the patient. If a person is evacuated to a hospital on the authority of an aerial medical doctor, then the department meets the cost of the evacuation fare. The Department of Health specialists visit Gove and inland hospitals generally in accordance with the demand as related to the level of referral. Surgeons, however, make regular monthly visits to Nhulunbuy-Gove. If in an attending doctor's opinion an outpatient was in such a condition that immediate specialist attention was necessary, the patient would be admitted to a hospital technically and transferred on a hospital to a hospital basis. Departmental doctors would only refer patients to private specialists at the patient's request. In cases where the base hospital did not have a specialist in the discipline concerned and such a specialist was available in the private field, then the hospital would engage the specialist on sessional fees. For example, in Darwin, neurosurgery is one area where this is done extensively.

1073 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

Can the honourable member take some action to ensure that some assistance is supplied to the Darwin City Council in cleaning up the beaches, which are now in a condition little short of disgraceful?

ANSWER

I will make representation on behalf of the honourable member for Port Darwin and advise him of what assistance is available to the Corporation of the City of Darwin.

1074 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON -

Is it a fact that only one meter reader for electricity meters is employed in the Darwin area, that a lot of folk are up to 6 months behind awaiting an electricity bill, including people with substantial consumption who should be read monthly, and that some folk have not received a bill for 12 months or more?

ANSWER

I would have to seek some advice from the department, particularly in relation to the number of meter readers currently in Darwin; I had understood that it was certainly more than one but I will check the information further for him this day. On the subject of accounts, it is a fact that many Darwin people have not received accounts since Cyclone Tracy in December 1974. These accounts are being processed by the department as fast as they can and are being sent out. Often they are in the form of 3 separate accounts when they do go out, and there is a note included which indicates that the 3 accounts do not have to be paid immediately. Only the most recent account is due for payment within the usual 14 days and the other accounts can be paid over a subsequent period of time. I will seek further information on the number of meter readers for the honourable member and let him know this day.

1075 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he able to tell me why the Block 8 cafeteria was closed and can he also tell me when it will reopen?

ANSWER

The honourable member referred to this yesterday in the adjournment debate and I indicated that I had received a letter actually on Monday from the Department of the Northern Territory concerning the Block 8 cafeteria following approaches I had made. I am advised that the delay in repairing and reopening the cafeteria has been brought about because the original contract for the construction of the building has not been completed. The Department of Construction has been advised legally that it would be imprudent to commence repairs prior to the building being handed over from the builders. That department has prepared estimates for the repairs for submission to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission immediately the building contract is complete, and is currently looking at alternative types of finish for the floor area. The floors got wet during the cyclone and in many areas have buckled. It is now hoped that the cafeteria will be operational by the end of this calendar year. In the interim, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is using the dining area for its building advisory service subject to the following conditions:

(a) That maintenance and repair contractors have complete access to the area.

(b) That the Darwin Reconstruction Commission occupancy will

cease automatically when the cafeteria is repaired and ready for reopening.

1076 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

He has not answered my question about the reason why it was closed in the first place.

ANSWER

I recall from previous correspondence that the area was closed because of unsafe working conditions.

1077 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Miss ANDREW -

Has the Garden Point Police Station been notified in the Government Gazette? If not, can she tell me why not?

ANSWER

The Garden Point Police Station does appear in the Police Gazette and there are two constables there, one in an acting senior capacity. I do not know whether or not it is necessary to note police stations in the Government Gazette. I will endeavour to obtain that information before the end of the day.

1078 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

Will he table in this Assembly precise details of the cuts to the Civil Works Program in the Territory's budget for the year 1975-76?

ANSWER

I am not aware that there is any particular document outlining the cuts in detail, however, I will make inquiries through my colleague, the Executive Member for Finance and Community Development, to see if the document is available.

1079 Mr KENTISH to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he inform me why there is such a great delay in making available an adequate area of land for recreation purposes for the people resident in Darwin rural leases?

ANSWER

Through my membership of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, I am aware that there have been extensive discussions and consultations with a number of groups in the rural area associated with Darwin for the setting aside of a block of land for recreation purposes. I believe a commission decision has been made and I will find out why it has not yet been implemented.

1080 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Children from the Wagaman School are now being taken by bus to Tiwi School while the Wagaman School is being repaired. Is it true that vandals have been active in the Wagaman School, will the contracts be let for the repairing of the school and will the grounds be maintained?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, it is true that the Wagaman School building since it was vacated a fortnight ago has been extensively vandalised. Vandals broke a very heavy chain lock and distributed blue dye throughout the building, and other rubbish as well. Since then, there has been virtually no security in the school. I am advised by the department that the contract will be let within 3 weeks and that contrary to rumour the grounds will be maintained.

1081 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON -

Has he considered the abolition of water metering and the striking of a basic water rate? If he has, what is his policy on the matter for the Darwin area?

ANSWER

I wish that members of the executive had the authority to seriously determine policy on this aspect. I have given some thought, following representation from certain gardening groups in Darwin, to the possibility of eliminating water meters and charging a flat rate of water or a graduated scale of water charges for everyone. I have also had brief discussions with the relevant department on this matter. I have a paper on the subject which I would be pleased to let the honourable member for Nightcliff have. It indicates that the suggestion has been studied by various water authorities throughout Australia and that it is regarded as not being a very good proposition, the main reason being the fact that once people are not charged for any excess water the amount of water that is consumed increases astronomically. Unlike electricity, where the more you use the cheaper it gets, the more you water, the more expensive it gets. It is just a fact of operation and this is one of the reasons why my policy would be for not eliminating water meters in Darwin in lieu of the current system.

1082 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise when copies of Royal Commission's report on petroleum released last week in Federal Parliament will be made available to members of this Assembly? Also, can he advise what recommendations that report made concerning projects presently pending in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I am aware that the report was tabled in the Federal House last week and I have asked officers of the Mines Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory to try to procure for every member of this Assembly a copy of this report. I have no knowledge as to whether there is any specific reference to any proposed oil or gas developments in the Northern Territory in the report.

1083 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS -

I have a question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is the Majority Leader aware of an article in the Northern Territory News of 6 May wherein the Minister for the Northern Territory is reported to have criticised pastoralists who, he said, were unwise enough to go deeply into debt? Does the Majority Leader share that view? If not, is the Minister receiving accurate advice from his department?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the article that the honourable member refers to and I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the allegation that the Minister used those words. I certainly would not share the view that in the main pastoralists went into debt unwisely, I believe that the debt situation in which the majority of them find themselves was due to circumstances beyond their control - international marketing forces, and forces throughout Australia in other primary industries, in wheat and in sheep, which resulted in a diversification and build up of cattle numbers in those areas. There was no forecast by the authorities such as the Australian Meat Board or the Bureau of Economics that a sudden depression would come about in the beef industry in 1975. I do not think that such a contention could be substantiated. In general, I find that the advice which I have knowledge of that goes to the Minister for the Northern Territory from this department is sound and well-researched. But there are human failings everywhere and that would not be the case in all matters.

1084 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he intending to table in this House details of the cuts in the Department of the Northern Territory program for 1975-76?

ANSWER

I do not have the specific cuts for the Department of the Northern Territory in a form which I could table in this House. However, I would refer the honourable member to the action of the Federal Treasurer in the House of Representatives on 28 April 1976 when he presented 2 bills and circulated a statement. The 2 bills were the Appropriation Bill No. 3 for 1975-76 which appropriated a sum out of consolidated revenue additional to sums appropriated in the Appropriation Act No. 1, also Appropriation Bill No. 4 1975-76 to appropriate a sum additional to the Appropriation Act No. 2. The statement circulated by the Treasurer on that date was a statement of savings expected in the annual appropriations made by both Appropriation Bill No. 1 and No. 2. In those documents there are details of all Treasury requirements for additional funds by headings and also the savings expected in each department by headings.

1085 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr SPEAKER -

I refer to the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the refurnishing of this Chamber which you tabled yesterday. I see that members will shortly be issued with identification passes. What motivated the issuing of identification passes and for what purpose are they to be used? Surely everyone knows who the members are?

ANSWER

As the report has been noted, the honourable member will have the opportunity to discuss this matter. However, if the member does wish to pursue the matter, the need for identification for honourable members who are away from the Territory has been brought up very often. All other parliamentarians have gold passes etc, and this is a poor man's gold pass. I hope that satisfies the honourable member.

1086 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise me if the Northern Territory Stock Squad is presently equipped for action and service or is he presently still engaged as a receptionist behind the desk at the police station?

ANSWER

I am not aware that the position has changed since I last answered a question for the honourable member for Arnhem at the last sittings. I will check on the present position and advise him at a later hour.

1087 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

Can he tell me if the construction of the new road to Yirrkala from Melville Bay highway will commence this year? It was appropriated last year and should have commenced this year.

ANSWER

I do not have the answer to that question. However, I should be able to get it from the Department of Construction and supply the answer to the honourable member during these sittings.

1088 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise when the lessees of Goondalloo station will get an access road or at least an open grade to their property? Can he advise where Goondalloo is?

ANSWER

The road was on the program to be completed, however, this was one of the roads affected by the recent deferrals. I have spoken to the department and they say that the job has gone back into the hat and will have to take its turn. I do not intend to let it rest here because I think the open grade should be done with all haste by the Department of Construction.

1089 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Has there been consultation by the Federal Government with any Executive Member of this Assembly on the terms of the Aboriginal Land Bill?

ANSWER

I have had a number of consultations and discussions to formulate with the Minister for the Northern Territory a view on this matter. We also have had discussions with both the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Viner, and the Minister for the Northern Territory. There was a full day's discussion between them and the Executive Member for Finance and Community Development and myself. To that extent, the executive has been consulted in the formulation of the terms of the Aboriginal Land Bill.

1090 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

In light of a statement made by the ABC on the radio this morning, is it true that legislation for Aboriginal land rights has already been introduced into the House of Representatives?

ANSWER

To the best of my belief that statement made on the ABC National News this morning is untrue. As I heard the statement, it said that legislation has been introduced into the Federal House of Representatives. All inquiries that I have been able to make this morning and my general knowledge of the situation leaves me to believe that that is in fact untrue. I believe that what I say is correct and I still say that it is untrue. It shows a lack of responsibility on the part of the Australian Broadcasting Commission to use such an item in those terms as its lead item on this morning's national news. Any criticism I make to the ABC is no reflection on the local office of that organisation because I have found them very fair and cooperative in reporting. I should add that I had a telephone call from one of the reporters of AM at 7.00 o'clock this morning and his first question was whether I read this morning's Age and Australian. I can assure honourable members that the reporter, if he is a fair sample of what they have on their current affairs program, got in reply what I believe he deserved.

1091 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

As most honourable members would be aware, Rapid Creek School in my

electorate has not exactly been the most pampered of Darwin schools since the cyclone, or before, and I just wondered whether she could advise me whether any steps have been taken recently, or will be taken shortly, to get the school back into a civilised condition?

ANSWER

The Rapid Creek Primary School has been restored to a stage where all the school facilities are operational. Further restoration, largely of a cosmetic nature, will be effected shortly to bring the rooms back to the pre-cyclone condition. No structural upgrading will be carried out at this stage because major extensions and alterations are planned. Upgrading of the playing fields has not been programmed within the DRC works program so far, but because of extensive changes to upgrading of primary school buildings, some such work may be possible when the DRC program is finalised.

1092 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can the honourable member advise me how many of the members of the NACC inquiry committee are also members or officers of the NACC inquiring about themselves?

ANSWER

I cannot answer that question with any accuracy but I think perhaps he should have directed it to the Executive Member for Social Affairs. If the Executive Member for Social Affairs can add anything to that answer, I suggest that he be given the opportunity to do so.

Mr POLLOCK: My understanding at the moment is that 2 members of the 4 are members of the NACC. The committee of inquiry was here in Darwin on Tuesday for a short time. Only 3 members of that board of inquiry were present, including the chairman of the NACC as the delegate of the NACC on the board of inquiry. One other member of the board of inquiry, who was absent, I understand is also a member of the NACC.

1093 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

My question concerns that subject of great beauty, swill feeding to pigs. Could he tell me what the present position is in the Territory, whether the abolition of swill feeding is to be enforced, and has the Cattlemen's Association been approached?

ANSWER

This matter has been under discussion now seriously for well over a year, and the proposition was put to a meeting of the Cattle Producers Council in Alice Springs, I think, about a year ago. I was present and also the then Director of the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch was present. The views of various people were canvassed and I must say that my view was not entirely in conformity with that of Mr Hart. The Cattle Producers Council did not take a very firm line one way or the other; the matter was more or less left open. Since then, I have not had an official approach to introduce such legislation but I have heard that I will be receiving such an approach. Certain other states have already enacted such legislation and in certain states there is considerable opposition to the state government proceeding with it in the complete ban form which was proposed. I do not know what the outcome of those debates will be. I have not had an official approach from

the department yet with draft legislation to be introduced here.

1094 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING -

I understand that there is now in existence a town plan for the new Jabiru regional centre. Is it therefore appropriate that the town plan be displayed for the public scrutiny and comment?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the Jabiru planning is still at a workshop stage. I have seen documentation of proposed plans but I do not believe they have yet received the endorsement of the Town Planning Board and therefore are not at the stage where public scrutiny or display can be arranged. However, I will discuss the matter further with the Department of the Northern Territory to ascertain what their timetable is for displaying any such town plan.

1095 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

I would like to ask a question in relation to rolling stock purchased by the North Australia Railways for carrying iron ore from Frances Creek. How many railway hoppers are presently owned by the North Australia Railways and what is their value, and how many locomotives were purchased by the North Australia Railways to haul iron ore from Frances Creek to Darwin and what is their value?

ANSWER

Originally there were 157 rail hoppers purchased for the transportation of iron ore at a cost of $15,000 each. There are only 152 suitable for operation at the moment and they are worth $2,25m. Nine locomotives were originally purchased to haul these waggons and they cost $0.25m each. I am not quite sure how many of these units are redundant as a result of cessation of work at Frances Creek and, if the Government goes ahead with its present decision, they will all be redundant.

1096 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Have the Northern Territory Police made a study similar to that done by the South Australian Police on the economics of using aircraft rather than road vehicles for bush trips and what new police station will be opened this year in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

A study was commenced in August 1974 for a 3 to 5 year period to collect data to enable an assessment of the economics of aircraft as against vehicles for the bush trips. Preliminary figures indicate that the savings are much in line with those in the South Australia survey. As to the second part of the question regarding the police stations, I believe that possibly 2 new stations will be opened this year, one at Hermannsburg and one at Port Keats.

1097 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she aware of any active drug squad in Darwin and the Territory generally and, if so, has it had the effect of reducing the drug crimes in the Territory?

ANSWER

There is a drug squad operating in the Northern Territory. As far as their influence on drug trafficking is concerned, it would be very difficult to determine but I will endeavour to give him the details perhaps next week.

1098 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

Are any plans being made to relieve traffic congestion during peak hours on Bagot Road by provision of alternative access to and from the city to the northern suburbs?

ANSWER

I am aware that a number of things are being done. Short term phasing of the traffic lights to give them priority on inward moving in the morning and outward moving in the evening is currently being looked at and a number of investigations are being conducted by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission with regard to alternative access routes. The Frances Bay arterial link has been discussed on a number of occasions. I am aware that it is still subject to further investigation and I do not anticipate that it will come up in the next financial year's works program.

1099 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Is the Executive Member able to tell me what cuts in staff ceilings and expenditure the Darwin Community College is likely to have this coming year?

ANSWER

In the current expenditure there have been no significant cuts. The only reduction has resulted from the staff ceiling. I believe the ceiling is about 205 at the moment. The Chairman of the Community College and the Principal of the Community College are still in Canberra having discussions with the Minister for Education endeavouring to get a raise on these staff ceilings. In the capital works there has been no expenditure cuts at this stage and this morning workshop extensions to the order of $225,000 were approved. At this stage, there is no deferral, it is just that the funds are very slow in coming through.

1100 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr POLLOCK -

Bamyili Aboriginal community is making great progress with the tourism sector. Is this an indication of benefits of close cooperation between Aboriginals and Europeans?

ANSWER

Part of the general policies of the previous Liberal-Country Party government were to develop Aboriginal managed associations which would operate housing associations, commercial undertakings, stores, garages, market gardens, piggeries and so forth. Self-management was encouraged at a rate at which the Aboriginal people themselves wanted it. Although I have not been to Bamyili in recent times, and regrettably I was not invited to their function last week that the Minister attended, my understanding is that there is close cooperation between Europeans and Aboriginal people there. The

Aboriginals do realise that they can use the European people to assist in the development of their project and are progressing towards self-management and a healthy environment to live in.

1101 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he able to indicate when the Government will reintroduce the home sale scheme policy for government employees?

ANSWER

I am not able to so indicate. I have made a submission to the minister in an endeavour to establish ground rules at an early date to give public servants an indication of when the Government's home loan scheme will be reintroduced.

1102 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

My question relates to the amendments to the Motor Vehicle Ordinance which was passed early last year to provide indemnification through the nominal defendant for a person who held compulsory third party insurance with insurers who had gone broke. There was some mention of an alternative proposal on this legislation, as it has not yet been assented to, coming to us in a report from his Honour the Acting Administrator to yourself, Sir, earlier this year. I am not sure whether that report was entirely accurate in all respects but I wonder if the Executive Member could tell us whether anything has yet got as far as his desk on this now 18 month's old piece of legislation?

ANSWER

There have been discussions between myself and the department concerned. These were initiated some months ago and a paper was prepared in which the new proposals were outlined. I asked the department to send a copy of these proposals to the insurance companies. The proposals have been accepted in principle by the insurance companies but, as a certain amount of insurance company money will be held by the nominal defendant for the purpose of paying third party claims, we have gone back to the insurance companies and said, "You accept the proposals but we would like you to tell us how you feel it should be operated to give you access to this money, to put it on short call so that it can be effectively used but still kept in your hands.". I am waiting for word from the insurance companies and, as soon as this is available, I am going to suggest that we have another meeting with the insurance companies involved and try to come up with lasting instructions.

1103 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

My question concerns the new school of the air building in Alice Springs. Can she advise when tenders will be called and let for supply of radio equipment to that new building?

ANSWER

I believe that advertisements have been drafted at the moment and that tenders will be called before the end of the financial year.

1104 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Could she advise the Assembly whether she was consulted before the

Commissioner took his decision that police would not wear any form of identification?

ANSWER

I was not consulted before this decision was taken, however, I have discussed the matter with the Commissioner.

1105 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

Can he tell me what effect will Government economies have on the ABC in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I do not know what the actual effects will be. I know that a week or two ago there was an intention not to have a local filming unit. Pressure was put on from various directions and this decision was changed. I could make inquiries to see if I can find out what specific effect these cuts will have on the ABC and answer the honourable member next week.

1106 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

When was the Darwin jury roll last revised and when is it proposed to bring women onto jury panels?

ANSWER

The current roll was last revised in November 1973. Legislation was passed through this Assembly which included the right for women to be on the jury roll unless they specifically asked not to be or they had the same right of withdrawal as men do. Some 2 years later we have had no women appearing on juries in Darwin. The situation is little different in Alice Springs where, in the last Supreme Court sittings, for the first time women sat on the jury. The matter is the responsibility of the Sheriff and I am advised by the Attorney-General's Department that the reason it has not been updated was because of the cyclone and the lack of staff. However, I have made strong representation to the Attorney-General asking for his assistance and the immediate updating of this roll so that women can be included.

1107 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he able to tell me how long it takes for the Home Finance Trustee to process an application for the home loan to approval stage?

ANSWER

For non-complicated applications where all conditions are met within a few days of lodgement of the original application, the current time for approval is 6 to 7 weeks. The Home Finance Trustee has now approved in excess of 500 loans and the staff of that office is currently 21 persons. Delay is largely caused by the sheer volume of work that has to be handled by the staff of the Home Finance Trustee because not only are they now processing applications but they must attend to the necessary administration of the 500-odd loans that have currently been approved and are naturally in the course of administration.

1108 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware that, following approval, the time lag for awaiting first progress payment is approximately 5 weeks? This has the effect of having many builders teetering on the brink. If he is aware of this, has he made approaches for an increase in the staff?

ANSWER

A number of particular instances of delay in the processing of progress payments have been brought to my attention. On each occasion I have approached the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory to see what can be done. It is often found that a number of the claims being processed are not clear and straightforward because of the building supervisory assessments are in conflict with the actual progress payment requested. Therefore, the staff initially has to resolve that problem and it is further complicated because the Finance Branch is located in Brisbane. The Secretary is attempting to solve the problem but I do not know when the member is going to be given any joy.

1109 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it a fact that a child with a long history of tonsillitis and under a private surgeon requiring an operation by that surgeon for the removal of tonsils cannot at the present time have this operation at the Darwin Hospital in the foreseeable future?

ANSWER

I am unaware of the specific case to which the honourable member refers. The general situation in answer to his question is no. In fact, some 16 tonsillectomies and adenoidectomies have been performed so far this month. However, I would wish to define 2 groups of surgical patients. Firstly, there are those who are clinically urgend and who are admitted without delay for their surgical procedures. Secondly, patients who are not clinically urgent are listed for surgery when beds are available. This is the largest group. Availability of beds depends on adequate numbers of trained sisters to staff the wards.

1110 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise what protection pastoralists in the Northern Territory have received this year against bushfires?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge the Bush Fires Control Board will be making every endeavour to extend to the people of the Northern Territory, particularly the pastoral community the same level of bushfire control that they have extended in the past. In relation to the financial side of it, I was advised by officers of the Department of the Northern Territory at the time the budget was presented that the sum of $30,000 which had been shown in the Bush Fires Control Board's vote to emergency bushfire control was nominal and that in fact Treasury would provide funds from an open-ended vote to ensure adequate bushfire control, also that so long as officers of the Bush Fires Control Board had the physical capacity to control fires they would not be inhibited by the lack of funds.

1111 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Recently on a TV show a well known Australian mining magnate made a statement claiming that nuclear energy was safe and clean. Is this so?

ANSWER

I did not see the program to which the honourable member refers and I have no knowledge of which aspects of the use of uranium to which he refers. In any case I would not want to say anything that will pre-empt the findings of Mr Justice Fox's inquiry, and I would ask that the question be placed on notice.

1112 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

Is he able to tell me how long it takes for an electricity connection to take place?

ANSWER

I will assume that the question is directed to the situation in Darwin and I am pleased to report that there are currently 11 inspectors working with the Electricity Supply Department at the moment. In the case of an electrician's completion notice and a consumer's application for electricity being lodged together, and if it is found that the job has in actual fact been completed, electricity would be connected in around about 8 days at the present time. Occasionally, it appears that there are some electricians who claim that the department is holding them up when in actual fact they have not lodged the completion form that the electrician has to lodge. This tends to throw a bad light on the department as far as the consumer is concerned, when in actual fact an electrician might be buying time for himself. In some other cases delays are caused when it is found that the job is not a new connection but a change-over from the existing temporary service that was installed after the cyclone. In these cases a different crew is required as the job involves more men, including an inspector, and often the consumer's electrician as well. In those cases there has to be a certain amount of electrical equipment dismantled as well as installed again.

1112A ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: On the question of electricity I would just like to supply a little bit more information in answer to a question put to me on Tuesday by the member for Arnhem. I advise that there are currently 4 meter readers working in Darwin at the present time. One of them is only temporary and is assisting in the backlog of work and the normal crew will be 3 meter readers.

1113 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

Honourable members may be aware that to register the cheapest sort of private company costs at least $61 and the fees on occasions run into many hundreds of dollars. In order to register these companies - and it takes about 3 months for the worthy officials to process the registration - one is required to use forms prescribed under the Companies Regulations. I ask the Executive Member when adequate supplies of these forms will be made available, as they are not at present adequate?

ANSWER

The Companies Office is under no legislative responsibility to provide these forms. However, in supplying a service to their clients they have done so in the past. At the moment, with economy cuts, no money is available for the printing of these forms. In the foreseeable future they will not be supplied by that office.

1114 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

Can the honourable member advise when the Home Finance Trustee will be permitted to set up and operate his own bank account in Darwin to relieve the hardship that this is causing in many cases?

ANSWER

The issue raised by the honourable member is such that at the moment, under legislation, the Home Finance Trustee is required to operate from a trust fund established by the Treasurer, and therefore it would require legislative amendment to set up a local bank account for the Home Finance Trustee. I will be happy to discuss the matter raised by the honourable member further with him, and investigate all aspects of this and report at a later stage.

1115 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS -

Has he received representation from citizens of the Northern Territory and Western Australia concerning an incident which occurred on Bililuna Station in Western Australia? What action does he propose to take?

ANSWER

I have received a telegram. I have not got it with me at the moment, but it was I think from over 30 people who represent centres and stations, both in the Kimberleys and the Victoria River District, about an incident which occurred in Western Australia at Bililuna Station. The telegram suggested that there was some inequity in the application of the law and brought this to my attention. I believe that the matter the incident referred to may be still under or be still before the court or going to come before the court again and therefore I do not intend to comment any further on it. But as it is in Western Australia it is outside Northern Territory's legal jurisdiction and I will bring the representation to the notice of the Western Australian Attorney-General.

1116 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

If in fact there are cut-backs to apply to the ABC next year and it may mean rationalisation of ABC programs in the Northern Territory, would the Executive Member be prepared to recommend to the ABC the removal of the program, "Colonel Chuck Chunder" from the Northern Territory service?

ANSWER

I would prefer the question to be put on notice.

1117 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she tell me if there has been a review of school isolation allow-

ances for the year 1977? If so, what changes have been made to that formula?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, there has not been a review of children-in-isolation allowances this year. A new Senate committee on education, science and the arts is, I think, currently touring Australia accepting submissions and investigating the problems of children who live in isolation as regards education. I am hoping that they will return to the Territory and that as a result of their findings, which I believe must be tabled before the end of this year, a considerable increase in the allowances for children in isolation will be brought forward.

1118 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING (by leave): The honourable member for Alice Springs asked a question about town planning issues relating to the cemetery being built near the main road in Alice Springs. I am informed by the Department of the Northern Territory that intensive investigations were made for suitable land near Alice Springs. Competing land use needs had to be taken into consideration and also the soil had to be right. If chemicals in the soil are not right, decay takes place either too quickly or too slowly. There was a joint decision by the Department of the Northern Territory, the Town Planning Board and the Alice Springs Corporation. Aboriginal people and the funeral parlour people were consulted; the Aboriginals were consulted through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the decision was made approximately 3 years ago. The cemetery was an amendment to the Alice Springs Town Plan and was on display for 3 months in the Lands Branch Office and a copy was also held by the Alice Springs Corporation.

1119 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): The honourable member for Arnhem asked whether the NT Stock Squad was actively engaged in duties or still at the reception desk at police headquarters. The information I have obtained was that 1 member of the stock squad was performing duties at the CIB inquiry counter at the police headquarters building because of a temporary physical incapacity. He was now returned to the stock squad.

1120 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): I wish to inform the member for Tiwi that as I assured him yesterday, concerning the police station at Garden Point, notice has been placed in the Police Gazette. Thereiisnno requirement for notification in any other gazette. If his question was intended to relate to the gazettal of the premises as a police prison, the answer is no.

ABC -
"Blue Hills" (Everingham) 1065
cuts (Ballantyne) 1105
"Chuck Chunder" (Manuell) 1116
Aboriginal Land Bill -
consultation (Withnall) 1089
introduction (Dondas) 1090
Alice Springs -
abattoirs (Manuell) 824
rail reserve (Manuell) 1047
School of the Air (Vale) 1103
siting of cemetery (Manuell) 1066, 1118
ANL, "Darwin Trader" (Everingham) 1067
Bagot Road, traffic congestion (Everingham) 1098
Bamyili, tourism (Tungutalum) 1100
Beaches, cleaning of (Withnall) 1073
Beef industry (Ballantyne) 1052; (Vale) 1054
Bililuna Station, incident (Steele) 1115
Block 8 cafeteria (Dondas) 1075, 1076
Bread prices (Manuell) 1071
Civil Works Program, cuts (Lawrie) 1078
Company registration forms (Everingham) 1113
Consumer Protection Council, complaints (Everingham) 1063
Darwin Hospital, elective surgery (Everingham) 1109
Darwin airport, bar facilities (Dondas) 1060
Darwin Community College (Dondas) 1099
Department of NT, program cuts (Lawrie) 1084
DRC, budget (Withnall) 817
Drug Squad (Ballantyne) 1097
Education, expenditure deferrals 1975-76 (Lawrie) 1058
Electricity -
accounts (Kentish) 1074
connections (Dondas) 1112
meter readers (Kentish) 1112A
Family Planning Association, funds (Ballantyne) 821
Free beach (Dondas) 1056
Garden Point Police Station, gazettal (Tungutalum) 1077, 1120
Goondalloo Station, access road (Vale) 1088
Gove -
Department of NT staffing (Lawrie) 813
Nabalco (Lawrie) 810, 811, 814, 815, 816
Yirrkala/Melville Bay road (Ballantyne) 1087
Home Finance Trustee -
application processing (Dondas) 1107; (Lawrie) 1108
bank account (Everingham) 1114
Home sale scheme, government employees (Dondas) 1101
Isolation allowances (Ballantyne) 1117
Jabiru, town plan (Tungutalum) 1094
Jury roll, women on (Everingham) 1106
Katherine -
meatworks (Lawrie) 1044
school staffing (Ballantyne) 1057
Legal Aid Office, Darwin (Dondas) 1051
Medibank -
charges (Steele) 1070
transfer patients from Gove (Ballantyne) 1072
Melville Bay, pollution (Lawrie) 810, 811
Mines Branch, location of records (Dondas) 1045
Motor Vehicles Ordinance, amendments (Everingham) 1102
NACC inquiry (Kentish) 1092
National parks and wildlife legislation (Dondas) 1046
North Australia Railway -
closure (Manuell) 1059
rolling stock (Manuell) 1095
Notices of intention to determine leases (Vale) 1043
Nuclear energy (Ballantyne) 1111
Ordinances -
loss of presentation copies (Withnall) 809
reservation (Withnall) 809
Papunya -
housing (Robertson) 977
sewerage (Robertson) 976
Passes for members of Legislative Assembly (Lawrie) 1085
Pastoralists -
Minister's comment (Robertson) 1083
bushfire protection (Vale) 1110
Petroleum industry, Royal Commission report (Vale) 1082
Police badges (Everingham) 1061; (Lawrie) 1104
Police, use of aircraft (Vale) 1096
Prison facilities for juveniles (Lawrie) 1068
Rapid Creek School, condition (Everingham) 1091
Rates, rebates (Lawrie) 1064
Rural leases, recreation area (Kentish) 1079
Rural reconstruction, funds for 1976 (Kentish) 1048
Rural Roads Conference (Vale) 1062

Rural roads, planning (Tungutalum) 1049
Secretary Department of NT (Lawrie) 1055
Shoal Bay Road (Tungutalum) 1042
Stock Squad (Kentish) 1086, 1119
Swill feeding (Lawrie) 1093
Telecom Darwin, messages from Timor (Kentish) 1053
Town management boards, elections (Vale) 1069
Valuer-General, valuations in Darwin (Withnall) 1050
Wagaman School (Dondas) 1080
Wallaby Beach, restoration (Lawrie) 812
Water rates (Lawrie) 1081

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

1123 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

Will he attempt to obtain and table in this House the volume of freight brought to Darwin by government departments in the last 3 years and also details of its method of transportation?

ANSWER

I will attempt to obtain that information.

1124 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

Will he obtain from the Minister and table in this House the figures and the rationale on which the decision was made to close the North Australia Railway?

ANSWER

I will attempt to get the information.

1125 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON -

Can he supply any details on the $1.1m deferral of local government projects for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Owing to restrictions placed on Commonwealth expenditure for 1976-77, some projects proposed by both the Corporation of the City of Darwin and the Corporation of the Municipality of Alice Springs have had to be deferred. The main projects which had been proposed for next financial year and for which funds will not be available are as follows: in Darwin, the northern suburbs swimming pool complex of $300,000 and also stage two of the Winnellie Road reconstruction; in Alice Springs, the construction of the Alice Springs Civic Centre of $0.5m and the construction of the Alice Springs municipal depot at $300,000. Owing to some special circumstances which have arisen, the Alice Springs municipal depot is still under review but it is unlikely that funds will be available for it to proceed in 1976-77. Some deferral of projects proposed under the dollar for dollar subsidy will also be necessary. However, the identification of individual projects which will not proceed in 1976-77 will be a matter for discussion between the respective corporations and the Department of the Northern Territory. Operational subsidies paid to both corporations will remain untouched.

1126 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Has the Australian Atomic Energy Commission withdrawn from the Northern Territory exploration scene and, if so, how much will we save in this financial year and will this money be transferred to the Northern Territory Mines Branch to continue basic mapping and research?

ANSWER

From the best of my knowledge the Atomic Energy Commission has not withdrawn totally from the Northern Territory exploration scene, and that in fact the small cell of the force that was previously here will remain until the end of this dry season to complete a pro-

ject that it had underway and which is well worth completing in view of the amount of money that has already been expended upon it. I believe further that any withdrawal this financial year will result in a saving of between $0.8m and $0.9m to the Atomic Energy Commission. I have made an approach to the Minister for National Resources that this money and some 10 geologists be transferred to the Northern Territory Mines Branch to continue basic mapping and any other geological work that needs to be done.

1127 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise me where funding for the Regional Council of Social Development comes from and the annual amount of such grants? What are the names of the current officers of the Regional Council of Social Development?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1128 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise whether the reconstruction of the Stuart Highway through the foothills into Alice Springs will proceed as planned this year?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer that question as there is still no word from the Government as to the implementation of the second 3-year road program to upgrade the Stuart and Barkly Highways. The Alice Springs hills area was to receive priority when the program begins but at the moment no information has been given as to when this is likely to begin. I hope it comes through shortly.

1129 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

When did the Ayers Rock Advisory Committee last meet and when is it meeting again? At what stage is the development planned for the new Ayers Rock village, and will the Government's financial restrictions impose a delay on this development?

ANSWER

The Ayers Rock Advisory Committee last met on 30 October and at that meeting the committee assessed a panel of names of people who would be suitable consultants to carry out the project. They further appointed especially a sub-committee to receive and assess applications from these consultants. At present, the situation is held up because of the Government's financial attitudes towards the hiring of consultants. An application is currently before the Minister for the Northern Territory, Mr Adermann, and the Treasurer. As soon as funds have been approved for the appointment of the consultants to continue with the plans for the developing of the village, the chairman of the Ayers Rock Advisory Committee will call a meeting forthwith.

1130 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

In view of the Prime Minister's promise to turn on the lights, when will the right honourable gentleman reach for the switch that will

disperse some of the gloom in the cattle industry?

ANSWER

I can assure the honourable member that the Prime Minister and the Government are reaching for the switch. It is only just a matter now of when the circuit will be completed. The question of the difficulties of primary industry and the support needed for the North was discussed with the Prime Minister only last Saturday. I understand that progress is being made in an examination of a number of suggestions put forward by the Cattle Producers Council and other parties. I hope that an announcement on some of these will be heard in the near future.

1131 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW -

In the knowledge that she has not, nor will she ever have, any control over the Commonwealth Police Force about whom the question is concerned, would she inquire into and inform the House whether or not it is a fact that Commonwealth Police Officers are being given economy leave fares in lieu of first class, contrary to their awards and conditions of service; Commonwealth officers were enticed to serve in the Alice Springs area by false promises of fully furnished and equipped housing; Commonwealth officers are only paid a car allowance between Alice Springs township and the Joint Defence Space Research facility if they also carry 2 other officers as passengers and does this practice in many cases involve a net loss to the car owner because of increased insurance rates on that vehicle? Would she also obtain a copy of the Commonwealth Police Officers' Determination and conditions of service and table the same in this House?

Mr SPEAKER: I direct that the question be placed on notice.

1132 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

In the light of the statements which appeared in the press last night wherein he noted that the Minister had based his decision to close the railway on departmental advice, would he consider setting up a select committee of members of this Assembly to examine the North Australia Railway and its viability and ask the Minister for a stay of execution pending the report of that committee so it can give further advice to the Minister?

ANSWER

This may be a possibility, however, I would have to discuss it with other members of the Executive and report our decision to the Assembly.

1133 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Last year, there was appropriation made for some five police boats. Will consideration be given to purchasing a police boat for Gove this year and, if not, will she take the matter up urgently with the Commissioner?

ANSWER

I shall make representation to the Commissioner on the subject of the supply of the police boat for Gove.

1134 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

When will repairs be effected to the domestic airport facilities at Darwin airport?

ANSWER

At the last sittings, I did advise that cosmetic repairs to the terminal building were to be effected. To date, that has not started, however, I have spoken to the DRC and have been advised that tenders have closed and they should be announcing the successful tenderer within the next week or two.

1135 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

I refer to the Aboriginal advisory body that was set up some time ago to advise the Administrator on local Aboriginal affairs. Is this body still functional and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, this body is not functional. I do not know the reason why but I will endeavour to find out if there are any basic reasons behind the non-activity of this committee and advise the House later.

1136 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

What facilities are presently available for the holding of female prisoners in Darwin and what facilities are expected to be available in the near future?

ANSWER

Some facilities are from time to time available at Fannie Bay for the temporary holding of female prisoners. However, the practice is at the moment to transfer female prisoners from Darwin to Alice Springs where facilities are available. Consideration is being given to improving the former female block at the Fannie Bay Gaol to make it habitable and this is still being considered. However, at this stage, we do not want to spend a lot of money at Fannie Bay because we have no intention of that facility being able to linger longer.

1137 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): I wish to answer a question asked by the honourable member for Nightcliff last week. She asked about the intention with regard to the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory residing in Darwin. The information I have received is that it is the intention of the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory, Mr R.S. Livingston, to move to Darwin when accommodation can be made available. It should be noted, however, that at the present stage of constitutional development in the Northern Territory, the occupant of this position must spend considerable time in the national capital. It may be of interest to note that Mr Livingston has visited Darwin on 8 separate occasions since the beginning of the year.

1138 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): I wish to answer a question by the honourable member for Nightcliff. She asked if it was possible for me to table a detailed and accurate statement of the deferrals and expenditure in the field of education for the 1975-76 year. I am advised by the Department of Education that it is not responsible for cash expenditure on specific capital works projects. Expenditure, and hence deferrals of expenditure, are controlled by the Department of Construction and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. The department suggests that the honourable member for Nightcliff redirect her question to the Executive Member for Finance and Community Development.

1139 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Can the honourable member advise me whether he has given any consideration to the appointment of a commission of inquiry into overall Northern Territory transport needs?

ANSWER

As a result of the honourable member for Nightcliff's question yesterday concerning the possibility of a select committee of this Assembly to look into the North Australia Railway decision, we had discussions within the party and it was felt that it would be more appropriate and possibly more all-encompassing if we asked the Federal Government to conduct a Royal Commission into the complete transport system and problems which exist in the Northern Territory. In view of this, I am foreshadowing that tomorrow I will move that this Assembly ask the Federal Government to conduct a Royal Commission into transport in the Northern Territory. We will also be requesting that the decision to close the railway be put off until this Royal Commission is able to give its findings.

The honourable member for Nightcliff did ask me whether I would be able to table papers giving the figures showing the reasons why the NAR had to be closed down. I regret that I will be unable to officially table these papers in this Assembly.

1140 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS -

Is he able to indicate whether the Katherine meatworks will open this year and, if so, when? And also, is there any change in heart by the Federal Government in relation to carry-on finance for the beef industry?

ANSWER

I believe that honourable members would have heard the announcement last night and again this morning about the opening of the Katherine meatworks. The announcement emanated from the companies concerned, and I understand it to be a correct statement of the position that, following on the Federal Government's conditional agreement to vary the terms of repayment of the debt owed to them by Northmeat, an arrangement has been entered into between Norwest Abattoirs, the Wyndham people, and Northmeat to reopen the Katherine meatworks under the management of Norwest.

It is proposed that it will be opened in July. I cannot give the honourable member the exact date but from previous discussions with the meatworks people it would take about one month from the time of reaching the decision to open to get it operational again, so I hope that that would mean very early in July. This will make a significant contribution to beef producers in the Northern Territory, particularly in the northern half of the Territory.

I have some authoritive information that there has been an approval for a considerable extension of the carry-on finance scheme. It is something in the order of $600,000. I am trying to get confirmation of this from the office of the Minister for the Northern Territory today; I have an arrangement to speak to him at lunch time on the telephone and I may be able to confirm the situation there this afternoon for the honourable member. These 2 decisions taken together, if the second one is correct, will be of major significance to the viability of the beef industry of the Northern

Territory in 1976.

1141 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS -

Following on his remarks concerning the Katherine meatworks, is he able to inform the House that the credits due to the Katherine meatworks will still apply during this killing season?

ANSWER

I understand that they will. Even though a meatworks does not open or operate it still has an entitlement to the credit allocated to it at the start of the year. I believe that in the case of the Darwin meatworks, which will not be opening this year, its credits still hold and in fact have been transferred by some arrangement to Norwest. I trust that the Katherine credit will still apply in the case of Katherine. Indeed I do not believe they would be opening if this was not so, otherwise they would have difficulty in disposing of their meat to the normal export outlet, the American trade.

1142 Mr STEELE to Mr SPEAKER -

I refer to an article in the NT News yesterday concerning an unnamed member of the ALP executive calling for your resignation, sir. Can you tell us your intentions?

ANSWER

At this stage, I have no intentions of taking the honourable gentleman's advice.

1143 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise what type of lease will be offered to the Central Australian Racing Club for their new site presently under construction on the Stuart Highway south of Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I am advised that a special purpose lease is proposed for the race club and that it is currently before the Minister for approval. Conditions attaching to the lease will be that public facilities ought to be constructed to cater for at least 500 people and that boundaries should be fenced within a period of 2 years and fire-fighting equipment installed to the satisfaction of the Administrator. Plans for all development will be subject to the approval of the Urban Development Branch and it will be a requirement of the club to conduct 10 race meetings per year.

1144 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

Is there a maintenance program for the 92 Commonwealth houses at Nhulunbuy? If not, will a plan be implemented in the future and will the honourable member seek to have all houses installed with airconditioning in the forthcoming budget appropriation?

ANSWER

I would ask that the honourable member for Nhulunbuy place the question on notice so that the appropriate department can look into the matter.

1145 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

He is no doubt aware that certain homes now owned by the Department of the Northern Territory - I say now because some of them were previously owned by public servants and reverted to the Commonwealth - are being restored only to their pre-cyclone condition with no strengthening and no cyclone proofing at all, apparently under a direction from the DRC. Could he advise this House of the rationale for this decision and also if legal opinion has been sought in the event of another blow and those houses disintegrating would adjoining people have a claim against the Commonwealth for this peculiar action?

ANSWER

My understanding is that where minor repairs are being made to Commonwealth properties then the full cyclone code provisions are not applicable. However, where any major work is being undertaken, it is to meet the full requirements of the building code. I will investigate the question further and provide the member with a more comprehensive answer to this question.

The issue of legality of claims has I believe been raised on a number of occasions and my understanding is that there is no case for claim. It not only would apply to the government sector for restored buildings that are in a substandard state but you must also take into account that a number of private sector houses have also been restored without the full cyclone proofing.

1146 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Miss ANDREW -

What are the police doing about the hooligans who hang about terrorising people at Knuckeys Lagoon and Railway Dam?

ANSWER

I do not know but I will endeavour to find out.

1147 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

Of the recorded $2.5m loss attributed to the North Australia Railway last year, what percentage was attributable to Cyclone Tracy reconstruction?

ANSWER

I would ask that the honourable member place the question on notice. In doing so, I would like to point out that, over the last week, I have had several pages of questions concerning the closure of the North Australia Railway and requesting information which is very difficult to get quickly. The answers have to be got from various departments; they cannot all be answered by the railways. I have to do this inquiring myself and I regret that I have been unable to get the time to sit down at the telephone for about 2 hours and ring all the people necessary. I ask the member to put the question on notice and I will also attempt at some time today to get some answers to other questions which have been asked. Those that I am unable to get answers for I will see that the answers are transmitted to members after the sittings.

1148 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise what progress is being made by Mount Isa Mines with their McArthur River development?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge Mount Isa Mines is still proceeding with its plan of development. The most recent news I had of it was some 6 to 8 weeks ago when the company went to Borroloola and McArthur River and took a papier mache model of the proposed development to explain to Aboriginals living in the area just what the development would look like on local terrain, how much land use would be involved and where this land lay in relation to Aboriginal sites in the area. This manoeuvre was taken at the initiative of the company in conjunction with the Northern Land Council and to the best of my knowledge it was a very successful exercise in that it made the Aboriginals more aware of the company's intent. I think the long term planning for the project will continue and to the best of my knowledge it is going to take some 10 years before the project comes on the scene.

1149 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

I preface my question by referring to a statement on infant mortality among Aboriginals in the Northern Territory released recently by the Health Department.

1. Would he ask the Health Department to provide the number of births and infant deaths of Aboriginal males and females for each year from 1968, or any such earlier date on which similar records were maintained by the Health Department?

2. Would he ask the Health Department to indicate why it has provided a single index for each of the several years rather than a 5-year moving average which it is understood could statistically be a more reliable guide to such figures?

3. What has been the 5-year moving average from the time when the Health Department first maintained such records?

ANSWER

I have already asked the Health Department to provide me with those statistics and they are, I believe, being prepared at the moment. I should be able to advise the member later today or tomorrow of the figures.

1150 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

The Nightcliff Community Health Centre is working out of a room at the Nightcliff High School. What arrangements has the Health Department in hand to re-establish the centre and provide it with the proper facilities?

ANSWER

This problem of the Nightcliff Health Centre has been one of concern to the department for some time and they have made arrangements to lease premises in Phoenix Street. However, these premises require partitioning and associated work and about 3 months ago I

quire partitioning and associated work and about 3 months ago I made representations to the Department of Administrative Services to finally come good with the funding required for that work. That funding has been made available by the Treasurer - I think about 2 months ago now - and each week the Department of Construction has been assuring the Department of Health that the work will be finished in 4 weeks. However, as of yesterday, the situation was still the same as it was several weeks ago - the work will be finished in 4 weeks. The department is applying continual pressure but unfortunately it is out of their hands at the moment. They are very anxious to get into these new premises because the present facilities at the Nightcliff High School are far from satisfactory.

1151 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

Can he tell me if there is any indication when the Full Bench will make a decision on professional health officers' salaries?

ANSWER

This is a continuing saga in relation to the salaries for professional officers in the Department of Health. The situation as I understand at the moment is that Mr Justice Coleman, who has been a delegate of the Full Bench hearing submissions, has reported to the Full Bench and they are to sit again on 22 June. However, it is not certain just when they will hand down a final decision. It is hoped that it may be late in June - that is, later this month - but there will be nothing before 22 June unfortunately.

1152 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON -

This question is asked on behalf of the member for Elsey. Can he advise when meters will be installed in taxis in Katherine?

ANSWER

I understand that regulations are being drafted under the Motor Vehicles Ordinance to provide for meters to be installed in taxis in Katherine, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy. The regulations have to be considered by the Administrator's Council. Although I have not been given a time for their presentation to the Administrator's Council, I am told that it is expected that it will not be long. We can expect taxi meters in these areas in the near future.

1153 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

My question concerns her Native and Historical Objects and Areas Preservation Bill serial 107. Having listened with interest to the second reading speech and read the bill, I realise that the bill does not in fact do what was intended or implied in the speech as it does not relate to areas. Is it the honourable member's intention to amend the bill at a later date to relate it to areas or is it the intention to proceed with the bill in its present form and introduce other legislation dealing with areas?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Nightcliff is quite right. In the original discussions, it was planned to include areas, however, it has been since discovered that this is a very complex piece of

legislation because of the various types of leases and legislation concerning land. My intention will be to continue with the legislation as it stands at the moment assuming passage at the next sittings and, at a later date, introduce legislation which will then cover areas.

1154 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

I have had representations from 18 mothers concerning the half yearly intake at the Ludmilla School. Will there be no half yearly intake this year or is she able to provide some other information?

ANSWER

The Education Department this year has adopted a policy whereby children once they have reached the age of about 4 go to pre-school and this is considered the commencement of their primary schooling. Once children have enrolled in a pre-school, they have commenced their formal schooling and they continue in accordance with the policy of a particular school. There is no mid-year intake as such anymore because this policy involves a continuous flow of children from the pre-school to grade 1 or preparatory stages. The children who have entered grade 1 at this stage of the year will not normally proceed to year 2 until the 1978 year. Therefore, children entering year 1 later than this year will not be disadvantaged. The problems at Ludmilla are mainly in terms of staffing and actual accommodation. The flow will be facilitated as soon as possible, however, it must be clearly understood that the children are in fact at school by virtue of the fact that they are in pre-school and they will be flowing up through the system at their own rate of readiness.

1155 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

What assistance will the Department of Aboriginal Affairs give to the Warramunga Pabulu Housing Association in obtaining accommodation for the fringe dwellers in Tennant Creek?

ANSWER

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has made an announcement that only funds for the Northern Territory housing associations that are needed to meet their legal obligations will be provided until such time as a full review of the system which has been applied in recent times in relation to housing association has been made. However, there are problems like those at Tennant Creek where a great deal of money seems to have been expended and very little housing has been provided and fringe dwellers are continuing to be disadvantaged. This matter is being investigated by the department at the moment and perhaps I might be able to give some further advice later.

1156 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

What level of wages and salaries was incurred by the North Australia Railway last year and of that amount what savings will be made by retrenchments with the closure of the line?

ANSWER

I would ask him to place that question on notice.

1157 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

Complaints have been received about trail bike riding from citizens in my electorate around the Ludmilla area and I ask a series of questions. Under what section of the ordinance can the police act? Does the ordinance need strengthening? Is it a manpower problem? What is the solution?

ANSWER

The area under question is under the control of the Aboriginal Land Council and as such is private property. No power is conferred on the police force to enter upon private property under these circumstances to prevent such a nuisance. There is no particular ordinance, however, I believe that legislation concerning trail bike riding is under some consideration by the Majority Party. It is not a manpower problem; it is really a legal problem. I am advised by the police that the solution is for the Legislative Assembly to determine the official attitude to trail bikes on private and unalienated Crown land and pass appropriate legislation if necessary.

1158 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Has he seen press reports recently, that health ministers are to consider the introduction of limitation of smoking in restaurants at the next meeting of state health ministers in Adelaide? Will the Executive Member be attending that meeting and what attitude will he adopt?

ANSWER

I did read that article actually and I have not got a smoker's cough as I am a non smoker. Hopefully, I will be attending and the attitude I will be taking will be one of reason. I do appreciate the fact that some people do appreciate having a smoke after or during their meal and those pleasures should be perhaps enjoyed by those persons. However, as a non smoker and as a large section of the community are non smokers, I feel that frequently smokers in restaurants and other places show a general lack of consideration for persons who do not smoke. Perhaps there is some need for smokers in restaurants to give more consideration to non smokers.

1159 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Are there any commercial development proposals being considered by the DRC at the moment for Casuarina?

ANSWER

I am aware that the staff at the DRC are currently looking at the planning proposals for the Casuarina area and they do include commercial developments. I believe the paper on this matter will be coming before the next meeting of the DRC.

1160 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

What steps has he been taking in the last few days to ensure that people being displaced from their work by the closure of the NAR are going to be found work in Darwin or at least in the Northern

Territory? Can he let us have any further information as to the future of the ANL shipping fun from the east coast to Darwin and what is happening about the early implementation of the next 3 year road program for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

During the discussions that I had with the Minister for Transport last Friday, I did stress the need for urgent consideration that people displaced by the decision should be given every assistance to find suitable employment within the public service for those who wish to stay in the Northern Territory. I might add that they have been offered jobs south - that was an undertaking that the Minister made - but I pointed out to him that many of these people are long-term Territory residents and as such have no interest whatsoever in getting a job in Port Augusta. I feel that he has recognised this need and he assured me last night that he was looking into this matter quite seriously and I am hopeful that he can come up with a solution to the problem. I have been having discussions with the unions concerned and I will be sending a telegram to the Minister putting forward areas that the unions feel are important with regard to replacement, housing, possible compensation for people who have to move elsewhere etc. They will also look at the problem of long service leave whereby they may come up with a pro rata settlement for people who wish to leave the public service.

With regard to ANL, we have possibly deferred a decision. The Minister has asked ANL to review the situation. The loss last year was something like $13m or perhaps that is their expected loss this year. He has asked them to have a look at the situation and he was going to possibly make a decision based on what they told him. He was under the impression that we do not utilise fully the Darwin Trader. I made it quite clear to him that I believe that he was getting wrong advice on that matter because to my knowledge the Darwin Trader, if it has not been fully utilised over the last 12 months, has almost been fully utilised. It is a fact that the next Darwin Trader due in is full and, in fact, freight has been refused because the ship can take no more loading.

The Minister took this information coupled with the fact that we are losing the railway. I pointed out that there was no chance of having a satisfactory road system without some supplementary transport from the sea. I feel that I have impressed upon the Minister the need to retain that service. I also mentioned that, in view of the fact that the road would be used more with the railway being closed, it is about time that the Government made a decision to implement the second 3 year road program and get rid of the problems of which we are all too well aware - Newcastle Creek, Alice Springs hills, Adelaide River, Pine Creek etc. In view of their decision, they must quickly implement this road program. He agreed that that was important and he was going to look at that. He did make the point that it is not his responsibility to look after the roads in the Northern Territory and that it was the Minister for the Northern Territory's job. I agreed with him but I pointed out that he, as a Cabinet Minister, could possibly influence decisions in the Cabinet. I also spoke to the Minister for the Northern Territory last night and mentioned the same points to him regarding loss of jobs and the 3 year road program. I am quite sure that they are well aware of the serious effect that the

decision to close the railway has caused; I am hopeful that they will be able to act upon it and keep the hardship that may be suffered by people affected by the closure down to a minimum.

1161 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK -

I refer to his statement in this Chamber when he introduced the Radiographers Bill relating to the use of x-ray equipment by chiropractors and ask him whether the statement he made then had the support of the Director of Health? I also ask him if he will obtain and table in this Assembly, before the bill is further considered, a statement of the conditions which the Director of Health would impose under clause 19(2) of the bill?

ANSWER

I am not quite sure which section the honourable member is referring to but I feel that the sections which he is referring to are sections which have been initiated through the Majority Party and not by the Department of Health. I will get from the Director of Health his opinion and considerations and endeavour to have them tabled.

1162 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

In view of the fact that the northern rail track is reported to be in poor condition, is there any move to keep the roadmaster and necessary personnel and gangs engaged to put the track into good order and to maintain it in good order during the period that the railway is not functioning?

ANSWER

Because we have been concentrating, up until now anyhow, on trying to convince the Government that it would be better to keep the railway open, I have not made any inquiries as to what their plans are for the maintenance of the railway. The statement made by the Minister was that they were not closing it but it had been "mothballed", and quite obviously that is a fact that some form of maintenance would have to be kept up so that the rail would be in a satisfactory condition to open should the need arise in the future. I assume that the department would be making some announcement about this part of the operation, but I will make inquiries of the Minister to find out what plans they do have for the maintenance of the facilities.

1163 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

When will the children's creche be ready for operation at the Gove Hospital and will this centre be staffed? If so, will the staff be full time employees?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

1164 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

Are metal producers within the Northern Territory subject to price control by the Prices Justification Tribunal? If so, why? And do these controls apply to exports?

ANSWER

I have a part answer to the question. I will endeavour to get the complete answer and reply some time today.

1165 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he answer a question concerning a caravan park site auctioned at Borroloola 2 years ago and which has not been developed? Will it be forfeited or another site made available by auction?

ANSWER

Some information was provided with regard to the caravan site and the conditions of lease that were taken up at auction to yourself, Mr Speaker, some months ago. That position has not altered. I have sought in recent days information from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to ascertain what the wishes of the community that took up the lease at that auction are, and what their initial proposals are. As soon as this information is available, I will pass it on.

1166 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

I am aware that he is intending to ask for a Royal Commission into transport problems in the Territory. Has he had an indication from the Australian Government or any of its Ministers as to whether this will be agreed to by them?

ANSWER

No, I have not had an indication from any members of the Federal Government as to whether or not a Royal Commission would be acceptable.

1167 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

The Prime Minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser, has stated that there will be a conference for state and federal ministers to discuss the new hospital arrangements under Medibank. Has the Executive Member for Social Affairs been invited to attend the conference on June 11?

ANSWER

Yes, I have been invited by the Victorian Minister for Health to attend the meeting in Melbourne next Friday. It is a meeting initiated by him. I was also invited to attend a meeting today in Melbourne of departmental heads as a preliminary to next week's meeting, but unfortunately as the Assembly is sitting I am unable to attend.

1168 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS -

My question is asked on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is it economic for buffalo meat to be sold for 23 cents per pound in Adelaide and why should there not be a profitable trade in beef at 75 cents per pound in the United States?

ANSWER

I do not know that 23 cents per pound for buffalo beef in Adelaide is in fact the price but I would imagine at 23 cents per pound buffalo beef should be profitable, bearing in mind that buffalo beef is sold for two distinct purposes. The question did not indicate which use we are talking about; it is sold both as pet food and also for human consumption. I do understand also that an even higher price range has been offered for buffalo beef in Australia this year and is being taken advantage of by several operators for export overseas to both north America and Europe as game food. In that regard, it is

in the same classification as deer meat which is exported regularly and annually from New Zealand to European and other markets. It commands a premium price because of the fact that it has the label of game attached to it. Logically, we might argue that being game and being field killed is a disadvantage rather than an advantage but that is a consumer preference over which we have no influence.

As far as the market price for beef in America is concerned, I believe I have already answered that question earlier in this session. I referred to the effect of international market and trade situations on the price of normal export beef in Australia. I do not think I have anything further to add to that answer.

1169 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

On 17 June 1975 the honourable member tabled a paper entitled "The Katherine Project 1969-73" which was programmed to adapt the schooling process in the interests of Aboriginal students in Northern Territory schools. Could she advise me what benefit this report has had?

ANSWER

I do recall tabling that paper and in fact I am very familiar with the Katherine project having worked very closely to it for a period of time. However, I request that the question be placed on notice because the answer requires some degree of research.

1170 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

Are there any plans at this stage by the owners of the Warrego smelter to re-open the smelting plant and, if so, when?

ANSWER

In reply I would offer the information that was published by the board of directors of Peko Mines in the last 2 weeks. The directors have assessed the possibility of entering the international copper market again with the product of blister copper and they anticipate that if the continued price rises in copper continue at the present rate for the next 24 months, they will be able to get back into the market in July 1978. However, before the smelter and the mining of copper can begin, the company will be committed to 21 months work and modification on the smelter at a total cost of some $7.8m. To go ahead with these plans, the company will have to decide in the next 3 months whether it wishes to enter the market again in July 1978 so that the modifications can be completed by that time.

1171 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

When will the mothers' home in Tiwi be opened?

ANSWER

I cannot tell the honourable member when it will be opened. This matter was raised some time ago and there were some structural problems in relation to the handover of the building which was originally commissioned by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. In the latter times, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs decided it did not require the building and would hand the building over to the Department of Health. The latest situation is that the

Department of Health has decided that they do not want the building and it will go back to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. I am still pursuing the matter.

1172 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns about 100 houses of a prefabricated type of construction which are being constructed around the town for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I understand about 20 of these houses have been completed and a number of them have been offered to public servants as accommodation and have been turned down. I understand also that it is possible that these houses, being unacceptable to pulic servants, may be offered to the Housing Commission. If the houses are unacceptable to the Housing Commission as well, what is to be their fate?

ANSWER

I assume the honourable member is referring to the 100 homes being built for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission by the Department of Construction's day labour team. I also have heard that public servants are opting for the more desirable, more expensive and larger homes coming from the other contracts arranged by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. This is an internal matter within the Department of the Northern Territory with regard to the housing allocation, and people do have an option open to them. It may be rather interesting to see when a different form of rental is charged or if the Government's home sale scheme is re-introduced, whether those same public servants will opt for the more ivory castle type of home. It will be interesting to see if they then perhaps elect to take a home which costs less and therefore is not of the same standard as in some of the other contracts.

I am aware that initial discussions have taken place with the Housing Commission to see if the Northern Territory Housing Commission is interested in having a number of these homes added to their stock of homes available. I do not know what action the Housing Commission is proposing. I would feel that they ought to ask for a fairer spread of the market just as the public servants are doing.

1173 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

In Katherine, there are 14 adults with 16 dependent children who have been in Katherine for 18 months and who have recently been advised - these are public servants - that the date of their priority has nothing to do with their appointments as permanent public servants to the public service but to their arrival in Katherine. They have just been advised that in fact they are not considered to be on the Katherine staff. They are still considered to be attached to Darwin which is a long way to travel to and fro from work. I ask the honourable member what is the present situation regarding these people; are they to be housed in Katherine and on what priority?

ANSWER

After the cyclone, a number of staff were sent to Katherine to alleviate the housing problems in Darwin. They were told that they would be there for at least 12 months, with the promise that at the end of that period they would have the option of remaining there indefinitely or returning to Darwin as soon as accommodation became available. Location of some staff permanently in Katherine had been un-

der consideration for several years, an inhibiting factor earlier being the shortage of housing in Katherine. After 12 months the sitation was reviewed and staff had by then decided whether to remain or return to Darwin. The staff positions are regarded by the branch as very suitable for permanent transfer to Katherine and a formal request for this has just been made. In addition, a request has been made to transfer the position of an Engineer Class 2 to Katherine to manage the group and carry out the functions of a district engineer. He has also requested a house. After being on the housing list for some months and under every expectation of obtaining houses from the first allocation to be made, the first 5 officers were told by the District Officer late on Friday 28 May that they had been removed from the list by the Establishments Branch in Brisbane. They were also told that 20 houses were to be allocated from the 18 June, that there would be no more houses for 2 years, and that there would be no more meetings of the IDC before the 18 June. However, following the representations of the member for Elsey and myself to the department, this matter has been reviewed - it has been a matter of a series of quick phone calls between Darwin and Brisbane - and I am pleased to advise that while no houses will be allocated before 25 June, by that date the Water Resources staff should be back on the list.

1174 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise whether quality of ABC TV reception is affected by ABC economies with the micro-wave link?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

1175 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise me if there are plans on hand for expanding the strength of the Stock Squad which I understand is a one-man squad at present, it may be doubled, and does he know how the squad is currently engaged?

ANSWER

I did answer a question from the honourable member for Arnhem last week on this which indicated that a member of the Stock Squad who has been on other duties, desk duties, because of physical incapacity had returned to his normal duties in the Stock Squad. Just what those duties are, I am not too sure - we do not see a great deal of evidence of the Stock Squad operating out of Darwin. Previously they have indicated that because of the shortage of staff they were to operate essentially in response to complaints from the public rather than on a general patrol type of basis. I believe that would still be the arrangement. However, the honourable member will be aware of a notice on the notice paper concerning the strength of the Police Force, and I imagine that the question of the establishment of various sections, including the Stock Squad, may be canvassed there and that the Executive Member for Education and Law may have some information that she can pass on to the honourable member for Arnhem.

1176 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

Does the Government intend to introduce off-peak electricity charges?

ANSWER

I know of no proposal to introduce off-peak electricity charges in the Northern Territory at this time. I think this question may have arisen as a result of a recent advertisement on television in Darwin whereby a hot water system is being advertised as advising customers that they can save considerable money on off-peak electricity rates. I would suspect that the advertisement does in actual fact represent misleading advertising and, as such, I will bring the matter to the attention of the Consumers Protection Council.

1177 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN -

Edmund Road opposite Skewes' store at Humpty Doo needs rebuilding. Could he advise when the work will start?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1178 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Would she table in this Assembly a detailed and accurate statement of the reduction of expenditure in operational areas of education in the 1975-76 year?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to do so.

1179 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

What plans or projects are at present in hand for the export of live cattle from Darwin?

ANSWER

I cannot give the honourable member any precise information. I ask the honourable member, if he intends to ask a question without notice where it is necessary for any Executive Member to obtain information from another place, he should at least give some indication if he wishes to get the question answered at the sitting. I ask him to place the question on notice.

1180 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON -

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. As the Borroloola Inn is reverting to a general store and withdrawing its shower and toilet facilities from public use, will the Government provide toilet and shower for the public?

ANSWER

I have heard that the Borroloola Store is intending to cancel or withdraw its innkeeper's licence. If it does, the owner will not be obliged any longer to provide shower and toilet facilities that the public can use. I am not aware of any proposals by the Government to build public conveniences in Borroloola at this stage, and I do not know if any representations have been made to the Government on this line, suggesting that the Government should build them. Until such time as some proposal is put forward, I cannot supply any

further information as to a date that such facilities might be constructed.

1181 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON -

My question concerns street lighting at a point in his electorate. Previously I have asked about this position and since asking I find that magnificent lights have been erected nearby at the weighbridge at Winnellie, at Showgrounds Road. But can he tell me when lights will be placed at the entrance of Farrell Crescent which is used by hundreds of people?

ANSWER

The problem in regard to lights at Farrell Crescent has been one that has bothered me for some considerable time. I am running out of things that I can do to impress upon the transport planning people exactly how serious the matter is as far as a light at the corner of Farrell Crescent is concerned. It is a situation a few miles out of Darwin along the highway where there are no particular significant land points, and when one is travelling at night it is very difficult to pick up the corner of Farrell Crescent. It is an area used by quite a lot of people; there is the caravan park nearby and caravan park people are often fairly new to town and are not completely familiar with the area and it has caused a great deal of near misses and quite a few serious accidents on that corner. I have repeatedly asked the Government to have this light installed there to illuminate the intersection and, whilst promises have been made continually, absolutely nothing appears to have been done. As the honourable member for Arnhem has said, the public weighbridge has a beautiful set of lights but it is very rarely if ever used at night. The Showground Road has a lovely light over it as well and it is used once a year for about 4 days. But the one that is nearby that is used constantly by many residents has just been ignored it appears.

1182 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

He has told us that the Katherine people have been reinstated on the housing list. My question is what is their date of priority? Is it their arrival in Katherine, their appointment to the Commonwealth Public Service or the date the decision to reinstate them was made?

ANSWER

My understanding is that people on the housing list have a priority established from the day they first establish that priority in the Northern Territory. I will check that this is the case for those people that are now being relocated in Katherine.

1183 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): The honourable member for Tiwi asked what the police were doing about the hooligans terrorising people at Knuckeys Lagoon and the Railway Dam. I am advised by the Police Department that there has been no disturbances reported at either locality since October 1975. The last disturbance reported at Railway Dam was on 17 July 1975 and the last disturbance at Knuckeys Lagoon on 2 October last year. Police patrols cover both areas I am assured in the normal course of their patrol duties.

1184 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

I have been coming over to Darwin for a number of months now and during that time I have noticed that Blocks 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 have shocking surroundings. Would he find out if there is any move afoot to restore the sprinkler system and to beautify these buildings by grassing and planting of trees? If that move is afoot, when will it commence?

ANSWER

I am aware of proposals to totally reinstate and restore the blocks mentioned by the honourable member and the surrounds. I do not know the specific date of commencement; I have seen figures which would indicate that the major expenditure on this item will take place in the next financial year, 1976-77. I will pursue these specific issues raised.

1185 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK -

When was the last meeting of the Child Welfare Council held and what decisions have been made in regard to the continued operation of the council and by whom?

ANSWER

I am not sure when the last meeting of the Child Welfare Council was held but it was approximately 18 months ago. The council would not meet because at that stage there was a lack of a quorum and consideration of appointments was deferred. The whole matter of the council is being reviewed by the Department of the Northern Territory Social Development Branch with a view to providing a better child care service for the whole community. This work is proceeding at the moment and I am hopeful that in the near future something to the advantage of all will come forward.

1186 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

I noticed that a number of tenders are out for the taking of buffalo off Crown land. In section 22 of the tender form, there is a matter of the disposal of offal; it is to be burned or buried on site of the kill or alternatively disposed of somewhere. This is way out bush, I would presume. Can he inform me whether at the time of the shooting of the 3,000 buffalo on Woolwonga, the department concerned buried or burned all the animals and what action does the AIB or other department take to dispose of the bodies of the hundreds of buffaloes that are bogged at the end of each dry season?

ANSWER

The reduction in strength of buffaloes on the Woolwonga Reserve was after my time and I am not familiar with the details of disposal of carcasses or offal there. As far as I am aware, there are no special measures taken to dispose of animals which die naturally through bogging and malnutrition on the coastal plains region at the end of our dry seasons.

1189 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: I seek leave to have incorporated in Hansard an answer to a question asked of me yesterday by the honourable member for

Nightcliff with regard to structural upgrading of reconstruction works. She did refer to this answer in the adjournment debate yesterday.

Leave granted.

*The Building Manual requires that, where a residence is more than 50 per cent damaged, the whole structure will be brought up to cyclone resistant standards. Where the damage is less than 50 per cent, the manual requires that the new work is according to the requirements of the code, i.e. to cyclone resistant standards, and the balance of the residence requires no further upgrading work. However, the commission advises the private sector as to how it can upgrade the remaining 50 per cent at no great expense.*

*The type of advice that will be given to the private sector will, in fact, be carried out in the public sector, i.e. where a house is damaged and in the opinion of engineers needs some structural upgrading, this will happen.*

*There has been in the past a program of waterproofing and tidying up of government residences as a stage 1, which was to be followed by later upgrading. However, approximately a month ago the department was directed to carry out the restoration and upgrading of residences in one stage in lieu of two. The commission is aware that this direction has in some instances not been carried through and the commission has acquired the services of a structural engineer to ensure that this work is carried out.*

*In essence the General Manager believes that the Government must do to its own homes those things it advises the private sector to carry out.*

*At the last Darwin Citizens' Council meeting, a question was asked of the General Manager, similar to the above, in respect of defence homes and the council was given the assurance that those homes will also be structurally upgraded.*

1190 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH (by leave): I was asked yesterday whether the activities of mineral exporters in the Northern Territory were subject to the provisions of the Prices Justification Tribunal and the information I have received is that the three exporters in the Northern Territory, Peko, Nabalco and Gemco are not cotrolled by the Prices Justification Tribunal because their prices are set by the department controlling exports in Canberra. However, while Gemco has both internal and external activities, the internal activities are subject to the control of the Prices Justification Tribunal, and the tribunal watches very carefully that Gemco does not rip off its parent company BHP. In relation to its export activities, it is encouraged to rip off as many people as it can as often as it can.

1191 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): This concerns the date of the next Rural Roads Conference. Honourable members are anticipating that I might have good news for them, however, the department has been unable to set a date for the next Rural Roads Conference. They had hoped it could possibly be held in July but the have not been able to prepare anything for July so at the moment the next Rural Roads Conference is up in the air.

# INDEX TO QUESTIONS

1 June 1976 - 3 June 1976


ABC, micro-wave link (Vale) 1174
Aboriginal advisory body (Kentish) 1135
Aborigines, infant mortality (Kentish) 1149
Alice Springs, Stuart Highway reconstruction (Vale) 1128
ANL, future of "Darwin Trader" (Everingham) 1160
Atomic Energy Commission, activities in NT (Vale) 1126
Ayers Rock Advisory Committee (Everingham) 1129
Borroloola -
  caravan park site (Vale) 1165
  public toilets (Vale) 1180
Buffalo meat (Manuell) 1168
Buffaloes, disposal of carcases (Kentish) 1186
Casuarina, DRC proposals (Dondas) 1159
Cattle export (Kentish) 1179
Cattle industry (Withnall) 1130; (Manuell) 1140
Child Welfare Council (Robertson) 1185
Central Australian Racing Club, lease (Vale) 1143
Commonwealth Police Force, conditions of service (Robertson) 1131
Darwin airport, repairs (Kentish) 1134
Doctors' salaries (Ballantyne) 1151
DRC houses, rejection by public servants (Everingham) 1172
Edmund Road, Humpty Doo (Tungutalum) 1177
Education, expenditure 1975-76 (Lawrie) 1138, 1178
Electricity charges, off-peak rates (Dondas) 1176
Farrell Crescent, lights (Kentish) 1181
Freight, government goods (Lawrie) 1123
Gove -
  police boats (Ballantyne) 1133
  maintenance of government houses (Ballantyne) 1144
  creche at hospital (Ballantyne) 1163
Government buildings, landscaping (Ballantyne) 1184
Government housing, restoration (Lawrie) 1145, 1189
Katherine meatworks (Manuell) 1140; (Steele) 1141
"Katherine Project 1969-73" (Lawrie) 1169
Katherine, government housing policy (Lawrie) 1173, 1182
Knuckeys Lagoon, terrorising (Tungutalum) 1146, 1183
Local government, deferrals (Vale) 1125
Ludmilla, trail bikes (Steele) 1157
Ludmilla School, half yearly intake (Steele) 1154
McArthur River, mining development (Vale) 1148
Medibank, conference on hospital arrangements (Dondas) 1167
Member for Elsey, suggested resignation (Steele) 1142
Metal products, price control (Manuell) 1164, 1190
Native and Historical Objects and Areas Preservation Bill (Lawrie) 1153
Nightcliff Community Health Centre (Dondas) 1150
North Australia Railway -
  closure (Lawrie) 1124, 1132
  loss in 1975 (Manuell) 1147
  wage costs (Manuell) 1156
  alternative employment (Everingham) 1160
  maintenance (Kentish) 1162
Prison facilities for females (Lawrie) 1136
Radiographers Bill, chiropractors (Withnall) 1161
Road program (Everingham) 1160
Regional Council of Social Development (Kentish) 1127
Rural Roads Conference (Vale) 1191
Secretary, Department of NT (Lawrie) 1137
Smoking in restaurants (Dondas) 1158
Stock Squad, expansion (Kentish) 1175
Taxi meters in Katherine (Vale) 1152
Tiwi Mothers and Babies Home (Dondas) 1171
Transport needs in NT (Everingham) 1139; (Lawrie) 1166
Warramunga Pabulu Housing Association, assistance (Vale) 1155
Warrego, re-opening of smelter (Manuell) 1170

PART II

# THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

1120A Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

1. Is the honourable Member aware that the Australian National Railway will not offer new leases in the Alice Springs Rail reserve for commercial purposes pending their decision as to the location of the new railway reserve and associated commercial sidings; and is he further aware that when this decision has been made the site will be subject to an environmental impact study?

2. Does he concede that this whole project may take 10 years to complete and, if so, would he ask the Australian National Railway Commissioner to offer alternatives to the present negative attitude to permit some badly needed commercial growth in Alice Springs now and within the next 10 years?

ANSWER

1. In 1974 Messrs. Ashton & Wilson, Transportation and Urban Planners were commissioned to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on four proposed sites for standard gauge rail terminal facilities at Alice Springs. The scope of the statement followed guidelines recommended by the Department of Environment and Conservation. The Consultants report was released for public comment on 31.7.75 and interested parties were required to submit their comments in writing to the Department of Environment and Conservation, Canberra, by 1.9.75. Consideration of the replies by the Department of Environment, Housing and Community Development and related investigations are still proceeding. Until finality is reached on the question of terminal location, which is expected in six months, Australian National Railways are not entering into any new lease arrangements in the Alice Springs area.

2. The original construction plan provided for the Tarcoola-Alice Springs Railway to be substantially completed within five years of commencing earthworks. The actual period of construction could be extended as a result of the Government's policy of restricted capital expenditure and its appointment of a Review Committee to examine the construction standards and costs of this project.

1121 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

In view of the fact that the ABC is to be subjected to cutbacks and within the NT this may be reflected by demands to rationalise radio programmes would he be prepared to recommend that the programme "Col Chuck Chunder" be removed from broadcast programmes?

ANSWER

No. I do not believe that I am competent to determine the relative merits of particular ABC programmes, nor do I believe that other members of the Legislative Assembly have this competence. It is also my belief that personal prejudices should not replace objective assesment.

1122 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

1. What was the cost 1974-75 and 1975-76 of the re-sleepering programme for the North Australian Railways?

2. What was the cost of post-Cyclone Tracy benefits to employees of the North Australia Railways including R & R fares, R & R paid leave,

hard living allowances, lost time whilst on railway pay, but not in productive work for the North Australian Railways?

3. What is the cost to date of post-Cyclone Tracy repair work for the North Australia Railways?

ANSWER

1. North Australia Railway re-sleepering expenditure:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1974/75 | $435,000 |
| 1975/76 | $190,000 |

2. Post cyclone Tracy payments to North Australia Railway employees for rest and recreation leave, fares, hard living allowances etc. $152,000.

3. Post cyclone Tracy repair costs $449,000.

1192 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

REGIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Can he advise me from where comes the funding of this Council and the annual amount fo such funds?

2. What are the names of the current offices of the Regional Council of Social Development?

ANSWER

1. Funding for Regional Council of Social Development is by allocation of funds by the Australian Government and is administered by the Department of Social Security.

   Each Regional Council receives $40,000 per annum for social planning and administrative costs and to enable the Council to provide welfare information within the region.

   Council also receives $12,000 per annum for the employment of a Community Development Officer, but this may be varied.

2. The current officers of the Regional Council for Social Development:

| | |
|---|---|
| Senator Robertson, | Chairman |
| Mrs. N. Polishuk, | Secretary |
| Mr. J. Lawrie, | Treasurer |

1193 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

1. Is there a maintenance program operating for the Commonwealth houses at Nhulunbuy and if not, will a plan be implemented in the near future?

2. Will he seek to have all the houses fitted with air conditioning units in this year's budget appropriation?

ANSWER

1. There is a cyclical maintenance program operating at Nhulunbuy. It

is expected that $7,000 will be available for 1976/77. Urgent minor maintenance funds are also available.

2. It is not intended as a general rule that Departmental dwellings at Nhulunbuy be airconditioned. They are fitted with ceiling fans and the window treatment permits good ventilation.

1195 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

Out of the $2.5m loss recorded by the North Australia Railway last financial year, what was the amount of money spent specifically on reconstruction necessitated by cyclone damage?

ANSWER

No actual reconstruction work carried out. Efforts were directed towards the repair of damaged buildings to render them habitable and to enable staff to resume normal living and working conditions. The costs involved are reflected in the answer to question no. 1122(3).

1196 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

What funds were expended on salaries and wages by the North Australia Railway in the 1975-76 financial year and what savings will result from retrenchment of staff and employees with the suspension of the railway's operations?

ANSWER

1. North Australia salary and wages expenditure in -

1975/76 $2,100,000.

2. Estimated salary and wages savings to the North Australia Railway section in 1976/77 following cessation of rail traffic is $1 million.

1200 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS -

Mr Isaacs said on radio yesterday that executive mebers attended conferences at the taxpayers' expense for little or no return to the Territory. Perhaps the Majority Leader could answer that?

ANSWER

I presume that the spokesman for the ALP was referring to Commonwealth and state ministers councils which executive members of this Assembly have been attending for the past 12 months. I regard the attendance of our executive members at these councils as the most important development in our progress towards greater political responsibility for the Northern Territory. It is at these meetings that policies are made for the whole of Australia and individual regions.

I was at two such meetings last week. One was the Australian Agricultural Council. There was a move made by the states at that Australian Agricultural Council meeting to impose a complete baggage search for passengers leaving the Darwin Airport as part of a program to control the spread of fruit fly in Australia. The proposal was not based on logical local knowledge and I successfully averted it. At a subsequent meeting of the environment ministers held late last week, there was a proposal that other parts of Australia including the Northern Territory should follow the lead that New South Wales and Victoria have given in bringing regulations to reduce the lead content of petrol. This matter is causing concern in inner city areas in Sydney and Melbourne. The effect of bringing in such regulations in the Territory would have been to increase the price of petrol to the consumer of several cents a gallon and it would have achieved no useful purpose at this time as far as environmental control was concerned. By argument at that meeting, I was able to avert that imposition on Territory people at this time.

I am sure that other Executive Members could illustrate the value to Territorians of their participation in these councils and I regard it as a break through. At the last council, I actually attended in the place of the Minister for the Northern Territory and that is the first time that that has been achieved.

1201 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware of the report in the Adelaide Advertiser of Wednesday 4 August which suggested possible deferral of the continuing works on the Tarcoola to Alice Springs standard guage railway link? Can he say whether the Federal Minister for Transport has indicated to him the Government's intention to continue with planned works?

ANSWER

I did not see the particular article mentioned by the member for Alice Springs. However, I had sent a telegram to the Minister for Transport as a result of the rumours which have been bandied around the town. In his answer, he said "A review into construction standards and cost of this project announced by the Treasurer late in May is nearing completion. In the meantime, work is continuing on the project and a major contract was recently let for construction of earth works, bridges and culverts from Robin Rise to Mahler Bore. It is not intended to stop work on the project and no decision to slow down the work has been made.

1202 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he in a position to state clearly the position with the Home Finance Trustee?

ANSWER

Members will be aware that over the past 2 days the Minister for the Northern Territory has been in Darwin reviewing the situation that has received considerable press comment over the last 2 weeks. The Minister has issued a statement this morning, and I feel it would clarify the position best if I read that statement:

*The Minister for the Northern Territory, Mr Evan Adermann, held talks over the past two days with the Master Builders Association, the Chamber of Industries and Northern Territory representatives of Darwin bankers. These talks were arranged by the Northern Territory Executive Member for Finance and Community Development, Mr Grant Tambling. The Minister also had separate talks with the Chairman of the Reconstruction Commission, the Chairman of the Northern Territory Housing Commission and the Home Finance Trustee. The Minister also met with representatives of the ACOA at their request.*

*Mr Adermann said that a variety of issues were canvassed in the course of the talks but the single main matter was the Home Finance Trustee concessional home loan scheme. The Minister said this scheme obviously enjoyed the full support of the Federal Government, the Legislative Assembly and all sections of the Darwin community. Mr Adermann explained that his recent press statement on this subject was designed to draw attention to the appropriation provision of $11.5m for 1976/77 an increase in excess of 26% over the expenditure of last year. He also indicated that, if present trends continue, this cash allocation would be exceeded and he had instructed his department to prepare, as a matter of urgency, proposals which would achieve the most equitable distribution of available funds for Northern Territory housing. Moreover, the statement also reiterated the Government's clear commitment that the scheme would continue and eligible borrowers could utilise funds advanced under the scheme at any time up to 31 December 1980.*

*If additional funds were wanted to finance the home loan scheme this financial year there would need to be some redistribution of the total funds allocation for the reconstruction of Darwin. In the course of the talks this week, it was made quite clear that the Government's complete integrity in its statement that the highest priority would continue to be given to the reconstruction of Darwin was very evident in the provision of $172.2m an increase of $39m or 30% over actual expenditure last year.*

*Additional assistance provided to the Northern Territory's hard pressed beef industry, the needs of the ailing tourist industry, and the urgency of civil work outside Darwin meant that no money could be taken from those other areas of the Territory.*

*Answering his critics Mr Adermann said that any reallocation could not be responsibly done after only one month of the financial year had elapsed and most of the funds were untouched. Additionally, not until all applications were received by 31 December this year, could anyone assess the final cash requirement of the fund this year and for subsequent years. This will provide reliable statistics on which decisions could be taken and these would be taken well before cash*

*funds were depleted. Then and only then could he be satisfied that it would be most equitable to undertake some redistribution of funds giving full consideration to the whole range in each sector of housing requirements in Darwin.*

*Mr Adermann said that the situation would be kept under close review and, if events required some adjustment of existing cash appropriations, this would be done quickly and and announced publicly. The Minister said he welcomed the opportunity to meet with so many representatives of the local community and he found the exchange of views both rewarding and stimulating. Some positive suggestions were advanced and he was prepared to consider these carefully and, if necessary, discuss them with his ministerial colleagues in Canberra.*

I can only say that, in the talks in which I participated, I found the Minister most cooperative and receptive to the submissions made by politicians and by the community leaders. I am confident that the statement he has now made stresses the point quite adequately that there will be redistribution if necessary between the public and private sectors in Darwin and that therefore the confidence should be restored fully to those people who feel they are still under threat.

1203 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware of the form of inquiry into the Northern Territory transport needs being undertaken by the Bureau of Transport Economics and does he agree that this inquiry is a satisfactory alternative to the Royal Commission requested by this Assembly?

ANSWER

I have been in touch with the Department of Transport on this matter and I am waiting further information from them at which time I expect to make a statement to the House.

1204 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he confirm that the sewer line in Doctors Gully is and has been for some time broken just beyond the low tide marks so that raw sewage is discharged a matter of feet from the edge of the water at low spring tides? If he can confirm the facts, what steps have been and will be taken to avert the threat to health which is posed by this situation?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to confirm the information sought by the Honourable Member. I would ask that he place the question on notice to the Executive Member for Municipal and Consumer Affairs.

1205 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN -

Is there any truth in the rumour that the bus services in the Darwin area are to be curtailed?

ANSWER

I was in touch with the Department of the Northern Territory concerning bus services several days ago on a matter relating to another area. I have arranged to have discussions with them. At this stage no decis-

ion has been made to curtail any of the bus services in the Darwin area. I will be discussing these matters with the department, bearin mind that the Darwin bus services do run at a rather large deficit. I do not expect any decision will be made without thorough discussions between the parties concerned.

1206 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

I address my question without notice to the honourable member for Finance and Community Development in his capacity as a member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

I have a letter from the Minister for the Northern Territory dated 19 May 1976 stating clearly and unequivocally that the 2 facilities to be provided for juvenile delinquents are on the works program for 1976-77 and that they should be available in 1978. Can the honourable member confirm that these 2 facilities are indeed on the works program for 1976-77?

ANSWER

The consideration with regard to the civil works program and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission will be announced publicly next Tuesday night in the annual budget. From my recollection of the preliminary budget talks of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, I am of the understanding that both facilities were on the estimates submitted at that time. I will pursue this matter further and make additional information available to the honourable member.

1207 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

Is it true that the Darwin Gun Club has been closed down for 3 months; what is the reason for the closure; and when can we expect the gun club to be reopened?

ANSWER

Whilst I normally would answer questions on the subject of sport and recreation, the honourable Majority Leader, because of his long association with the rifle club, which is the club to which I think the member for Ludmilla alludes, has been more directly involved in this issue.

Dr LETTS: The Darwin Rifle Club is suffering this problem. It is a matter, I believe, of some foolishness that from time to time the Army in Darwin, which has the responsibility for the rifle range, decides, when it has a change of personnel or something of this sort, that there are safety problems at the Darwin Rifle Club and seeks to bring about its closure. This is not the first time that this has happened; the club was closed about 4 years ago but only for a short period of 3 or 4 weeks until the Minister for the Army looked into it and satisfied himself that there was no substance in the complaint that the Army had made. It has been threatened on various other occasions during the past 10 or 15 years and now we are at the stage where, for some 3 or 4 months, the main range has been closed to shooting, depriving the public of Darwin of an important and constructive recreational facility. The reason appears to be that the Army requires some kind of a man-proof safety fence to be constructed around the range, this would make the situation quite different to anywhere else in Australia, there are virtually no rifle ranges that require a complete man-proof safety fence. There are safety pre-

cautions laid down and exercised by rifle clubs which adequately prevent accidents from happening. The Darwin Rifle Club has been very assiduous in observing these procedures and, of course, has had an accident-free record over the past 20 years or so. I believe that the step taken by the Army locally was extreme; I have made representations to the Minister for Defence and the Minister for the Northern Territory. I hope that the situation can be corrected in the near future.

1208 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK -

Has the Department of Health taken counts of E coli at various points in the Darwin Harbour during the last 12 months and, if so will he have the results of such counts over the last 12 months tabled in this Assembly?

ANSWER

Yes, I understand that the Department of Health has these counts taken at various places within the Darwin Harbour and I will endeavour to have the information made available for him.

1209 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

What has happened to the proposal the Northern Territory Housing Commission had to establish a permanent caravan park in Darwin to the value of $1.5m?

ANSWER

I am not acquainted with the statistical information that the honourable member for Casuarina obviously has. I am aware that the Northern Territory Housing Commission has requested a site for the establishment of a caravan park from the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I am also aware that the Darwin City Corporation has indicated a similar interest and that the Reconstruction Commission has invited interested public tenderers also to indicate development type proposals should several blocks at Leanyer, in Vanderlin Drive, be made available for the establishment of caravan parks. When those development proposals have been considered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, the Housing Commission's proposal will be considered at the same time.

1210 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

Can the honourable member inform me if Pidgin English, politely called Creole, is taught as the first language at some Northern Territory schools, and whether the disease is spreading?

ANSWER

I believe that Creole is taught at Bamyili. That is the only place in the Territory at the moment.

1211 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

A press report in yesterday's NT News concerning a conference held in Sydney on land rights states that this Assembly had opposed any form of land rights bill and that Country Party and National Party bodies in other states had supported this attitude. Is this report the true stance taken by this Assembly and the majority party?

ANSWER

No. The conference referred to in the NT News was an anonymous conference as far as the report was concerned; it did not say who organised it or sponsored it or was present at the conference, and I am not sure who was involved there. The statement is not true and it is an unwarranted slur on this legislature which was one of the first legislatures in Australia, going back to the days of the Legislative Council, to move by a committee and subsequently by legislation towards setting up Aboriginal land rights legislation, and in fact did set up such legislation as far back as 1968. We have repeatedly tried in the more recent times of this Assembly to get to the heart of what is the best form of land rights legislation for Aboriginals in the Northern Territory and are continuing to do so.

As far as the party in the Territory is concerned, there is a public document available - which I would be happy to send to the organisers of this conference if I am able to establish their identity - which states the policy quite clearly. It is that Aboriginal land tenure in the Northern Territory be granted under Territory legislation with the Federal Government bringing in complementary legislation to guarantee our laws, that land designated as reserved land - including Hermannsburg, Santa Teresa and Daly River leases - be declared as inalienable Aboriginal land under perpetual title, that Aboriginal landowners apply direct to the Government for the title to their land and receive a title to their land direct from Government, that a council be established, supported by advisers, to assist Aboriginal landholders on any matters on which they may require advice and assistance, that Aboriginal landholders may determine who may enter their land - and it goes on to develop the policy in some further detail. It is quite clear to all members of this Assembly that we have a very keen and continuing interest in seeing that Aboriginals do get land justice. We believe that this Assembly has a role to play in this matter and the policy of the majority party is consistent with that stand.

1212 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Is it a fact that public servants who were transferred to Brisbane after the cyclone have been placed on the housing list with the same priority point system as those public servants who have put up with crude and uncomfortable conditions in Darwin since the cyclone? Will he agree that the Government should recognise that the people who stayed deserve better treatment, and will he seek amendment of the points system to give them some priority over those who have enjoyed far better conditions in Brisbane for the last 20 months?

ANSWER

I am not sure whether the first part of the question is a fact and I will need to establish that first. I will inquire into the points raised by the honourable member in his question and provide a comprehensive answer later in these sittings.

1213 Mr MANUELL to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that the Australian Legal Aid Office in Alice Springs is openly competing with private solicitors in that town? Is it true that when the Australian Legal Aid Office commenced operation in Alice Springs the chief officer outlined to private practitioners that up to 50% of briefs received by that office were to be passed

to private practitioners? Is it a fact that this policy is now discontinued and the Australian Legal Aid Office is handling all its own briefs to the detriment of existing private practitioners in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I am not prepared to answer that question now. I will endeavour to find out facts and figures about the situation and report them later in the Assembly.

1214 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. At the last sittings I asked the honourable member when somebody would reach for the switch to turn the lights on for the cattle industry. Since then the Katherine meatworks has opened and the Minister has made an announcement that $600,000 carry-on finance has been made available. Can the honourable member say whether any of this money has actually reached the pockets of any cattlemen?

ANSWER

The short answer to the question, I believe, is no. But to leave it at that would not be a fair statement of the position. The Cattlemen's Association of North Australia, indeed the Northern Territory Cattle Producers' Council, put up a 4-point program to the Government earlier this year in which they sought the opening of the Katherine meatworks: they sought some assistance with freight, they sought additional money for carry-on finance and they sought some money for reconstruction funding. The first 3 of those points have in fact been dealt with by the Government. The meatworks has been opened. The question omitted to refer to the fact that a freight assistance scheme has been established for the Northern Territory and an additional sum for carry-on finance has been appropriated. Funds have been made available to producers from earlier appropriations in relation to that $600,000, the funds are available. There are a number of applications in hand from producers; 5 of these have already been approved and are in the final stages of the money being advanced. This should take place within the next week or so allowing for the fact that the final claims have to go down to Brisbane for cheques to be drawn and this sort of thing. But there is no problem other than the normal time taken to process an application in the Primary Producers Board to meet the requirements for carry-on finance. The money is there and available.

1215 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN -

The Executive Member is probably aware of the senseless slaughter and maiming of pedestrians taking place along the main thoroughfares around Darwin and I ask him if he would urgently exhort the Department of the Northern Territory to get stop lights established on the main thoroughfares, such as the Stuart Highway at Stuart Park the 2 pedestrian crossings on Bagot Road and the pedestrian crossing on Trower Road?

ANSWER

I agree wholeheartedly with the honourable member for Ludmilla. This particular problem has been raised by the Northern Territory Road Safety Council and in fact I brought the matter up at the last meet-

ing. I cannot say that the possibility of installing stop lights was received unanimously because I think we also must realise that the installation of lights can create havoc with the flow of traffic, and that is a serious problem on Bagot Road. Whilst I agree that something has to be done with the pedestrian crossings, whether it is practical to put in stop lights, I do not know, but the matter is being looked at and, hopefully, we can come up with a satisfactory solution.

1216 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

In view of the fact that the Government has some millions invested in the Katherine meatworks, would the terms of rationalisation between Northmeat, Northwest and the Government be made public?

ANSWER

I do not know whether it is possible to make public the terms of the agreement between Northwest, Northmeat and the Government. As the Government has a large stake, as the honourable member has said, in the future of the Katherine meatworks, I imagine that they would in a responsible way have had some conditions applying to the opening of the works. If that information is available, I will seek it and produce it in the Assembly during these sittings.

1217 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

This question concerns the subject I mentioned in the previous question to the Executive Member for Transport. Will it assist the problem of pedestrians being run over on main thoroughfares if there are police patrols at pedestrian crossings, and would there have to be an intake of more policemen to cater for this need?

ANSWER

The police are hampered in performing their duties as far as patrols are concerned, and certainly most other of their duties around the Territory, as a result of the ceilings which have been imposed. A new group of recruits will be going into their training in early September, but that is really only putting bandaids on the problem and certainly not solving it. Bagot Road would have more police cars going up and down it per day than probably any other road in Darwin because the Traffic Division is at Casuarina and there is general commuting between the northern suburbs and the central city area as a result of the day-to-day business by the patrols. I am certain that if the police could afford the luxury of a patrol per pedestrian crossing the number of deaths and injuries would drop, but unfortunately that is a bit of a pipe dream and the police are to be commended because they are doing their best at the moment.

1218 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

The Country Women's Association at Groote Eylandt and others have expressed concern at the lack of a full-time doctor in the community. What action is the Department of Health taking to remedy this situation?

ANSWER

The Department of Health is concerned about the absence of a full-time doctor at Groote Eylandt. There has been a bit of an impasse in

relation to the matter for some time. The situation has been advertised on a number of occasions but to date they have not been able to gain an applicant for the position. The recent increase in salaries may assist in recruiting somebody in the near future, but in the meantime a doctor at Gove is making regular visits to Groote Eylandt and of course the aerial medical plane at Gove can commute. There is a difficulty over flying at night time and this does cause some problems. It is the earnest desire of the Department of Health to have a full-time doctor at Groote Eylandt but a medical practitioner who is prepared to operate in isolation like that is not easy to find. Unfortunately, at the moment, the department is in a bit of a bind.

1219 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

My question concerns a proposal to purchase a Nomad aircraft for the Northern Territory Aero Medical Service. In view of the recent fatal air crash and other crashes concerning this Nomad aircraft will he use his position to seek a review of the decision to purchase this particular type of aircraft?

ANSWER

It is true that there has recently been a fatal air crash involving the Nomad aircraft. It would be improper of me to go into the ramifications of that because an inquiry is being conducted and the aircraft was on an experimental flight. The problem of replacement of the aerial medical planes is twofold in that the present Dove aircraft have been in service for a long time and have to be retired. The service will lose one of the aircraft in November and another one about April-May next year, depending on its flying hours. I believe 6 Nomad aircraft are to go into service in about November this year. At the moment, that program is firm. However, I have sought further information today and hopefully later in the sittings I might be able to tell the honourable member a little more.

1220 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

In view of the undertaking given by the Minister for the Northern Territory on taking office that his permanent head would reside in the Northern Territory, when is it expected that Mr Livingston will reside permanently in the Territory?

ANSWER

I am unable to satisfy her with a firm date in this matter. I can tell her that the permanent head is following energetically inquiries for accommodation in Darwin and I heard yesterday that he was on the track of a flat which could be in the electorate of Nightcliff. The honourable member may have a new vote in her electorate within a reasonable time if everything goes according to plan.

1221 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he aware of the concern expressed by residents in Tennant Creek and Alice Springs at the lack of orthodontist services? What action is being taken by the Department of Health to institute orthodontist services?

ANSWER

I am aware of the concern that has been expressed. At present, the department has recruited a second orthodontist for the Territory. Thus, there are now two orthodontists for the Territory, both domiciled in Darwin. The department has also applied through the necessary channels for the creation of a position of orthodontist in Alice Springs. Should this position be made available and a person recruited, he would service both Alice Springs and Tennant Creek on a regular basis. I have written to the Minister of Health about the concern of the people in Tennant Creek and Alice Springs of the absence of this service on a full-time basis. I am hopeful that he and the department can successfully argue with the Public Service Board on the need for that appointment.

1222 Dr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

The honourable member was reported in the press last week as being concerned about the activities of a Darwin building company. Can he supply details of his concern?

ANSWER

The organisation I was speaking of was a firm called Bako Building Constructions. The firm has been registered with the Companies Office in Darwin since last November and it was recently learned that partners involved have left the Northern Territory, leaving behind numerous creditors and also a number of people who have paid deposits to have their houses reconstructed. Unfortunately, the total amount involved is not known at this stage. However, there is evidence to show that it is many thousands of dollars and investigations into the activities of the two partners involved are continuing. That is all the information I can supply to the House at this stage.

1223 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

When is it expected that the Government home sale scheme for public service housing will be reintroduced? Will he give an undertaking that the full details of any such scheme will be discussed in this Assembly? Can he advise if he has been privy to any discussions with the department as to the details of the scheme?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Minister for the Northern Territory called for a departmental review of the Government homes rental and sales situation in the Northern Territory. He was to expect that report some time in August. I have not been involved personally in any discussions with regard to the scheme but I will certainly pursue the details of the scheme and seek to make the information available.

1224 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

My question concerns the supply of water to the Yuendumu population north west of Alice Springs. Is he aware that one bore only supplies this population of 1,200 people? In fact, provisions have been made by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to evacuate the entire community this summer should that bore fail. Will he undertake to arrange with the department alternative and backup supplies of water for emergency use?

ANSWER

I do know that water at Yuendumu has been a long-standing problem but I have been out there twice in the last three weeks and no concern was expressed to me whilst I was there. However, I will undertake to go to the department and see what plans they do have in hand for an adequate supply of water.

1225 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

I have been told that the high schools in the northern suburbs, Casuarina and Nightcliff, expect to have an overflow next year. What steps are being taken, if any, to establish the Dripstone High School or a high school in that area?

ANSWER

Building of the Dripstone High School is at the moment not planned to commence before July 1977, which would mean that the school would not be ready until 1979. Representations have been made by parent-teacher groups and myself, and indeed the Northern Territory Branch of the Department of Education, strongly supporting an earlier commencement date for Dripstone High School in light of the overflow situation at Nightcliff and Casuarina. However, it is unlikely to be commenced before July 1977.

1226 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware that the chief test pilot who met his untimely death in the Nomad incident the other day had experienced on two previous occasions jamming of the elevator controls on the aircraft? I was wondering whether the Executive Member could ascertain the reasons for these incidents and provide the House with the information before the House rises.

ANSWER

Quite obviously the sort of information the honourable member for Alice Springs is after would be subject to some sort of investigation by the Department of Transport. I would therefore be completely at their mercy as to access to this information. Certainly I could not give any guarantee that I would be able to get the information and whether or not, if I could get hold of the information, it would be during these sittings. However, as I will be in touch with the department and the Minister on other matters, I will seek to get this information.

1227 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

Very recently I noticed a press release or statement by the Attorney-General, Mr Ellicott QC, indicating that the Commonwealth Government would now be proceeding with the setting up of a Commonwealth Superior Court. Would there be any benefits in the proposed court, of which I have very little detail, for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Like the honourable member for Jingili, I have very little detail so I am really unable to answer his question. However, to give him some reassurance, the reason I have very little detail, in spite of undertakings given to me by the Attorney-General that the matter

would be discussed with representation from the Northern Territory, this press statement suddenly appeared in interstate papers, not even local papers, that such a court was to be established. There is a possibility that the Attorney-General may be arriving in Darwin later this week and I am awaiting confirmation of that. If this is the case and he does appear, lengthy discussions will take place between himself and interested parties as to the matter. However, if he is unable to come to the Northern Territory, I have been assured of some preview of the legislation and discussions with him before it proceeds.

1228 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he now advise the House when and where the next Rural Roads Conference will be held?

ANSWER

The advice that I have from the Department of the Northern Territory is that, subject to possible monetary restrictions, the conference is hoped to be held in September in Katherine.

1229 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise if there will be another residential land auction in Darwin this year?

ANSWER

I am unaware of any further proposals to hold a Government land auction in Darwin this year. From my understanding of the number of available residential sites, I would be extremely doubtful that such an auction could be held.

1230 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

Is he aware of any continuing negotiations between the Magellan Oil group of companies and the Government in relation to the establishment of an oil refinery in Alice Springs and, if so have there been any further developments towards the establishment of that refinery?

ANSWER

I am aware that the company and the Department of National Resources in Canberra have held discussions over the past six to eight weeks to overcome problems of well-head price for their product and the distribution of the product from the Mereenie fields and the Palm Valley fields at Alice Springs. The last information I had was several days ago from the Department of National Resources who said that there are no problems so far as the Government is concerned holding back the development of the refinery. It is now a matter of pure economics as to whether the company can go ahead.

1231 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

Can he advise me when the street lighting in the northern suburbs area will be restored - to be more specific, in Jingili, Moil, Wagaman, Alawa, Nakara, Wanguri and Tiwi?

ANSWER

I have made some inquiries relating to the upgrading of street lighting in the northern suburbs. The situation has been quite unsatisfactory. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has a sizeable budget to be spent on upgrading the street lighting in Darwin this financial year and I understand that the major roads have a high priority in that spending. I hope to have a more detailed statement to present to the House later on in the week relating to priorities in the upgrading of street lighting in the northern suburbs.

1232 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

The honourable Executive Member indicated that so far as he was aware no further auctions of land by the Government could be expected in Darwin for the rest of this year and I would therefore ask him whether he or the Government is doing anything to encourage the L.J. Hooker Development Corporation to get on with the subdivision of the Brinkin area which has been held up now for the last 5 or 6 years.

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has taken an active line in pursuing with the Department of the Northern Territory discussions with the Hooker Corporation for the recommencement of their lease development. I am aware that the Chairman of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has made personal representations to the Hooker Corporation and I believe that we should see the fruits of their efforts in the near future.

1233 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

At the sittings held on 24 February I directed a question without notice to the Executive Member regarding the Tiwi Mothers' Home. At that time he replied that the various authorities were experiencing construction problems mainly in airconditioning. Would the honourable member please tell me what the situation is regarding the Tiwi Mothers' Home as the airconditioning should have been repaired by now.

ANSWER

I can tell the honourable member quite a deal about the Tiwi Mothers' Home and I refer him to pages 403 and 404 of Hansard for Thursday 3 June 1976 which details what has happened at the Tiwi Mothers' Home. My understanding now is that it should be operational as a hostel run by Aboriginal Hostels Limited.

1234 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Honourable members will recall that at the last sittings of this Assembly we were somewhat concerned at the regrettable closure of the North Australia Railway. The Executive Member for Transport then indicated to us that he held some hopes that the taking of the "Darwin Trader" off the shipping route from the east coast to Darwin might be averted; there were rumours at that time that we were also to loose our one sea link to the east coast. I would like to ask the honourable member whether he can give this House any definite assurance as to the retention of the "Darwin Trader" on the shipping route from Sydney and Brisbane.

ANSWER

Rumours have persisted on this particular shipping run. I do not know where the rumours are coming from. We have had the Shadow Minister for Transport state that the ship is definitely going to be taken off the run. However, irrespective of what these people seem to think is going to happen, the Minister for Transport told me that there has been no decision whatsoever made to take the "Darwin Trader" off the run, and that any decision affecting east coast shipping will be made after the inquiry which is being conducted by the Bureau of Transport Economics, on which, as I said yesterday, I hope to make a statement later in these sittings. The situation at present is that the Minister for Transport has said that the "Darwin Trader" will be retained, pending this inquiry. Just for the record, from my own personal point of view - I believe I could be considered in some quarters to be sticking my neck out - I do not consider that the Government would leave the Northern Territory without a shipping service from the east coast.

1235 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

What is the state of the strata titles legislation which was passed through this House some time ago and when is it likely that it will be commenced?

ANSWER

Amongst the ordinances awaiting action are the Unit Titles Ordinance, the Real Property Ordinance and the Freehold Titles Ordinance and I have been advised that recommendations for assent are in motion. That is an official advice from the Department of the Northern Territory on 6 August. I have had discussions with officers of the Department of the Northern Territory with regard to the early commencement of this ordinance and I know that they are in the process of preparing the regulations that are required and the administrative system that has to be established in the Lands Branch, the Registrar-General's office and a number of other government departments. I have seen a list of bureaucratic desk passing that the applications will have to flow through and I hope to be able to influence some rationalisation of that in the next few weeks. I have been informed that it is hoped that the regulations will be presented to this Assembly at the October session and I know that members from the commercial groups that have made representation to the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory have been informed that it is hoped to see the legislation commence shortly thereafter.

1236 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK -

My question is on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Does the Acoustics Laboratory in the Darwin Hospital cater for all sections of the community or do people other than pensioners and Aboriginals have to travel interstate for the fitting of hearing aids?

ANSWER

There are some administrative difficulties in relation to the provision of hearing aids to persons other than pensioners and children. This matter is one which I have been pursuing in recent weeks and I hope that, before the end of this current sittings, I should be able to give the House a full reply on the matter.

1237 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER -

Are you in a position to give information regarding the Assembly's application to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for land at Larrakeyah to be used for a new parliament house?

ANSWER

I have had some fair warning of this question. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has confirmed that the site sought for a new parliament house at Elliot Point on the Larrakeyah Peninsula is outside the Aboriginal land claim area and that he has no objection to the use of the land for any other purpose. However, the site in question is still part of a defence reserve and I have written to the Minister for Defence asking which parts of the reserve not required by his department will be excised from the reserve and when. On assent of these details, it will then be possible for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to proceed with initial siting investigations.

1238 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

When is it expected that Housing Commission homes sales will recommence and has he any indication as to whether the Housing Commission intends to sell partially destroyed homes if the would-be purchaser can satisfy the commission that he can rebuild them in a satisfactory manner?

ANSWER

At the last session of this Assembly, I advised that the Majority Party has prepared draft legislation to enable the Northern Territory Housing Commission to institute a new home sales scheme. The Commonwealth Government and the state governments are currently renegotiating the terms and conditions that apply to the sale of housing commission homes Australia-wide. New rules have to be established with regard to the low interest funds that are made available to housing commissions and any subsequent sale of houses are naturally affected by the availability of this finance. I have discussed the matter with both the Minister for the Northern Territory and the Minister for Environment, Housing and Community Development. The Minister for Environment, Housing and Community Development has promised a reply by next Monday with regard to the implications of my draft bill and hopefully I will then be in a position either to introduce it or to announce the areas in which amendment will be necessary.

With regard to the sale of homes in a substandard condition, I have discussed this with the Chairman of the Housing Commission and I know that commission proposes to look at this after the legislation has been agreed to. There are implications here because most of the home purchasers will be buying the homes with considerable mortgages to the Housing Commission and, if the properties were sold in a substandard state, there could be equity problems and subsequent covenants required to get them up to some form of cyclone proof standard. However, the commission is receptive to looking at the idea and they have promised that they will give it thorough investigation.

1239 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it a fact that certain people renting housing accommodation from the Department of the Northern Territory at the 13-mile have been asked for large amounts of back rent even though the officers of the department have previously advised that the rent would only be charged from dates after tenancy agreements were finalised?

ANSWER

I am aware of one instance where a large account has been rendered for back rent with regard to a property previously occupied by a person even before the cyclone, taking the levy for rent back to July 1975, even though the notification for that rent was not issued till April 1976. The tenants were under the impression that departmental officers had stated that their rent would become due from the date of notification and are therefore embarrassed by the sizeable accounts they have received. I have discussed this matter with officers of the Department of the Northern Territory and have been advised that it will be necessary for the back rent to be paid. However, they have indicated that the Finance Branch of the department would be prepared to discuss suitable terms and conditions for the repayment of those funds.

1240 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON -

Can he advise when water and electricity will be connected to the school at Tea Tree?

ANSWER

The upgrading of power and water supplies at Tea Tree was deferred from the 1975-76 works program during the cut-back period. Funds will be made available this year and the water supply is expected to be completed by the end of next year. Permanent electricity should be connected to the school at Tea Tree - I believe the question is mainly concerned with the school itself - before the commencement of the 1977 school year. In light of the fact that the new school at Tea Tree is due for completion later this year and may in actual fact take pupils this year, funds have been made available to install a temporary water supply and temporary power to the school as soon as it opens. The temporary water supply would be available to the town later as an emergency fire fighting facility.

1241 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it a fact that no resident psychiatrist is in attendance at the Alice Springs Hospital at present nor has there been one this year and, if so, what steps are being taken to make provision for a psychiatrist resident at the Alice Springs Hospital?

ANSWER

It is correct that there is no resident psychiatrist at the Alice Springs Hospital at the present time. Arrangements have been made by the Department of Health to have a visiting psychiatric service from Adelaide on about three days a month. This is a temporary measure but the department has been able to gain a position in the establishment for a psychiatrist and also an understudy and it is endeavouring to recruit persons for those positions. They are not easy to get but, when they are available, they will be engaged.

1242 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW -

I bring to the honourable member's notice the existence of a noisy, riotous and disruptive camping group on Kahlin beach and I ask if she will take steps to see that there are regular police patrols with a view to keeping the peace in this area?

ANSWER

I shall draw it to the attention of the Commissioner.

1243 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

How many sited vacant caravans does the Northern Territory Housing Commission and the Department of the Northern Territory have and also is he able to tell me how many caravans do they have in their various stores?

ANSWER

I will seek the information and make it available to the honourable member.

1244 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Could she advise why some students at Casuarina High School have been told to sit as external students for the matriculation examination?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer that question at the moment; I will obtain the information later in the day.

1245 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Is he aware that a further case of alleged illegal branding of cattle has occurred in the Finniss River Station and the Wagait Reserve area and can he advise me if there are any positive steps being taken to establish a fenced boundary between these two areas or does any other solution to the problem exist?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are some allegations concerning misuse of brands in the Wagait area but whether it is actually illegal or not has not been established and it would probably take a court case to establish it. It should be borne in mind that at least one Aboriginal group who have been carrying out certain activities with buffalo on the Wagait Reserve have a brand registered for that area. This Wagait problem has been with us for many years and I have spoken on

it in this chamber on many occasions. As far as trying to reach a solution to the problem, it is a very complicated matter. There are several cattle stations adjoining the reserve which claim to have an interest in livestock on the reserve and no doubt some of the populations of unbranded cattle on that reserve emanated from those adjoining stations. There is a large herd of buffalo also throughout the reserve and there are 3 Aboriginal groups now who lay claim to some part of the reserve.

The situation is not unlike that which occurred on the Daly River several years ago when there was a conflict between Aboriginal groups with rights on the Daly Reserve and Tipperary and Elizabeth Downs Station. That situation was resolved that time by a meeting chaired by the Department of the Northern Territory between the interested parties and their legal advisers and agreement was reached and it was set down on paper. It seems that the same kind of treatment is needed in this case which is even slightly more complicated because the boundary between the reserve and Finniss River Station is the Finniss River for quite a length of that boundary. This river is agreed by all parties to be unfenceable. Therefore some adjustment to the boundary either by agreement or by some means would be necessary to get a satisfactory resolution of the problem. I can inform the Assembly that a meeting of interested parties took place on Monday this week at the initiative of a police sergeant who has some responsibilities in this area. My understanding of that meeting was that the Department of the Northern Territory and the lands administration did not take a sufficient role in that meeting by chairing it and bringing the parties together and trying to find a positive solution. I believe that the department needs to do more in this regard and I will be using my best efforts see that they continue with these negotiations, that the department does take its proper role and that a satisfactory conclusion is reached.

1246 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Can he tell the Assembly whether at the recent meeting of federal and state ministers for Primary Industry rural reconstruction was discussed and, if so, what was the outcome of these discussions?

ANSWER

The recent meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council of Commonwealth and State Ministers threw no new light on the rural reconstruction finance situation. As I mentioned in an answer to a question yesterday, this is the one point of the 4 main points raised by the Cattlemen's Association which has not yet been satisfactorily resolved. The position briefly is that rural reconstruction finance, which is a particular segment of the financial support area has been established at levels which will apply up until the end of this calendar year. As far as the states are concerned, I understand that those levels are satisfactory. It is only in the case of the Northern Territory where I believe that the level is not satisfactory. We will not know exactly what the final level of assistance will be until after the Budget, so we will know as of Wednesday next week what the final figure for rural reconstruction is. Then we will know for sure whether it is unsatisfactory, but I envisage that interested people will have to continue pressing the Government for additional funds to make sure that all the needs are covered.

1247 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW -

In view of many complaints about delays experienced in the Territory by members of the public in having legal services rendered without undue delay, can the honourable member say to whom any official complaints should be directed?

ANSWER

The Attorney-General.

1248 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he indicate to me the policy that the Department of the Northern Territory will adopt to dispose of the caravans that are no longer required for temporary accommodation?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission have requested information of the Department of the Northern Territory, as the client department, to advise what its continuing requirement is for the necessity to maintain transient or temporary type accommodation for Darwin. It is hoped that the Department of the Northern Territory, either at the next DRC meeting or the one following, will be in a position to advise its continuing requirement with regard to demountables and caravans. At that stage the DRC will advise the Minister on future implications about ownership of these assets.

1249 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

Has there been any discussion on charging Aboriginals on settlements for electricity and water rates, taking into consideration that a form of revenue could be forthcoming knowing that the majority are now on award wages?

ANSWER

The manner of charging all persons living on Aboriginal reserves for service charges such as water and electricity has been under consideration by the Government for some time. This matter goes back some 18 months ago and was under quite active consideration before the change of government. The whole matter is still unresolved. There are many problems as to the reliability of the supply and in Darwin at Bagot and in Alice Springs at Amoonguna, European staff members are at present charged for electricity from the town supplies. The matter is being considered.

1250 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer to the Town Planning Board's revised plans in respect of the Araluen residential subdivision. Is he aware that there is widespread and angrily expressed dissatisfaction to that plan by the people of Alice Springs, its community leaders and by the committee of the Araluen Foundation for Arts and Cultural Conservation? If he is so aware, what is his present personal policy to that subdivisional proposal? Will he give an undertaking that the Administrator's Council will not deal with the matter until he personally has discussed the matter with the people of Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I am aware that there is considerable electoral and community response to the proposals at the Araluen area. I have received representation in this regard. It is not proper for me to talk about the course of action that will be taken by the Administrator's Council but I can assure the honourable member that I will be speaking with leaders in the Alice Springs community myself and pursuing the matter further before final decisions are taken.

1251 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK -

I bring to the honourable member's attention the existence of an unauthorised camping area on the old golf course at East Point and the complete inadequacy of the 2 toilets there to service the people who are there. Will the Government, including the Department of Health, take steps to protect the public from any disease which such overcrowding may create?

ANSWER

Another term for this particular place other than "unauthorised camping ground" is a temporary caravan park initiated through other channels in Darwin. The Department of Health is extremely concerned about the matter. The director has had Government representatives there and expressed his concern. At times, I do think that that concern in certain areas falls on deaf ears but it is a matter which is under constant review by the department. It is taking all action it can to cover the matter.

1252 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

Are there any plans for the establishment of a police station on the Roper River Settlement?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer that question. I will endeavour to obtain the information later in the day.

1253 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

Is it a fact that the proposed establishment of an oil refinery in Alice Springs and the associated oil field development from which it would be supplied is delayed pending the clarification of the proposed Aboriginal land rights legislation?

ANSWER

Yes, this is one of the inhibiting factors in the development in the Magellan oil refinery and oil and gas field, and it depends entirely on whether the Aboriginal Land Bill provisions will have a retrospective effect on existing mining titles in the Northern Territory. This is yet to be decided by Federal Cabinet.

1254 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN -

What steps are being taken to upgrade the repair to the Casuarina Fire Station?

ANSWER

About 6 months ago, an amount of $8,000 was spent to tidy up the Casuarina Fire Station and I have been advised by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that they expect to let a contract for the rehabilitation of the Casuarina Fire Station towards the end of September. I believe the amount of money involved is about $80,000.

1255 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON -

Can he advise when another date has been set that all premises in Katherine are to be connected to sewerage and, if so, what is that date?

ANSWER

There has been no particular date set when all premises in Katherine should be connected to the sewerage system. The situation as it applies generally throughout the Territory is that, when an area is sewered, the blocks serviced by the main trunks from then on are charged sewerage rates. Persons having septic systems at that time can continue to maintain their septic systems until such time as the Department of Health declares that the system has been overloaded or is unhealthy in any way. The Department of Health can condemn a septic system with an order which is issued under the Sewerage Regulations that a person must connect to the sewerage system and that order specifies the particular time - usually 6 months or so - that that connection must be made.

1256 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

How many loans have the Home Finance Trustee approved to the end of July? What is the total value of those approvals? How many loans does the Home Finance Trustee have yet to approve and what is the waiting time for a loan to be approved?

ANSWER

As at the end of July, 603 loans had been approved with a commitment value of just over $18m. As at 6 August, there were 449 applications on hand and not yet to the approval stage. With regard to the time delay for approval, the current time from the stage when all requirements have been lodged with the Home Finance Trustee to the date of approval is between 4 to 5 weeks.

1257 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise us of the legal requirement for taxi drivers and passengers to wear seat belts and also has the taxi driver the right to enforce passengers to wear seat belts?

ANSWER

I am not too sure how I should answer this question. There appears to be some sort of problem with regard to making a legal statement or a legal opinion contrary to Standing Orders. I will speak to the honourable member for Stuart later.

1258 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Is it true that children from Moil Primary School will be unable to attend that school till the middle of next year?

ANSWER

I believe that Moil School has to be upgraded to meet cyclone requirements and, in fact, the roof has to come off and certain other repairs have to take place. I believe that in the last 3 weeks of this year the lower classes in the school will be using classrooms at Wagaman School and that for the first term of next year grades 3 to 7 will be bussed daily to Nakara School.

1259 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Honourable members may be aware that the Premier of South Australia, Mr Don Dunstan, whilst he adopts a strong conservationist attitude is nevertheless a man with a shrewd business sense. I understand that he has been approaching overseas cartels with a view to financing the establishment in South Australia of a uranium enrichment plant. What is being done to ensure that any uranium enrichment plant is established in the Northern Territory to treat Northern Territory uranium? If we are to suffer as some would call it the rape of our resources we might as well get all the benefits of the violation.

ANSWER

Honourable members would be aware that earlier this year the Minister for National Resources, Mr Anthony, asked private enterprise in Australia to make bids for the treatment of the uranium oxide into the stage of uranium hexofluoride so that the benefit of processing this product could be kept in Australia. I am aware that the Premier of South Australia has been making overtures so that this enrichment plant may be placed in his state. Inquiries that I have made would indicate that any such processing plant would require enormous amounts of electricity, up to 500 megawatts, for its operation and that such a plant would most likely be situated adjacent to a coal field or an enormous oil and gas reserve, neither of which we seem to have in the Northern Territory. It would appear that Queensland and Western Australia would be in the front running. The decision on where it will be put is entirely up to the Federal Government. Unless the economics of the situation indicate that the Northern Territory could provide the enormous amount of electricity required at the right price, there would be little likelihood of our getting such a facility in the Territory.

1260 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

What steps are being taken to provide reasonable radio reception to isolated areas in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Over the last 12 or 18 months, I have received quite a lot of information concerning the installation of 200 kilowatt shortwave transmitters for the ABC. I wrote to Senator Bishop when he was the Minister and received conflicting answers about the location and the actual whereabouts of the transmitters. Some people seemed to think they were already in Australia and the Minister said that they had not arrived. I made a similar representation to the present Minister who has advised me that they have not been delivered as yet but they should be delivered shortly.

They have not decided where these transmitters will be installed. The original idea was to install them on Cox Peninsula but Cox Peninsula has been a bit of a dead duck since the cyclone although they would be operational if somebody gave them some aerials. That is a matter I have also taken up with the Minister. They are not too sure that they could use Cox Peninsula and I have heard that the possibility is that one could be placed in Darwin to look after the northern area and another one in Alice Springs. With the installation of these particular transmitters, the local ABC programs should be beamed to all parts of the Northern Territory and I am quite hopeful that this will be undertaken in the near future, although there has been a lot of procrastination to date.

1261 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it a fact that the lady dealing with adoption procedures in the Northern Territory on behalf of the relevant department is presently based in Adelaide? If so, when is she expected to return to the Northern Territory? Does her residence in Adelaide place an unfair burden on people wishing to adopt children in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The statements which the honourable member for Nightcliff has made are news to me as my understanding is that adoptions are basically handled here in Darwin, and from my association with the department this has been the case. There is an officer of the department here in Darwin - I will not name her - handling these matters because I have been assisting her in some ways.

1262 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it true that the DRC has rejected offers from private people to use private land as temporary caravan parks? If so, how many offers have been rejected and on what basis have they been rejected? Also, what is the cost difference between establishing temporary caravan parks on public land such as the Tiwi Oval and the old East Point Golf Course and private allotments of the same size? If the answer to my first question is no, will he immediately make representations to the DRC to advertise urgently that the DRC is prepared to look at offers from the private sector to alleviate the problem of insufficient sites for caravans?

ANSWER

I have had forewarning of the question but have not been able to obtain the total information sought by the honourable member for Ludmilla. However, I am in a position to give him an indication of some facts that may be of assistance to him. The only areas of private land that have been considered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for use as temporary caravan parks are sites that were raised by commissioners at a meeting, private land such as the Sea Breeze Hotel, the Fannie Bay Hotel and similar sites. I am not aware of any applications by private residential owners to the Reconstruction Commission to use their own sites for temporary caravan parks. However I will have this matter investigated and advise the honourable member further.

1263 Mr MANUELL to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that the construction of the new school at Tea Tree represents a gross departmental error in that the capacity provided by the new school far exceeds the need of students in the foreseeable future? What plans, if any, exist to utilise the facility beyond what is needed for schooling purposes?

ANSWER

I will seek further information regarding this question and inform the House at a later date.

1264 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Recently there has been quite a deal of controversy, as all honourable members would be aware, in relation to proposed changes to the Medibank system. I ask the honourable Executive Member whether he has any information which may be of benefit to people in the Territory in relation to the proposed new Medibank system for the Territory?

ANSWER

The matter of Medibank for the Northern Territory is a relatively simple matter as is, I believe, the whole new arrangement. All persons in the Northern Territory are covered by Medibank until such times as they decide, for personal or economical reasons, that they want to opt out and join a private fund or join the Medibank private scheme. Later today, I am hopeful of introducing legislation which will amend the Hospital and Medical Services Ordinance to accommodate the new provisions of Medibank as they will affect the Northern Territory. Basically, as I said, all persons will be covered under the standard Medibank coverage which is the 2.5% tax levy on persons up to $300 for a married couple or $150 for a single person. This will entitle all persons to free medical attention in hospitals as a standard patient; they will be able to receive free treatment by a doctor at a government hospital or, if they attend a private practitioner, 85% of the set fee for medical services provided by a doctor. If, of course, a doctor bulk-bills, they do not really have to pay anything. If however a person decides he wants to be treated in hospital by a private practitioner or wants intermediate or private ward facilities provided by those doctors, they will then need to take out private insurance either through the Medibank scheme or with a private insurance company, whichever they chose. There will be a charge made against those persons through their funds for an intermediate coverage of $40 per day for a hospital bed or $60 for private.

In addition, for persons who are insured but are treated as standard patients in a hospital, there will be a $20 a day charge made against their fund.

It also has been proposed that persons who have taken out private insurance who attend at government hospitals or clinics be charged $5 per day a visit. However, I have made representations to the Minister to have this particular fee not proceeded with in the Northern Territory. He has made certain recommendations to the Prime Minister and I am quite confident that that fee will not be imposed in the Northern Territory.

1265 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

How will Medibank affect 2 income families?

ANSWER

I thought I had covered that but I will make it quite clear that under Medibank no family can pay more than $300 for a standard coverage. For 2 income families, there is a limit of $300, for a single person $150. It can be less than $300 depending on your income. Of course, a 2 income family would be above $300 in the 2.5% levy but $300 is the limit.

1266 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Does the department intend to proceed with the purchase of the Nomad aircraft and, if so, when is the first delivery expected? Is he also aware of press reports that the individual cost of this aircraft is now in the order of $0.5m?

ANSWER

I am unaware of press reports in relation to the cost structure of the aircraft. The Government has decided that it will buy the Nomad aircraft for the Department of Health and this much against the grain of the department, I might add. It has fought this tooth and nail but unfortunately Cabinet has decided on 2 occasions that the Department of Health Aerial Medical Service in the Northern Territory will have the Nomad aircraft and at this stage that is what the decision is. It is a decision which has been imposed upon the department. In relation to the delivery, I am advised that the delivery of the aircraft is now indefinite in view of recent events and the department is taking appropriate measures to ensure that aircraft are available for the continuance of the service. As I mentioned the other day, some of the Dove aircraft which are in service at the moment are due to be retired later this year - November, I think, one and about April-May for another - because they will be just out of hours and beyond economic reconditioning; the department is looking around and seeing what other aircraft it can either hire or lease to ensure that the service is properly and adequately maintained.

1267 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Has the Australian Government completed the task of cooperating with the Indonesian Government in eradicating foot and mouth disease on the island of Bali?

ANSWER

I understand that the problem of foot and mouth disease in the Bali area has been overcome but I will check the facts with my departmental advisers and confirm that to the honourable member later in the sittings.

1268 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware that in the last week the South Australian Government is reputed to have received a grant from the Federal Government of $20m for national highway development including upgrading of the Stuart Highway? If so is the honourable member aware of what proportion of that $20m does the South Australian Government intend placing towards the Stuart Highway development?

ANSWER

I have been in touch with the Federal Minister for Transport on this matter and this morning received a call from the secretary of the department and he advised me that the money had been granted to South Australia. However, unfortunately for the Northern Territory, the amount of money contained in the grant relating to the Stuart Highway is only for maintenance, so it appears that this financial year nothing will be done for the improvement of the Stuart Highway south of the border. He also added that there has been some investigation into the possible route of the new road when and if it finally starts; there are several options as to which course the road will follow. One is through the defence base at Woomera; this would cut about 60 miles off the length of the road which would be a quite significant saving in money. However, the analysing of these options is now under way and, hopefully, they will decide where the road can go and then possibly some money will be made available, hopefully in the next financial year, to enable them to begin the construction of that road to bring it up to an all-weather highway.

1269 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN -

When will the dirt heaps at the 2½-mile depot be shifted? Has the work commenced and, if so, when will it be completed?

ANSWER

This inquiry has been placed upon me apart from the question that the honourable member for Ludmilla has asked. Several weeks ago I had a letter from some people asking me the same question and I contacted the DRC and was advised that they were going to cease stockpiling of material. I did notice that within the next week that trucks were still dumping material there. I will take the matter up again with the DRC. I did speak to them about the fact that they were still dumping material there and there seems to be a little bit of confusion as to exactly what is going to take place out there. But I think it is important that it ceases to be used as a dump because quite obviously the dust and rubbish that is being blown onto the people living just behind the 2½-mile depot is rather inconvenient.

1270 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON -

Could it be advantageous for Katherine and Tennant Creek to engage their own local government experts and advise the Department of the Northern Territory of the terms and conditions under which these towns would accept local government?

ANSWER

I believe that the question related to the town management boards in Katherine and Tennant Creek engaging their own consultants although the words "town management board" were not used. No doubt it would be advantageous if the town management boards did engage a consultant to advise them on the aspects of local government in those small centres. However, the constitution of the town management boards under the ordinance forbids them from engaging anyone at all because they have no financial status whatsoever. The boards are purely advisory boards to the Administrator and cannot engage any staff whatsoever. They have no budget at all.

I believe that the Government would be responsive to an application from either of the town management boards to supply an expert on local government to advise on any questions pertaining to the transfer of local authority to the area. It is a matter for negotiation between the town management boards and the Government and I think that the Government would recognise its responsibility to give every assistance possible to the boards and to answer any questions they would have as to the effect of any proposals that they might put forward.

1271 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

At present, there is only one person engaged in serving process and executing process and warrants out of the Supreme Court and local courts of Darwin. When will appointments of up to 4 bailiffs be made to the Supreme Court and local courts?

ANSWER

Whilst the department is most concerned with the matter, I am unable to give any definite dates.

1272 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it correct, as indicated in the NT News, that it is the action of this Assembly that has put the future of the regional councils in doubt?

ANSWER

Quite definitely no. The future role of the regional councils in the Australian Assistance Plan was put in doubt some couple of months ago when the Minister for Social Security announced that the Commonwealth would no longer fund these organisations beyond the 30 June 1977. In consequence, the states and the Territory have to decide what future role these organisations have to play in the community. If anything, it is the setting up of the select committee which will possibly secure the future of these organisations, rather than wipe them off the books. I think that in some ways yesterday's reports were inaccurate, inaccurately presented at least to the public, and that aspect of our decision has been lost in a mire of other big letters.

1273 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

I ask a series of questions relating to a reply to a question in 1974 which is going back a way. I refer to an intention by the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to purchase an Aboriginal interest in the Perkins Shipping and Mining Corporation. Can the honourable member

inform me if this interest has been purchased and to what extent; whether the services as a result have been improved; whether the Darwin terminal is improved and landing facilities at outstations have been improved; and how many Aboriginal people are employed on the barge side of the enterprise? The Minister said that he felt the concept of a partnership in which skilled non-Aboriginals provide expertise in the early stages of such projects should guarantee their success. Can the honourable member advise me whether the Aboriginals have assumed full control by now of all operations and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

The situation is at the moment, as I understand it, that a holding company, known as the Arnhem Transport Company which is Aboriginalowned, has a 75 per cent interest in the Perkins Company - the full title eludes my memory. With relation to the upgrading of facilities and so forth, I do not know what has happened in relation to the Darwin wharf area but with relation to Aboriginal communities and settlements I believe that a program to upgrade these facilities is suffering from financial restraints. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs has prepared a program, but apart from the planning stages of that program at this stage nothing material has arisen to improve the facilities at outstations. There are 5 Aboriginal persons employed in the company; 2 as apprentice mechanics, 2 deck boys and 1 plant operator. Beyond that at this stage I am unable to provide the member with further information.

1274 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

My question concerns yesterday's press report concerning trouble at Rabbit Flat. Can she advise if she has any further information concerning what caused the police to be flown out to that remote area?

ANSWER

I am sorry, I have been unable to get any further information other than what has come over the press. However, I am liaising with the Commissioner and I hope to be able to provide the information later in the day.

1275 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN -

Edmund Road opposite Skewes' store at Humpty Doo needs rebuilding. Has the work started on this road and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

I have been in touch with the department about Edmund Road. I was asked this question by the honourable member for Tiwi I think at the last sittings and I thought I had obtained an answer. I spoke to the Department of Construction and they advised me that the road was damaged rather badly during the wet and some maintenance had taken place already; this is relating to grading the road to fill in the holes left from vehicles that were bogged. There has been some patching done on the more serious areas after the grading and further general patching and maintenance of the road is expected to begin in about another month.

1276 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

This question follows on a question I asked of the honourable member yesterday. He said that it would be unlikely that the Northern Territory would see the setting up of a uranium enrichment plant here to process uranium, if it is in fact mined in the Northern Territory, because of a likely shortage of power to run such a plant which apparently requires huge reserves of electricity. Has any consideration been given by him or by the Mines or Resources Branch to the establishment of an atomic power station, not only to operate the uranium enrichment plant but to supply the requirements of Darwin for the future, particularly when consideration is now apparently being given to a coal-fired power station on Quarantine Island in East Arm?

ANSWER

The concept of an atomic power station has been considered in some quarters but it is highly unlikely that it could operate in an area and environment such as Darwin because an atomic power station as such would turn out much more power than the whole of the Northern Territory and a uranium processing plant could consume, and it would not be economic from that point of view. The economics relating to setting up a processing plant here will not be a decision of ourselves or the Atomic Energy Commission but primarily of business; it is a matter of whether you take 500,000 tons of coal to Darwin to treat 3,000 tons of uranium oxide or take 3,000 tons of uranium oxide to the coal basin, and it is highly probable that the latter would be the most attractive procedure.

1277 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Will he direct me to that part of the law which will explain whether it is the responsibility of a taxi driver to ensure that his passengers wear seat belts?

ANSWER

I will direct him to that part of the law; it is in the library, Mr Speaker, in the ordinance.

1278 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON -

For a considerable time, I have asked questions about the erection of a light on the Stuart Highway at the entrance to Farrell Crescent and I was pleased that on the last sitting day in June to notice that a lamp had been erected on a pole. When is the lamp likely to be lit or activated?

ANSWER

I will seek the information and supply an answer during these sittings.

1279 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Has the honourable member any idea if and when his National Parks and Wildlife Ordinance passed through this Assembly will receive assent?

ANSWER

The nearest I could get to that would be in the near future. The Minister for the Environment was in Darwin recently and discussions were

held with him by 2 of our executive members. I subsequently saw him in Sydney. There appears to be no conflict as far as the Department of Environment is concerned between our ordinance and the national act to prevent the commencement of this ordinance. There are some Treasury and financial considerations which will have to be finalised in discussion. I would hope that it will be assented to and commenced in the near future.

1280 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

Is there a shortage of police in the Territory. Has the Motor Vehicle Registry considered setting up a motor vehicles registration branch at Nhulunbuy to relieve the police work in that area?

ANSWER

I do not know whether it has been considered; I will find out and advise the Assembly in the sittings.

1281 - 1284 See Questions on Notice

1285 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Has his attention been drawn to the remarks of the honourable Mr Justice Foster in the Supreme Court concerning the lack of physchiatric services at Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I did hear the remarks of the Judge of the Supreme Court. As I did mention yesterday, the Department of Health has made application to the Public Service Board for a position of psychiatrist at Alice Springs. This application was made last month. There is a position of psychiatric registrar at Alice Springs but this is vacant at the moment. I am advised that it is difficult to fill that position without the more senior position of psychiatrist being filled at the hospital. The psychiatric registrar position arose because a person from Melbourne University did come to Alice Springs for 12 months during a training period but it is quite difficult to get him replaced without the more senior position being available. The absence of these services at Alice Springs is causing the department some concern and it is hopeful of having the position created and filled.

1286 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise me whether the two juvenile facilities promised by the Minister are in fact on the capital works program for 1976-77?

ANSWER

Design work is in progress for the repair and construction of Essington House for use as a juvenile training facility. Further study is being carried out in conjunction with the Department of the Northern Territory in relation to the juvenile security centre and provision has been made in the works program for 1976-77 for both of these works. I would also indicate that the Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory has indicated in the DRC that there may possibly need to be some review of the actual use to which Essington House is put.

1287 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise if the Deputy Secretary in his position with the DRC is aware that I have a firm undertaking from the Minister for the Northern Territory that the two juvenile facilities, one at Berrimah and one at Anula or Wulagi, will be commenced? There was no suggestion that Essington House was to be reconstructed for the purpose which it served so poorly.

ANSWER

There is no way in the world that I would endeavour to speak for Mr Dwyer. However, I will bring the honourable member's remarks to his attention.

1288 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON -

Are the bylaw making powers under the Local Government Ordinance defective in their present form and, secondly, has the Municipality of Alice Springs any right to the claim that it is unable to adopt any bylaws under this ordinance?

ANSWER

The section of the Local Government Ordinance relating to bylaw making powers requires considerable consolidation and refinement of expression to ensure that bylaws are valid and suitable to the needs of any council concerned. Officers of the Department of the Northern Territory in conjunction with the Corporation of the City of Darwin and the Municipality of Alice Springs are investigating various proposals for revision of this section of the ordinance. The corporation in Alice Springs' claim that they cannot introduce any bylaws under the ordinance is incorrect. Although there are no model bylaws set out in the current Local Government Ordinance, any bylaw proposed by a corporation will be checked by Crown Law to ensure that it is within the powers and consistent with the ordinance and any other ordinance in the Northern Territory.

1289 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he able to indicate when the Block 8 cafeteria will be opened?

ANSWER

I am losing faith that it ever will be but I will endeavour to find out.

1290 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

The honourable member may have heard reports some few days ago that the Minister for Defence had issued an edict requiring the use for defence purposes of the present Darwin Airport terminal area within 5 years. Are planning steps now being taken to provide an alternative civilian terminal adjacent to the Darwin Airport?

ANSWER

I do not know exactly what is happening. I know that it has been planned for some time to establish a new terminal at another point on the airfield. The information reported in the media was that

the Air Force will require the present terminal area. I would like to add that where the terminal is situated at the moment is pretty unsatisfactory because it is cramped up. I do not know where they plan to shift it; there have been several suggestions as to where it might be put but I assume that this will happen in due course.

1291 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

What development has taken place in the Mount Isa Mines McArthur River lease?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no further progress on those leases and there is not likely to be any until Mount Isa Mines gets title to its grounds.

1292 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK (by leave): The honourable member for Port Darwin asked a question the other day in relation to E coli counts at Doctors Gully. The detailed information of counts taken weekly from 22 January 1975 to 30 June 1976 is available and I ask that the answer to the question be incorporated in Hansard.

Leave granted.

*BACTERIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF WATER : 1975/76*

| *DOCTORS GULLY* | *Coliforms /100 ml* | *Faecal Strep. /100 ml* | *Faecal Coli /100 ml* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *3 December* | *2,000* | *380* | *240* |
| *10 December* | *2,500* | *430* | *100* |
| *17 December* | *1,400* | *280* | *650* |
| *24 December (nil report)* | | | |
| *31 December (nil report)* | | | |
| *7 January* | *650* | *130* | *210* |
| *14 January* | *170* | *180* | *140* |
| *21 January* | *27,000* | *2,800* | *500* |
| *28 January* | *430* | *150* | *80* |
| *4 February* | *280* | *70* | *50* |
| *11 February* | *960* | *154* | *150* |
| *18 February* | *290* | *630* | *250* |
| *25 February* | *28,000* | *2,800* | *1,400* |
| *3 March* | *3,600* | *1,100* | *170* |
| *10 March* | *440* | *70* | *20* |
| *17 March* | *4,500* | *170* | *tmtc* |
| *24 March* | *400* | *580* | *30* |
| *31 March* | *380* | *1,160* | *60* |
| *7 April* | *40* | *8* | *14* |
| *14 April* | *280* | *n/t* | *90* |
| *21 April* | *160* | *2* | *140* |
| *28 April* | *560* | *130* | *58* |
| *5 May* | *4* | *10* | *0* |
| *12 May* | *300* | *70* | *42* |
| *19 May* | *720* | *620* | *110* |
| *26 May* | *370* | *66* | *66* |
| *2 June* | *350* | *20* | *42* |
| *9 June* | *900* | *96* | *160* |
| *16 June* | *300* | *110* | *50* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 23 June | 1,100 | 52 | 60 |
| 30 June | 186 | 14 | 24 |

tmtc = too many to count

n/t = not tested

BACTERIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF WATER : 1975

| DOCTORS GULLY | Coliforms /100 ml | Faecal Strep. /100 ml | Faecal Coli /100ml | Temp. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 January 1975 | 320 | 70 | 150 | 30° C |
| 5 February | 250 | 650 | 70 | 32° C |
| 12 February | 900 | 250 | 30 | 31° C |
| 19 February | 640 | 180 | 140 | 28° C |
| 27 February | 50 | 0 | 0 | 30° C |
| 5 March | 180 | 90 | 70 | 30° C |
| 12 March | 3,400 | 1,000 | 760 | 29° C |
| 19 March | 500 | 80 | 8 | 30° C |
| 2 April | 560 | 88 | 90 | 29° C |
| 9 April | 800 | 160 | 280 | 29° C |
| 16 April | 770 | 90 | 28 | 28° C |
| 24 April | 110 | 26 | 32 | 30° C |
| 30 April | 140 | 16 | 22 | 29.5° C |
| 7 May | 110 | 32 | 10 | 30° C |
| 14 May | 110 | 12 | 16 | 28° C |
| 21 May | 80 | 76 | 10 | 28° C |
| 28 May | 94 | 10 | 16 | 26° C |
| 4 June | 40 | 0 | 0 | 25° C |
| 11 June | 420 | 24 | 60 | 25° C |
| 18 June | 92 | 36 | 28 | 23° C |
| 25 June | 108 | 40 | 28 | 25° C |
| 2 July | 2 | 8 | 2 | 25° C |
| 9 July | 150 | 18 | 48 | 25° C |
| 16 July | 990 | 200 | 32 | 25° C |
| 23 July | 28 | 4 | 28 | 26° C |
| 30 July | 100 | 8 | 10 | 27° C |
| 6 August | 280 | 120 | - | 26.5° C |
| 13 August | 150 | 130 | 14 | 26.5° C |
| 20 August | 90 | 130 | 14 | 25.5° C |
| 27 August | 0 | 8 | 0 | 27° C |
| 3 September | 94 | 34 | 48 | 28° C |
| 10 September | 20 | 230 | 6 | 27.5° C |
| 17 September | 220 | 200 | 190 | 28.5° C |
| 24 September | 26 | 120 | 10 | 29° C |
| 1 October | 150 | 54 | 32 | 29° C |
| 8 October | 2,000 | 300 | 2,000 | 30° C |
| 15 October | 42 | 560 | 36 | 30° C |
| 6 November | 310 | - | 80 | 30° C |
| 12 November | 20 | 14 | 14 | 31° C |
| 19 November | 140 | 26 | 28 | 30° C |
| 26 November | 8 | 12 | 2 | 30° C |

Bacteriological Quality of Recreational Waters *

| Faecal coliform level (organisms /100 ml) | Classification |
|---|---|
| 2,000 | Heavily polluted, water objectionable |

| | |
|---|---|
| *200 - 2,000* | *Distinct pollution* |
| *50 - 200* | *Slight pollution* |
| *50* | *Satisfactory water* |

* *modified from "A compilation of Australian Water Quality Criteria" Australian Water Resources Council Technical Paper No. 7.*

1293 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON (by leave): The honourable member for Port Darwin asked if I could confirm that the outfall at Doctors Gully was in fact damaged and in a most unsatisfactory condition and what steps would be taken to avert any threat to health. The restoration of Doctors Gully outfall is included in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's 1976-77 works program; an amount of $400,000 has been authorised and the project is to replace sections of the outfall which had been damaged by ships' anchors during cyclone Tracy.

1294 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN (by leave): I wish to answer a question asked by the honourable member for Alice Springs concerning the recent air crash of the Nomad. Whilst I was speaking to the Secretary of the Department of Transport this morning I mentioned to him that I had been asked this question and he advised me that the aircraft was an experimental aircraft. It did not relate particularly to the aircraft which are being delivered in Darwin. He told me that they are presently investigating the causes of the crash. He did not intend to advise me specially when the investigation was completed but when it is completed, the findings will be released to the press.

INDEX TO QUESTIONS

10 August 1976 - 12 August 1976


Aboriginal land rights (Vale) 1211
Aboriginal settlements, electricity and water rates (Ballantyne) 1249
Adoption procedures (Lawrie) 1261
Alice Springs -
bylaw-making powers (Manuell) 1288
hospital, psychiatrist (Manuell) 1241
judge's remarks on psychiatric service (Everingham) 1285
legal aid office (Manuell) 1213
oil refinery (Manuell) 1230, 1253
orthodondist (Manuell) 1221
railway reserve (Manuell) 1120A
Araluen subdivision (Robertson) 1250
Atomic power station (Everingham) 1276
Bailiffs for Darwin courts (Everingham) 1271
Bako Building Constructions (Dondas) 1222
Bali, foot and mouth disease (Kentish) 1267
Block 8 cafeteria (Dondas) 1289
Branding, illegal (Kentish) 1245
Brinkin subdivision (Everingham) 1232
Bus services (Dondas) 1205
Bylaw-making powers (Manuell) 1288
Caravans, Housing Commission and Department of NT (Dondas) 1243, 1248
Caravan parks on private land (Steele) 1262
Carry-on finance for cattle industry (Withnall) 1214
Casuarina fire station (Dondas) 1254
Casuarina High School, external matric students (Lawrie) 1244
"Colonel Chuck Chunder" (Manuell) 1121
Commonwealth Superior Court (Everingham) 1227
Creole (Kentish) 1210
Darwin Airport (Everingham) 1290
Darwin Harbour (see E coli counts)
Darwin Hospital acoustic laboratory (Manuell) 1236
Darwin Rifle Club (Steele) 1207
"Darwin Trader" (Everingham) 1234
Depot at 2½ mile, dirt heaps (Steele) 1269
Doctors Gully sewer (Withnall) 1204, 1293
Dripstone High School (Everingham) 1225
East Point caravan park (Withnall) 1251
E coli counts (Withnall) 1208, 1292
Edmund Road, Humpty Doo (Tungutalum) 1275
Executive Members and conferences (Steele) 1200
Farrell Crescent, light (Kentish) 1278
Government homes sales scheme (Lawrie) 1223
Groote Eylandt, lack of doctor (Ballantyne) 1218
Home Finance Trustee (Steele) 1202; (Dondas) 1256
Housing Commission -
caravans (Dondas) 1243
home sales (Lawrie) 1238
proposed caravan park (Dondas) 1209
Juvenile offenders, facilities (Lawrie) 1206, 1286, 1287
Kahlin Beach, noisy campers (Withnall) 1242
Katherine -
local government (Ballantyne) 1270
meatworks (Lawrie) 1216
sewerage (Vale) 1255
Land auction (Dondas) 1229
Legal delays (Withnall) 1247
McArthur River, Mount Isa Mines (Vale) 1291
Medibank (Everingham) 1264; (Dondas) 1265
Moil Primary School (Dondas) 1258
National Parks and Wildlife Ordinance, assent (Lawrie) 1279
Nhulunbuy -
Commonwealth houses maintenance (Ballantyne) 1193
motor vehicle registration branch (Ballantyne) 1280
Nomad aircraft (Vale) 1219, 1266; (Manuell) 1226, 1294
North Australia Railway -
resleepering (Lawrie) 1122
loss last year (Manuell) 1195
salaries and wages (Manuell) 1196
Parliament house (Dondas) 1237
Pedestrian crossings (Steele) 1217
Perkins Shipping and Mining Co (Kentish) 1273
Pidgin English (see Creole)
Public servants from Brisbane (Withnall) 1212
Rabbit Flat trouble (Vale) 1274
Radio reception in isolated areas (Vale) 1260
Regional Councils for Social Development (Kentish) 1192; (Vale) 1272
Rent at 13-mile (Tungutalum) 1239
Roper River, police station (Kentish) 1252
Rural construction (Vale) 1246
Rural Roads Conference (Vale) 1228
Secretary of department, residence in NT (Lawrie) 1220
"Stop" lights (Steele) 1215, 1217
Strata titles legislation (Lawrie) 1235
Street lighting, northern suburbs (Dondas) 1231

Stuart Highway (Manuell) 1268
Tarcoola-Alice Springs rail link (Manuell) 1201
Taxis, seat belts (Vale) 1257, 1277
Tea Tree School (Vale) 1240; (Manuell) 1263
Tennant Creek -
orthodondist (Manuell) 1221
local government (Ballantyne) 1270
Tiwi Mothers Home (Dondas) 1233
Transport inquiry (Vale) 1203
Uranium enrichment plant (Everingham) 1259
Wagait Reserve, illegal branding (Kentish) 1245
Yuendumu, water supply (Vale) 1224

PART II

# THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

FROM 31 MARCH 1976

822 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

When will the rehabilitation of Administration Block 3, Mitchell St., Darwin, be completed and when and by whom will it be occupied?

FROM 10 AUGUST 1976

1194 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

1. When will the children's creche be ready for occupancy at Gove hospital?

2. Will this centre be staffed and, if so, will the staff be employed full time?

1197 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

1. As at 30 June 1975 and 1976, how many members were physically attached to the CIB Inquiry Section at -

   (a) Darwin
   (b) Alice Springs
   (c) Katherine
   (d) Tennant Creek, and
   (e) Nhulunbuy?

2. What support sections are available to the CIB, such as breaking, consorting and drug squads and how many members does each of these squads have?

3. Are any of these squads in the CIB to be expanded in the coming six months and, if so, by how many additional members and what new positions are proposed?

1198 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

How many square miles of the Territory are taken up by:

(a) wildlife sanctuaries;
(b) unalienated Crown Land;
(c) commonages;
(d) national parks; and
(e) fauna reserves?

1199 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Is the Stock Squad of the NT Police presently functional?

How many members are there in the squad?

What vehicles are attached to the squad?

How many horses are attached to the squad?

How many cases has the squad investigated in the period 1 January 1976 to 30 June 1976?

How many kilometres has the squad travelled in the same period?

How many nights have members of the squad spent away from home on duty in the same period?

How many pastoral properties in the:

(a) Darwin Gulf District;
(b) Victoria River District;
(c) Barkly District; and
(d) Alice Springs District

has the squad visited in the past 12 months?

FROM 17 AUGUST 1976

1281 Mr WITHNALL to Mr PERRON -

1. Can he confirm that the sewer line in Doctors Gully is, and has been for some time, broken just beyond the low tide mark and at low tide raw sewage is discharged a matter of feet from the edge of the water?

2. What steps have been and will be taken to avert the threat to health posed by the sewage?

1284 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

How many people, not residents of Darwin at the 24th December 1974, have received the Home Finance Trustee 6% loan?

1295 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

What progress has been made to date on the development of the Ayers Rock tourist village project?

ANSWER

The committee that is investigating the development of the Ayers Rock village had a meeting 2 weeks ago and, at that meeting, it was advised that it is unlikely that any funds will be available for consultants to continue with the proposal and that other measures will have to be considered if the village is ever to be developed.

1296 Mr STEELE to Mr PERRON -

Is it a fact that the Ludmilla dump is burning underground? Recognising the implications should someone fall through the crust and be injured, will he consult with the corporation on an urgent basis to rectify the problem?

ANSWER

I have no knowledge that the dump at Ludmilla is burning underground. However, I will take the matter up with the local corporation and see whether some action can be taken to rectify the problem.

1297 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

What is the situation regarding the declared area under the Nudity Ordinance?

ANSWER

I am informed that the regulations have been signed, that notification of the making of these regulations will appear in a special Gazette tomorrow and the area will be effective if the honourable member should choose to use it from 12.01 this evening.

1298 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

How much money has been allocated to the reconstruction of Fenton Flats on the Stuart Highway? Have contracts been let? When will the work commence? When will the work be completed? What are the penalty clauses if the contractor fails to complete on time?

ANSWER

I am informed that $549,914 has been allocated for the reconstruction of Fenton Flats. The contracts have been let, work will commence on approximately 30 August and they are due to be completed on 21 July 1977. With regard to a penalty clause, there is a clause that allows for penalty at the rate of $25 per flat per week.

1299 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

What juvenile detention centres are currently available in Darwin? What staff is on hand at these facilities and what measures are being taken to improve staffing at the facilities?

ANSWER

There are 2 juvenile detention facilities currently available in Darwin. Palmerston House for boys and Dundas House for girls, Dundas House being opened only at the beginning of last week. As to the staffing situation at both these establishments, I am unable to advise the member exactly what staff is available; however, I do know that it is insufficient in the opinion of the branch. The Social Development Department is rather hampered in staff by the ceilings which have been imposed on the department and in fact is one of the departments suffering most from these ceilings. The whole social welfare area is quite short of staff. The department is unable to replace people who leave or people who were away at the time these ceilings were imposed, and the department is making representation to have these staff levels raised.

1300 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

My question relates to the matter of Essington House, or what was Essington House, which is presently being used by the Marrara Community creche. I support the remarks made in this House last week by the honourable member for Nightcliff when she said that the bureaucrats were going to have their way and reconstruct this place and use it as a detention centre rather than permitting it to remain as a community creche. If the bureaucrats are going to rebuild Essington House and use it as a juvenile detention centre, what alternative provision is being made to house the northern suburbs Marrara Community creche?

ANSWER

Firstly, I hope that Essington House is not rebuilt that we have something in its stead. However, the arrangements are that with the people who are using the remaining section of Essington House at the moment, such as the Marrara creche, in their arrangement of occupancy, it is a condition that 6 months' notice must be given by the department for them to quit if the building is required for departmental purposes. I am advised that this notice is at present being given to the organisations who are using the creche but it is not necessarily certain that at the end of 6 months that occupancy will be required. The period may extend considerably beyond the 6 months but the department is taking a safeguard action by giving 6 months notice now, regrettably.

1301 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

This question is asked on behalf of the member for Elsey. Has the Road Safety Council inspected Cemetery Corner in Katherine and, if so, what recommendations did it make?

ANSWER

The Road Safety Council has inspected the particular corner. I assume this is the corner at which a fatality occurred within the last few days. It is my intention to bring the matter up at the next meeting of the Road Safety Council.

1302 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

Can he advise me if there is any progress in the quest for a resident doctor at Groote Eylandt?

ANSWER

I am advised that the Department of Health has recruited a doctor for appointment at Groote Eylandt. He will be going to Gove on Wednesday and, after about a fortnight of relief duty at Gove, he will be going to Groote Eylandt. In a little over a fortnight, there will be a resident doctor at Groote Eylandt.

1303 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Following statements last week that it is likely that one of the juvenile centres is to be deleted from the capital works program, has this decision been discussed and approved by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?

ANSWER

My understanding of the decisions taken in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is that 2 centres are placed on the forward estimates which should appear in the budget papers this evening. I would like to refresh my memory on the actual motions of the Reconstruction Commission and advise the honourable member for Nightcliff further with regard to decisions that have been taken on these 2 facilities.

1304 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS -

Will the Councils and Associations Bill of the Federal Parliament have any effect on the Local Government Ordinance?

ANSWER

It is my belief that the Councils and Associations Bill would have a considerable effect on the future of local government in the Northern Territory, particularly in the smaller centres. It would cut across what should be the proper role of the Local Government Ordinance of other legislation which we have under consideration at the moment to deal specifically with the growth of forms of local government in more remote and smaller communities. It is quite clear that, under the provisions of the federal bill, a jural system of local government could develop in the Northern Territory. The position could arise where, on the edge of some of the towns in the Territory, a separate incorporated body for Aboriginal people could be developed with its own system of garbage collection and services quite separate from the other nearby community. The kind of misgivings which we have are shared by other state governments and I understand that the state governments of Queensland and Western Australia in particular have made their misgivings and objections known to the Federal Government. I regret to say that the reactions we have had so far from the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs indicate a very inflexible attitude to this particular matter as with various other matters we have brought to his attention from time to time.

1305 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is he aware of the difficulties Barcar Holdings is having getting the Giles Street subdivision in Katherine sealed? Is he also aware that this is because the subdivision is 5 months ahead of schedule, and will he investigate allegations of incompetence against Barcar Holdings made by the Katherine branch of the Australian Labor Party in the "Katherine Informer" of 13 August of this year?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the problem. I will however take the matter up with Spraypave and also the Department of Construction in an endeavour to find out why, if they have in fact finished the preliminaries, they cannot get the sealing of the road carried out.

1306 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Has there been any further progress in relation to the planning or construction of a small boat facility in Darwin Harbour?

ANSWER

$101,000 was made available for the upgrading of the particular facility. Members may be aware of a rock groin which now exists in Frances Bay. This of course is not satisfactory as it is almost underwater at high tide. The $101,000 will be spent in upgrading the groin and in fact this work, if it has not already started, is vitually ready to go ahead.

1307 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

Is he aware that water pressure in some areas of Alice Springs has diminished to a trickle and that in some areas some sprinklers will not work at all during the day? What is the cause of this shortage and has any contingency plan been considered to prevent a restriction of water supply this year in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The Department of Works has advised me through the Water Resources Branch that some difficulties have been experienced in the Gillen area while maintenance was being carried out on the $7m tank. Parts of the east side in particular and the race course area have suffered from reduced pressure at certain times of the day due to heavy demand and it is planned by the Department of Works to upgrade and augment the existing supply in these areas in conjunction with the development of the Sadadeen Subdivision. Measures for improving the overall water supply in general will in fact be carried out as a result of expenditure in this year's Budget and the criteria whether restrictions will continue depends on the availability of finance to complete the equipping of 5 bores in the Mereenie area, the severity of the summer and the rate at which Works can carry out what needs to be done.

1308 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she aware that the Northern Territory Teachers Federation has banned the use of stage II of the Katherine Hostel accommodation for teachers in 1977?

ANSWER

Yes, I am aware of this. Only this morning, I received a letter from the Northern Territory Teachers Federation advising me that this action was taken because the executive believes that, in 1977, there will be superior alternative accommodation available in stage I and III of the hostel and unused single officer flats at the Katherine Hospital.

1309 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware of a report prepared by the Department of Construction concerning certain construction problems with the Yirara College and Bradshaw School in Alice Springs and will this report be made available to the public?

ANDWER

I am not aware of any such report. However, I will make inquiries and give to the House any information which I may be able to get.

1310 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN -

Is he able to tell me anything with regard to the reflectorized licence plates?

ANSWER

The Department of the Northern Territory Transport Planning Division have several vehicles fitted with reflectorized licence plates of various colours. The purpose of this is to establish which colours stand up to the climate and are least affected by being covered with dust, rubbish and mud. Once having established this, there will be a move towards picking suitable colours for the new Northern Territory reflectorized plates and passing the necessary legislation to have them fitted to the vehicles. I would assume that this will take place some time in the first half of the next year.

1311 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he yet able to advise the terms and conditions upon which the sale of government homes will be re-introduced in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

I am not able to provide that information. I have sought urgent information of the Minister yesterday and I hopefully will be able to provide it within the next few days.

1312 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

Is the Trade Practices Act being enforced in the Northern Territory and has the Trade Practices Commission got an office in Darwin?

ANSWER

Following a visit to the Northern Territory earlier this year of an official of the Trade Practices Commission in Canberra, arrangements have been made for the Prices and Consumer Affairs branch of the Department of the Northern Territory to take over some of the aspects of policing the Trade Practices Act. Matters to be handled by the Consumer Affairs Branch here are the consumer protection provisions under part 5 of the act and also the restrictive trade practices provisions of the act. Although an officer of the commission will not be stationed in Darwin permanently at this stage, an officer from the commission's Brisbane office will make occasional trips to Darwin throughout the year and specific trips if there are any matters that warrant his attention. As far as the Alice Springs area is concerned, it will be serviced by the Trades Practices Commission Adelaide office.

1313 Mr VALE TO Mr POLLOCK -

When will pensioners' homes in Katherine occupied by Aborigines be connected to sewerage?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find the information and advise the House.

1314 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS -

I refer to the statement in the Northern Territory News of 16 August headed "Nomination called for land trust posts". Could the Majority Leader inform me why this nomination has been called before the bill is finally passed in the Commonwealth Parliament? Why does the bill provide for freehold title to be held by a land trust representing large areas and not by the traditional owners according to Aboriginal laws? My third question is about land councils. This is the whiteman's idea of giving us land rights. We might be able to make it work if we are given a land council in the bill for Bathurst and Melville Islands. Would he tell me why only one land council has been made for the north of the Northern Territory and why a land council will not be made for Bathurst and Melville Islands in the bill?

ANSWER

The first question related to the inviting of applications for membership of land trusts. Like the honourable member for Tiwi, I can only guess at the reason. I have not any information as from the Minister or the Federal Government as to why it has been done. I would have some concern about the calling of the applications at this stage because we have passed on to the Government and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs the concern which some citizens of Arnhem Land in particular have expressed to us about the setting up of land trusts in the form that the bill before the Federal Parliament proposes. It has been pointed out to us, and we have pointed this out to the Minister, that to set up what separate trusts for the Arnhem Land mainland the Arnhem Land islands is contrary to the reality of the situation in so far as most of the people who have land on the islands also have an interest or traditional claim to land on the mainland, and they are being split in half.

More than that, there are problems, which goes on to his second question, about the size of these trusts in so far as they include the whole of the Arnhem Land islands except Bathurst and Melville Islands and within that trust there will be a number of separate language and descent groups, and the same of course with the large mainland area of 47,000 square miles. Aboriginal people have expressed misgivings about this which was passed onto the Minister. Therefore I am surprised and disappointed I suppose in a way, that he is calling applications for trusts for the scheduled areas, apparently not being prepared to give consideration to any variation in the original design. I suppose in favour of the Government one might argue that they can consider it prudent to have names available in case the bill passes in its present form, but against that I would argue that in doing this they are raising expectations from Aboriginal people who might submit their names towards these trusts and then they may not be realised in the final judgment which is made on the legislation. The Federal Government continues to act unilaterally in matters such as this and pay little regard to their frequent stated policy of close collab-

oration and consultation with the Northern Territory people.

On the third question, that with regard to land councils, the proposed legislation of course does make provision for more than the 2 original land councils to be set up, and I would advise the honourable member for Tiwi that the information that we have received in going around and in material which is being forwarded to us from Aboriginal groups is that certainly in the northern half of the Territory there is a very strong possibility that a number of individual land councils would be created or would be applied for probably the Bathurst-Melville Island area, the Groote Eylandt area and north and north-eastern Arnhem Land. Under the present design of legislation, it seems likely that, within a short period of time, instead of having one land council in the north we could very well be faced with a number of separate administrations - anything up to 5 or 6 - within the first year or 2.

1315 Mr WITHNALL to Mr PERRON -

Has he noticed that the Darwin water supply has been frequently fouled lately with a substance which is probably algae resulting in a revolting scum forming on the water and an associated taste and odour? What is the cause of this condition and what is being done about it?

ANSWER

I am aware of the problems that the honourable member for Port Darwin has alluded to. I do not know the actual cause although I have heard it rumoured that it is the result of some process that kills algae in pipelines and the result is the dead algae in the glass. I will endeavour to find out the reason and table it in this House later on in these sittings.

1316 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

When will there be a special school re-established in Darwin as there was pre-Tracy? I am aware that some schools are taking a limited number of children but it is not sufficient to cater for all the children needing special education in Darwin.

ANSWER

There have been some problems about the re-establishment of a special school because one of the Ludmilla preschools is in actual fact occupying the building. Several schools such as Rapid Creek, Ludmilla, Wanguri, Alawa and Millner, all have children in their care who would normally be at special schools. This is probably not such a bad thing because there are certain advantages for disadvantaged children in being with normal children. However, a decision has been taken to rebuild a special school and it will be done as soon as possible. No date has been mentioned.

1317 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it the responsibility of the Social Development Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory to provide funds for the burial of destitute persons in cemeteries within the Northern Territory? I refer particularly to Katherine.

ANSWER

It is the responsibility of the Social Development Branch to pay the burial costs of destitute persons. At Katherine, the department has a contract with the local undertaker. However, problems did arise there following the imposition of grave opening fees by the local cemetery trust. The cemetery trust wanted the undertakers to pay this fee and the undertaker would not pay because it was not covered by his contract. In other centres, the cemetery trust send the account to the department but in Katherine they did not want to do it this way. The matter has since been resolved and there should be no further problems.

1318 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

When will occupied houses at Tindal be weatherproofed? What other improvements are planned?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as you are well aware, the problems at Tindal are very complex because of the ownership status of the buildings there and the confusion that arises between the Department of the Northern Territory assuming occupancy of a number of these buildings following the cyclone and the Department of Defence holding vested interests. I do not have the specific information sought in the question. I believe it should be available in the Budget papers this evening and will seek further information in answer to the question.

1319 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

Is he aware that the ring seal for the high capacity storage tank in Alice Springs has failed for the third time in succession and is Still in a state of desrepair, rendering the pressure useless? What steps are being taken to rectify the problem, and is it a fact that the design of the ring seal was made by the Department of Works and was in fact experimental at the time of design?

ANSWER

The answer to the first part of the question is very simple. Advice received from the Department of Works is that the ring seal has in fact been repaired and has been repaired for some period. In answer to the second part of the question, the department advises that the design was carried out by consulting engineers retained by the Department of Housing and Construction and in fact the present design being used is commonly put to use in South Australia and is not an experiment by any means.

1320 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Are there any more taxi licences issued in Darwin now than there were as at 24 December 1974? Secondly, are there any plans to issue any more taxi or hire-car licences; and, further, does the Registrar of Motor Vehicles conduct random roadworthiness checks on taxis; if he does not, is he planning to do so?

ANSWER

At present there are 55 taxi licences and 28 hire-car licences held in Darwin. This is the same number as existed prior to the cyclone. The

Registrar has had no representations asking for any extra licences to be issued so at present there is no intention to do so The second question was relating to random inspections of taxicabs and hire cars. Currently they are subject to a 6-monthly inspection at the Motor Vehicle Registry, and in addition to this one of the chief inspectors does from time to time make random checks of vehicles on ranks and at home.

1321 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN -

How many weekly flights has Qantas had operating in and out of Darwin? Is Qantas coping with the present rate of passenger traffic and what is the situation likely to be during the school holidays?

ANSWER

There are currently 2 flights through Darwin scheduled by Qantas. Generally speaking, these 2 flights do handle the normal traffic that comes through Darwin. However, some people seem to think that we could do with extra flights, particularly to Hong Kong because we do not have a direct flight to Hong Kong. At present, the bookings for December are full which means that anybody who wants to leave Darwin directly for overseas during December and they do not have a ticket at the moment, they will be unable to go. Last year, a similar situation existed but we were able to prevail on Qantas to give us a few extra flights through Darwin mainly because we said that people would be keen to get out of Darwin the first year after the cyclone. This same situation exists this year to a certain degree although I do not know whether we will get the same amount of sympathy from Qantas. However, I intend to send a telegram to Sir Lennox Hewitt and the Minister for Transport to ask if extra flights can be put through Darwin at Christmas. I believe other airlines are keen to come through Darwin but are unable to do so because Qantas vetoes that particular move. I will ask, if Qantas cannot handle the traffic, why other airlines could not be given the opportunity to pick up passengers in Darwin and also create a little bit of opposition for Qantas.

1322 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Miss ANDREW -

Bathurst Island has a population of 1,200 to 1,400. When will the police station be built on Bathurst Island? Is it in the 1976/77 program, if not, when will it be programmed?

ANSWER

The police department have put a proposal to the Department of the Northern Territory for the Bathurst Island police station to go on the 1976/77 design A list. If this proposal is accepted, the building would not be commenced before the beginning of the next financial year.

1323 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware of damage to property and inconvenience to persons being caused by the parking of vehicles by patrons of the Marrara Hotel in Seabright Crescent, Jingili, and has he any plans to remedy the situation?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the problem that the honourable member for Jingili

points out.

Mr Everingham: I told you about it. I wrote you a letter too.

Mr RYAN: He just made a comment that he has told me, in which case, Mr Speaker, I must admit that I had forgotten and I certainly cannot remember receiving a letter, as he interjected. However, I will make a point of having a word with him and see if we can do something to solve the problem if it exists.

1324 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): The honourable member for Arnhem asked me last week: "Has the Australian Government co-operated with the Indonesians in eradicating foot and mouth disease in Bali?" I did hazard an opinion on the situation at the time, but I can now tell him that the Department of the Northern Territory advises that the Australian Government has co-operated with the Indonesian Government in an eradication program. The Chief Veterinary Officer of the Northern Territory spent several months in Bali, assisting in the vaccination of the disease and the disease is now regarded as being under control.

1325 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING (by leave): The honourable member for Ludmilla asked a question in relation to temporary caravan parks being developed by private people on private land. I am supplied with the following information:

> *These applications were not supported after considering site location and the lack of existing service facilities. The cost difference in establishing a temporary caravan park on private land as opposed to public land is minimal. The cost is, of course, reduced where there are showers and toilets already in existence.*

1326 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW (by leave): The honourable member for Stuart asked me a question concerning the Rabbit Flat Roadhouse incident. I will make all this information available, Mr Speaker, to the honourable member, because I do not want to bore you all with reading a blow-by-blow description. However, a group of Aborigines arrived at Rabbit Flat about 8pm on Tuesday 10 August. They intended to stay overnight and then continue to Balgo Mission next day. During the evening, Mr Farrens was forced to stop the sale of liquor due to disorderly behaviour. At 2 am an Aborigine was discovered inside the security area at the rear of the premises, a scuffle followed the discovery and Nelson was injured. Following this, the Aborigines threw stones at the roadhouse and Farrens barricaded himself inside. The Aborigines were eventually quietened by the Aboriginal elders who had taken control of the situation prior to the arrival of the police. Police were called as a result of a call at about 4 am which Farrens made to the Bureau of Meteorology and he advised them that his premises were under siege and he was on his own. He was also most concerned about the Aborigine, later known as Mr Nelson, who was injured. He then contacted the bureau at 5.55 am and advised them that he was expecting some further action at daylight. However, this did not take place. There was some damage done to the building amounting to several hundred dollars. However, Nelson will not be charged; I am advised that some other minor charges have been made.

1327 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK (by leave): The honourable member for Nightcliff asked about adoption services and the availability of an officer for adoption in the Northern Territory. In the Northern Territory, there are 2 officers handling adoptions, one is based in Darwin and the other in Alice Springs. It is quite impractical to operate the adoption ordinance with officers resident interstate.

1328 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK (by leave): I was asked by the honourable member for Alice Springs about services provided by the accoustics laboratory at the Darwin Hospital. In reply to that question, I will read an extract from a submission from the Commonwealth Department of Health to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare earlier this year:

> *(i) hearing services - hearing aids and audiological services are provided to children under the age of 21 years, pensioners and their dependants, repatriation beneficiaries, Commonwealth employees, compensation claimants, Commonwealth Department of Social Security rehabilitation clients, Aboriginals under the care of the Northern Territory Administration.*
>
> *(ii) hearing conservation and noise annoyance - advice and assistance to Commonwealth Government departments and defence services in hearing conservation measures and noise problems affecting the community from defence services and Commonwealth activities, and*
>
> *(iii) loan of audio meters to school medical services.*

1329 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK -

What progress, if any, has been made towards the introduction of reformed liquor legislation within the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The reform of liquor legislation for the Northern Territory has been a matter which I have been looking into since assuming this position. The very limited staff which is available to me hinders proper development of the proposed reforms. Draft working papers of the principles of the liquor ordinance and also papers in relation to alcohol and drug dependency have been prepared and approved by the executive. However, at this stage, there is no staff available to the executive to develop these policy documents to the stage where drafting instructions can be satisfactorily given to draftsmen to prepare the legislation. Approaches have been made to the Minister to have staff made available to the executive to carry out this work and negotiations in that regard are going on. I am hopeful that he will concede to our request and that, in the foreseeable future, we will be in a position to have these drafting instructions ready and the legislation prepared.

1330 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise me of the membership of the technical committee of the Emergency Services Organisation and if a decision has been taken to designate Nightcliff High School as a primary shelter? If this decision was taken, what consultation was there with the Department of Education and more importantly with the staff of the high school and their board membership?

ANSWER

I am advised that membership of the technical committee comprises a representative of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, representation from the Department of Construction, representation from the Education Department, representation from the Department of the Northern Territory including a member of the emergency services organisation, and some other as yet undetermined people who have qualifications in engineering and designing.

I am advised by the Department of Education that a technical committee has investigated the most suitable areas for cyclone shelters in the Darwin region. Mr Alan Ritchie, the senior education adviser on school buildings, is the Education Department representative on this committee. On the basis of evidence received, Nightcliff High School was selected as a primary impact shelter by the emergency committee. As yet no structual alterations have been made although some are planned. These include replacement of ground floor windows on the southern side with armoured glass, strengthening the window frames as necessary. Solid screens may be placed on the pillars outside the ground floor windows on the northern side to protect both windows and walls. Mr Ritchie and other members of the technical committee have discussed the matter with the principal of the Nightcliff High School who is the executive officer on the board of management.

1331 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it a fact that there is a gerry building on Lot 2911 in Fannie Bay? I do not think that the executive member will be able to answer it at

this stage but could he inform me a bit later?

ANSWER

I think this question should be placed on the notice paper.

1332 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN -

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Do newly licensed motor vehicle drivers receive booklets on the rules of the road and do they have to pass a written examination before receiving their licence?

ANSWER

I know that booklets are available. These are normally given to any person who is going to sit for the written exam. In answer to the second part of the question, there is a written exam. One of the reasons behind this question related to the possibility of people not being able to write the language. I am not too sure on this particular aspect although I believe there is a certain amount of leeway given. The main point is that whoever is going for the licence must understand and be able to recognise the various signs and know exactly what the rules of the road are. I do not know if the testing people enforce the written test as strictly as we might imagine. I think they use their discretion in certain cases.

1333 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise me when a rural bank will be established in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I cannot give the honourable member for Arnhem any prediction of an exact date for the establishment of a rural bank or even any certainty that one will be established. All that I can tell him at this stage is that a senior officer of the Department of the Northern Territory has been in Darwin for the last 2 or 3 weeks with the specific task of investigating the present functions of the Primary Producers Board, future needs and the reconstruction of the legislation on primary production. Arising out of this review, the chances are that something towards a rural bank situation will emerge. The officer concerned is working in close contact with me and the PP Board and with producers' organisations. I hope that we will have his recommendations available within the next month or so and, from that, we will be able to take some more positive steps towards the objective which the honourable member for Arnhem has suggested is desirable.

1334 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he yet advise me as to the terms and conditions on which the sale of government homes will be recommenced in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

I have had neither an acknowledgement nor a reply on the information sought from the Minister in this regard.

1335 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

This is a follow up to a question I asked some months ago. Could he tell me what stage the landscaping to blocks 6, 7 and 8 opposite has reached? Is there a finishing date to this work? If so, what is that date?

ANSWER

I am sure the honourable member for Nhulunbuy has noticed the progress that has taken place in the area surrounding these particular blocks with regard to landscaping. I have not got a termination date at my fingertips. However, I will seek it for him.

1336 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

I have noticed with some concern the incidence of hepatitis in the Northern Territory and in Darwin in particular. I wonder if he can state, as a reasonable medical probability, whether the establishment of the temporary caravan park proposed to be set up in the northern suburbs is likely to lead to a greater incidence of hepatitis?

ANSWER

It is true that the incidence of hepatitis in the Darwin area has in recent months been increasing at an alarming rate and causing the Department of Health concern. In the 12 months to July last year to June this year, there were 155 cases in the northern region; and in the first 6 months of this year, there were 104 cases. This is a considerable number of cases for the region.

I do not know that temporary caravan parks in the northern suburbs would necessarily increase the incidence of the illness if these caravan parks are constructed to a standard which effectively caters for the health needs of the community. It is camps which are in existence, such as at East Point, with totally inadequate facilities for the number of people that are there, that give rise to a threat of increase and outbreak of hepatitis. There are such problems there that there is cause for concern that this disease might become even more active.

1337 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Has the radio telephone exchange in Katherine been adversely affected by Telecom Australia's austerity drive?

ANSWER

I would be surprised if it had not; everything else has. I will check up, however, and find out if this is the case.

1338 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can he indicate whether funds for rural reconstruction are included either directly or indirectly in the 1976-1977 Budget?

ANSWER

The question anticipates some comments which I will be making later in the day on this subject. The short answer I think is, that yes, funds for rural reconstruction are included in the 1976-1977 Budget for the

whole of Australia and for the Northern Territory. In the case of the Northern Territory, the funds, I believe, are quite inadequate.

1339 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Can he say why all export abattoirs have now to be built to the standard specified for the US market? Will he make representations with the view to the acceptance by the Department of Primary Industries of a lesser standard so that Northern Territory beef producers may take advantage of eastern markets?

ANSWER

Once an abattoir is licensed for export, then it is licensed for export to any country whether it be Russia, Japan or North America, to name 3 of our principal markets. However, the United States market far outweighs in quantity all the other markets put together. The import certificates for the United States require that the works be licensed not only under the Australian licences but under United States licences. It follows that the policy has been adopted to have export meatworks come up to this standard. However, some works do not seek an export licence. I think Meneling is a case in point and there are a number of other provincial works around Australia which do not have to comply to the full extent with the United States standards even though in most respects those standards are quite reasonable and pretty close to what the community at large would now expect to be the standards of sanitation and meat hygiene under which meat would be processed.

1340 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Are the health authorities taking any steps to reduce the two year waiting period for dental appointments in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

At Alice Springs, there is an approved establishment of a dental superintendent and two dental officers. The existing staff is a dental superintendent, who is presently on leave, and 3 dental officers along with 4 positions for dental therapists with 4 persons occupying those positions. The establishment at the moment is fully met. There is a considerable waiting list for dental services at Alice Springs. That is a matter of concern but I am unable to answer the member further.

1341 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

I would like to ask this question following a reply yesterday in relation to the ring seal in the Alice Springs high pressure reserve tank. Is the ring seal design that was used in this tank the same as that used by the South Australian Engineering and Water Supply Department? If it was the same, has the Engineering and Water Supply Department in South Australia experienced the same rate of failure as that which has been experienced by the tank in Alice Springs and, if so, why was the same design used?

ANSWER

I would have to get the information from the department and from the water supply authority in South Australia. I will endeavour to do so this sitting.

1342 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

How many people are actually working on processing the 6% concessional home loan through the Home Finance Trustee's Office?

ANSWER

There are 16 people engaged in the task.

1343 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he supply me with any details, if any, of incentives to mining and oil companies announced last night in the budget and what effect will this have on the Northern Territory exploration?

ANSWER

I will answer that later in the sittings.

1344 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it a fact that people who were owner occupiers pre-cyclone and who have no children are being told they can only apply for the $15,000 loan?

ANSWER

This is the first occasion that this matter has been brought to my attention. I am not aware of any people who are owner occupiers who would under my understanding not meet the eligibility criteria for the full 6% loan concession scheme. I will certainly take the matter up with the Home Finance Trustee and advise the member further.

1345 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Does he have any information regarding the review of the Mental Defectives Ordinance?

ANSWER

Drafting instructions for a Mental Defectives Bill have been issued some 6 weeks ago. I am now awaiting the bill from the draftsman. I was hopeful that it would be here at this session but, as it is rather a complex matter, it will not be ready until the October session.

1346 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise what the Majority Party's proposed action is concerning the Northern Territory Housing Commission homes sales scheme?

ANSWER

Members will recall that at the last sitting of this Assembly, on the last day, I indicated that the Majority Party had prepared draft legislation to enable the reintroduction of a homes sales scheme for the Northern Territory Housing Commission. That draft legislation had been prepared by myself in consultation and conjunction with the Northern Territory Housing Commission. It was necessary for me to refer it to the Government for consideration of a number of the principles.

I indicated at that time that the states and the Commonwealth were currently reviewing the arrangements that applied to the financial aspects of the 4% funding for housing commissions throughout Australia; those principles of course are applied to the Northern Territory Housing Commission just as much as they are in the states.

In the month between our meetings, I have referred this legislation to both the Minister for the Northern Territory and to the Secretary of the Department of Environment, Housing and Community Development. I have received advice from both the Minister for the Northern Territory and the department, that there are several - bugs, if you like - in the legislation that I have had drafted that still need further review.

The Minister for the Northern Territory said in his reply:

> *However, there are some fundamental financial aspects in the bill which have not yet been fully assessed, and undoubtedly Treasury will need to be consulted. Preliminary discussions have been held with the Housing Commission and I would see it as desirable that areas of concern be resolved initially between the commission, my department and the Treasury. I am aware of the urgency and my department will be continuing these discussions to resolve any anomalies which could affect the operation of the scheme. I see it as desirable that all obstacles be cleared prior to the enactment of legislation which could give effect to a home sales scheme, but I will leave to your judgment the question of when a bill should be introduced.*

In the reply I received from the Department of Environment, Housing and Community Development they also raised several specific matters of my proposed bill, and as this has only come to hand in the last week, I have not had the opportunity to discuss it fully with the draftsman or with my legislative advisers. It is therefore not my intention to introduce a bill at this sitting. However, I am hopeful and confident, and it is certainly the intention of the Majority Party, to introduce a new scheme at the next sittings.

1347 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Is he aware that jenny crabs are being sold in large numbers in Darwin? If he is aware, is it his intentions to limit their taking and sale as is done in Queensland?

ANSWER

I was not aware of this situation until just now. I will inquire into the matter and take advice from the Fisheries Branch to see whether some form of control is needed. I am not personally aware of the life cycle of the crab as far as reproduction is concerned. We know that other female crustacea, for example prawns, have a huge rate of egg laying of something like 200,000 eggs for each female per year. Therefore, there has never been any requirement to try to draw the line between male and female in the case of that particular group of crustacea but it may be a different situation in the crab world. I will certainly look into it and, if necessary, see that action is taken.

1348 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH -

All members are aware of the appropriation statement yesterday presented in the budget papers. Does he feel that the staff salaries and Tourist Bureau expenses as stated which approximate $490,000 to earn an estimated commission income of $85,000 is a reasonable economic proposition? If he does feel that that is the case, what action can be taken to improve the revenue earning capacity of the Tourist Board in the future?

ANSWER

I indicated yesterday that the amount of money consumed by the Tourist Board to collect $85,000 in commissions was not satisfactory and the board itself is concerned about this. It is not my position to direct the board in what they should be doing but I believe that they would welcome an inquiry into the internal activities of the board to determine whether the board should be involved in retailing of travel at all or whether the board should be involved in wholesaling of travel and servicing the industry.

1349 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise if any attempt is being made to introduce apprenticeships for boners and butchers in the meatworks and abattoirs of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Not to my knowledge. I ask the honourable member for Stuart to place this question on notice.

1350 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he yet advise as to the terms and conditions of the proposed reintroduction of the government home sales scheme?

ANSWER

I presume the honourable member would be aware that there has been no variation to the scheme in Northern Territory centres other than Darwin and that at the moment the terms and conditions do apply outside of Darwin. The only current situation being held in abeyance is the actual Darwin situation. I am advised that no final recommendation has yet been made to the Minister in regard to the terms and conditions for the reintroduction of a government home sales scheme in Darwin. I am aware that the Department of the Northern Territory is

working on this advice and investigations are continuing. They have indicated to the Minister that the details of the report should be available to him by some time in August, and I was informed this morning it should be by the end of August. However, I would then presume that, in the normal course of events, the determination of any new policy would probably take some time, and I cannot therefore give a date on which the new policies may be determined.

In the telex which I referred to in answer to a previous question about the Housing Commission, the Minister has stated to me: "The introduction of sale schemes, including those for public servants, is a very complex issue. In principle, I agree that it is desirable for some avenues to be opened to enable tenants to buy houses and have no objection in principle to differential interest structures which may have to be adopted".

I believe there are also other complex issues in centres outside Darwin; for example, in Katherine, the current cost of building a government home is now exceeding $40,000 per house but this has not reflected in the market value which in that town is something in the middle 20,000s for the unit. I believe this is posing a problem to the people who are carrying out the investigations in the report that they will present to the Minister.

1351 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK -

I address this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is it a fact that neither the Arts Council for the Northern Territory nor Browns Mart are eligible for financial assistance under the Community Grants Scheme? Has the Arts Council of the Northern Territory financial liquidity of $100,000?

ANSWER

My advice is that, under community activities and the allocation of money by the Regional Grants Committee, the Arts Council and Browns Mart are not eligible. However, they are eligible under other schemes which may be provided by the department. I do not know what financial liquidity the Arts Council has but the department advises me that at the time of receiving application for a grant the Arts Council did provide a balance sheet with quite a healthy financial liquidity. However, I have not examined the balance sheet and I would not like to comment further.

1352 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER -

Have you received a reply from the Minister for the Northern Territory regarding his approval for our delegate to attend a Commonwealth Parliamentary conference to be held in Mauritius later on this year?

ANSWER

I sent a telegram to the Minister on Thursday last; I have not received a reply.

1353 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission board approved the apparent change in program which will allow the reconstruction of Essington House as a multi-use facility including security?

ANSWER

I did indicate in question time the other day that I wished to restudy the minutes of the Reconstruction Commission meetings with regard to this particular aspect. In my reappraisal of those minutes and looking at the budget papers, I noted that there is provision for 2 facilities, one in Darwin and one in Malak. I presume the one in Darwin was for the original proposal presented to the commission for a new facility at Berrimah. There has been discussion with regard to the utilisation of Essington House and whether an assessment should be made of what additional facilities might be needed. In fact, the paper considering this at the Reconstruction Commission was deferred for further consideration. I am not aware that any further consideration has taken place by the commission.

1354 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

This question is asked on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Can he advise the reason for the delay in granting mining leases to Mt Isa Mines at McArthur River?

ANSWER

I believe that the 12-year saga of issuing these leases is about to come to an end this month. In fact, the letter of agreement between the Government and the company is being signed and the Minister will issue the leases this month.

1355 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware that the Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory issued a press release saying that the decision had been taken and that Essington House was to be reconstructed? If he is aware of this statement, can he give me an assurance that that statement is not a fait acompli until approval is given by the DRC?

ANSWER

Again, as I indicated several days ago, there is no way that I would speak for Mr Dwyer and I am not aware of the totality of his actions. I am not aware of the particular press statement that the honourable member refers to. However, I do agree that any decision with regard to a capital work or civil work project in Darwin is the total prerogative of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

1356 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

My question concerns the sealing of Stuart Highway. Is he aware that, in the budget announcement the night before last, the section of Stuart Highway in the township of Alice Springs from Smith Street to Stuart Highway foothills will be sealed while that section from Shell Corner to Smith Street has been apparently forgotten? Will he seek to have this decision reviewed?

ANSWER

I will seek to have that decision reviewed.

1357 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

Will he obtain and table in this House a structural report on the Nightcliff High School, bearing in mind that it apparently has been desig-

nated as a primary shelter and there is a school of thought abroad in the community which understands that this school has not been given a very good rating as far as structural integrity is concerned come another good high wind?

ANSWER

I will attempt to get that information.

1358 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he able to give me any information as to when Gunn Point Prison Farm will be reopened?

ANSWER

The Gunn Point Prison Farm, hopefully, will be opening in about one month's time or towards the end of September. The problem at the moment is that the Department of Construction has some upgrading work to do there, including the installation of some of the core units for staff accommodation. If the department is able to have this work completed by mid-September then the department should be in a position to have the Gunn Point Prison Farm open then. Some 15 new staff have been recruited and will commence duties on 30 August; this will bring the staff level of the prison service up to a level which will allow operation of both the Fannie Bay Gaol and the Gunn Point Prison Farm. An additional recruiting drive is anticipated before the end of this current calendar year which will further increase staff levels and, hopefully, allow further expansion of prison service activities.

1359 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Could he advise me the view of the Minister for Tourism on the promotion of tourism in Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

I would like to say that broadly it is the policy of this Party and I believe of the Government generally to promote tourism anywhere and everywhere, and in particular within Aboriginal communities, but the prime problem that we have had in establishing tourism in the Northern Territory has been with the people themselves, that the people are more reluctant to establish tourism than the Government.

1360 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING -

Have any plans been made by the Town Planning Board to accommodate the interests of off-road trail bike riding activities conducted in Alice Springs by the Junior Motor Cycle Club?

ANSWER

I am informed that plans for such a facility are not the responsibility of the Town Planning Board but rather of the Department of the Northern Territory. I will take the matter further with the Department of the Northern Territory to find out what submissions they have had from the junior motor cyclists with regard to the issue of any special purpose lease and if necessary I will relay this information to the member for Alice Springs. It may be in the best interests of that

community that he organise a round-table conference with interested persons in Alice Springs if there is need for this to be pursued further.

1361 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON -

Is it his intention, before the next general municipal council election in Darwin to amend the legislation to permit the reintroduction of the ward system for that election and subsequent elections?

ANSWER

The answer to that question is yes. The Majority Party does believe in the ward system for local government in Darwin and we will certainly be taking steps to ensure that that system does apply to the next general election in the municipality of Darwin.

1362 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

Can she inform me of the progress of the Stock Squad in respect to the Finniss River Wagait Reserve matter or in respect to other inquiries?

ANSWER

I cannot give any information in reference to those two particular issues that the honourable member has asked me However, I would ask that the question be placed on notice.

1363 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Could she, before the end of this sitting, obtain and table in this House the membership of the Churchill Fellowship Trust Committee, by whom they were appointed and their length of tenure?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to do so.

1364 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

What facilities are the Department of the NT going to provide for the training of prison officers?

ANSWER

The matter of training for prison officers is under active consideration by the Correctional Services Branch and, with the recruitment of an administrative officer in recent months, this program is being developed. The honourable member might be aware that about 2 months ago in an intake of only 4 officers for the first time an induction course was held. It is intended that all future officers on joining the service will partake of an induction course. Admittedly, at the moment, it is of only a week but it is intended to develop this course. It is also intended to develop and promote an in-training service and training for officers but this depends on facilities which might be made available to the service in relation to staff and other activities.

1365 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Is he aware of a recent press statement by the Governor of South Australia, Sir Mark Oliphant, that Australia should mine and market

its uranium resource before it becomes a non-resource and, if so, was the Executive Member able to bring this statement to the attention of Mr Justice Fox?

ANSWER

I am aware of the statement to which the honourable member for Jingili alludes and I do believe that the statement was quite correct in saying that the resource we now have will be very quickly become a non-resource as the world is finding enormous amounts of uranium in a very short time at the moment simply because the world has been forced to look much harder for it.

As to the part of the question that relates to me bringing this to Mr Justice Fox's attention, I would not have thought that it was my position to do that as it would not have bearing on the environmental part of the inquiry which is what Mr Justice Fox is inquiring into.

1366 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): The honourable member for Port Darwin asked me a question relating to public servants being transferred to Darwin from Brisbane and their place on the housing list in relation to those who remained here since the cyclone. The information I have obtained is as follows. The points system as it stands was formulated by the subcommittee of the interdepartmental committee - how about that! - on housing allocations, which body endorsed the recommendation. The subcommittee included, as well as representatives of various departments and the Public Service Inspector, the secretary of the Council of Australian Government Employee Organisations. The subject of the officers transferred to Brisbane was discussed at some length and the committee considered that, as many of these officers were reluctant to go to Brisbane, irrespective of their living conditions and did not go of their own choice, they should not be disadvantaged on their return. Officers transferred to Brisbane and those remaining in Darwin receive one point for each month they were in or eligible for departmental housing prior to the cyclone and 2 points per month post-cyclone. Officers subsequently recruited to Brisbane-based positions receive only 1 point per month.

1367 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS (by leave): The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me a question concerning the details of the financial arrangements and conditions applying to Katherine meatworks between the Government, Northmeat and the Northwest Development Corporation. I have not got very much information which would satisfy her on this but I will give her what I have. The details of financial arrangements and conditions applying to Katherine meatworks between the Government, Northern Meat Exporters Pty Ltd and Northwest Development Corporation Ltd are confidential between the parties concerned. However, it has been announced that the Government has given favourable consideration to a request by Northern Meat Exporters Pty Ltd to vary the repayment schedule of the Government's loan of $1.4m. This decision enabled the company to operate the Katherine meatworks under a joint venture arrangement with the Northwest Development Corporation Ltd the managing company for the Wyndham abattoir. Since 1 June 1976 the Katherine meatworks has been managed by Northwest Development Corporation. The current industrial dispute at Katherine meatworks is causing considerable concern, disruptions in the killing operations

can only aggravate the already serious financial situation of the Top End cattle producers.

1368 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING (by leave): The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked a question with regard to the waterproofing of houses at Tindal. I am informed that the department will be double roofing, weather proofing 20 additional houses at Tindal before the wet season. This number will cater for the maximum number of public servants that will be housed at Tindal during the coming wet.

1369 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING (by leave): The honourable member for Nhulunbuy also asked me a question with regard to when landscaping would be completed in the area adjacent to Blocks 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. I am informed that it is expected that work will be completed in November 1976.

1370 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON (by leave): The honourable member for Port Darwin asked me what the cause of the scum matter floating in Darwin water these days is, and what was being done about it. The answer is that the algae in our water originates from the Darwin River dam; it is killed by chlorine treatment at the 19-mile process and after that treatment it turns white. I am advised the algae is not at all harmful and has no bacterial risk. When it is expected to stop is rather an awkward question. There is work being done to try to establish why the Darwin River dam is breeding this particular type of algae but it appears the case may be that it will only stop when something like $5m is allocated for a treatment plant and $0.5m per year is allocated to operate it.

INDEX TO QUESTIONS

17 August 1976 - 19 August 1976

(Second Week)


Abattoirs, apprenticeship (Vale) 1349
Abattoirs, standards (Withnall) 1339
Aboriginal land rights legislation (Tungutalum) 1314
Adoption services (Lawrie) 1327
Alice Springs -
  Bradshaw School and Yirara College (Vale) 1309
  dental treatment (Vale) 1340
  Stuart Highway, sealing (Vale) 1356
  trail bikes (Manuell) 1360
  water pressure (Manuell) 1307, 1319, 1341
Ayers Rock tourist village (Manuell) 1295
Bali, foot and mouth disease (Kentish) 1324
Barcar Holdings, allegations (Manuell) 1305
Bathurst Island, police station (Tungutalum) 1322
Budget, incentives to mining and oil companies (Vale) 1343
Caravan parks on private land (Steele) 1325
Churchill Fellowship Trust Committee (Lawrie) 1363
Councils and Associations Bill (Tungutalum) 1304
CPA, delegate to Mauritius (Dondas) 1352
Crabs (Lawrie) 1347
Darwin Harbour, small boat facility (Everingham) 1306
Darwin Hospital, accoustics laboratory (Manuell) 1328
Darwin water supply (Withnall) 1315, 1370
Detention centres for juveniles (Dondas) 1299; (Lawrie) 1303, 1353, 1355
DRC, detention centres for juveniles (Lawrie) 1303
Emergency Services Organisation (Lawrie) 1330
Essington House, reconstruction (Lawrie) 1353, 1355
Government buildings, landscaping (Ballantyne) 1335, 1369
Government home sales (Lawrie) 1311, 1334, 1350
Government housing, transferred public servants (Withnall) 1366
Fenton flats, reconstruction (Steele) 1298
Groote Eylandt, resident doctor (Kentish) 1302
Gunn Point Prison Farm (Dondas) 1358
Hepatitis, incidence in Darwin (Everingham) 1336
Home Finance Trustee, loan processing (Dondas) 1342
Home owners, $15,000 loan (Lawrie) 1344
Housing Commission, sales scheme (Vale) 1346
Juvenile offenders facilities (see Detention centres)
Katherine -
  burial of destitute persons (Kentish) 1317
  Cemetery Corner (Vale) 1301
  Giles Street subdivision (Manuell) 1305
  hostel accommodation for teachers (Ballantyne) 1308
  meatworks, financial arrangements (Lawrie) 1367
  pensioners' homes, sewerage (Vale) 1313
  radio-telephone exchange (Vale) 1337
  Tindal, weatherproofing of homes (Ballantyne) 1318, 1368
Liquor legislation (Manuell) 1329
Local Government elections, ward system (Lawrie) 1361
Lot 2911 Fannie Bay (Steele) 1331
Ludmilla dump (Steele) 1296
Marrara Community Creche (Everingham) 1300
McArthur River, mining leases (Vale) 1354
Mental Defectives Ordinance (Dondas) 1345
Motor Vehicle Registry, road rule booklets (Manuell) 1332
Nightcliff High School, primary shelter (Lawrie) 1330, 1357
Nudity Ordinance (Dondas) 1297
Prison officers, training (Dondas) 1364
Qantas (Dondas) 1321
Rabbit Flat Roadhouse, incident (Vale) 1326
Reflectorised licence plates (Dondas) 1310
Regional Grants Scheme, eligibility (Manuell) 1351
Road safety Council (Vale) 1301
Rural bank (Kentish) 1333
Rural reconstruction, funds (Kentish) 1338
Seabright Crescent, parking (Everingham) 1323
Special school (Lawrie) 1316
Stock Squad, Finniss River/Wagait Reserve issue (Kentish) 1362
Taxi licences (Everingham) 1320

Tourism, Aboriginal communities (Tungutalum) 1359
Tourist Board, financial status (Manuell) 1348
Trade Practices Act (Dondas) 1312
Uranium, statement by Sir M. Oliphant (Everingham) 1365

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 13 OCTOBER 1976

FROM 10 AUGUST 1976

1197 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

1. As at 30 June 1975 and 1976, how many members were physically attached to the CIB Inquiry Section at -

   (a) Darwin
   (b) Alice Springs
   (c) Katherine
   (d) Tennant Creek, and
   (e) Nhulunbuy?

2. What support sections are available to the CIB, such as breaking, consorting and drug squads and how many members does each of these squads have?

3. Are any of these squads in the CIB to be expanded in the coming six months and, if so, by how many additional members and what new positions are proposed?

1199 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Is the Stock Squad of the NT Police presently functional?

How many members are there in the squad?

What vehicles are attached to the squad?

How many horses are attached to the squad?

How many cases has the squad investigated in the period 1 January 1976 to 30 June 1976?

How many kilometres has the squad travelled in the same period?

How many nights have members of the squad spent away from home on duty in the same period?

How many pastoral properties in the:

   (a) Darwin Gulf District;
   (b) Victoria River District;
   (c) Barkly District; and
   (d) Alice Springs District

has the squad visited in the past 12 months?

1375 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

1. What is the cost of supplying and installing a water meter on a residential block in Darwin and how much has been spent for this purpose in the last eighteen months?

2. What is spent annually on the maintenance of water meters in Darwin?

3. How many water meter readers are employed in Darwin and what are their total annual wages and allowances?

4. What are the other annual administrative costs to the Government for the collection of excess water charges?

5. What revenue is derived annually from excess water charges in Darwin on -

   (a) residential blocks; and

   (b) parks and recreation areas under the control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin?

6. What proportion of the total revenue from the supply of water is represented by the amount collected for excess water charges?

1376 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

1. Has the attention of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission been drawn to any instances of "jerry-building", in particular the structure in the course of erection on block 2911 Fannie Bay?

2. Was a "stop work" notice issued by the building Board in respect of the structure on block 2911?

3. Has the connection of water, installation of a toilet and shower room and the connection of electricity to the block been carried out since the issue of the "stop work" notice?

4. Were these services provided in conformity with the relevant regulations and the work carried out by licensed tradesmen?

5. Is it the intention of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to prosecute the owner of the block for any violations of the Building Code perpetrated in the last three months?

1377 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

1. How many T.B. tests were performed in the Northern Territory by private veterinarians and how many by Government veterinarians during the last three financial years?

2. How many brucellosis tests were performed by the A.I. & A. Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory during the same period?

3. What are the per kilometre running costs for vehicles of the A.I. & A. Branch?

4. What was the salary allocation of the Branch for eradication programmes for each of the last three financial years?

FROM 12 OCTOBER 1976

1481 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

1. What is the role of the Community Adviser in Aboriginal Communities?

2. What qualifications and experience are looked for in those seeking appointments to these positions?

3. What guidelines have been laid down by the Department for Community Advisers in the discharge of their duties?

4. Are regular assessments made of the effectiveness of the work of Community Advisers?

5. What criteria are used in making these assessments and by whom are they made?

6. Could an overall assessment be provided of the work of Community Advisers since 1973?

1482 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Are there any figures available for the number of vehicles which have traversed the following roads during the past three years and, if so, what are they?

(a) Yuendumu Road from the Stuart Highway turnoff to Yuendumu;

(b) Ayers Rock Road from the Erldunda turnoff;

(c) Plenty River Highway;

(d) Sandover Highway.

1483 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

1. What was the cost of sealing each of the stages of the Stuart Highway from Alice Springs to the South Australian border (excluding bridgeworks), and the mileage of each stage?

2. What is the name and location of each of the bridges, and what was the cost of each?

3. Has there been a contract let - or estimate completed - for the sealing of the Stuart Highway south of the South Australian border to Pimba, and does it include the bridgeworks in that section?

4. Has there been any traffic count between Port Augusta and Alice Springs; if so, with what results?

1484 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

What was the total quantity, and the value, of liquor sold -

(a) in the Alice Springs district; and

(b) in the Tennant Creek district,

during the last three financial years?

822 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

When will the rehabilitation of Administration Block 3, Mitchell Street, Darwin be completed and when and by whom will it be occupied?

ANSWER

Rehabilitation of Block 3 is completed and occupation by the Public Service Inspectors Office and the Attorney-General's Department commenced in June 1976.

1194 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

1. When will the children's creche be ready for occupancy at Gove hospital?

2. Will this centre be staffed and, if so, will the staff be employed full time?

ANSWER

Although the building is now ready for occupancy its use has been reviewed. The nursing situation at Gove Hospital has improved and the commercially-operated Kiddie Kare Creche has extended its hours and this is expected to meet the need from prospective nursing staff. The building can be used for storage of drugs and other medical supplies and so provide improved warehousing and stores accounting for this particular range.

1198 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

How many square miles of the Territory are taken up by -

(a) wildlife sanctuaries;
(b) unalienated Crown land;
(c) commonages;
(d) national parks; and
(e) fauna reserves?

ANSWER

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (a) | wildlife sanctuaries | - | 18,967 sq. miles |
| (b) | unalienated Crown land | - | 97,300 sq. miles (approx.) |
| (c) | commonages | - | 510 sq. miles |
| (d) | national parks | - | 818 sq. miles |
| (e) | fauna reserves | - | 176 sq. miles |
| | | | 117,771 sq. miles |

1281 Mr WITHNALL to Mr PERRON

1. Can he confirm that the sewer line in Doctors Gully is, and has been for some time, broken just beyond the low tide mark and at low tide raw sewage is discharged a matter of feet from the edge of the water?

2. What steps have been and will be taken to avert the threat to health posed by the sewage?

1372 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

How many juveniles in the age groups and for the periods shown were committed to the Alice Springs gaol during the years 1973, 1974, 1975 and in the period 1 January to 30 June 1976?

| Age groups | Periods |
|---|---|
| under 12 years | less than 1 month |
| 12 - 13 years | 1 to 6 months |
| 13 - 14 years | 1 to 12 months |
| 14 - 15 years | 1 to 2 years |
| 15 - 16 years | 2 to 5 years |
| 16 - 17 years | |

How were the offences for which the juveniles were gaoled categorized?

ANSWER

In order to prevent duplication the data has been supplied for the following periods.

Less than one month
One month to six months
Six months to twelve months
Twelve months to two years

During the 1973 Year

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Under 12 years | | Nil |
| 12 to 13 years | | Nil |
| 13 to 14 years | less than one month | 3 |
| 14 to 15 years | less than one month | 5 |
| | one to six months | 3 |
| | two to five years | 1 |
| 15 to 16 years | less than one month | 16 |
| | one to six months | 6 |
| 16 to 17 years | less than one month | 1 |
| | six to twelve months | 1 |

During the 1974 Year

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Under 12 years | | Nil |
| 12 to 13 years | | Nil |
| 13 to 14 years | less than one month | 2 |
| 14 to 15 years | less than one month | 7 |
| | one to six months | 2 |
| | six to twelve months | 1 |
| 15 to 16 years | less than one month | 11 |
| | one to six months | 4 |
| | two to five years | 1 |
| 16 to 17 years | less than one month | 5 |
| | one to six months | 2 |

During the 1975 Year

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Under 12 years | less than one month | 1 |
| 12 to 13 years | less than one month | 5 |
| | one to six months | 2 |
| 13 to 14 years | less than one month | 6 |
| | one to six months | 7 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 15 to 16 years | less than one month | 10 |
| | one to six months | 7 |
| | six to twelve months | 1 |
| 16 to 17 years | less than one month | 7 |
| | one to six months | 8 |
| | two to five years | 1 |

During the 1976 Year

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Under 12 years | | Nil |
| 12 to 13 years | | Nil |
| 13 to 14 years | less than one month | 7 |
| | one to six months | 1 |
| 14 to 15 years | one to six months | 1 |
| 15 to 16 years | less than one month | 2 |
| | one to six months | 3 |
| 16 to 17 years | less than one month | 6 |
| | one to six months | 5 |
| | six to twelve months | 1 |

However, it should be noted many of the juveniles were convicted of multiple offences and thus a distribution of the offence categories would be relatively meaningless without considering each individual's conviction record.

The categories or types of offences for which juveniles were imprisoned are listed as follows:-

Use Motor Vehicle Without Consent
Drive Without Licence
Drive Under Influence
Illegal Use of Motor Vehicle
Interfere with Motor Vehicle
Drive in Dangerous Manner
Rape
Carnal Knowledge
Carnal Knowledge of Female Mental Defective
Aid and Abet Carnal Knowledge
Aid and Abet Rape
Attempt Sexual Intercourse Without Consent
Aid and Abet Sexual Intercourse Without Consent
Indecent Assault on a Female
Aid and Abet Indecent Assault on a Female
Malicious Damage
Break and Enter and Steal
Attempt Break and Enter
Stealing
Unlawful Possession
Indecent Language
Assault Police
Resist Police
Escape Custody
Found on Premises Without Lawful Excuse
Breach of Bond
Give False Name to Police
Break and Enter with Intent to Steal
Aggravated Assault
Unlawfully Use a Horse
Fail to Give Name and Address to Police
Murder
Arson
Forge and Utter
Forge with Intent to Defraud
Fight in a Public Place

ANSWER

1. Yes.

2. Restoration of the Doctors Gully Outfall is included in the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's 1976/77 Works Program. An amount of $400,000 has been authorised. The project is to replace sections of the Outfall damaged by ships' anchors during Cyclone Tracy.

1282 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Are police trackers to be issued with replacement uniforms as required?

If so, (a) When were they last issued?

(b) When will they be next issued?

ANSWER

1. Police trackers are not issued with uniforms.

1282 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

(a) When is the next intake of NT Police recruits?

(b) What number of recruits is expected?

ANSWER

(a) 13 September 1976

(b) A maximum of 40

1284 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

How many people, not residents of Darwin at the 24th December 1974, have received the Home Finance Trustee 6% loan?

ANSWER

No loans have been made to persons who were not permanent residents of Darwin at 24 December, 1974.

1371 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

1. What progress has the Stock Squad made in its investigation of alleged branding of Finniss River and the Waugait Reserve cattle?

2. Is the squad currently carrying out any other investigations and, if so, what results have been achieved?

ANSWER

1. The investigation has been completed. On 13 August, 1976 a meeting was attended by all interested parties and the Government Departments involved and an agreement was reached. This agreement is now being implemented.

2. Yes. No results at this stage as inquiries are continuing.

1373 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Is any attempt being made to introduce apprenticeships for boners and butchers in the meatworks and abattoirs of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

A 4 year apprenticeship is available for Butcher/Slaughterman which includes such skills as boning. Related apprenticeships available areßbutcherSsmallgoods (4 years) and Butcher/Shopman (3 years).

1374 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

What are the criteria for the distribution, and who determines the amounts of money allocated to racing clubs in the Northern Territory from the revenue of the Betting Control Board?

ANSWER

Distribution of such moneys is determined by the Administrator's Council after considering Betting Control Board recommendations, pursuant to Section 94 KD of the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance.

1378 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

There was a recent public announcement to the effect that the Queensland Government had approved a plan for a national scheme to fix a minimum price for beef. Can the Majority Leader inform the Assembly what effect this will have on Northern Territory beef producers?

ANSWER

I cannot at this time indicate to the Assembly or to the cattle industry of the Northern Territory what effect this scheme will have on our producers. Honourable members will be aware that for some time, over the past 12 or 18 months, a number of efforts have been made around Australia to produce price support schemes for beef. Western Australia has a localised scheme which only relates to domestic production; so does Tasmania; and this Assembly some time ago passed a Beef Price Stabilisation Bill which has not received assent. The Queensland Government set up a special committee, I think about 5 or 6 months ago, to look at something which might have national application. That committee has reported to the Queensland Government and the Queensland Government has accepted the plan put forward. I have received advice from the Queensland Minister for Agriculture that the plan has been submitted to the Australian Agricultural Council which is the Commonwealth-State ministers' body and which would need to agree on any uniform or standard plan for the whole of Australia. A special meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council has been called for Friday of this week; I have been invited to attend and hope to do so.

I have seen a copy of the Queensland plan and it deals mainly with the principles. A copy was available to a meeting of the Cattle Producers Council in Darwin last weekend which I attended and that council came to the conclusion that there was insufficient detailed information to enable them to understand just how it would affect producers in various parts of the Northern Territory and they are seeking more information. I believe that this is probably what the Australian Agricultural Council will do also, try to seek some more information on this matter before making a decision on it. At the same time the Cattle Producers Council is writing to the Commonwealth Government indicating that if there is going to be any delay or doubt about the implementation of a national scheme the Minister for the Northern Territory be asked to re-examine the question of activating the Territory scheme which we processed in legislation some 8 or 9 months ago.

1379 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Has his executive assumed responsibility for the Housing Commission? Can he yet indicate if, when and how the sale of Housing Commission homes is to recommence in the Darwin area; and can he also indicate the terms and conditions for the sale of Government homes in the same area?

ANSWER

The honourable member will recall that at the last meeting of the Assembly I indicated that the Majority Party had under consideration draft proposals for the reintroduction of a homes sales scheme for the Northern Territory Housing Commission. I have, in the intervening period, pursued the necessary policy discussions with Government with relation to the terms and conditions of this particular scheme

and I hope at this session to be able to introduce that legislation. The original proposals in draft form do require amendment and will require additional effort in the next 2 weeks, but hopefully next week I will be in a position to take that one step further.

With regard to the reintroduction of Government employee homes, I am aware that a report has been submitted through the Department of the Northern Territory to the Minister, but I am not yet aware of any of the details or when the implementation will take place.

1380 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

Will he make a statement in the Assembly on the proposed transfer of executive functions to amplify the earlier press releases and answer some of the queries raised by the media and the public?

ANSWER

Yes, it is my intention to make such a statement and I hope to be able to do so tomorrow or Thursday. This will provide an opportunity for further discussion in the Assembly should members so desire.

On a couple of particular matters, it has been drawn to my attention that rumours have been circulating among some levels of the public service that personnel involved in the transfers will be dispossessed of their departmental housing and forced to go on a Housing Commission waiting list. This is quite untrue. Transfers will have no affect on their current housing situation or entitlements.

I would also briefly like to refer to an editorial yesterday in the Northern Territory News, a portion of which read as follows: "Dr Letts would have been advised to seriously discuss a new Northern Territory Public Service Ordinance with the public service unions before it was drafted". Drafting of the new Northern Territory Public Service Ordinance has not yet commenced. Discussions have been held with the public service unions. Last week with the Minister, representives of the 3 unions, the ACOA, The Fourth Division Officers Association, and the POA, we sat down and discussed some of the principles which would need to be included in any rewrite of the ordinance. Subsequently I had quite lengthy discussions with the secretary of the ACOA and I provided him with all the information which I have had up till now from the Public Service Board adviser on redrafting of the ordinance. So the ACOA secretary at this stage knows as much about the intentions as I do. It is intended, through the cooperation and courtesy of the Attorney-General that special draftsmen will arrive in Darwin next weekend and will be put solely onto the job of getting out the first redraft of the Northern Territory Public Service Ordinance and when that is available it will be discussed with the unions in depth before we proceed to final drafting and before we have a bill for introduction in this Assembly.

1381 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

It has been announced, I believe with his consent, that Commonwealth public servants transferring to the new Northern Territory Public Service will retain their right of advancement through the Commonwealth Public Service. If that information is correct and if that is the intention of the proposed legislation, will the same right of promotion within the Commonwealth Public Service be extended to people who are already in the Northern Territory Public Service?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to answer any detailed questions on the form of the Public Service Ordinance and the rights entailed therein at this stage nor will I be able to do so until I have at least a preliminary drafting. Questions on particular aspects remain to be answered but will be fully considered before anything is finalised here. The models which we have looked at with the unions for the preservation of entitlements are already with us. The changes in the Postmaster General's Department when the postal service was set up, the changes when the Australian Electoral Office was set up, provide models for the retention of the rights of Australian Public Servants when they move to a new authority, such as the one which is proposed for the Northern Territory.

1382 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware that at the public auction for land in Alice Springs last week, the shopping complex designed to service the new Racecourse West subdivision was turned in through lack of bids. Could he advise how the reserve price was determined, if it was a fair price and, if not, will some review be made to re-offer this block again so that the development of the block can take place at an early date?

ANSWER

I have been informed of the auction last week in Alice Springs but I ask that the question be placed on notice.

1383 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

What arrangements have the DRC made for the make-safe program in the coming wet?

ANSWER

A program for the clean-up and making safe of domestic and commercial buildings is currently being arranged jointly between the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the Corporation of the City of Darwin. Details of this program will be announced in the very near future.

1384 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

In discussions with the Commonwealth Government as to the new Commonwealth-Northern Territory relationship, would he press to have accepted by the Commonwealth a convention that at least such ordinances as those related to the activities to be controlled by the local Executive would receive assent according to the recommendation of the Northern Territory Executive Council without the intervention of the Department of the Northern Territory, the Minister or the Governor-General and, if he did have such discussions and make such points, what was the answer made by the Commonwealth Government?

ANSWER

I have not specifically pressed this particular point in recent discussions with representatives of the Commonwealth Government. It is a point which is made in the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report on the Northern Territory and there is a general acceptance of that report by the Government although it will be necessary at times to receive specific decisions on certain aspects of that report.

1385 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it true that the DRC have aborted their plans to install a temporary caravan park on Tiwi oval?

ANSWER

A special caravan park committee was set up by the Chairman of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. It has consulted and received representations from the community on the proposal to establish a temporary caravan park on the Tiwi oval. The deliberation of that committee was that the proposal for the Tiwi oval be abandoned and, at the last meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, this recommendation was endorsed by the commission.

1386 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON -

Can he advise me whether high tension wires are to be strung down the centre of Rothdale Road between Jingili and Moil using existing concrete power pylons and new iron power pylons to replace those blown away in Cyclone Tracy?

ANSWER

It is proposed to proceed with a new lattice steel narrow based tower system for all except two concrete power poles which are still existing and undamaged near one of the sub-stations.

1387 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

As the benevolent Australian Government has in its wisdom decided to delay the building of Dripstone High School for a year, could she advise how the overcrowding in high schools is to be met in the 1977 year? Is it to be done by way of zoning or, if not, what system will be introduced?

ANSWER

The subject of overcrowding in secondary schools in Darwin is currently under review by the Department of Education both locally and in Canberra and I hope to be able to advise the honourable member for Nightcliff later in this sittings as to developments.

1388 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

My question concerns the Department of Construction's 2 year time limit to rectify temporary internal falling tiles at the Bradshaw School in Alice Springs. After a 2 year wait, what steps will be taken and when by the department to effect permanent repairs?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get the information from the Department of Construction and pass that on to him in these sittings.

1389 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

The honourable member may be aware of recent census figures which indicated that Darwin's population as at 30 June 1976 was very close to pre-cyclone levels. He may also be aware of statements by the Chief Town Planner of the Department of the Northern Territory, Mr

Terry Brooks, to a Public Works Committee hearing on the Sanderson subdivision in 1973 that blocks would be required at Darwin East for sale to persons wishing to build homes in the Darwin area by 1977. Are there now plans to proceed with the development of Darwin East?

ANSWER

I have seen the census figures referred to by the honourable member. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has not taken any action with regard to the subdivisional activities to be pursued in the Darwin East area. However, consideration is being given to necessary extension in the Sanderson area and I would hope that that would form part of the civil works program for the 1977/78 year. I will keep the honourable member informed of these developments.

1390 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer the executive member to an advertisement published in the NT News of 23 September 1976 by the Department of Construction. The tender closed on 19 October 1976 and the tender number was TD 703 for the supply of 3 only 4-berth sleeping caravans in Darwin and Alice Springs. Why is there this waste of taxpayers' money in view of the vast number of caravans that are available at the two-and-a-half mile depot?

ANSWER

My attention has been drawn to the calling of tenders for the supply of 3 caravans by the Department of Construction. I am informed that these are special vans used in construction and road work camps throughout the Northern Territory. They are frequently towed over very rough terrain and this includes deeply corrugated surfaces. These vans must be as robust as possible and have high ground clearance. They will have a welded steel frame, aluminium external cladding and heavy duty cross brace chassis etc.

1391 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he provide any information about the construction activities of the Northern Territory Housing Commission in Darwin since Cyclone Tracy? Is any information available with regard to the tender prices now being received for new homes?

ANSWER

The latest information that I have been supplied by the Northern Territory Housing Commission is very pleasing with regard to damaged homes. Contracts have been let for some 266 houses and of these 108 have been completely restored and handed over. With regard to new housing, contracts have been let for 661 houses of which 282 have been handed over to date. The Housing Commission has also informed me of an interesting development with regard to the tendering - homes are now costing some $5,000 to $7,000 less than the initial tenders that were received in the hectic period following the cyclone.

1392 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise me when an ordinance for the control of electrical contracts to bring them into line or into closer uniformity with southern states is likely to be brought into this chamber?

ANSWER

The proposals for this legislation are being considered by the Majority Party at the moment. I am not too sure when it is likely to be presented in the House, but as soon as I get this information, or as soon as I am able to get the necessary approval through from the party, this legislation will proceed. I would anticipate it to be early next year.

1393 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN -

Could he advise me the situation that Connair presents at the moment?

ANSWER

That could be answered very simply in one word - hopeless. There does not appear to be any satisfactory action taking place with regard to the Connair dispute. I have spoken to the Minister's office this morning. Mr Peter Nixon met with the pilots on the weekend in an attempt to try to solve the problem of the national airlines overflying Alice Springs. I do not believe it was all that fruitful; it still seems to be a standoff situation. The Minister is in a position where he cannot intervene terribly strongly at the moment. The situation with Connair itself I believe that it is a perfect example of people going to extremes to get a result, with the result that nothing is happening. In fact from day to day it is getting worse.

I will be trying to talk to the Minister again today to find out what the Government intends to do regarding Connair, because it is quite obvious to everybody who lives in the Northern Territory, and particularly to those people who are serviced by that airline, that we just cannot afford to sit back and see the airline go out of business even though there has been some suggestion in some quarters that other airlines can possibly handle the job. I think Connair is something that has been with the Territory a long time and I would certainly be loath to see the organisation and the service which that airline has given to the Territory disappear for good. Hopefully, the Federal Government can intervene and take action which will either support the airline or certainly make it satisfactory for somebody else to give the same sort of service.

1393 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Why was the Darwin Regional Council van impounded and by whom?

ANSWER

I understand the van owned by the Darwin Regional Council for Social Development was seized by customs officers. I am not acquainted with the full reasons because that is a matter within their hands and I think it improper to discuss the matter here.

1394 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

Does the Health Department maintain figures of the incidence of venereal disease in the various Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory? Are these figures at such a level as to be a concern to the department? Could the department provide a table showing the location, number and ages of those suffering from VD together with figures of the incidence over the past 2 years and what special means have been taken and are being developed by the department to reduce the incidence of VD in these communities?

ANSWER

I will answer one part of that question now and the other parts later. The spread of the disease is a matter of concern to the department, and anyone involved in the community. This legislature has tried to assist by passing legislation in recent months. With regard to the other parts of the question, I will endeavour to have the information later in this sittings.

1395 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he aware of a recent TV program in Alice Springs in which a doctor of the Centralian Aboriginal Congress claimed that the Department of Health did not employ any Aboriginals in providing health care. Is this in fact the case?

ANSWER

I am aware of the television program which was shown in Alice Springs the other week and I believe it was shown here in Darwin last week. I was quite disturbed by some of the statements which were made by a doctor employed by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. His statement that the Department of Health does not employ any Aboriginal persons is a complete misrepresentation of facts. In the community health services in central Australia, in the areas apart from the town itself, some 39 Aboriginal persons and some 27 European persons are employed in providing health care in rural areas of central Australia. Aboriginal persons are employed as health workers, hospital assistants, traditional healers and there is a fully trained Aboriginal nursing sister. In fact, there are more Aboriginal persons employed in providing health services to the rural community in central Australia than Europeans. Other statements in that program were also inaccurate.

1396 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Is he aware that the operator of the Mataranka telephone exchange with 15 subscribers receives $43 each week for 60 hours work?

ANSWER

I am aware that the operator receives that remuneration because I heard on a news item yesterday that the gentleman said that he was going on strike.

1397 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

I asked question 1159 on 2 June 1976. This referred to the commercial development proposals by the DRC for the Casuarina area. The executive member stated that a paper on this subject would be coming up at the next meeting of the DRC. Was the subject discussed and, if so, what are the proposals?

ANSWER

The town planning aspects of commercial development in the Casuarina area have been considered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and are still under consideration.

1398 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Has any decision yet been made concerning a financial grant to the Northern Territory Arts Council?

ANSWER

In spite of assurances by the Minister for the Northern Territory that a decision would be reached as soon as possible, I understand that no announcement has yet been made. I called the Minister for the Northern Territory and his permanent head this morning but I was unable to contact either of them and no-one in their office seemed to have any answers.

1399 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

In relation to a newspaper report that I read recently regarding the sale of the Taiwanese fishing boat by the Commonwealth Government for $6,000 and its catch for $1,000, can she inform me whether the Attorney-General's Department handled that sale?

ANSWER

No.

1400 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

I refer to a question I have asked on notice, number 1375, which appears on today's Question Paper. I would like to see if I can hurry this information along as I am very interested in speaking to it in the adjournment of this Assembly sittings.

ANSWER

The question from the honourable member for Casuarina is obviously asking for some quite detailed information and involves a considerable amount of research. I have had a talk with the department about when the answer will be forthcoming; it involves some research in the Department of Construction and in the Finance and Personnel Branches of the Department of the Northern Territory as well and I am informed that the complete information will not be available until about 22 October. However, I hope to conduct some research of my own during these sittings and make a statement on the water situation in Darwin later on during the sittings.

1401 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

I seem to recall 6 weeks or 2 months ago some statement being made by either the Federal Minister for Transport or the honourable Executive Member to the effect that a departmental inquiry or committee of inquiry would be set up to investigate all aspects of Northern Territory transport. What has happened to this committee?

ANSWER

The people that will be conducting the inquiry will be arriving in Darwin within the next couple of days. They will be in the Territory for several weeks. Initially, I believe, they felt that a quick trip to Darwin would provide them with the information necessary to come up with the answers to all our transport problems. I only have that information second-hand but I believe that, after some ex-

planation was given to them by an officer of the Department of the NT, the message came across loud and clear that they are going to have to spend more than just a few days in Darwin. They have responded by advising that they will be visiting all the major centres in the Northern Territory. I have been working closely with the Transport Planning Branch of the Department of the NT who are coordinating the exercise and I have passed on the names of organisations and individuals which have been given to me by groups and members of the Assembly. These names have been forwarded by the department to the Bureau of Transport Economics and I believe letters should now have been sent out to all the people who are interested throughout the Northern Territory and hopefully the bureau will speak to all these people. I have asked that, wherever possible, people submit a written submission so that the bureau can take this with them to make sure that their memories stay fresh. Hopefully, with the right information fed to it, the bureau can come up with the proper answers that are going to solve our problems. I anticipate, from the discussions that I have had and the information that has been passed on to me that the report should be completed around about the end of the year.

1402 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise whether it is the Minister's intention to delay any decision on the Darwin Trader until that particular committee has presented a report to him or will the decision be made, as was originally planned, by his own departmental committee; which I understand has recently reported to him?

ANSWER

I have spoken to the Minister on half a dozen occasions regarding the possibile withdrawal of the Darwin Trader from the run. Quite obviously the ANL line has not been operating satisfactorily and I believe the Minister has made it clear that he wants them to reduce the loss. I cannot understand the honourable member for Nightcliff's comment about his department but I guess she means that the shipping line has requested that the Darwin Trader be taken off the run. So far as I know, there has not been any recommendation to the Minister to take the Darwin Trader off the run. The Minister has advised me that the Darwin Trader will be retained and that any decision relating to its withdrawal, or anything to do with transport in the Northern Territory whereby the Federal Government has to make a decision, will be after the inquiry. I do not necessarily see that as meaning that immediately the report is brought down the Minister is going to say, "All right we will now take the Darwin Trader off," I do not feel that that is the attitude that he has. I certainly made it quite clear to him that if he takes the Darwin Trader off us he is going to have a fight on his hands. I think the Minister appreciates the fact that we need the Darwin Trader; however, he is reserving any judgments that he has or directions that he is going to make until he has a look at the inquiry report.

1403 Mr WITHNALL to Mr POLLOCK -

From what places in Doctors Gully are samples of sea water drawn for the purpose of assessing the degree of pollution of the harbour by raw sewage discharged in the vicinity?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find out at what exact localities these measurements are taken and advise the honourable member.

1404 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

Have the law enforcement authorities been able to locate or name the organisation in Darwin which assists in illegal radio operation with communist Fretilin forces in East Timor? If so, what is the organisation concerned?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to advise the honourable member later in the sittings.

1405 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Further to my question of the honourable Executive Member for Education and Law a short time ago regarding the Taiwanese fishing boat, can he advise me whether any department or branch which liaises with him handled the sale of that vessel?

ANSWER

To my knowledge, the Navy, the Department of Customs, the Attorney-General's Department, the Department of the Northern Territory, the Department of Transport and the Department of Primary Industry all had a vested interest in this operation. Which minister actually was responsible for effecting the sale I do not know, but I will endeavour to find out and clear up the mystery.

1406 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN -

Has he any plans or any talks going with the Minister for Transport concerning the rolling stock at the railway and the sheds? Are there any plans to lease them out to sporting bodies or what plans are available for people to find out about?

ANSWER

I have not had any discussions with the Minister concerning the Darwin facilities that belong to the railways. I have written to the Minister, but I have not received an answer as yet, concerning problems that exist in Katherine and we have asked that some of the facilities down there be used. I have not made any approaches in Darwin at this stage because I am waiting until the run-down has been completed. Then, an approach could be made through the Department of the NT to the Railways as to whether or not the facilities could be made available. I certainly expect that if the Railways are not going to use them, they would want to make sure that they are made available to the rest of the community.

1407 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

A week or so ago I was held up for 10 minutes at the Salonika crossing whilst shunting went on. I would like to ask the honourable Executive member if perhaps the railway is not going into mothballs after all?

ANSWER

I would like to ask the honourable member to let me forget about the North Australia Railways. That particular comment does concern me because one of the bright things that came out of this whole operation was that I was attending a function one night and I was getting a bit of treatment from the compere about the problems I had with the North Australia Railways and some kind soul in the audience called out, "He is all right, he is the man who made Salonika crossing safe". That has not even come to fruition as yet.

1408 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Does he have the current statistics for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's rebuilding program and is he also able to tell me how many of the new houses are waiting electricity connections?

ANSWER

I do have the latest statistics of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's housing program and they are as follows: 2,060 houses have been authorised of which 1,922 have commenced. These are of the order of 1,635 new homes, 121 rebuilds and 166 repairs. Of the 1,922 commenced, 830 have been completed and, as the honourable member asked, 109 are still awaiting power connection. With regard to flats under construction by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, authorisation has been issued for 179 of which 93 are to be new flats and 86 repairs. Of these, the entire 179 have commenced and at this stage 51 have been completed.

1409 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise me if she has any knowledge of arrangements for increased housing for school teaching staff at Alyangula, Groot Eylandt?

ANSWER

No, I have no knowledge of the houses approved for Alyangula. However, I will endeavour to inform the honourable member later in the day.

1410 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it a fact that patients evacuated from isolated areas by the Royal Flying Doctor Service have to pay for this cost themselves and are not covered by the Medibank levy? If this is in fact the case, will some decision be taken to review it?

ANSWER

Evacuations which are made by the Aerial Medical Service in the Northern Territory or the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Alice Springs are, as I understand it, basically free, except where claims are made against workers compensation or third party insurance, if there is a recoverable claim then the organisation makes a claim against the insurance companies. Persons who use the service are otherwise at liberty to contribute towards the cost if they wish to as a gesture or otherwise, but the services are generally funded from Commonwealth funds and contributions made by the public and I don't see really how Medibank gets into the evacuation side of it. If the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Alice Springs had its own medical officer who travelled around the countryside and consulted, then that medical officer would be able to claim for those consultations under Medibank.

1411 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS -

Federal Parliament has appointed David Hay to report on all the money spent on Aboriginal Affairs. Could the Majority Leader advise me when this report will be made available?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to advise the honourable member for Tiwi when, or even if, this report will be made available publicly, I did see an answer to a question in the Federal Hansard recently, a question of a similar type directed to Senator Webster. In his answer Senator Webster pointed out that the investigation and the report is an internal intradepartmental one and there is no commitment to make the report public. That would be a decision by the Prime Minister in Cabinet and, as far as I am aware, no such decision has been made.

1412 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it a fact that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission ordered the construction of 200 concrete and steel air-raid cyclone shelters from the manufacturers in Darwin and that they were made, and presumably paid for, at about a cost of $700 each and all except 8 are now to be scrapped?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission did purchase a number of cyclone shelters which have been made available for some considerable time to the public if they wish to purchase them. I believe that only 2 such shelters have been purchased. I am not aware of the statistical information or the financial considerations of this particular contract but I will obtain it for the honourable member.

1413 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Recently in the Gove Peninsula there was a rescue of 2 Aboriginal children. During that rescue by the police, it was found that they needed a police boat. Has any further attempt been made to purchase a boat so urgently needed in this area for the Nhulunbuy police?

ANSWER

Further attempts have been made. I have had discussions personally with the Minister for the Northern Territory, Mr Adermann, and with the permanent head, Mr Livingston, and have just completed a submission on the provision of a boat suitable for the waters around Nhulunbuy.

1414 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

There was a meeting of the CPC in Darwin last weekend and the question was asked whether cattlemen were happy with the Government's attitude towards the industry generally, towards education, communication, employment opportunities for Aboriginals, rural reconstruction etc.

ANSWER

I find the question somewhat naive. I wonder whether the person sponsoring the question and the person presenting the question have ever

found a primary industry organisation that has been happy with the Government. Certainly in my 40-odd years of association with primary industry and its organisation I have never found a state of happiness in relation to the government of the day. A number of matters were considered. I do not remember all the points offhand that the honourable member mentioned, but in relation to education, the cattle producers of the Northern Territory are extremely unhappy about the inadequate allowance for isolated children to attend schools and to have the same benefits as people who live in town or urban areas in the Northern Territory and the rest of Australia. And they are unhappy about certain discriminatory aspects of isolated children assistance. As far as rural reconstruction is concerned, they are still unhappy about that. As I have reported in this Assembly before, the funds provided for rural reconstruction during the past 18 months, both during the life of this Government and the previous government, are quite inadequate, something like 10 per cent of the need, and further representations have been made on that. I think that probably on all the points the honourable member mentioned representations are going forward to the Federal Government to indicate a continuing degree of dissatisfaction with the way that the Territory is being assisted and helped through its critical time. If the honourable member will give me the details of his question I will try to provide him with a more specific answer.

1415 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise me when it is hoped to issue a developmental plan for the Darwin district as far down as Noonamah?

ANSWER

There has been considerable work by the planning section of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in conjunction with the Department of the Northern Territory for an implementation of a new Darwin town plan and for the rural area adjacent. This matter however is frustrated by the lack of suitable legislation and it is the Majority Party's intention to work towards a new planning and development ordinance. This is a detailed and comprehensive task but it has been given high priority by the Majority Party and I hope, either later this year or early next year, to introduce that new ordinance. At that time I would see the implementation of a suitable plan in the area adjacent to Darwin.

1416 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING -

Does the Darwin Reconstruction Commission have any attitude on the involvement with the Reconstruction Commission or the Department of the Northern Territory with private developers in the development of the 32 square mile acquisition area?

ANSWER

As I mentioned earlier, there are no current proposals for development in the Darwin East area specifically. With regard to the utilization of private developers for subdivision work in Darwin, members will be aware that the Hooker group of companies do hold a development lease over the Brinkin area adjacent to Darwin and in the area further out from the Darwin East area, land holding is to a large extent freehold and will require development by private developers. It would be my hope that, once the new planning and development ordinance is implemented, we will see considerable development by

private developers in that area and certainly they will be given encouragement by the Majority Party.

1417 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns the proposed Araluen subdivision, I again remind the honourable gentleman that there are over 1,300 objections to that proposal lodged by the people of Alice Springs. What is the present position regarding the proposed subdivision?

ANSWER

The consideration of the Araluen town planning issue is currently before the Administrator's Council, and will be resolved by that council in due course. The Administrator's Council is considering holding a meeting in Alice Springs in the near future and I would anticipate that such a meeting would certainly give the council the opportunity to look further at the proposal.

1418 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

On 12 August, I asked the honourable executive member: "Because of the shortage of police in the Territory, has a motor vehicle registration branch been considered for the area of Nhulunbuy". I ask again whether a registration branch will be set up at Nhulunbuy police station?

ANSWER

I believe that I gave him an answer to this although I cannot recall the actual details of the answer. However, I will have a talk with the honourable member and see if I can recall the information that I supplied him.

1419 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he make any further statement on the commencement of the strata titles or unit titles legislation? I understand that we are waiting for regulations to be drafted.

ANSWER

I hope later this day to be able to inform the honourable member for Nightcliff of the stage which the preparation of regulations has reached. The legislative officer advising the Executive is at this moment attending a meeting about the matter.

1420 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN -

I refer the honourable member to the dirt heaps out at the two-and-a-half mile depot. We have been promised for many months that these dirt heaps will be removed. Will the dirt heaps be removed and when?

ANSWER

You may recall that this question has been asked previously. I made approaches to the DRC and was advised that it was the intention of the department to discontinue the use of the depot as a storage area for various kinds of road making material. Nothing took place and in fact the situation seemed to continue pretty much as normal. I have been in touch with the associate director of the Department of Construction who has responsibility for these dumps and he has advised me that the Department of Construction has made a decision not to utilise this area any further. However, it will be some time before the dirt heaps that are there are depleted. They have no intention of bringing in any new material so the residents of Ludmilla can expect to have this problem alleviated.

1421 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

I remind her that a bill was passed as a matter of urgency to allow insurance payments to people who were due these payments by companies which had become insolvent. The legislation passed unanimously and was never assented to. I have asked about it at every sittings and I ask if she can advise as to whether other legislation is to be introduced as this matter is causing great hardship to a number of people?

ANSWER

The matter is now under review.

1422 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

An additional $25m is to be allocated to Aboriginal affairs. Can he advise in which areas this money will be spent.

ANSWER

I did note the announcement made yesterday in parliament by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Viner, that an additional $25m has been allocated for Aboriginal spending in Australia. I contacted his office last evening but unfortunately he is unable to give a breakup of that amount of money or say how much will be coming to the Northern Territory and on what the money will be spent. However, he was able to tell me that the money will be spent in 3 areas: Aboriginal housing, Aboriginal employment and Aboriginal enterprises. I would

hope a good deal of it will come to the Northern Territory to continue the many housing projects and block developments which have been initiated over recent years.

1423 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

Does any table under Medibank provide for dental benefits and do private health funds provide for dental coverage?

ANSWER

At this stage, no table under Medibank private or any of the Medibank schemes provides for dental coverage. There are some private funds which do provide for dental coverage. However, members of the public should be warned that this applies to dental treatment by private practitioners only. If you take out a medical benefit table including dental coverage you go to a clinic operated by the Department of Health, then you cannot claim that benefit. It is a ridiculous scheme.

1424 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Last October, he indicated that the delay of 3 weeks in the processing of final payments of carry-on finance to cattlmen was quite unwarranted. Is he aware that, in October 1976, the delay has been extended to between 4 to 5 weeks?

ANSWER

No.

1425 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

What is the situation regarding the new gaol at Berrimah?

ANSWER

I understand that the Minister has given instructions to the Department of Construction to go ahead with detailed planning for the new gaol at Berrimah. An environmental impact statement has been prepared in relation to the site. This has been presented to the DRC and the DRC has referred it to the Department of Environment for necessary processing by that department. I am still quite hopeful that work on the new prison at Berrimah will commence at the beginning of the next financial year at the latest.

1426 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

Is it anticipated that the new gaol at Berrimah will be built with hard labour or union labour?

ANSWER

I think it will be a combination of both. It is hoped that the initial structures of the prison and so forth will be built under contract but as much work as possible, including such items as the perimeter fence and associated light work that will be available in the confines of the prison grounds and perhaps some work in relation to the sewage treatment plant, might be able to be effected by prison labour. This is a matter which is being considered by those responsible for the planning of the new prison.

1427 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr POLLOCK -

When is the report of the committee set up by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to inquire into the future of the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee expected to be available?

ANSWER

My understanding was that the report of the committee set up to inquire into the NACC was to be available in late August or at the end of September; I am not sure which month. At the moment I do not know what the situation is in relation to the report. However, I will make an inquiry with the Minister's office and endeavour to advise the member later in this sitting.

1428 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

As a result of the resignation of the Mataranka exchange operator, what action has been taken to install an automatic telephone system at Mataranka?

ANSWER

I do not have the information available. I will approach the Telecommunications Department to find out what information they can give me and I will pass it on to the Assembly in these sittings.

1429 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise what plans are in hand for the construction of a preschool centre in the new Racecourse Subdivision?

ANSWER

No, I cannot advise what plans are under way at the moment. However, I will endeavour to obtain the information for the honourable member today.

1430 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she aware that the reply she gave me, I think at the last sittings, concerning the rebuilding of Nightcliff Primary School is no longer valid and that the projected plans for that building have apparently been scrapped because of cost? Can she, as a matter of urgency, discuss with the Education Department and the DRC all moves necessary to ensure that the school is rebuilt on schedule?

ANSWER

Yes, Mr Speaker, I was aware that the plans to rebuild Nightcliff Primary School had been changed somewhere along the line. I had discussed the matter with the Minister for Education, Senator Carrick, who has asked me to prepare a paper for him.

1431 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH -

Who went on a recent tourist promotion trip to the southern states? What was the result of the trip, and who paid for the expenses of the accompanying people?

ANSWER

The recent trip inaugurated by the Tourist Bureau to send Northern Territory tourist industry and Tourist Board representatives to the southern states consisted of the Chairman of the Katherine Tourist Promotion Association, Mrs Sylvia Wolf; a member of the Tourist Board representing Alice Springs region, Mr Len Kelly; the member of the Tourist Board from the Darwin area and representing the Darwin Tourist Promotion Association, Mr Fred McCue; the Darwin Manager of the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau Office, Mr Ron Balch, and both myself and the Chairman of the Board, Mr Reg Harris, met with the contingent in Sydney and Melbourne.

The activities of the promotion tour involved a one day visit to Perth, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. In Perth, the board members and tourist industry representatives consulted with 60 people from 25 different travel agencies. In Melbourne, they consulted with 102 people from 36 different travel agencies. In Sydney, 49 people attended 2 seminars involving 22 travel agencies. And in Brisbane, 70 people attended 3 seminars and they represented 29 travel agencies.

The functions that the board conducted were very simply an audio-visual presentation of Northern Territory destinations and facilities. Most interest was shown by the agencies in the southern states of the amount and quality of accommodation that is available in the Territory. They were very keen to know the exact position of Ayers Rock facilities and they showed great enthusiasm for the tours of Katherine Gorge.

The third part of the question was "who paid?". The trip was sponsored by Ansett, who provided the air fares. The Territorian Motel Group provided the accommodation, Avis provided the transport in the respective cities and the individuals gave their time.

1432 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK -

Has the recruitment of medical officers in the Northern Territory been made easier by the recent increase in salaries and, if so, has the Darwin Hospital now reached its full complement of medical officers and others? Has the Gove Hospital been considered also and will they have their full complement in the next few months?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question in detail at this stage. However, I am told that the recent increases in salaries and conditions for medical officers has made it a lot easier for the department to recruit staff. It is hoped that, at the beginning of the next calendar year, the staffing situation will be greatly relieved. There will be a number of new medical practitioners joining the service and this will alleviate the situation at Darwin and at other centres in the Territory. If I can get some more information for the member later in the session, I will.

1433 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Does he have further information about the prospect of introducing a licence for abattoirs of less than full export standard who already export to countries overseas other than the United States?

ANSWER

I did broach this matter with the Minister for Primary Industry during a recent meeting I had with him in my electorate and he undertook to have a look at the matter. I will be seeing the Minister again on Friday this week and I will check with him whether any progress has been made in this consideration.

1434 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise the likely date of appointment of a commissioner or commissioners to conduct the proposed inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to make an announcement which I believe will come from the Administrator in the near future as to the commencement of the inquiry initiated by this Assembly some 12 months ago. I can inform the Assembly that everything is now known except the commencement date. The commissioners have been approached, have agreed to participate and will be available in the near future. The exact starting time has not yet been fixed and as soon as that is known I believe the Administrator will make an announcement.

1435 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS -

Will he take up urgently with the Minister the matter of establishing a contributing superannuation scheme for members of this Assembly on the general lines of the scheme operating in Federal Parliament?

ANSWER

The matter has already been taken up with the Minister. The member for Finance and Community Development has been handling this and he may be able to give the honourable member further information on the matter.

1436 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

I refer to statements made from time to time in this House concerning a review of the liquor ordinance and a liquor commission. Can he give any indication as to when this will take place?

ANSWER

As I have reported to the House before, the executive has approved basic principles and guidelines for that legislation. We have asked the Minister to provide staff to assist us in preparing the detailed papers necessary to prepare drafting instructions but that assistance has not been forthcoming. Until it is, we are just not in a position to go ahead and effect the reform to that law that we want. Only 2 days ago, I telegraphed the Minister's office asking what he is doing about our request to provide staff to assist us in preparing drafting instructions for that legislation. When those instructions are prepared, the next problem will probably be the drafting.

1437 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

My question relates to the Northern Territory bus service operating in Darwin. I have been somewhat concerned by the lack of patronage of this bus service - oh no, I have not been using my leather pass too

much and I certainly have not seen the Majority Leader riding down to the 11 mile on it either. But the bus service seems to operate on rather inconvenient routes for its patrons and also not always at convenient times. I ask the Executive Member whether he is taking any steps to reschedule and re-route the bus service so as to make it more attractive to its patrons?

ANSWER

The situation with bus services in Darwin is that nobody seems to be able to come up with the right answers to satisfy everybody. The bus services are running on a fairly high subsidy and I have been having discussions with the department about the rationalisation of the bus services. The department is looking at the possibility of trying to rationalise the service. The main problem, as mentioned by the honourable member for Jingili, is that the services are not patronised to a great extent and, while this does form an excuse to curtail the service, consideration does have to be given to those people who have no other means of transport. I will be having some further discussions with the department and I would expect within the next week or so that they will be making an announcement on some changes to some of the routes in Darwin to try to rationalise the service.

1438 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING -

It seems to be clearly the legal position that members of this Assembly are not covered by any workers compensation provisions at all. Would the honourable member look into this matter and see if something can be done?

ANSWER

The matter of superannuation and disablement benefits for members of this Assembly has been raised in discussion with the Minister for the Northern Territory. He has sought from me a submission for presentation to Senator Withers, the Minister for Administrative Services, who has control of the Remuneration Tribunal and who will actively pursue the matter on our behalf.

1439 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise me who is the person responsible for making the recent reallocation of positions in the top ranks of the Department of the Northern Territory due to the absence of Mr Dwyer?

ANSWER

The answer to that question, I believe, would be the permanent head of the Northern Territory. He would have the job of selecting his acting deputy in the absence of Mr Dwyer.

1440 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Can he advise if and when the National Highway Corridor Study Team for the Barkly region will be visiting Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I cannot give the honourable member for Stuart an answer on the Barkly area corridor investigation that is taking place. I will attempt to find out. The Department of Construction should be able to supply me with this information and I will pass it on to him at a later day in these sittings.

1441 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise when the Darwin Reconstruction Commission gave approval for the extension of the Mindil Beach caravan park northward, extensions which are being carried out by the Corporation of the City of Darwin? Has the commission a policy which he can make public on the alienation of foreshore areas for any purpose?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has no authority over areas of land that are vested in the care and control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin. It would therefore not be in its charter to have directed the corporation with regard to the reserve at Mindil Beach and the action that it has taken with regard to the northern or seafront extension to that caravan park. As a member of the commission, I raised the matter, and the environmental representations that had been made to me, at a meeting of the commission; however, the commission did not pursue the matter and it was left in the hands of the Mayor and the corporation to take whatever action they considered fit.

With regard to foreshores in the Darwin area there is a program between the commission and the corporation where they are cooperating on foreshore improvements and erosion measures and the DRC is also looking at tosse beaches that are outside the corporation's present control.

1442 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is it a fact that that area has not been gazetted and passed over to the control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin?

ANSWER

I do not have information with regard to the boundaries of any reserves in that particular area. However, I will seek it for the honourable member.

1443 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What organisation sponsored the training course for union shop stewards recently conducted at the Darwin Community College?

ANSWER

The organisation which sponsored that recent training course was the Australian Council for Trade Union Training. It is a part of an authority which was set up in 1975 by the Labor Government and has been quite active in the Northern Territory setting up an interim local council to get various people who would be allowed to attend training courses under the Trade Union Training Authority scheme. It is expected that some time in the future regulations will be formulated to that act in the Federal Parliament formally setting up a Northern Territory Trade Union Training Council which will consist of various representatives from trade unions in the Northern Territory. Its function will be to both conduct courses within the Northern Territory for unionists and also to select unionists who will be allowed to attend federal courses at the Clyde Cameron Union Training centre at Albury Wadonga.

1444 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

How many loans has the Home Finance Trustee approved to date? How many applications for loans are awaiting approval? What is the current

waiting time for such a loan? Can he confirm that the cut-off date for persons wishing to apply for the 6% concessional loan will be 31 December 1976?

ANSWER

Taking the last part of that question first, I can confirm that the cut-off date is 31 December 1976, as has been announced in a number of ministerial statements. I do not have the statistical information sought by the honourable member but I will seek it and make it available to him at this sittings.

1445 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS -

Could he advise me when the report by David Hay on Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Bill will be available?

ANSWER

I attempted to answer that question yesterday for the honourable member for Tiwi but since yesterday further information on the availability of this report is available, I ask the Executive Member for Social Affairs if he would look into the matter for us and perhaps he is in a better position to answer the question than I am.

1446 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he aware that, where people own land in the surge area and were not able to build for some 15 months and have bought property in a higher area, they cannot get the Home Finance Trustee loan until such time as the land in the surge area is sold? You cannot sell it on the open market and there is no money for acquisition by the Government. If he is aware of this ridiculous position, has he made any approach to the Minister to have it rectified?

ANSWER

A number of cases where people have subsequently built on alternative sites have been considered by the Home Finance Trustee. I am aware that in the initial stages of approval of loans by the Home Finance Trustee, a number of loans were made available with just book entry adjustments made for the value of the other property. I was informed recently, however, that there is now a policy where valuations and sales are being reviewed. I do not have the up-to-date information on this but I will seek it and make it available.

1447 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he considering the introduction of legislation for the legalisation of poker machines in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The matter of poker machines has been rearing its head rather frequently in recent weeks and there have been press reports and comments and so forth from people. Somebody seems to have it in his head that the executive and myself have decided that we are hell-bent on introducing poker machines into the Northern Territory in the near future. I can assure the public that the matter has not been discussed by the Majority Party or the executive and I personally have no intention of introducing any legislation to legalise poker machines. People who have an interest in this might well get their case together, and make submission to the inquiry which is to be carried out into the general

lottery and gaming provisions of the law for the Northern Territory.

1448 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK -

Can he tell me whether the incidence of treatment of persons using hard drugs such as heroin and so on by the Department of Health in the Northern Territory has increased in the last 12 months?

ANSWER

I am advised that hard drug addicts are rarely seen in the Territory in government hospitals outside of Darwin and most of those at the Darwin Hospital are treated at outpatients. The incidence runs at about 7 patients per week in the wet season but rises sharply during the dry to the point where 95 patients received treatment in September 1976. Most of those patients are transients and the majority are already on treatment commenced elsewhere.

1449 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he tell me which department handled the sale of the Taiwanese fishing boat recently for $6,000?

ANSWER

The Minister responsible for the sale of the Taiwanese trawler for $6,000 was the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Sinclair.

1450 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN -

Has he studied the Law Reform Commission's report on alcohol, drugs and driving and, if so, when does he expect to take legislative action to correct the problems inherent in our breathaliser legislation?

ANSWER

I received a copy of the report mentioned by the honourable member for Gillen and I am studying it. After reading the report, I will have discussions with Crown Law and the department and hopefully we can look at introducing legislation to solve some of the problems that exist in the Territory law with regard to the breathaliser.

1451 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Was there any assessment of value of the fishing boat in question and the catch, which I understand was sold for $1,000, obtained by the department or any branch, agency or authority of the Commonwealth Government before the sale of this vessel?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to provide an answer during these sittings.

1452 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The member for Arnhem asked a question about the law enforcement authorities being able to identify or name the organisation in Darwin which persists in illegal radio operations with communist Fretilin forces in East Timor. I am advised by the Northern Territory police that, in liaison with the licensing section of the Postal and Telecommunications Commission, on Monday 27 September 1976, they identified 2 persons who were operating an unlicensed trans-

ceiver from the mainland. The persons were Andrew Phillip Waterhouse of Epping, New South Wales and Stanislaus Da Silva who gave the same address as Waterhouse. It is believed the unlicensed transceiver was used to communicate with persons in Timor.

1453 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The member for Arnhem also asked about the Alyangula Area School. The provision of teacher accommodation in Alyangula is the responsibility of the Department of the Northern Territory who have advised that they have programmed tenders to be called for the construction of 4 houses at Alyangula for government employees in the 1976-77 financial year. However, both departments are aware of the current accommodation problems and officers from the Department of the Northern Territory Administrative Division have planned a visit in a few days time to investigate the teacher housing situation.

1454 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked a question with regard to cyclone shelters held by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. The commission purchased 212 concrete pipe shelters with steel doors. Twenty of the pipes were used and the remaining 192 have been offered to the public for sale at a cost of $447 each.

1455 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked in what places in Doctors Gully samples of sea water are being taken to assess the level of sewage pollution. I am advised that the laboratory tests are carried out on foreshore samples taken at various states of the tide in approximately 1 foot of water off the foreshore adjacent to Doctors Gully.

1456 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Stuart asked a question about repairs to Bradshaw Primary School. The Department of Construction has advised me that they intend to carry out these repairs over the Christmas holidays.

1457 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Is there any truth in the rumour that the Area 4 office of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission at Bradshaw Terrace Casuarina is going to close?

ANSWER

There is no truth in the rumour.

1458 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

What assistance will be available to parents in isolated areas to give their children access to appropriate schools?

ANSWER

I am advised that for basic boarding there is an increase of $150 and $500 will be available, The maximum additional boarding allowance will be $450, over and above the $500. The correspondence basic of $200 will remain the same. The correspondence reimbursement will be a maximum of $300, that is a rise of $150, and short term boarding will be $15 a week an increase of $5 a week.

1459 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Who will be paying for the repairs to the Bradshaw School in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I do not know for sure. I do not think the Education Department will be expected to pay for the repairs. However, I will have this confirmed by the Department of Construction and advise the honourable member later in these sittings.

1460 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

When will the next residential land auction be held in Darwin?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

1461 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

What increases will become effective in 1977 for the Aboriginal Secondary Education Grants Scheme and will a means test apply?

ANSWER

A means test will not apply in 1977 but one is being considered. Living allowances for junior grades will be $308 per annum, and that is an increase from $240. Living allowances for senior grades $440 per annum. Books and clothing allowances will be $250 per annum. A personal allowance for junior grades will be $1.50 per week and personal allowance for senior grades will be $3 per week. A boarding allowance for a boarding school will be $1,450 maximum, an increase of approximately $200. Hostel allowance will be $28 per week and private $20 per week.

1462 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK -

When will the Block 8 cafeteria be reopened?

ANSWER

I am unable to enlighten the honourable member any further than I have on previous occasions. I have written to the officer in charge of the Department of Administrative Services in recent days and asked what is going on but as yet I have not had a reply. I will advise the member in due course.

1463 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

What is the latest development in the Connair dispute?

ANSWER

I had some discussions last night with the Minister for Transport, Peter Nixon, and Senator Kilgariff in Canberra. There did not appear to be any major developments then except that the situation seemed to be getting worse. I rang again this morning and spoke to Senator Kilgariff who met with the Transport Minister at 1 am this morning and he feels quite confident that the proposed extension of the strike over the weekend by the national airlines will not go ahead. He is also confident that there can be arranged a meeting between Connair and the pilots on the weekend with the Transport Minister as the mediator. Hopefully, out of these discussions, the Government will give an indication that it is prepared to support the airline so that it can continue to run until such time that the interdepartmental committee has completed its investigation into the airline. If one can believe the reports, the chairman insists that he cannot run the airline on the same basis as before and the pilots have agreed to go back to work providing the status quo remains. Senator Kilgariff is quite confident that the extension of the strike can be averted and if the Government intervenes the airline can be assisted and operated until such time as the interdepartmental committee comes along with its findings.

1464 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS -

What action can be taken to overcome the restrictive effects of quotas laid down by the AMIEU to limit the export of live cattle from the NT? Does he agree that the greater use of the live cattle market can help overcome the glut of cattle in the Northern Territory which is having a number of serious consequences here?

ANSWER

Answering the second part of the question first, I do agree that the greater use of the live cattle market could help to overcome the glut in the cattle industry here. The effect of the overstocking is being masked to some extent by the good seasons we have had. However, should the current dry season be extended and there be a delayed wet or a light wet this year, the effect of that overstocking will become obvious in a very dramatic and pronounced way. The more cattle we can get rid of at this stage, particularly breeding cattle which is surplus to requirements, the better it will be for the industry.

To overcome the restrictive effects of the quotas established by the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union, the meatworks themselves have to agree that there are cattle surplus to requirements and that could not be normally killed through the meatworks. I believe that

the meatworks recognise clearly that we have got more cattle than they can put through in the current circumstances. This needs to be done and probably a figure set of 20,000 or 25,000 head or whatever is regarded as surplus to the meatworks requirements. The second thing that needs to be done is to have a direct negotiation with the executive of the AIMEU, which would have to be done in Brisbane or Sydney because they have not got a branch up here, in order to get them to adopt a reasonable and logical approach to the situation, in a similar way to that which the Western Australian branch has with regard to the export of livestock from Western Australia. I believe that this could be done; I do not accept the view that they are totally unreasonable men. In fact, I would be prepared to offer my services along with somebody from the cattle industry like Mr Bill DeVoss to have discussions with the AIMEU officers with this object in mind. This should be done as soon as possible and efforts made to reactivate the live cattle trade which, while it does have its difficulties and complications, could make a useful contribution to our industry at present.

1465 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Can she advise when the new School of the Air building in Alice Springs, presently under construction, will be opened and occupied?

ANSWER

I understand that the expected completion date is December of this year, 1976, and that the building will be occupied in early 1977. However, this is subject to the arrival and installation of the transmitting equipment.

1466 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

My question relates to what is commonly known as the "Northumberland" amendment to the Motor Vehicles Ordinance relating to the provision that was passed by this House in November 1974 to afford relief to persons who held compulsory third party insurance with companies which had become defunct or had defaulted through insolvency. I am holding a letter from a solicitor in this town who advises that a judgment of $5,097.25, plus costs, was obtained against a person insured with the Northumberland on 15 November 1974. The judgment has not since that date been satisfied and, that so far as this firm can see, the only relief for their client now to be obtained is to take enforcement, which I presume means bankruptcy proceedings against the defendant personally. This piece of legislation has been held in abeyance, awaiting Administrator's assent, for almost 2 years, and I ask the Executive Member what is going to be done to get assent to this legislation within the very near future?

ANSWER

I do not think that this legislation will ever receive assent.

Mr Everingham: Why did the Government approve it then?

Mr RYAN: I do not know why the Government approved it. All that I know is that the Government has had second thoughts on the implications of that legislation in as much as they are not prepared to foot the bill. I think that is to put it simply. We therefore have a situation whereby people who have been affected by insurance companies going broke are not left with a great deal of hope. The new legislation that I hope to introduce is still being prepared. However, I am having a

certain amount of lack of success with the provisions that the honourable member for Jingili and those people affected by the insurance companies that have gone out of business would like to see. The Government still is not prepared to accept the cost, and the insurance companies, quite obviously, are not too happy to accept losses that were incurred by another company which is now out of business.

I do not know what the answer is. I have had correspondence myself from various law firms around the town virtually along the same lines, although that is the first one I have seen whereby a decision has been made and somebody was unable to pay up. There are some much larger claims floating around which are going to cause various hardships to the people concerned. I certainly do not have any quick answer. We have no authority in the matter. Any retrospectivity that will be involved in the legislation that I hope to present will have to be either approved by the Government, inasmuch as they are prepared to accept some responsibility because they initially okayed the companies going into business, or accepted by the insurance companies. I cannot see them doing this. They are prepared to contribute to a fund in the future to cover any companies that go out of business but I think we are going to have a very difficult job in convincing them that they have got to look after the people that have already been affected.

1467 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING -

Can the Executive Member advise me what the Housing Commission's intentions are regarding the concrete houses that were part of a contract interrupted by Cyclone Tracy? The houses I talk about are situated on Trower Road between Ellengowan Drive and Bradshaw Terrace.

ANSWER

I am aware that a problem exists with regard to some 20 houses that were subject to a contract at the day of the cyclone. Ten of these houses were delayed for initial consideration with regard to rebuilding because of the 1975 early town planning constraints placed upon that area by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. That would not give encouragement to the commission in the early days to plan or consider any sort of rebuilding program. This procrastination in turn was further aggravated when the contractor for the erection of those buildings dissolved his partnership and therefore there had to be a negotiation out of the contract with the Housing Commission with consequential insurance problems. There now exists the further problem that engineering design must be modified on the plans of these buildings to ensure that their standards, particularly as to roofing, meet the new cyclone code. It is the intention of the Northern Territory Housing Commission to restore these buildings. However, it is unlikely that work will be commenced until the 1977/78 financial year.

1468 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

This question concerns a statement made at the Roads Conference in Katherine recently which indicated that road works on the Pine Creek/Cullen River Road may not go ahead this financial year. If this is so, could the Executive Member use his influence to have that money diverted to the Stuart Highway through the foothills north of Alice Springs?

ANSWER

It is pleasing to see the concern expressed by a member from the centre for a northern electorate. This section of road is on the program this

year and, in fact, does make up the majority of the money which has been made available in cash for the upgrading. That particular job, I think, has been allocated somewhere in the vicinity of $400,000 cash. However, the argument still exists as to whether the road should by-pass Cullen Creek to the extent that has been planned. The federal members have been pursuing the matter with the Minister for the Northern Territory. If the decision is made to once again have a look at the situation, this would mean that it would have to go back to the Parliamentary Works Committee because the hearings that were conducted last year into the second 3-year road program by the Parliamentary Works Committee decided that the arguments put up by the people from Pine Creek would not justify the re-routing of the road closer to Pine Creek. The only thing that has changed since then is the closure of the railway and of course this puts a bit of extra pressure on Pine Creek. I personally feel that the matter should be reconsidered and we are concerned that if it is reconsidered it would mean a setback on that particular contract of somewhere in the vicinity of 6 months which would mean that it would be impossible to spend the $400,000 cash allocated to that particular project. At that particular meeting, a wish was expressed that if a decision was made to have a look at the possibility that the road might pass closer to Pine Creek that the cash that is available be transferred to another contract and I hope that this is what would happen. But I have not heard anything further on the matter regarding the Pine Creek diversion. I will be contacting, most probably Senator Kilgariff because he is in close cahoots with the Minister for the Northern Territory to see if there is likely to be a decision on this matter.

1469 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr POLLOCK -

I have been told that the report on Aboriginal housing associations has been released in Federal Parliament. Can the honourable member advise how much money has been allocated?

ANSWER

The situation is that the report compiled by Mr Hay on government services provided by finance from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs was tabled in the House of Representatives and the Senate on Tuesday. Copies of that report are on their way here to Darwin now and hopefully I will have one later today or tomorrow. The report itself I believe is fairly general. In relation to money, the Minister made an announcement on Tuesday afternoon in the House that $25m extra would be available for Aboriginal Affairs for Australia and, as I reported to the House I think it was yesterday, this money is for Aboriginal housing, employment and enterprise. Just what the break-up of that money is as far as the Territory is concerned I do not know at this stage but as soon as that information is available I will advise the member.

1470 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

He has indicated that major highway street lighting is going to be upgraded and restored this financial year. Can he tell me if the section between the Casuarina shopping centre and Ellengowan Drive is going to be included in that?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the amount of money which has been allocated for upgrading of street lighting in Darwin and the resources that are available to execute work in the Darwin area are such that the portion

of major arterial roads that the honourable member refers to will not be in the program for this coming financial year. Depending on financial and resource considerations, it may not even be in the program for the following financial year.

1471 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TAMBLING -

Has he had any reaction from the public regarding the present extensions to the caravan park at Mindil Beach and has the public been informed that the work going on there will destroy the environment of the beach front? What plans are in hand to beautify that area after this work is carried out?

ANSWER

The area under development at the moment is under the care and control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin. The extension of the beach front side of the Mindil Beach caravan park is being undertaken by the corporation and I believe has received considerable publicity within the last month. I have received electoral representation from a number of people who are concerned about the environmental aspects of the extension on the beach side of the park and I have made these known to the mayor and the corporation.

1472 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH -

What does the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau intend to do with their property in Smith Street? Are they going to redevelop it or leave it?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the bureau intends to redevelop the property but it is subject to budgetary considerations. I will confirm that later in this session today.

1473 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK -

When is it anticipated that the new Alice Springs hospital will be completed and commissioned? Will staff establishment levels at the hospital be sufficient to service the hospital?

ANSWER

It is anticipated that the new Alice Springs hospital will be completed and handed over between 1 and 15 December this year. It is uncertain at this stage whether the Department of Health will actually commission the hospital and have it in use before Christmas or leave it till after the Christmas period and have it in operation in early January.

It is a matter of concern that the present staff ceilings and staff establishment levels that are imposed on the health service in the Territory are going to prove of some difficulty to the department in fully staffing the new hospital. Staff ceilings will also affect the 32 bed ward at Katherine that is expected to be in operation before Christmas and the 4 additional wards at the Darwin Hospital which are expected to be in operation before Christmas. To staff all these facilities within the staff ceilings at the moment is going to be difficult. I have taken the matter up with the Minister for Health and the Prime Minister, and we are hopeful that staff ceilings can be raised to such a level as to allow full staffing of all those facilities that I have mentioned as they come on stream.

1474 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

Can he give me any information about the planning or consideration of a bridge on the Roper River downstream from its junction with the Wilton River?

ANSWER

I have not heard of any proposal for the bridging of this particular section of the Roper River. In any discussions I had at the recent Roads Conference the matter was not raised. However, I will speak to the Transport Planning Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory to see if they have any long term plans with regard to the bridging of the Roper and will supply that information to the honourable member for Arnhem later in the sittings.

1475 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

I have another question about this Northumberland Insurance amendment. Is the Executive Member aware, and has he brought it to the attention of the Australian Government, that legislation of similar affect to the legislation passed in this House, to relieve persons in the default position, has been passed in the states of South Australia and Queensland and, I believe, in other Australian states? Is he aware that an estimate of $250,000 compiled from information obtained from legal firms in the Northern Territory as to the total cost to it of honouring this legislation was provided to the Australian Government in early 1975? And is he aware that the responsible member of the responsible department approved the legislation before it was passed in this House? If the honourable member is not aware of any of these matters, will he undertake to bring them to the attention of the department?

ANSWER

I was aware that legislation has been passed in some of the states to cover this provision. I am not aware whether or not there was any retrospectivity attached to the legislation. Maybe the honourable member for Jingili could inform me later on. I will have discussion with the member for Jingili and get some more details from him and will make an approach to the department on the matter.

1476 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

I refer to an article in today's "STAR" which alleges that in the Miss Australia Quest on the panel of judges was a detective who quizzed the girls on their knowledge of marihuana, whether they had smoked it, whether they knew anyone who had and, apparently, whether they could name the people who had. Is this a fact? Was it with the knowledge and consent of the Commissioner of Police that this person was on the panel asking these questions and could she also advise as to who chose the panel?

ANSWER

I will ask the Commissioner.

1477 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Casuarina asked several questions relating to statistical information on the 6 per cent concessional loan scheme of the Home Finance Trustee. I am advised that 703

loans have been approved since the commencement of this scheme. There are 440 loans still awaiting approval or which have been notified as lodgements for possible future loans. A great majority of these are still awaiting further information from the applicant and a large number have indicated that they are not interested in taking up the loan until after December 1976; in fact, some have indicated that their intention is not to take up the loan until as late as 1980.

The honourable member also asked what was the current waiting time for an application to receive approval once all information had been lodged. I am advised that the current waiting period is 2 months, although a staff interviewing position was filled last week and the Home Finance Trustee now expects the period of waiting to be reduced.

1478 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The honourable member for Stuart asked me yesterday about the new preschool at the Racecourse Subdivision in Alice Springs. I am advised by the department that the Racecourse Subdivision is presently serviced by the Teppa Hill preschool. The department has included a new preschool to be built on the Braitling Primary School site in its 1976-77 design list. The project will be included in the department 1977-78 draft program proposal. It is expected that the project will be approved and construction will commence during 1977-78 financial year. I am also advised that, as an interim measure, the infants section of the Braitling School will be used as a preschool in 1977.

1479 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked a question about the medical staff situation as the result of recent increases in wages. I am advised that the recruitment period from the time of placement of an advertisement is initiated through to the actual arrival of the doctor in the Territory such that it is at this stage too early to give a firm indication of the effect of recent salary increases. However, present indications are that recruitment of hospital doctors is improving and we should have a full complement of doctors in our hospitals at the beginning of 1977. However, the prospect for the recruitment of district medical officers is not as bright.

1480 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Arnhem asked several questions on Tuesday in relation to venereal disease. I am advised that the Department of Health maintains confidential registers of venereal disease notification in each region and staffs the statistical unit in Darwin which collates monthly and annual figures on venereal disease. The department has been concerned about the prevalence of venereal disease for several years and it is currently one of the priority field programs. The high record incidence of syphilis in the Northern Territory is particularly explained because of the concentrated case detection carried out over the past two years. Tables setting out details of venereal disease notifications are available and I will advise the member of those.

For his information, in the 3 regions of the department in the Territory for 1975-76 gonorrhoea notifications totalled in the northern region 319, east Arnhem region 1, southern region 196; syphilis in northern region 254, in the east Arnhem region 7 and in the southern region 309. The incidence of syphilis particularly in the

the centre is far higher than would be expected. However, the laboratory tests used to diagnose syphilis cannot distinguish between venereal and non-venereal sections. It is likely that a considerable proportion of cases in central Australia are of the non-venereal type. Current departmental activities to reduce the problem include standard diagnostic measures in all Northern Territory hospitals, standardised therapy throughout the Northern Territory, use of rural health staff to trace and offer treatment to contacts of known cases, preparation of educational material in selected Aboriginal languages and incorporation of venereal disease into the curriculum of the Aboriginal health workers training program.

1485 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING -

Is he able to inform the Assembly when the unit titles legislation, previously passed in this place, is likely to receive assent and be brought into operation?

ANSWER

Action has been proceeding on the implementation of legislation for strata titles. Regulations will be made to cover the necessary fee structures in the very near future. The Department of the Northern Territory has put all guns in motion and, hopefully, the ordinance will be commenced and operation of strata titles in the Northern Territory will commence on 1 November 1976.

1486 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

Can he advise why the original specifications for the reroofing of the assembly area of Nightcliff Primary School has been altered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission so that there will be now no roofing of the general assembly area and consequently children will be wet right throughout the wet season? I understand this was done by the DRC against the advice of the Education Department and everyone else concerned.

ANSWER

The issue raised by the honourable member is one of a technical nature that has not been referred to the commission itself. However, I will seek the information sought by the honourable member today.

1487 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW -

What plans does the Education Department have for a special school class to take care of the children who should be going to high school but have special learning difficulties?

ANSWER

These children are placed in ordinary classes to a large extent, I am advised by the department that the provision of educational facilities for moderately and severely handicapped children of secondary school age is under review. The department has been corresponding with the Handicapped Persons Association in an attempt to negotiate the use of certain facilities available at the Coconut Grove Centre for a secondary age moderately to severely handicapped children's class. Officers of the department are meeting with the association on 11 October, which I believe was yesterday, to discuss alternatives. Should appropriate facilities be available, the department will attempt to provide a suitably qualified teacher to cater for the needs of the secondary age handicapped children in Darwin. I only hope that these moves come about quickly and we get some action because the situation at the moment is somewhat disastrous.

1488 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise if water restrictions are to aply in Alice Springs this year and, if so, how severe will they be?

ANSWER

It is not proposed to introduce restrictions in Alice Springs this year.

1489 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Is the Darwin Community College being involved in the negotiations regarding the Brinkin Subdivision?

ANSWER

No. I have a copy of a letter sent to the Chairman of the Community College Council from the Minister for the Northern Territory on 5 October advising that he felt it was unnecessary for the college to be concerned at this time and that their interests were being cared for by the Department of the Northern Territory.

1490 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns a press release from the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust which I believe he tabled. I refer to the balance of the Mayor's Trust Fund for the restoration of community recreation and cultural facilities for the people of Darwin. Is it a fact that this amounts to some hundreds of thousands of dollars and can he advise the precise amount?

ANSWER

The information was contained in a press statement that was distributed for the information of members but I do not believe it has been tabled. I believe that reports of the Trust Fund, as required by the trust deed will be tabled in the Federal Parliament, this Assembly and the Corporation of the City of Darwin, and will contain full details of all disbursements made by that Trust Fund. It would be proper to seek the detailed information sought by the honourable member from the chairman of the fund.

1491 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK -

What is the establishment number of health inspectors in the Northern Territory at each working base? What is the present strength of health inspectors at each working base? If the operative strength is below establishment, what reasons are given for the situation? How many resignations from the health inspection section have there been in the past 2 years in the Darwin area in particular?

ANSWER

I have had prior advice of this question. The previous establishments, including senior staff, is as follows: Gove 3, Katherine 1, Tennant Creek 1, Alice Springs 7, Darwin 12 - a total of 24 health inspectors for the Territory. The number of health inspectors actually employed on 7 October was: Gove 2, Katherine 1, Tennant Creek 1, Alice Springs 4, Darwin 5 - a total of 13. Recruitment and retention has been difficult, particularly in Darwin over the past 2 years. Recently, there has been a good response to advertisements and it is hoped to make a further 4 appointments shortly. From July 1974 to July 1976, there have been 8 resignations in the Northern Territory including 6 from Darwin and there have been 4 transfers from the health inspection section.

1492 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS -

Has any progress been made in resolving the problem between the Army and the Rifle Club so that the sport of range shooting may commence?

ANSWER

Yes, there has been some progress. Following representations I made to the Minister for Defence, I received a letter a couple of days ago from him advising formally that the Army has no further requirement for the range. I understand it is now up to the Department of the Northern Territory to spring off its backside to get the piece of land back from the Army and to make it available to the Rifle Club, at least for temporary use on an occupational licence whilst negotiations take place for a more permanent site for the long term future.

1493 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

I must assume that he is aware that some people are receiving a letter from Crown Law saying that they have been instructed to institute legal proceedings against them for the recovery of charges due for rents for Wacol Hostel to which people were evacuated immediately after the cyclone. Some of these people have very little prospect of being able to pay without severe hardship. Would it not be better and more proper to have this met by the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund? There are adequate funds there. Would he take steps to ensure that this is done?

ANSWER

I do not know very much about the matter; I have had no real personal approaches about it. I do understand that there have been letters - from whom I do not know - sent to some people who are said to be in arrears for costs incurred after the cyclone at some hostels at various places throughout the Commonwealth. As far as getting the funds from the Relief Trust Fund is concerned, I believe that has been virtually wound up now, so there is no prospect of getting funds from there. However, I will see what I can find out.

1494 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW -

Has the Department of Education yet decided to resume teachers' conferences at Batchelor?

ANSWER

I was speaking to one of the officers only this morning on this matter. It seems that in-service conferences will be recommenced, using the Batchelor education exhibit, almost immediately on the same basis as was used in 1973/74. Up until now there has been a shortage of finance. The committee has recently reviewed the situation and this is their decision, to recommence the in-service conferences.

1495 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

I refer to a press release regarding lot 3744 in Darwin. The press release implied that the handing over of that portion to a youth hostels committee was a fait accompli. I ask him, in his capacity as a member of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, if that is a fact and if he is aware that other groups applied for that land, with development plans, a long while before the Youth Hostels Association did?

ANSWER

I am aware of press reports relating to the proposed allocation of a block of land for the Youth Hostels Association. I am not aware that

any matter relating to it has been referred to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

1496 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What is the cost of one mile of the cable normally used for street lighting?

ANSWER

The cost of the electrical conductor for street lighting is approximately $180 per kilometre.

1497 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she aware that a group of people calling themselves the Children of God have been handing pamphlets and treatises to children on high school precincts in Darwin and can she advise if the school principals are aware of this?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get some information to the honourable member later today.

1498 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Following his visit to Sydney to attend the Agricultural Council last week, can he advise when the council is expected to make a decision concerning a national beef price stabilisation scheme?

ANSWER

I do not expect a decision to be made in under 12 months. The Agricultural Council expressed great interest in the idea of a stabilisation scheme they have had actually 2 schemes submitted to them, a Queensland scheme and a Victorian scheme. They have referred the matter to a standing committee on agriculture and this will take some time. The working party's analysis and report will not be available until mid-autumn next year. Even if the decision was to go ahead, by the time the producers had been approached in some kind of poll and the necessary legislation made, I do not believe that such a national scheme could possibly be established during the 1977 year. Thus, it would have no effect either this year or next year as far as the Territory is concerned and, in the light of that, the department has been asked to re-examine the scheme represented in the bill which we passed in this Assembly last year to see whether, with some changes in the mathematics to take account of current beef prices, there is any possibility of activating that particular proposal.

1499 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW -

What is the role of adult education advisers in Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

The principal of a school in an Aboriginal community has responsibilities for the educational development of all members of the community and, where possible, an adult educator is attached to the staff to work specifically with the adults.

1500 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

I was told recently by passengers on the "Darwin Duchess", the passenger ferry between Darwin and Mandorah, that passengers from that boat participated in the rescue of certain people from an upturned small craft in Darwin Harbour. One of the persons being rescued was a young child under 2 years of age and there appeared to be no life jackets worn by any of these people or present in the upturned boat. Does the Northern Territory Port Authority have any persons policing the provisions of safety equipment in pleasure craft?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question at the moment. However, I will approach the Port Authority for information.

1501 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN -

I would like to ask a question about the Radio Australia transmitter which I visited recently. At what stage is the rehabilitation of the Radio Australia transmitter station at Cox Peninsula? When will this very important service recommence transmission and who is responsible for the money appropriation for the rehabilitation, the DRC or Telecom?

ANSWER

The bulk of the installation has been rehabilitated. However, there are no aerials. There is part of a wharf over there. The main problem is that there are no aerials. I have written to the Minister for Posts and Telecommunications and I have also sent him a couple of telegrams. I also had some correspondence with the previous government's minister. He advised me that there was an investigation into Cox Peninsula, as to whether or not it would be appropriate to leave the installation in that particular location in view of the damage caused by the cyclone. I did point out to the present minister, when I mentioned the previous minister's correspondence, that it does not seem to matter much where in the north of Australia they put the installation; it has to be in the top end of Australia and the top end of Australia, unless it is away from the coast - and this is unsatisfactory - is subject to cyclones. I venture to say that in the east and west coastal regions it would be more likely to be subject to cyclone damage. The technical people have also told me that the particular location at Cox Peninsula is the best location in the northern part of Australia. Should the installation be rehabilitated, and I have heard rumours that it would be although the report of the inquiry should be out in about 2 weeks time - I had some advice from the Minister's office last week to this effect, I would assume that any money for the rehabilitation will come from the Department of Posts and Telecommunications.

1502 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Could she also ascertain if it is a fact that people known as the Children of God have been travelling on the free school bus service and importuning children? For her information, I believe their spiritual leader is a man called David who claims some direct decent.

ANSWER

Could I remind the honourable member for Nightcliff that my responsi-

bility is education and law? No, I was not aware that they were travelling on the buses. I shall seek to find out who their divine leader, David, is.

1503 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

How many single police officers were required by the Commissioner of Police to move their residence to the new police barracks at Alice Springs when the building was occupied last year? How many of those officers have been paid the allowance provided for in clauses 93 and 94 of the PATTD, No. 12, in force at the time? If any officer has not been paid the allowance, why not?

ANSWER

I believe that 8 police officers were required to remove their residences. None have been paid allowances, Only one officer has applied and this claim is currently being processed.

1504 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that 16 schools in the Northern Territory have a teacher shortage? Is it also a fact that there are unemployed teachers available in other states of Australia who refuse to come to the Northern Territory? What steps can the honourable member take to alleviate the teacher shortage problem?

ANSWER

I could not say whether there are 16 schools short-staffed in the Northern Territory or one. However, I will endeavour to find out, I think the Northern Territory at the moment, whilst there are a few shortages, is fairly evenly balanced; in fact Alice Springs is, if anything, overstaffed while Darwin is fairly stable. I am sure there are unemployed teachers down south who do not wish to come to the Territory. I guess they do not want to go to Antarctica or south-east Asia either. As to what I can do about it, there has just been a recruitment campaign down south and it was discovered that people in promotion positions were not generally interested in coming to the Northern Territory. This is providing the department with some difficulties; however, I shall make further representations to the Minister.

1505 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he aware of the trouble at Docker River last week? If so, can he advise the amount of damage sustained by the recently opened health centre at that settlement?

ANSWER

I am aware that there was some incident at Docker River last week or in recent weeks. Some damage was done to the health centre at that community. At this stage I am unable to advise the member further but I hope to do so later.

1506 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

I advise him that block 7619, Nightcliff was sold at a public auction on behalf of the Government of Australia. Is he aware that this is well in the primary surge zone? Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission now a policy of allowing the Government to resell primary

surge blocks they have acquired because they would not let anyone else build on them?

ANSWER

The honourable member's question seeks information that I cannot give without reference and I ask that she place it on notice.

1507 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware that private letter box holders in Alice Springs have recently been notified that, with the relocation of the new post office, those holders will be required to change the letter box numbers and this will cost quite an amount of money? If so, will he undertake to have this decision reversed?

ANSWER

I am aware of the situation; I have in front of me a copy of a letter which was sent to the box holders in Alice Springs. I will make some inquiries within the department and see if it is possible to retain the same numbers and overcome the problem. The cost that the honourable member for Stuart has referred to is the cost that would be imposed on those people with letter heads and pre-addressed stationery.

1508 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Last week I asked her when legislation would be reintroduced covering such people as the Northumberland Insurance Company and I believe that the honourable member from Jingili made some excellent remarks in this context at a later time. Her reply then was that the matter was under review. Can she now give me any idea when this legislation will be introduced?

ANSWER

No.

1509 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH -

Some time ago, he gave the House information on world copper prices necessary to make the Tennant Creek smelter viable. Is he able to advise the current position and give any indication when that smelter may reopen?

ANSWER

The height recently obtained on the world copper market was $1,520 per ton but it has slipped down to about $1,200 a ton which is not a viable price for the Peko Mining operation to function in Tennant Creek. The company anticipated that the price would slump at this time and they do not anticipate that it will go back to the $1,600 to $2,000 a ton before next July and that would be the earliest that they would be able to open the smelter. For the company to be sure to open the smelter in July 1978, they would need to start moving approximately 400 - 600 people back in January. If they misinterpret the market and the price does not rise they will go through the hoop for quite a few million.

1510 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER -

What steps are being taken to protect the members in the press box from the constant attack by mosquitoes up there? If nothing is being done, will he undertake to supply them with a tin of Mortein?

ANSWER

I give the honourable member that undertaking.

1511 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

Further to my questions last week relating to the sale - or perhaps the giving away - of the Taiwanese fishing boat recently for $6,000, can he advise if there was any valuation or assessment of the value of the boat and catch obtained by the responsible department before sale?

ANSWER

The Department of Primary Industries has not yet provided that information.

1512 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What steps are being taken to bring the Land and Business Agents Ordinance 1974 into operation?

ANSWER

The Land and Business Agents Ordinance has been under review because it is inadequate in its present form. Some time ago, the Executive completed its recommendations and forwarded them to the draftsman. The severe shortage of draftsmen in the Northern Territory is holding up this bill.

1513 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Could she tell the House if music is part of the curriculum in Northern Territory schools and, if so, will it be introduced to all schools and at all levels in 1977?

ANSWER

I am sure that the department would be delighted if they could provide music as part of the curriculum in every school in the Northern Territory but, unfortunately, there is an Australia-wide shortage of music teachers.

1514 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: I was asked a question by the honourable member for Nightcliff about an article that appeared in the "Star" concerning a detective questioning girls about marihuana. I am unable to determine whether or not this was a fact because the organisation was a private one. She also asked: "Was it with the knowledge and consent of the Commissioner of Police that this person was on the panel asking these questions?" I am advised that the person concerned was on recreation leave and he had this leave with the knowledge and consent of the Commissioner of Police but in fact was acting in a private capacity by being on the panel. I was also asked if I could advise who chose the panel. I spoke with the organisers but they have

refused the information.

1515 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: I was asked questions by the honourable member for Nightcliff and Nhulunbuy concerning the caravan park area at Mindil Beach owned by the city corporation. The following information has been supplied to me. The area is within reserve number 1018 which was reserved for the purpose of the Corporation of the City of Darwin in relation to recreation and amusement by proclamation appearing in Commonwealth Gazette number 57 dated 17 September 1959 and the Northern Territory Gazette number 42 dated 30 September 1959. On 15 September 1972, the Administrator gave a direction pursuant to section 103B of the Crown Lands Ordinance that part of the land included in reserve number 1018, including the area referred to by the member for Nightcliff, be managed, regulated and controlled by the Corporation of the City of Darwin by operating of the bylaws of the municipality of Darwin. This information relates to the area of the reserve and not the lot which specifically relates to the caravan park.

1516 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked me a question relating to whether a motor registry would be built in Nhulunbuy. The answer to a question without notice answered this. I have asked for a copy to be sent to me and I will pass this onto the honourable member.

1517 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Stuart asked who would pay for repairs to the Bradshaw School and I advised him that I felt that the Education Department would not have to pay for them. I have been in touch with the Department of Construction and they have advised me that discussions are taking place presently between them and the contractor. If the contractor accepts the responsibility, the repairs will be done without any cost to any department. If there is some contribution necessary by the Australian Government I would assume that the Department of Education could possibly be asked to contribute because the Department of Construction does not have its own funding.

1518 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Arnhem asked whether any action or planning was being undertaken for a bridge on the Roper River. The possibility of bridging the Roper River has been examined in the past and a later study of the area suggested a crossing near the Roper Settlement. However, no suggestions or plans at present exist for the bridging of the Roper River.

1519 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW -

Is it a fact that Mr Ralph Hayes, the station manager of Wave Hill Station, was recently assaulted by an Aboriginal employee? If this is true, was the person who made the assault charged with that offence? Is it also true that Mr Ralph Hayes J.P., the same station manager, wrote to Inspector Wyatt of the Katherine Police Station asking if the Northern Territory police could attend the Negri race meeting held last week in Western Australia and that Inspector Wyatt denied police representation to the race meeting on the grounds of staff shortage? Is it true that, because of no Territory representation from the police force between 20 and 30 Northern Territory Aboriginals assaulted 7 stockmen from Wave Hill Station with sticks and stones and knives and that vehicles were damaged by this assault? Is it a fact that additional police representation is needed at the Wave Hill Settlement to maintain law and order?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to obtain the information for the honourable member, I could answer this in part but I think it would be preferable if I left it until I had the full facts.

1520 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

How many primary producers have been considered as ineligible for carry-on finance? Is this because their viability is measured against current or ruling meatworks' prices?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1521 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Is it true that Browns Mart is to close down because its seating is not considered adequate by the fire brigade?

ANSWER

I understand that the city corporation is not in a position to issue a licence after 31 December unless permanent seating is fixed in Browns Mart. I understand they are not allowed to issue a licence until such time as a permit from the fire brigade is received and the current permit lasts only until the end of the year. I believe that the trustees are endeavouring to launch a fund-raising campaign in order to meet with the proposals of the Chief Fire Officer.

1522 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH -

Can he advise what steps the Government is taking to service the tourist traffic carried on the Connair service between Cairns and Mount Isa and is it proposed that this route will remain a third level airline operation?

ANSWER

The tourist industry has been concerned for some time at the lack of continuity in the Cairns-Alice Springs air connection, particularly because of the American tourist market that orientates around Cairns and the Alice Springs tourist promotion people are keen to tap it. The Department of Transport and the industry have been holding

consultation for some time and, notwithstanding the Connair strike, the Heron and DC3 connection which has been operating on a weekly basis for some years now will be replaced immediately by Ansett and TAA Fokker Friendships which will start on a fortnightly basis. Early in 1977, DC9s will be introduced to the Alice Springs-Cairns run.

1523 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING -

My question concerns the roofing of the assembly area of Nightcliff Primary School. In his reply to my question yesterday, the Executive Member advised that the work currently planned for Nightcliff Primary School was part of a staged program and a roof over the assembly area was to be provided, the roof to be completed by the end of January 1977. Is the Executive Member aware that the roofing of the assembly area was omitted by an addendum to the contract just let for the re-roofing of some areas? The contractor was advised, having tendered for it, that it was to be deleted. If this is so, is a separate contract to be let for that area? If so when, and why not now rather than the end of January?

ANSWER

The information that I provided in reply to the honourable member yesterday was supplied to me by officers of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. My understanding is that the item is to be added to any contract that might be currently in existence and it is to be completed by the end of January 1977, not let in January 1977.

1524 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS -

Can he advise when an ordinance passed by this Assembly to amend the Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance will receive assent?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

1525 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW -

My question follows from that very disturbing answer she gave the honourable member for Casuarina in respect of Browns Mart. Is this House to take it that the theatres of the Alice Springs Youth Centre, the Alice Springs Memorial club, the Totem theatre, and every other theatre probably in the Northern Territory, is going to be closed as a result of this jumped-up new rule about chairs having to be fixed in all theatres in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I understand that the fixing of the chairs is peculiar to the Browns Mart situation and I am not aware that this applies to every other hall in the Northern Territory.

1526 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON -

On behalf of the Member for Tiwi, I ask when the rubbish dump will be established in the Humpty Doo area, on Section 360, as proposed?

ANSWER

I do not have that information at the moment. I will endeavour to seek it and advise the honourable member during the day.

1527 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON -

What is the installation cost of a pole used to support street lighting?

ANSWER

The cost involved in this type of operation varies but, as a general rule a figure of $300 should be taken to include the cost of the pole and the erection thereof.

1528 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK -

Is he aware of the hardships being caused to people because workers' compensation payments are not indexed? It he is aware, will he take steps to amend the ordinance accordingly?

ANSWER

Workers' compensation is not my responsibility.

1529 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS -

Is he aware of cattlemen who are eligible for neither carry-on finance nor unemployment benefits? If so, how are these unfortunate people existing?

ANSWER

I ask him to place that question on notice.

1530 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON -

I re-direct my earlier question about workers' compensation to the Executive Member for Municipal and Consumer Affairs.

ANSWER

The Workmens Compensation Ordinance and the benefits under that ordinance have been the subject of a committee of review. It has recently handed down its report but I have not had time to study it closely. The committee consisted of various representatives form employer groups, unions and government. I will endeavour to find out if the matter that the honourable member has raised has been covered by that committee.

1531 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

How do the recent increased allowances for isolated children compare with increased school allowances to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders under the ABSEC scheme?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1532 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

In view of the steady build up of residents in the area, when will the bus service to Humpty Doo be reinstated?

ANSWER

I am unable to tell the honourable member for Arnhem when the bus service to Humpty Doo is likely to be reinstated. I have had some approaches from the people living in the area. I intend to talk to the department on the matter and I doubt if I will be able to give an answer this sittings. However, I will pass on to him any information that I can get from the department.

1533 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS -

Has there been a feasibility study made in the Northern Territory for the use of the Northern Territory rivers to load and transport live cattle for export?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice.

1534 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW -

Will the Nakara School be ready for the 1977 school year?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to get the information for the honourable member today.

1535 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Can the honourable member advise me whether he has had discussions recently with the Federal Minister for Transport in relation to the present position in the Connair dispute and, if so, what the position is?

ANSWER

I have not had any discussions with the Federal Transport Minister since last week. As we all know, a meeting took place on Monday between the company, the pilots and the Federal Minister. I think everybody was hopeful that some agreement would come out of that meeting. In the press yesterday we were told that there are some doubts about this. Late last night I received a phone call from Senator Kilgariff asking whether or not I had spoken to the pilots recently and I said not since Monday when I was unable to get any further information because the meeting had not been held. I spoke to one of the pilots this morning and it would appear that the problem is still some way from being solved. I also believe that the answer to the proposals put by the chairman of Connair will be handed to the Minister today. I do not know exactly what the contents of that letter are but I have asked for a copy to be given to me as soon as possible so that I know exactly what it contains. However, I feel that the pilots are going to reject the proposals made at the meeting and this could put us back to square one. That is about all I can give honourable members on the strike at the moment. Hopefully, later today I may have some more information concerning the problem and I will pass it on to the House.

1536 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW -

Is she yet able to advise how the overcrowding problems in Darwin secondary schools are to be overcome next year and the following year as Dripstone High School is not going ahead?

ANSWER

No.

1537 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW -

Has the Arts Council of the Northern Territory received news of further funding following the failure to receive money from the 1976-77 Budget?

ANSWER

They have; a letter was received yesterday by the chairman of the Arts Council. I understand that the Minister for the Northern Territory has offered $10,000 to be forwarded as soon as possible. He has also mentioned that if the Arts Council can forward accounts etc another $10,000 may be available to cover their losses. I would just like to point out, of course, that the figure of $32,000 forwarded by the Arts Council would be much more realistic. They are going to be placed in an embarrassing position.

1538 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN -

When will work commence on rebuilding the Casuarina Fire Station?

ANSWER

I was under the impression that tenders had been called and let for the repair of the Casuarina station. I will check and answer him later on today.

1539 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

I refer to Newcastle Waters causeway which has caused great difficulty in the last 3 wet seasons. Will there be any relief this wet season or are the authorities hoping that a drought will intervene?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Arnhem could have hit the nail on the head when he said the authorities may be hoping for a drought to intervene. If there is a drought, I hope it can extend over another 2 to 3 wet seasons because that will be the time needed to fix the Newcastle Creek causeway. I am in two minds whether we should be asking for a relief by way of a drought because this would enable our southern colleagues to say that it is not urgent after all, because it has not gone out this wet. If we do have another strong wet this season, it will keep the matter highlighted. I will leave it up to other members to decide which they would like to happen.

1540 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH -

I preface my question by pointing out to you, Mr Speaker, that I have already asked it twice - I think even 3 times - at this sittings so far, and that I have not yet received an answer form the honourable member. It is my belief that his department is prevaricating in the matter, and I would like him to assure his department that, if it is, I will keep pursuing the matter until I worry the information out of them one way or another. The question is: Was any valuation or assessment of value of the Taiwanese fishing boat recently sold for $6,000 obtained by the Department of Primary Industries or any other agency before the boat was sold?

ANSWER

With regret, I can only say that the honourable member's assessment, that the department is prevaricating, may be correct; they have not yet provided me with the information.

1541 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN -

Can the Executive Member tell me whether any resolution has yet been reached in relation to the Mataranka Telecom dispute?

ANSWER

I do not know. I did advise the House yesterday that as a result of a telegram which I received from the Mataranka Progress Association. I contacted the Minister's office. At this point I think I should add that in the press last night there were some criticisms of various Executive Members. I do not know whether my name was included in the original press release from the Mataranka people and it was fortunate I think that my name seems to have been edited out of the press report last night, which is quite strange considering that I have what little responsibility there is in the communications side of the operation. Since I was the only one to receive a telegram the other members I guess could be excused for not taking action. After speaking with the Minister's office and requesting that they take some fairly urgent action, later on in the day I spoke to the state manager of Telecom who looks after South Australia and the Northern Territory - that was an hour after I had sent the telegram and spoken to the Minister's office - and he had received a communication from the Minister asking for details of the matter. So hopefully these details would have been given to the Minister. I have asked that the Minister use his influence, little though it may be, with regard to the commission, to try to get them to increase the remuneration to the operator so that the exchange can continue to operate until such times as an automatic exchange can be installed.

1542 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS -

Our pastoralists have been the victims of fires, particularly around their watering points and bores. Are they eligible to make application for drought relief? If not, will he seek to have the guidelines altered?

ANSWER

I do not believe that there is any decision on the eligibility of pastoralists affected by bush fires. In fact, I do not think the question has been put to any responsible authority. The member for Resource Development may know something else about it but drought relief comes in two forms. The first is a local Northern Territory scheme which is brought in from time to time in response to drought. This only extends during the period of that particular drought and, if another drought occurs later, then the scheme has to be restarted. The other form of drought assistance is the Drought Bond Scheme and I do not believe that the situation would apply in that case. That is a Commonwealth administered scheme rather than a Territory scheme. I do not believe the guidelines would provide for this and I doubt whether there would be much chance of getting those guidelines altered quickly. However, if there is a case for special relief for bush fire affected people, and relief has been given in the past for drought, flood and natural catastrophes, then I believe that a case should be submitted as soon as possible to the Department of the Northern Territory.

1543 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN -

Is he aware of any outlying settlements that are in desperate or difficult circumstances due to the Connair pilots' strike and, if so, what action is being taken to provide relief for them?

ANSWER

I do not have any details to hand but I do believe that some areas are having problems with communications because of the Connair strike. Some of the charter companies are attempting to take stop-gap action to try to alleviate the problem. I am unaware just exactly how effectively the other air people are in fact handling the problem.

1544 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me about a certain group of people commonly known as the Children of God and whether they had been handing out pamphlets to school children on high school grounds and whether the headmasters were aware of this. I am advised by the department that the principals of the 3 secondary schools in Darwin contacted yesterday all advised that they were unaware of the presence of the Children of God or any similar groups on their grounds. No teachers, students or parents had reported their presence nor have any requests been received from any such groups seeking access to students. The principal of Darwin High School had been advised of the alleged situation by the honourable member but he has been unable to find any evidence of its occurrence. The second question was whether the Children of God were travelling on school bus runs. The high school principals advise that they have had no reports and no drivers have reported any such incidents. I am unable to answer the third part of the question concerning the gentleman known as "David".

1545 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr POLLOCK: The honourable member for Stuart asked about damage incurred at the Docker River Health Centre. I am advised that the Docker River Health Centre and staff accommodation units were completed but not commissioned in September at a cost of $485,000. There was an unusually large number of Aboriginals assembled at Docker River for the purpose of initiation ceremonies. Heavy rain in the area gave reason for visiting Aboriginals to seek shelter and the health centre was occupied for about 4 days. Damage estimated by the Department of Construction at about $1,000 was caused to windows, doors and walls.

1546 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a question concerning press statements of Youth Hostels Association of Australia about the granting of a lease of land in Fannie Bay. I would advise that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has not had such an application placed before it. However, there is an investigation being done by the Urban and Town Planning Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory with a view to allocating land to Youth Hostels Association of Australia. The site has not yet been allocated and there are no other known claims on the land. There are no official records and the public plan shows that the land in the vicinity of the site under investigation to be crown land with no indication whatsoever of any previous allocation.

1547 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member also asked a question about lot 7619 in the town of Nightcliff and whether it had been allocated for sale although it was a property in the primary surge zone. I am advised that this is a government lot and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission does not determine the selection of land to be sold by the Department of the Northern Territory. The commission resolved last year that people should not be prevented from building or rebuilding in surge zones if they wish to do so.

INDEX TO QUESTIONS

5 October 1976 - 13 October 1976


Aborigines -
additional $25m (Vale) 1422
adult education advisers (Kentish) 1499
funds for housing associations (Tungutalum) 1469
Hay inquiry (Tungutalum) 1411, 1445
NACC inquiry (Tungutalum) 1427
secondary education grants scheme (Vale) 1461
settlements and Connair strike (Kentish) 1543
Abattoirs, less than export standard (Withnall) 1433
Alice Springs -
Bradshaw school repairs (Vale) 1388, 1456, 1459, 1517
hospital, completion and staffing (Robertson) 1473
juveniles admitted to gaol (Vale) 1372
new School of the Air building (Vale) 1465
police officers moved to barracks (Dondas) 1503
post office box numbers (Vale) 1507
Racecourse subdivision -
preschool (Vale) 1429, 1478
shopping complex (Vale) 1382
theatres, chair fixing restrictions (Robertson) 1525
water restrictions (Vale) 1488
Alyangula, teaching staff (Kentish) 1409, 1453
Araluen subdivision (Robertson) 1417
Arts Council, financial grant (Vale) 1398; (Ballantyne) 1537
Assent to ordinances, local matters (Withnall) 1384
Barkly area corridor investigation (Vale) 1440
Batchelor, teachers' conferences (Vale) 1494
Beef, national minimum price (Vale) 1378, 1498
Berrimah, new gaol (Dondas) 1425; (Kentish) 1426
Betting Control Board, allocation of moneys (Vale) 1374
Block 3 (Ballantyne) 822
Block 8 cafeteria (Dondas) 1462
Breathaliser legislation (Robertson) 1450
Brinkin Subdivision and Community College (Dondas) 1489
Browns Mart (Dondas) 1521; (Robertson) 1525
Bus service (Everingham) 1437
Butchers and boners, apprenticeships (Vale) 1373
Caravans, tenders for supply (Dondas) 1390
Carry-on finance for cattlemen (Vale) 1424; (Kentish) 1520, 1529
Casuarina, commercial development (Dondas) 1397
Casuarina Fire Station (Dondas) 1538
Cattlemen, attitude to Government (Vale) 1414
Children of God (Lawrie) 1497, 1502, 1544
Connair dispute (Tungutalum) 1393; (Vale) 1463; (Everingham) 1535
Connair service from Cairns to Mount Isa (Vale) 1522
Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund, Mayor's fund (Lawrie) 1490
Darwin, developmental plan (Everingham) 1415
Darwin East (Everingham) 1389, 1416
Darwin Hospital staffing (Ballantyne) 1432, 1479
Darwin Reconstruction Commission -
Area 4 office (Dondas) 1467
concrete cyclone shelters (Withnall) 1412, 1454
development of 32-square mile acquisition area (Everingham) 1416
make-safe program (Dondas) 1383
Mindil Beach caravan park extension (Lawrie) 1441, 1442
rebuilding program and electricity connections (Dondas) 1408
Darwin Regional Council for Social Development, impounding of van (Dondas) 1393
"Darwin Trader" (Lawrie) 1402
Dental benefits (Dondas) 1423
Department of NT, reallocation of top positions (Kentish) 1439
Depot at 2½-mile, dirt heaps (Steele) 1420
Docker River, damage to health centre (Vale) 1505, 1545
Doctors Gully, sewerage (Withnall) 1281, 1403, 1455
Dripstone High School (Lawrie) 1387
Drought relief, pastoralist fire victims (Robertson) 1542
Drug addicts, hard drugs (Everingham) 1448
Electrical contracts, control (Kentish) 1392

Ellengowan Drive, street lighting (Dondas) 1470
Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance (Vale) 1524
Executive functions, transfer (Dondas) 1380
Fretilin radio (Kentish) 1404, 1452
Gove -
  creche at hospital (Ballantyne) 1194
  hospital staffing (Ballantyne) 1432, 1479
  police boat (Ballantyne) 1413
  vehicle registration branch (Ballantyne) 1418, 1516
Government homes, sale (Lawrie) 1379
Hay report on Aboriginal expenditure (Tungutalum) 1411, 1445
Health Department, employment of Aborigines (Vale) 1395
Health inspectors, establishment (Kentish) 1491
Home Finance Trustee -
  loans approved and cut-off date (Dondas) 1444, 1477
  loans for surge area landholders (Lawrie) 1446
  loans to non-residents (Lawrie) 1284
Housing Commission -
  concrete houses contract (Dondas) 1467
  construction activity and prices (Steele) 1391
  home sales (Lawrie) 1379
Humpty Doo area rubbish dump (Kentish) 1526
Humpty Doo bus service (Kentish) 1532
Insurance, insolvent companies (Lawrie) 1421, 1508; (Everingham) 1466, 1475
Isolated children, education assistance (Ballantyne) 1458, 1531
Land and Business Agents Ordinance (Dondas) 1512
Land auction (Dondas) 1468
Liquor legislation review (Lawrie) 1436
Live cattle export quotas (Steele) 1464
Live cattle for export, river transport (Ballantyne) 1533
Lottery and Gaming Ordinance inquiry (Lawrie) 1434
Make-safe program (Dondas) 1383
Mataranka telephone exchange (Ballantyne) 1396, 1428; (Everingham) 1541
Medical officers, recruitment (Ballantyne) 1432, 1479
Medibank and aerial evacuation charges (Vale) 1410
Mindil Beach caravan park extension (Lawrie) 1441, 1442, 1515; (Ballantyne) 1471
Miss Australia Quest, marihuana questions (Lawrie) 1476, 1514
Music in school curricula (Ballantyne) 1513
Nakara School (Dondas) 1534
Negri race meeting (Steele) 1519
Newcastle Waters causeway (Kentish) 1539
Nightcliff Primary School -
  assembly area reroofing (Lawrie) 1486, 1523
  rebuilding (Lawrie) 1430
North Australia Railway (Everingham) 1407
"Northumberland" amendment (Everingham) 1466, 1475; (Lawrie) 1508
Nhulunbuy - see Gove
Overcrowding in high schools (Lawrie) 1536
Pine Creek - Cullen River roadworks (Vale) 1468
Poker machine legislation (Everingham) 1447
Police officers, move to Alice Springs barracks (Dondas) 1503
Police recruits, new intake (Lawrie) 1283
Police trackers, uniforms (Lawrie) 1282
Press gallery mosquitoes (Dondas) 1510
Public servants, retention of rights (Lawrie) 1381
Radio Australia transmitter, Cox Peninsula (Ballantyne) 1501
Railway rolling stock and sheds (Steele) 1406
Rifle Club range (Dondas) 1492
Roper River, proposed bridge (Kentish) 1474, 1518
Rothdale Road, high tension wires (Everingham) 1386
Shop stewards, training course at Community College (Dondas) 1443
Small Craft Regulations, policing (Everingham) 1500
Special learning difficulties, high school students (Everingham) 1487
Stock squad investigations (Kentish) 1371
Strata titles legislation (Lawrie) 1419; (Robertson) 1485
Street lighting, cost of cable (Dondas) 1496; cost of pole (Dondas) 1527
Superannuation scheme for Assembly members (Withnall) 1435
Surge zone, sale of blocks (Lawrie) 1506, 1547
Taiwanese fishing boat, sale (Everingham) 1399, 1405, 1449, 1451, 1511, 1540

Teacher shortage (Steele) 1504
Tennant Creek copper smelter (Robertson) 1509
Tiwi oval caravan park (Dondas) 1385
Tourist Bureau, Smith Street property (Dondas) 1472
Tourist promotion trip to southern states (Dondas) 1431
Transport inquiry (Everingham) 1401
Unit titles - see Strata titles
Venereal disease (Kentish) 1394, 1480
Wacol Hostel, rent recovery (Lawrie) 1493
Wagait Reserve, illegal branding (Kentish) 1371
Water meters and charges (Dondas) 1400
Wave Hill Station, assault on manager (Steele) 1519
Wildlife sanctuaries and national parks etc (Vale) 1198
Workers compensation for Assembly members (Withnall) 1438
Workers compensation indexation (Lawrie) 1528, 1530
Youth Hostels Association and lot 3744 (Lawrie) 1495, 1546

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

FROM 10 AUGUST 1976

1197 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

1. As at 30 June 1975 and 1976, how many members were physically attached to the CIB Inquiry Section at -

   (a) Darwin
   (b) Alice Springs
   (c) Katherine
   (d) Tennant Creek, and
   (e) Nhulunbuy?

2. What support sections are available to the CIB, such as breaking, consorting and drug squads and how many members does each of these squads have?

3. Are any of these squads in the CIB to be expanded in the coming six months and, if so, by how many additional members and what new positions are proposed?

1199 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

1. Is the Stock Squad of the NT Police presently functional?

2. How many members are there in the squad?

3. What vehicles are attached to the squad?

4. How many horses are attached to the squad?

5. How many cases has the squad investigated in the period 1 January 1976 to 30 June 1976?

6. How many kilometres has the squad travelled in the same period?

7. How many nights have members of the squad spent away from home on duty in the same period?

8. How many pastoral properties in the:

   (a) Darwin Gulf District;
   (b) Victoria River District;
   (c) Barkly District; and
   (d) Alice Springs District

   has the squad visited in the past 12 months?

FROM 5 OCTOBER 1976

1375 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

1. What is the cost of supplying and installing a water meter on a residential block in Darwin and how much has been spent for this purpose in the last eighteen months?

2. What is spent annually on the maintenance of water meters in Darwin?

3. How many water meter readers are employed in Darwin and what are their total annual wages and allowances?

(i) what was the cost to the government for arresting, escorting and detaining the vessel?

1549 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

How do the recent increased allowances for isolated children compare with increased school allowances to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders under the ABSEG scheme?

1550 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS

Has there been a feasibility study made in the Northern Territory for the use of the Northern Territory rivers to load and transport live cattle for export?

1551 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Is he aware that, at the public auction of land in Alice Springs at the end of September, the shopping complex designed to service the now Racecourse West subdivision was passed in through lack of bids? How was the reserve price determined and will this price be reviewed in order that the block can be re-offered with some hope of a sale eventuating and the development of the block taking place at an early date?

1552 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

When will the Ordinance passed by the Assembly on 27/5/76 to amend the Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance receive assent?

1553 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

How many persons have been convicted for drug offences in the Territory in the last wo years and in each case -

(a) what was the name of the person convicted;

(b) what was the date of conviction;

(c) what was the drug involved; and

(d) who was the Magistrate who presided at the hearing?

1554 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK

How many Aboriginal people on settlements and reserves are in receipt of employment benefits through the Department of Social Security?

1377 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

1. How many T.B. tests were performed in the Northern Territory by private veterinarians and how many by Government veterinarians during the last three financial years?

2. How many brucellosis tests were performed by the A.I. & A. Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory during the same period?

3. What are the per kilometre running costs for vehicles of the A.I. & A. Branch?

4. What was the salary allocation of the Branch for eradication programs for each of the last three financial years?

ANSWER

1. The number of T.B. tests performed in the Northern Territory during the past three financial years:-

| | Private Veterinarians | Government Veterinarians |
|---|---|---|
| 1973-74 | 182520 | 131058 |
| 1974-75 | 229177 | 183178 |
| 1975-76 | 211353 | 64929 |

2. 1973-74 - 123432

   1974-75 - 131553

   1975-76 - 141881

3. The running cost for vehicles on hire to the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch is approximately 16c per kilometre per vehicle including hire rates and repairs and maintenance.

4. For these programs the proportion of total salaries is estimated at -

   1973-74 - $147,500

   1974-75 - $263,000

   1975-76 - $267,000

1481 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

1. What is the role of the Community Adviser in Aboriginal Communities?

2. What qualifications and experience are looked for in those seeking appointments to these positions?

3. What guidelines have been laid down by the Department for Community Advisers in the discharge of their duties?

4. Are regular assessments made of the effectiveness of the work of Community Advisers?

5. What criteria are used in making these assessments and by whom are they made?

6. Could an overall assessment be provided of the work of Community Advisers since 1973?

ANSWER

1. Appended is a staff memorandum dated 10 December 1975 and an accompanying document entitled "Duties of the Community Adviser". These give detailed information regarding the Community Adviser's role in Aboriginal communities and are self-explanatory.

2. There has been no intake of Community Advisers since the introduction of the title "Community Adviser" in early 1973 which replaced the previous designations of Patrol Officer and Patrol Officer-in-Training. Because the Northern Territory region has been unable to recruit trainees for several years, this department is experiencing an increasingly acute shortage of trained career field staff and measures are under way at present to gain Public Service Board approval to recruit sufficient trainees annually to maintain an effective field staff force.

   The types of people the department wishes to recruit to Community Advisers positions are persons with at least basic Third Division entry qualifications (satisfactory medical standard and matriculation) and additional qualifications such as the following -

   (a) interest in working with people; especially Aboriginal people

   (b) experience in similar fields such as personnel, employment or industrial work, community development work in indigenous or other communities, work with youth clubs etc.

   (c) aptitude and motivation towards working with people of different cultures etc. in remote areas

   (d) ability to work effectively and diligently with minimal supervision

   (e) ability to express onself well, both orally and in writing

   (f) a sympathetic attitude towards disadvantaged peoples and an appreciation of the factors involved, and

   (g) possible previous academic training in the fields of sociology, anthropology, psychology, languages, political science, and other related disciplines considered appropriate.

   Persons possessing such qualifications and aged between 18 and 45 have been in the past, and probably will be in the future, invited at regular intervals to apply for appointment as Community Adviser-in-Training. The response, in the past, has usually been good, and the department has been able, after interview, to select the best of the applicants for probational appointment.

   Upon successful completion of 2 years academic and field training, trainees are promoted to Community Adviser (Class 5). Whilst carrying out the necessary training, such officers are reported on by academic staff at college and by experienced field staff whilst in the field.

3. See attachments mentioned in answer to Question 1 which are self-explanatory.

4. Yes. In addition to the requirement that Community Advisers submit comprehensive and regular reports on their field duties and programs, Area Officers visit each community at least four times per year and on these visits are able, amongst other review duties, to assess the value to the particular community of the Community Adviser's field work.

   Area Officers make recommendations and take the necessary action regarding the Community Adviser's field work as required. For instance, they point out to Community Advisers how they can improve the quality of their field work, they recommend necessary transfers, and may implement local council suggestions regarding local field staff.

5. The main criteria used is the effect of the Community Adviser's work in the community he is located. Assessments are made by Area Officers, Regional Officers, Project Officers and occasionally Assistant Directors or the Director. Normally, however, Area Officers are directly responsible for Community Advisers. Occasional conferences for field staff and Area Officers are also held, which provide opportunity for discussion and exchange of ideas concerning Community Adviser's field work.

6. Due to the fact that Government policy has changed significantly since 1972, particularly with respect to field staff functions in Aboriginal communities, the role played by Community Advisers has had to be modified and adapted according to experience and knowledge gained since the current concept of Community Advisers was first introduced. The guidelines and information contained in the attachments reflect this state of affairs. Early uncertainty over the role of a Community Adviser and the objectives of his work has now been largely overcome. Whilst the very nature of a Community Adviser's duties do not lend themselves to quantitative analysis, and "success" or "failure" is usually only meansurable in the long term, advisory work in Aboriginal communities is considered generally to be of an improving standard. It is hoped that this will continue as the Community Advisers themselves become more proficient and the functions and duties of their role become more widely known and accepted not only by the Community Advisers themselves but by the Aboriginal communities in which they work.

*THE COMMUNITY ADVISER - WHAT DOES HE DO?*

*Prior to 1973, government settlements were run by the Welfare Branch of the Northern Territory Administration. The person in charge of each settlement was the Superintendent. Policy making, planning and programming were done at the higher levels within the Administration and it was the Superintendent's task to see that these policies and progrmas were implemented. The Superintendent had wide powers in respect of what was done or not done on the settlement and his role was one of an administrator. The position of Superintendent no longer exists.*

*In late 1972, the Labor Government established the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and introduced the current policy which has become known as 'self determination'. There has been some confusion as to how 'self determination' should be interpreted and what it means.*

*'Self determination' is a process in which Aboriginal groups are given the opportunity to decide the pace and nature of their future development, but in doing so they are subject to the legal, social and economic restraints of Australian society. In other words the Aboriginal people have to be given the opportunity to make decisions for themselves about priorities, programs and planning. In making these decisions however, the Aboriginal people do not have licence to do anything they fancy: they have to remember that they are a part of the larger Australian society and as such, there are restrictions on what they can or cannot do.*

*This policy is based upon the belief that if the Aboriginal people are given the opportunity to decide upon their own programs and to determine their own priorities, they will, over a period of time, become less dependent upon outside support and more able to handle their own affairs.*

*The role of the Community Adviser, therefore, is to find the ways and means by which the Aboriginal groups can participate and be involved in planning and deciding those issues which affect their own lives. The restraints which were mentioned, i.e. economic, social and legal, need to be drawn to the attention of the community and explained by the Community Adviser so that they can take them into consideration when making their decisions.*

*While not disturbing the autonomy or the decision making processes of the Aboriginal community, the role of the Community Adviser is seen as being an active and positive one. The Adviser does not sit around under trees waiting for some one to come and ask his advice. The Community Adviser has a responsibility to communicate and liaise with all sections of the community, both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal, male and female, supervisors and supervised, employed and unemployed, educated and uneducated, Christian and non Christian, drinkers and non drinkers, and any other factions which may be present within the community. By doing so he should achieve a position of knowing and understanding why the community ticks the way it does.*

*The Community Adviser should be active in providing advice and guidance to the community, particularly on the funding sources open to it from government to implement its own programs and in explaining to the community the various options open to it. He has a responsibility to assess at the local level the effect of government policies aimed at the advancement of the Aboriginal community and to keep the department fully informed where change or revision is necessary. Because of his position of some advantage in the Aboriginal community he should be able to channel correctly to the department any new initiatives or ideas originating from the community. The Community Adviser has to be able to explain to the community the provisions of new legislation planned and also to carry out some measure of local project control. He should be available particularly at this stage, to assist councils and council staff in maintaining effective liaison with other government departments and agencies.*

*The above is just a brief resume of what sort of tasks the Community Adviser is involved in. The essential point is that non Aboriginal personnel working in or with Aboriginal communities do not operate in isolation of the Community Adviser, but should work in close communication with him.*

*The importance of the Community Adviser's role is reflected in the fact that he is the senior departmental officer at the local level. This does not mean, however, that he is there to make decisions about the administrative details associated with the running of the settlement. This is the responsibility of the Administrative Officer. But where issues affecting policy are in question, the Community Adviser has the responsibility and authority to decide those issues.*

*(Signed) T.C. Lovegrove, Director*
*Department of Aboriginal Affairs*
*10 December 1975*

DUTIES OF THE COMMUNITY ADVISER

1. CONSULTATION

The Community Adviser should make himself familiar with the expectations and concerns of the various factions within his community through a process of consultation. He/she has a responsibility to consult with Aboriginal and non Aboriginal groups representing all factions and interests within the community.

2. RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

The Community Adviser has a responsibility to make himself aware of the various resources which would be available to the community. These include financial, administrative and material resources. In particular, he should be familiar with the funding sources open to the community from Government to implement programs arising from community initiatives.

3. COMMUNICATION

The Community Adviser must be in a position to communicate information both to the community groups and from the community groups. Because of his position of some advantage in the Aboriginal community, he should be able to channel correctly to the department any new ideas or initiatives originating from the community.

4. ADVICE

The fulfilment of Aboriginal expectations will be subject to the economic, legal and social constraints applicable to the wider Australian society. The Community Adviser has a responsibility to ensure that the community or group are aware of these constraints in the planning and development of their programs. He should be able to explain to the Aboriginal community and others current government policies in respect of certain issues concerning the community or the provisions of new legislation planned.

5. EVALUATION

The Community Adviser has a responsibility to assess at the local level the effect of government policies aimed at the development of the Aboriginal community and to keep the department fully informed where change or revision is necessary. The evaluation process is a continuing process which must be given a high priority in respect of the duties of a Community Adviser.

6. PARTICIPATION

The Community Adviser has the responsibility to investigate and examine the ways by which the community or groups can participate in deciding those issues which bear upon their own lives. This may involve the establishment and support of councils of one kind or another or it may involve the development or maintenance of more traditional institutions within the community. Effective participation of the community in deciding priorities and issues which are of concern to the community, is crucial to the department's policy in respect of Aboriginal development.

7. PROJECT CONTROL

The Community Adviser must be prepared to carry out some measure of local project control. For example many projects are funded with certain conditions attached. The Community Adviser should be in a position to know if these conditions are being violated, or whether funds are being used for the purposes intended. He should also be able to assess the implications of certain methods of funding in respect of whether projects are encouraged or inhibited by using such methods. Information he has with regard to project control should be channelled to the department on a regular basis.

8. LIAISON

The Community Adviser should also be available to assist Council and Council staff in maintaining effective liaison with other Government departments and agencies. The liaison role is not restricted to Councils and their staff however. The Community Adviser should be involved in the promotion of effective communication between the various interest groups within the community and between the community and 'outside' agencies.

The Community Adviser must meet a number of specific requirements:-

(i) He requires a thorough knowledge of the tools, processes and procedures involved in the community development approach.

(ii) He has to have an ability to analyse, conceptualise and articulate accurately and concisely the problems involved, including the cause of the problems.

(iii) He must seek out applicable resources.

(iv) He must accept the principle that when he does not have the answer to a question he refers to someone who does. He must also be willing to team up with somebody who can answer the question or do something he cannot do.

(v) He must be disinterested in, the alternatives of the community - not uninterested.

(vi) He must refuse to make the decision for the community.

(vii) He must refrain from being a co-ordinator. He does not co-ordinate the activities of everybody else. To promote and assist in the development of effective comm-

unication between groups and agencies is not acting as co-ordinator. Moreover the Community Adviser must be able to ask the right questions of the right people at the right time. He has to have sufficient drive to ask the questions but sufficient diplomacy to get an answer.

The Community Adviser must be an advocate - not for any specific alternative for the community or group, but an advocate of the retention of the decisions of 'what shall be' in the hands of the community citizen.

1482 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Are there any figures available for the number of vehicles which have traversed the following roads during the past three years and if so, what are they?

(a) Yuendumu Road from the Stuart Highway turnoff to Yuendumu;

(b) Ayers Rock Road from the Erldunda turnoff;

(c) Plenty River Highway;

(d) Sandover Highway.

ANSWER

Traffic counts have been taken on the roads mentioned by the honourable member. The data is available for most months of the years from 1971 to July 1976, and is shown in the accompanying tables.

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

PLENTY HIGHWAY (Station S86) 16 Km east of Stuart Highway

| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1971 | 15 | 11 | 23 | 23 | 18 | 31 | 38 | 54 | 37 | 28 | 26 | 21 |
| 1972 | 17 | 19 | 14 | 19 | 20 | U/S | 23 | 59 | 18 | 17 | 14 | 10 |
| 1973 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 28 | - | - | - |
| 1974 | - | - | 16 | | - | - | - | 47 | 26* | 27 | 21 | 13 |
| 1975 | 15 | 12 | 12 | 17 | 22 | 29 | 24 | 20 | 15 | - | - | - |
| 1976≠ | 14 | 20 | U/S | U/S | 28 | 29 | - | - | - | - | - | - |

SANDOVER HIGHWAY (Station C132) midway Woodgreen/Amaroo

| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1970 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | - | 4 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| 1971 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 4 |
| 1972 | 2 | - | 7 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

LEGEND: No figure shown = No record
U/S = Unserviceable
* = A.D.T. for part of month only
≠ = 1976 A.D.T.'s are approximations only

TANAMI ROAD (Station S87) 16 km west of Stuart Highway

| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1971 | 32 | 40 | 39 | 36 | 45 | 42 | 26 | 48 | 37 | 37 | 31 | U/S |
| 1972 | 43 | 26 | 28 | 36 | 38 | 34 | 38 | 33 | 35 | 35 | 38 | 30 |
| 1973 | 23 | - | 24 | 40 | 38 | 34 | 43 | 67 | 42 | 25 | 33 | 48 |
| 1974 | 25 | 25 | 45 | 49 | 56 | 57 | 53 | 69 | 62 | 63 | 60 | U/S |
| 1975 | 45 | 23 | - | 55 | 61 | 66 | U/S | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1976≠ | 23 | 47 | 49 | 66 | 54 | 49 | U/S | - | - | - | - | - |

PETERMAN ROAD (Station S89) 16 km west of Stuart Highway

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1971 | 14 | 11 | 11 | 24 | 37 | 36 | 37 | 50 | 36 | 21 | 13 | 19 |
| 1972 | 15 | 12 | - | 25 | 67 | 50 | 44 | 62 | 61 | 25 | 19 | 18 |
| 1973 | 24 | - | 19 | 33 | U/S | 34 | 47 | 49 | 52 | 23 | 18 | 19 |
| 1974 | 6 | - | 19 | U/S | U/S | 44 | 50 | 83 | 37 | 30 | U/S | 27 |
| 1975 | 17 | U/S | - | 22 | 76 | 48 | 54 | 82 | 83 | - | - | - |
| 1976≠ | 25 | 18 | 24 | 49 | 85 | 99 | 74 | - | - | - | - | - |

LEGEND: No figure shown = No record
U/S = Unserviceable
≠ = 1976 A.D.T.'s are approximations only

1483 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

(1) What was the cost of sealing each of the stages of the Stuart Highway from Alice Springs to the South Australian border (excluding bridgeworks), and the mileage of each stage?

(2) What is the name and location of each of the bridges, and what was the cost of each?

(3) Has there been a contract let - or estimate completed - for the sealing of the Stuart Highway south of the South Australian border to Pimba, and does it include the bridgeworks in that section?

(4) Has there been any traffic count between Port August and Alice Springs; if so, with what result?

ANSWER

1. & 2. The detail requested in parts 1 and 2 of the question are listed in the accompanying tables.

3. The most suitable route for a sealed national highway from Port August to the Northern Territory has been the subject of a Corri-

dor Study conducted jointly by the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments.

The Joint Steering Committee which supervised the Corridor Study has presented its report to the Australian and the South Australian Ministers for Transport.

The report was tabled in the legislatures concerned on Tuesday 12/10/76. The recommendations are being studied.

4. Counts have been carried out. The Annual Average Daily Totals of vehicles at Kulgera were -

| | |
|---|---|
| 1970 | 44 |
| 1971 | 54 |
| 1972 | 63 |
| 1973 | 58 |
| 1974 | 66 |
| 1975 | 71. |

SOUTH STUART HIGHWAY

00 km = Airport Road i.e. 12 km south of Alice Springs Post Office

TABLE 1 - ROADWORKS

| Distance (km) | | | Contract Sum ($) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 00 | to | 5.0 | 60,202 |
| 5.0 | to | 6.4 | Refer 24 to 27.5 |
| 6.4 | to | 24.0 | 388,739 |
| 24.0 | to | 27.5 | 155,000 (incl. 5.0 to 6.4 section) |
| 27.5 | to | 85.4 | 647,032 |
| 85.4 | to | 97.1 | 174,000 |
| 97.1 | to | 124.0 | 744,888 |
| 124.0 | to | 128.4 | 185,000 (incl. 97.1 to 124 section) |
| 128.4 | to | 149.2 | (incl. 124 to 128.2) |
| 149.2 | to | 150.4 | 997,884 |
| 150.4 | to | 202.0 | 404,787 |
| 202.0 | to | 218.0 | 2,468,982 |
| 218.0 | to | 296.0 | |

TABLE 2 - AGGREGATE SUPPLY CONTRACTS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 24 - 202 | Heavitree Quarries | $113,769 | 16/6/72 |
| 202 - 296 | Centralian Industries | $204,948 | 17/9/75 |

TABLE 3 - BRIDGES

| Location | | Contract Sum ($) |
|---|---|---|
| 5.0 | Roe Creek | 66,906 |
| 85.5 | Hugh River | 54,463 |
| 120.0 | Maloney's Creek | 67,937 |
| 126.0 | Finke River | 47,840 |
| 150.0 | Palmer River | 50,212 |
| 170.0 | 105 Mile Creek | 49,308 |
| Bridge Guardrails (all 6 bridges) | | 56,140 |

1484 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

What was the total quantity, and the value, of liquor sold -

(a) in the Alice Springs district; and

(b) in the Tennant Creek district,

during the last three financial years?

ANSWER

Explanatory Notes.

1. For the purpose of calculating licensing figures, the year ends 28 February.

2. The whole of the Northern Territory is divided into two districts:

   (a) North Australia District - down to the including Renner Springs.

   (b) Central Australia District - up to and including Tennant Creek.

3. For the purpose of this answer, Tennant Creek has been confined to the town boundaries. The Alice Springs district includes the whole of the remaining part of the Central Australia District.

4. All licence figures are based on purchases of the previous year with the exception of "Liquor Merchants" which are based on sales to licensed premises and unlicensed persons.

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA DISTRICT

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1974 | | | |
| General: | Litres | 3,254,390.3 | |
| | Value | $1,956,315.28 | |
| Liquor Merchant: | Litres | 204,781.53 | |
| | Value | $ 157,058.25 | Licensed Premises |
| | | $ 18,331.29 | Unlicensed Premises |
| 1975 | | | |
| General: | Litres | 6,151,554.75 | |
| | Value | $2,359,816.78 | |
| Liquor Merchant: | Litres | 237,925.66 | |
| | Value | $ 317,965.80 | Licensed Premises |
| | | $ 17,005.13 | Unlicensed Premises |
| 1976 | | | |
| General: | Litres | 4,810,681.3 | |
| | Value | $3,387,763.70 | |
| Liquor Merchant: | Litres | 478,554.14 | |
| | Value | $ 452,971.49 | Licensed Premises |
| | | $ 52,653.36 | Unlicensed Premises |

TENNANT CREEK

1974

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| General: | Litres | 1,261,001 | |
| | Value | $ 660,606.30 | |
| Liquor Merchant: | | Nil | |

1975

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| General: | Litres | 910,743.4 | |
| | Value | $ 749,664.94 | |
| Liquor Merchant: | Litres | 94,008.6 | |
| | Value | $ 59,211.80 | No break-up available |

1976

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| General: | Litres | 1,144.320.8 | |
| | Value | $ 898,265.62 | |
| Liquor Merchant: | Litres | 588,741.38 | |
| | Value | 387,119.08 | No break-up available |

1555 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

Is it correct that, whilst severe financial restraints are being imposed on the ABC, the commission is paying several hundred dollars a week for a new office in the TAA building which it will probably not occupy for another 5 or 6 months?

ANSWER

I will attempt to find out later today and advise the Assembly.

1556 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Is he yet in a position to advise the terms and conditions for the recommencement of the sale of government homes in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

No. However, I have again sought the information from the Minister.

1557 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

How many grass fires have been experienced in and around Alice Springs during the last six months, and how were they started?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer that question and I do not know if I will be able to get the information before the end of the sittings. I therefore ask that the question be placed on notice.

1558 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

At the previous sittings, I asked a question about the upgrading of government homes which have so far received only cosmetic treatment. Given the rapidly approaching wet season with its high winds, what efforts are being made to strengthen government homes which have only received cosmetic treatment and which in their present state are a danger to adjoining properties?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has a policy with regard to its program of work which relates to the construction of new homes to the full requirements of the code and the upgrading of a number of homes which fall into 2 categories - those which have major damage and require upgrading to meet the requirements of the new code and those where work of a cosmetic nature was undertaken at an early stage to enable comfortable habitation by the tenants. I will seek further information for the honourable member with regard to the number of houses that fall into each category and the subsequent proposals for their full strengthening.

1559 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

When will the reports of the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund be tabled in this Assembly?

ANSWER

The honourable Member for Jingili has tabled the reports of the trust fund up to and including June 1976. I am informed that the monthly

reports for the months of July, August, September and October are apparently being prepared and should be available within the next fortnight. They will be tabled at the first available date and I would anticipate that that would be during the December sitting. The final report, which will contain the audited statement, will depend on the receipt of the final audit statements by the Auditor-General. It is anticipated that that report will be available early in the new year.

1560 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

Is it correct that the ABC in Darwin will have only one talks officer on duty for much of next year compared with 4 up until the cyclone? What affect will this have on the ABC services?

ANSWER

I do not have this information. I will seek the information.

1561 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he advise if the staff ceilings in the public service will affect the hiring of full staff complement for the new Alice Springs Hospital?

ANSWER

The situation of staff ceilings generally in the health services in the Northern Territory is one of concern. I have taken the matter up with the Minister for Health and with the Prime Minister's Department which is responsible for the setting of staff ceilings. The Prime Minister's Department has not been fully cooperative and there may be some problems in being able to find sufficient staff, within the ceilings of the Department of Health, to meet all the immediate requirements and the new developments in health services in the Territory, particularly the Alice Springs Hospital and further wards at the Darwin Hospital.

1562 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

How much would it cost to reinstate the street lighting along Trower Road between Vanderlin Drive and Ellengowan Drive?

ANSWER

I do not have that information. I will endeavour to get it for the honourable member.

1563 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is he aware of the report of a royal commission into petroleum tabled in the Federal House yesterday and does this report refer to the proposal in central Australia? Will he seek to have copies of the royal commission report made available to Assembly members?

ANSWER

The answer to the first 2 parts of the question is yes. I will endeavour to have the report tabled in the Assembly at the earliest possible time.

1564 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

Has a date been set to form the Recreation and Sporting Advisory Council in the Northern Territory? If so, where will the meeting be held?

ANSWER

A definite date has not been set for the meeting of such a body largely because of complications arising through the proposed transfer of powers. I would imagine that the meeting will be held in Darwin some time in the next month.

1565 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

What is happening regarding the establishment of a health commission for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

A proposal for the establishment of a health commission for the Northern Territory was placed before the Federal Cabinet by the Minister for Health, I understand, either early last week or the week before. The Minister advised me last Friday that Cabinet has deferred further consideration of the establishment of a Northern Territory Health Commission until March 1977. In the meantime, there will be further prepatory discussions on the proposal.

1566 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

Has the Executive Member made representation to Senator Carrick to have the Dripstone High School included in the proposed mini-budget to be handed down next March?

ANSWER

Yes

1567 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he advise when a commissioner or commissioners will be appointed to conduct an inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance?

ANSWER

No.

1568 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

When will the Darwin Reconstruction Commission commence work on the repair of the sewerage outlet at Doctors Gully?

ANSWER

The answer required is one of a technical nature and with regard to the work program. I will seek the information for the honourable member and make it available to him.

1569 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

Have discussions taken place with possible persons to handle the inquiry into lottery and gaming and is he aware whether a recommend-

ation has gone forward which may result in the appointment of a commissioner in the near future?

ANSWER

The appointment of a commissioner to conduct the inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance is a matter for the Administrator and the Administrator's council. Unfortunately, I am not a member of that council. I understand the Majority Leader has had discussions in southern places in recent weeks, that some decisions have been made and that some recommendations have been made to the Minister and to the Administrator.

1570 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he supply any information pertaining to an advertisement which appeared recently in the Financial Review concerning a proposed casino for Alice Springs,

ANSWER

Now the casino is in Alice Springs! I have not seen this advertisement which was supposed to have government backing. I do not know anything about the matter and have had no approaches from anybody regarding the establishment of a casino in the Northern Territory. If people want to establish a casino, that is one of the matters they can bring to the lottery and gaming inquiry, but they might also care to discuss it with me.

1571 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

What plans and provisions have been made to provide cyclone shelters with food, medical supplies, generators and trained staff?

ANSWER

As far as food and water is concerned, all public shelters are presently being stocked with supplies. Soup, tea, coffee, biscuits and baby food and water tankers are installed during "condition white" of the cyclone alert. Receptacles for additional water supplies are already installed and will be filled by a shelter coordinator in "condition white". All shelters are equipped with first-aid and medical supplies and the Department of Health have arranged for staff to be located at the shelters. Some emergency generators are permanently installed and at shelters where this is not possible for technical reasons, gas lighting and power is being arranged. All shelters are in the main staffed by volunteers and, while some training has been carried out, it has not been possible to train all staff concerned. However, a trained social worker, welfare officer, interpreters, medical, first-aid, and communication operators will be located at each shelter.

1572 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING

Is it a fact that, in the making of an application for a building permit for a house or industrial building involving any structural steel, Alice Springs people have to present an engineer's certificate in the same manner as if Alice Springs was in the area defined by the Darwin Reconstruction Act? If it is a fact, upon what and by whose authority is such a certificate required?

ANSWER

I will seek from the Building Board the procedures required and make the information available to the honourable member.

1573 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

Is it a fact that the government representative on the Northern Territory Tourist Board was recently sacked by the board and that the reason for his sacking was his non attendance at 3 consecutive meetings of the board and how was this allowed to happen?

ANSWER

It is not a fact that the government member was sacked from the board. The government member's term of office lapsed. Under the ordinance, when a person misses three consecutive meetings of the board without the consent of the chairman, that office becomes vacant. As to the third part of the question, the chairman of the board works under the ordinance and he has followed that ordinance.

1574 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

Is he aware of press reports by an Adelaide journalist which refer to a possibility of the Northern Territory achieving statehood and the Territory should then be called "Wonderland" and the capital "Alice".

No anwer given.

1575 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS

I refer to recent publicity given to alleged restrictions placed by this Assembly on traditional hunting by Aboriginals. Is he aware of these criticisms and does he propose to take any action in the matter?

ANSWER

Yes, I am aware of reports in the press, on radio and television to that effect. I think there may be some ground for some of the criticism. The principles which we sought to achieve in planning the legislation were that Aboriginals would still have the right to hunt traditionally for food, decoration or Aboriginal purposes in their own areas but, at the same time, prevent them engaging in trafficking, trading, bartering, selling and non-traditional uses of wildlife, which is protected for the whole of the rest of the population of Australia. In the framing of the legislation, particularly section 122, we may have gone a little further than was the intention. However, I would say that the people who have been most vocal on this matter, including Dr Peterson, have made no representations to me in the matter at all. They have preferred to go to the press and radio and to try and claim the headlines and the limelight, whereas I believe the proper course of action for them was to make their views and representations known to us; they would have received full consideration. As it is, I have asked the Director of Legislation to confer with the draftsman and see whether some amendments which may remove any undesirable side-effects of our present legislation can be achieved.

I am also aware of a program last night on "New Society" in which, I understand, a fairly lengthy interview was conducted with Dr Peterson

critical of me, the Assembly and a number of other people. I can only say from what I have heard of it that this program completely lacked any balance and that the program organisers in the ABC made no attempt to get in touch with me to check the facts or what we might be doing in the matter. This kind of unbalanced presentation by the ABC does nothing to enhance their case.

1576 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

What facilities are there available in Darwin to train staff or members of the community in civil defence procedures?

ANSWER

Whilst only limited facilities exist for training in Darwin, courses are carried out in survey, rescue and first-aid in relation to disasters and emergency situations. Other courses are being planned and, in addition, selected people have been sent to the National Disaster Organization training courses at Mount Macedon in Victoria for training in rescue, welfare, research, disaster control and disaster planning.

1577 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

During the recent power failure in the Darwin area the water pressure in the northern suburbs was noticed to drop quite a lot. Could he tell us why?

ANSWER

During a recent widespread power failure in the Darwin area, the water supply in the northern suburbs, in the area serviced by a particular water reserve tank, did fail virtually completely. The reason for this failure was twofold. The water reservoir itself had been receiving maintenance over the previous 3 weeks and was empty. At the time of the power failure, the tank had just been commenced to be refilled. On top of this, standby power supplies available for the pumps at the McMinns pumping station were not brought into operation as quickly as they could have been. These two events caused that area to lose water supply completely. I am informed that steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of these events and we hope that it will not happen in the future.

1578 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

Why did the government representative on the Tourist Board fail to attend 3 consecutive meetings of the board?

ANSWER

Perhaps the honourable member could redirect that question to the government member who did not attend the 3 meetings.

1579 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

I ask the Executive Member for Resource Development to answer the question or ask that it be put on notice as I understand that he has responsibility to the Assembly for the portfolio of tourism.

ANSWER

I am unable to say why the member did not attend the 3 meetings. I

will endeavour to find out and answer the member's question at a later hour.

1580 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN

In recent times, I have driven down the Stuart Highway and along the Barkly Highway and I noted with horror that some of the road that is in poor shape has not been resealed although there is one sealing gang in the area. Will he take steps to ensure that this sealing is speedily done and that the road situation is watched very carefully? If there are heavy rains, weight restrictions may need to be imposed.

ANSWER

The area that concerns the honourable member for Ludmilla is the Barkly Highway which was subject to weight restrictions last year and those restrictions were responsible for keeping the road open for most of the wet season. I will check with the Department of Construction as to what progress has been made in repairing the road. I know that a lot of money was put aside for the repair of this section of the road. Unfortunately, even after the repair, should the coming wet season be similar to the one we experienced last year, we could find ourselves in the same situation with regard to weight restrictions. I will ask the Department of Construction to look more closely at the timing of the weight restrictions so that restrictions are brought in before trucks are able to damage the road.

1581 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

Is it proposed that selected prisoners in Northern Territory jails be released daily for work, particularly in the light of a recent newspaper report that a prisoner was stated as saying that he just could not "hack it" in Fannie Bay because he was dead bored?

ANSWER

Present legislation in the Northern Territory does not allow for the introduction of work release programs. I am hopeful that in new legislation that will be introduced next year provision will be made for work release programs. The plans for the new Darwin jail include a work release facility from which selected prisoners will be able to move into the community for employment. States which have work release programs regard them as a progessive step in penal reform and it was one of the several areas of conditional release which were discussed extensively at a recent meeting of state ministers in charge of prisons and parole which I attended a fortnight ago. The proposed Northern Territory legislation I hope will incorporate all those aspects of legislation in the states which have enabled more positive results to be obtained.

1582 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

On Sunday 17 October at 8,45 am, I had reason to visit the Casuarina Fire Station: the dashboard of my vehicle was on fire. I had a small electrical fire and I pulled into the fire station thinking that they would be of some assistance. Unfortunately there were no fire extinguishers at the station. Can the Executive Member tell me why not?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Casuarina did mention this to me shortly after the event. I spoke to the Chief Fire Officer and there does

appear to be some problem with fire extinguishers. The normal method used by the fire brigade in extinguishing fires of an electrical nature - and I am assuming that was the situation with the honourable member's car - is to use a water mist through a hose. The fire extinguisher problem, as the chief explained to me, is caused by the fact that these fire extinguishers, which are quite small, come in handy to certain people around the community when vehicles are at various locations and they find it hard to keep up with the supply. They would normally have a fire extinguisher of this nature on the fire appliance. Unfortunately, on the day the honourable member ran into his problem, they were not able to make available a fire extinguisher. I believe that the fire brigade did extinguish the fire, which I think was the prime object of the exercise.

1583 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

What is the standard of accommodation at the Groote Eylandt courthouse and ancillary quarters? Secondly, have magistrates indicated that they will not be holding a court at Groote Eylandt again until such time as the courthouse and ancillary quarters are upgraded to an acceptable standard?

ANSWER

While I have not inspected the accommodation provided for magistrates at Groote Eylandt personally, I have been convinced by both pictures and reports that it can best be described as worse than primitive. It is true that magistrates will not be going out there again until the accommodation is upgraded. I believe that representation has been made by the Attorney-General's Department to the responsible authorities to that end.

1584 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

What provisions are being made to provide shelter for prisoners at Fannie Bay jail during a cyclone?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

1585 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

I have a telegram that has been sent to a constituent of mine from the Secretary of the Northern Territory Town Planning Board. This particular telegram would cost the taxpayer at least $20 or $25; it is 4 paragraphs. Could he please tell me why a telegram was sent and not a letter?

ANSWER

Several representations have been made to me with regard to the Town Planning Board notifying objectors by way of telegram. I did pursue this matter and was informed that there is a statutory requirement for the board to notify an objector within a fortnight of the board hearing a particular objection. Because of the peculiar administrative problems of the Department of Northern Territory at the moment, where the Town Planning Office is located in Brisbane and the board meets in Darwin, a situation arose recently where the fortnight almost expired and the objector would not have been notified within the statutory period. It was therefore necessary to inform the objectors of the considerations by way of a telegram.

1586 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

I have a question on notice regarding excess water charges and rates. The Executive Member stated at the last sittings that I would have a reply by the 22 October. To date I have not had a reply. When will I get a reply?

ANSWER

I have endeavoured over the last few days to get the answer. I am advised that the answers to the question have been sent to my office. However, they appear to have taken the long route because they are not there as yet. I hope that the honourable member will have the answers by tomorrow.

1587 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

I noticed a smirk on the face of the honourable member. Is he able to tell me when Block 8 cafeteria will open?

ANSWER

The smirk on my face was about a question which was asked on the 10th of August and which has not been answered. The member was worried about a question asked in October.

1588 Mr STEELE to Mr PERRON

My question refers to the sealing of the section of the East Point Road in front of the Penthouse Restaurant. Why was that road ripped up and it thought necessary to put new sealing there? What sort of priority did that sealing have?

ANSWER

This particular problem does not fall within my area of responsibility. I suggest the honourable member redirect the question; perhaps it is part of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's funding program.

1589 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW

Is the Executive Member aware that the living accommodation for the policeman at Avon Downs is in a shocking state and dangerous? Will she take my remarks to the Commissioner of Police and try and get something done about it?

ANSWER

Yes, I am aware of the state of the Avon Downs accommodation and I have already made representations to the proper authorities on behalf of the policeman living there.

1590 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

Is it true that a further 45,000 library books are coming from Canberra, and is it also true that these books are yet to be catalogued?

ANSWER

I am advised that it is not true that 45,000 books are coming from Canberra. 38,000 books are coming from Canberra. About one-third of these are catalogued; the rest will have to be done.

1591 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Members will recall that at the last sittings I presented a petition from residents of Rothdale Road, Jingili, relating to the proposed re-erection of overhead high voltage power transmission lines along Rothdale Road, asking that this action be stayed by the Department of the Northern Territory and that the lines be undergrounded. Is it intended to proceed with the erection of the overhead lines or is there a possibility that they may be undergrounded?

ANSWER

I believe the intention of the department is to erect overhead reticulation of electricity in that area.

1592 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

I refer to the area in the Noise Exposure Forecast zone along Bagot Road. Is he aware of any town planning proposals for that area and, if so, what are they?

ANSWER

It would seem that the honourable member for Ludmilla is going back to 1975. The NEF zone was raised as a town planning issue by the Cities Commission in their first report and their classification of Darwin. There is currently under preparation by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, in cooperation with the Northern Territory Town Planning Board, a new town plan for Darwin. Whilst this will look at zoning for the particular requirements of the Darwin community, I am not aware that it takes into account in any specific manner on the maps either the surge zones or the NEF zones.

1593 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

If his remarks are correct as far as he is aware, is it true that there is some compulsory acquisition being carried out in that area?

ANSWER

I believe that a number of acquisitions were instigated even prior to the cyclone. Whether these were related to the issues of the NEF zone, I am not sure. I will seek further information for him. I would expect any town planner to take into account such matters as zoning an NEF zone in the zone classifications that may be given to a particular area. However, I will seek further information for the honourable member.

1594 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

I refer to a speech made by Mr Viner in Melbourne at the opening of the Aboriginal exhibit. He said that it is easily forgotten that until recent times Aboriginal people were forbidden to speak their own language and observe their traditional customs in what was considered by administrators to be an enlightened policy of assimilation. In nearly 40 years of experience in North Australia, I have never heard of this. Would the member for Social Affairs tell me if he has knowledge of this in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

My attention has been drawn to the speech made in Melbourne by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. As I understand it, what he stated has never occurred in the Northern Territory. I cannot go back 40 years but, in my time in the Territory, I have never heard of such an accusation. I believe that Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory are encouraged to use their native language, crafts, skills and traditions. They are also encouraged to learn the English language and perhaps a lot more white Australians could perhaps learn some of the traditional skills and the language of the Aboriginal people. The remarks made by the Minister are completely contrary to the situation that exists in the Northern Territory or ever has existed.

1595 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

When will the new Edith River bridge be trafficable?

ANSWER

I have not spoken to the department about this recently but some time ago they expected the bridge to be open by the end of 1976.

1596 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Is it a fact that the Federal Minister for Transport will be visiting the Territory in the near future and, if so, will the Executive Member undertake to seek some answers on the proposal to close the Alice Springs to Port Augusta rail line?

ANSWER

The Federal Minister for Transport will be in Darwin Monday and Tuesday next week and I will be having discussions with him. I will be asking him about the proposals that were given some coverage in the press a couple of weeks ago to see if he has anything more to say on the matter.

1597 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What accommodation is currently provided by the Housing Commission in Darwin? How does this compare with pre-cyclone tenancies and can he indicate the number of people on the waiting list for Housing Commission accommodation in Darwin?

ANSWER

Accommodation provided by the Housing Commission as at 31 October was: 437 caravans, 234 demountables and 1,046 houses in various states of repair, new houses and restored houses. The Housing Commission also had tenanted 320 flats. That is a total of 2,037 tenancies as at 31

October. Compared with pre-cyclone, the pre-cyclone tenancies that the Housing Commission had were only 1,644. It is an increase of some 400 on the pre-cyclone figure. The third part of the question related to the applicant waiting list. I advise that the total number of outstanding applicants, as at 31 October, was 1,149 persons.

1598 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Is the honourable member able to provide information relating to new and rebuilt houses and flats for the Northern Territory Housing Commission since the cyclone? What is the value of their contracts let in Darwin? Thirdly, what is the extent of expenditure by the Northern Territory Housing Commission on contracts in Darwin since the cyclone?

ANSWER

The figures of performance relating to the Northern Territory Housing Commission in its reconstruction program are rather remarkable. The Housing Commission has let contracts for new houses and flats to be built totalling 786. Of these, 643 have been commenced and 332 are now complete. With regard to the house restoration program, contracts for 277 homes have been let, 220 have been commenced and 117 are complete. That gives a total of 1,063 contracts let, 863 commenced and 449 completed. The total value of contracts let in Darwin since the cyclone for new and rebuilt houses and flats is $24m. For house restorations, the total is $4.14m and for temporary repairs to houses and flats, $1.6m. That is a total value of contracts let since the cyclone of $29.8m. The extent of expenditure on those contracts since the cyclone is $17.2m, made up of $1.6m in the 6 months following the cyclone to 30 June 1976, $11m in the financial year 1975/76 and $4.6m in this financial year to September 1976. There has been an expenditure of $17.2m by the Housing Commission to date.

1599 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON

Is the honourable member aware that in Alice Springs the introduction of chlorine into the domestic water system is creating damage to domestic, and commercial and public buildings? Is he aware that the chlorine damages the seats of valves in the water reticulation and hot water systems creating an unwarranted equipment and appliance replacement effect? Will he undertake to investigate this matter and report what remedy action may be available?

ANSWER

I was not aware of the problems that have been outlined by the honourable member for Alice Springs. However, I will endeavour to have talks with the department on the subject and report back to him.

1600 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he give any assurance or make any statement to the House concerning the Darwin electricity supply through the coming wet season? There have already been some breakdowns experienced and there is some community concern in this regard. Is the Department of Construction satisfied that the reticulation system is adequate?

ANSWER

All I can say is that the Electricity Supply Undertaking people are not at all satisfied with the condition of the patched-up electricity

reticulation system that exists in Darwin. We are liable to experience considerable trouble during the coming wet season as a result of the work which has had to be done since the cyclone to get consumers back on to electricity in some cases in a very haphazard way. I am afraid that I do not have any reassuring words. The task to completely bring Darwin's electricity reticulation system back to pre-cyclone standard will cost many millions of dollars and will take several years.

1601 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

I want to question without notice the honourable majority leader as a member of the Administrator's Council, following questions which were asked of the Executive Member for Social Affairs yesterday. Can he advise when and if a commissioner or commissioners will be appointed to conduct the inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance?

ANSWER

We are almost at the final stages of this operation after a long time. At the request of the Administrator and Administrator's Council, I interviewed a short list of people when I was in Tasmania and Victoria recently. I believe that a suitable selection is now available from that list. The final step which needs to be taken is a clearance from Prime Minister to Premier on a particular person. That should be done in the very near future, I hope, and the Administrator will be then in a position to make an announcement.

1602 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Could he tell me when the Gunn Point Prison Farm will be reopened?

ANSWER

The Department of Correctional Services hopes that the Gunn Point Prison Farm will be reopened and in full operation before Christmas. There has been a continuing delay in reopening the prison farm. It closed in February because of a staff shortage. That situation has been gradually improved and another group of officers will be taken into the service on the 29th of thiy month in Alice Springs, bringing the establishment there up to full strength. There has been considerable amount of upgrading work carried out in recent weeks at Gunn Point. There have been 6 or 8 core units moved out there and they are being adapted for staff accommodation to upgrade the standard. Water, sewerage and electricity reticulation are being upgraded. All this work is hoped to be finished in the next month or so, and so allow the permanent removal of prisoners from Fannie Bay and perhaps Alice Springs to Gunn Point so that the prison farm will be fully operative. At the moment there are work parties of up to 16 men a day going out to Gunn Point, maintaining and generally keeping the place in operation. There has been an increase in the establishment of the staff there and there is now, instead of a chief prison officer in charge, a superintendent in charge. It is hoped, with that upgrading and the concurrence of the Prison Officers Association in other matters, that the farm will be operating before Christmas.

1603 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW

What is the policy of the Education Department regarding the employment as a teacher or part-time instructor of a person convicted of a sexual offence against a pupil or convicted of other criminal offences?

ANSWER

Teachers and part-time instructors are employed in two separate ways. A teacher in the Northern Territory is employed under the Commonwealth Teaching Service Act and as such is a member of the Commonwealth Teaching Service and responsible to the commissioner. I understand that there is a section in the Commonwealth Teaching Service Act, section 35 I believe, which allows for disciplinary action by the commissioner in cases of such a conviction. There is also provision for appeals on behalf of the person convicted. In the case of part-time instructors, this is largely a matter for each individual school. A school is given a certain number of hours for which they are allowed to employ part-time instructors and each school has a quota on a separate system depending on the number of students they have and other aspects. It would be largely up to the individual principal because of the autonomy a school has in a particular situation. However, the Director of Education would have the overriding authority to make a policy which I understand has not definitely been made at this stage if such an incident arises.

1604 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr PERRON

Is he aware of any claim or payment ever having been made under the Northern Territory Compensation Ordinance in respect of a uranium mining worker when such a claim has resulted from the handling of uranium ore or by-products?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any such claim ever having been made.

1605 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is he aware of any plans by the 2 major Australian domestic airlines to introduce additional flights to and from the Territory over the festive season? Is he aware of a continuing rationalisation attitude leaving the Northern Territory residents unable to move to and from the Territory during the festive season?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the points made by the honourable member for Alice Springs. I would ask him to place the question on notice.

1606 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS

What is the current position in the Northern Territory with regard to the export of live cattle? Have markets been established and have 4 contracts been negotiated? Will this market assist to alleviate the depressed industry?

ANSWER

Markets for export of live cattle from the Northern Territory have been established. Some of those cattle have been exported from the Port of Wyndham rather than from the Port of Darwin due to problems which have existed in the past in reaching an understanding concerning quotas with unions. I do not have any official figures for cattle that have been exported in recent months. I understand it could be something in the order of 2,000 from the west and from here. I know that the market is being fostered by several different groups and they are having results in places such as Hong Kong, the Phillipp-

ines, Brunei and Sabah. There is an expectation also that live buffalo will be shipped to New Guinea when the New Guinea Government and the exporters arrange a suitable contract; this is being advertised.

The live cattle market could have a considerable impact on what is a very depressed industry, an industry which has increasing problems of overstocking and which could be compounded by bad seasons. We need not only the slaughter and processing market but also the live cattle market working together in order to ensure the viability of the industry in the Northern Territory. The industry can only benefit from the lifting of the former quota of 8,000 head of live cattle which was imposed by the AMIEU on the basis that they were trying to protect the jobs of meatworkers. In a spirit of cooperation, the union has realised that, unless realistic numbers of cattle are sold alive overseas, the stations themselves will be forced to close and the whole industry could close down so that there would be a catastrophic result as far as the employment of meatworkers in northern Australia are concerned. They are taking a more realistic and better approach which will help develop the live cattle market.

1607 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Has a lease been granted by the Crown on the foreshores of Darwin Harbour for the purposes of a marina? Secondly, when was that lease granted? Thirdly, what fee or premium was paid for the lease? Fourthly, what are the development covenants?

ANSWER

I do not have that information available. I will speak to the honourable member for Jingili during the day and advise him to put the question on notice. If he wants an answer in the Assembly I will get it before the next sittings.

1608 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS

Is he able to tell me what would be involved in raising the Alice Springs abattoir to an export licence standard?

ANSWER

In a very general way, to raise the Alice Springs abattoir to export standard would mean that it would have to meet the requirements of the American United States Department of Agriculture and, in fact, would have to become registered by that department as well as the Department of Primary Industry in Australia. As far as the detailed specifications of what would have to be done and perhaps the order of cost of those, I cannot provide that information at the moment, but if the honourable member would place the question on notice I will get the information for him.

1609 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

In the light of the announcement that action is being taken in Victoria to give prisoners in that state the right to vote, can the honourable Executive Member advise me of the position with prisoners' rights of voting in elections in the Northern Territory and is he taking any action to consider the position?

ANSWER

The situation in the Northern Territory at the moment is that a prisoner whether sentenced or on remand for a period of 12 months or less has the right to vote in Commonwealth, Territory and municipal elections. I believe at the recent municipal elections one prisoner at Fannie Bay exercised that right - by postal vote.

This matter was discussed generally at a meeting of state ministers for prisons and parole a fortnight ago in Queensland and the matter of general rights to vote has been canvassed amongst the states. At the moment, there are several theories on the matter. The Victorian announcement, which the honourable member for Jingili refers to, is correct; all prisoners in that state, regardless of how long they are sentenced, will be given the right to vote in a state election. Whether that right will be extended to the Commonwealth remains to be seen. The problem is that there are Commonwealth and state regulations in relation to voting rights. The other problem which is to be considered and finalised is whether they will be enrolled at their place of residence, which would be the gaol, or at their former home address.

1610 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK

I am not sure whether he will see fit to answer this question in the House. It is raised on behalf of some community organisations who have contacted me in Darwin. Is it a fact that there are some thousands of dollars held in trust in Alice Springs which was collected for the relief of Cyclone Tracy victims? If this is a fact, how was the money to be disbursed?

ANSWER

It is a fact that Alice Springs did respond very generously to the cyclone relief appeal and I think that in the town of some 13,500 people at the time over $120,000 was contributed to a fund which was commenced there. The majority of that money, I think in excess of $100,000, was expended on relief in the immediate time after the cyclone. The fund I know did have a problem of how to dispose of the rest of the money and I am not sure how they did dispose of it but there were schemes to put it into projects in Darwin to assist. I know that at one stage the consideration was being given to giving the money to the Salvation Army for the re-supply of an aircraft which they lost during the cyclone. I do not know whether that happened or not and I do not know whether the fund has been actually wound up in Alice Springs. I will endeavour to find out and advise the honourable member.

1611 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise me of house production figures for the Darwin Reconstruction Commission up to date?

ANSWER

This is a similar question to one I have just answered for the Northern Territory Housing Commission. As at 31 October, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has authorised work on 2,053 homes of which 2,021 had been commenced and 1,003 were completed. With regard to the program for flats, authorisation had been issued for 179 flats, of which the whole 179 had been commenced and 111 completed.

1612 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he advise me whether an assessment of value or valuation was carried out on that Taiwanese fishing boat before it was sold for $6,000?

ANSWER

I will take the opportunity to answer the question posed at the last sittings by the member for Jingili in full. I apologise for the delay and explain that it was not caused by any part of the Department of the Northern Territory. The holdup came from the federal department of Primary Industry. The first part of the question asked which government department handled the sale. The answer was the Department of Primary Industry. "Was any valuation or assessment of value of the boat and catch obtained by the department?" The Department of Primary Industry obtained a valuation from its own estimating division. The next part of the question was: "Did the department advertise or otherwise offer the boat and catch for sale either by auction, tender or private treaty?" The answer is, no. The secretary of the department has power to dispose of the confiscated goods and the ship building policy of the government precludes the sale of confiscated ships within Australia. "How many offers to purchase or approaches with a view to purchase did the department receive?" The answer is one. The amount offered in the tender was $6,000 for the vessel and $1,000 for the catch and the authority to sell that vessel at that price was ordered by the secretary of the Department of Primary Industry. The honourable member further asked: "Was the sale for cash or on terms?" The answer is that the vessel was sold for cash. The last part of the question concerned the cost incurred on government departments. The Department of Primary Industry has been unable to ascertain the total cost because there were some 7 or 9 departments involved in the apprehension and disposal of the vessel. I regret that I cannot answer that part of the question.

1613 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Could he advise when legislation will be introduced to cover people who have outstanding third party insurance claims against companies which have become insolvent?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Jingili said as an aside that it has been passed. He is referring to the bill that he put through early last year. I am currently in the process of looking at a proposal from the Department of the Northern Territory to introduce this legislation relating to third party. However, that legislation will not have any retrospectivity.

Mrs Lawrie: Explain the meaning of the word.

Mr RYAN: I was not going to explain the meaning of the word. The proposal does not have any retrospectivity. I do not know what we can do about this situation. There are only 2 sources from which any funds can be made available to cover the people affected by the failure of companies: the Government and the insurance company. So far as I know, neither of the parties wish to make any such contribution. I intend to bring the matter up before the Majority Party and formulate a policy so that we can approach the Government. I feel that the Government does have some responsibility in the matter since they approved the setting up of the companies in the first place. I am certainly worried and concerned about people who have been left with a claim

which could possibly ruin their future because of the amount which they are expected to pay. I am hopeful that we will be able to formulate a policy and approach the Government and ask them to do something to alleviate this problem.

1614 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING

I asked a question yesterday in relation to the provision of engineering certificates being required by the Alice Springs home builders and commercial premise builders. Is he yet in a position to give me an answer to that question?

ANSWER

The following information has been provided by officers of the Building Board. Every application for a permit involving steel or reinforced concrete structures or a large timber truss, other than approved drawings and design calculations by a qualified engineer or architect. However, a certificate of adequacy accompanying plans and specifications, signed by an architect or a qualified engineer may be acceptable. It is understood that engineers in private practice in Alice Springs charge $24 per hour or, on a sliding scale, from ten per cent to five per cent of the cost of the building, commencing at $20,000. That is, maybe ten per cent of the cost of the building up to $20,000. The certificate is required by the Building Board and stems from a resolution made by the board under building regulation No. 23(i)(c) on 24 August 1962. The resolution applies to all building areas in the Northern Territory.

1615 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Was the Northumberland Insurance Company Ltd duly authorised to effect third party insurance pursuant to the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Ordinance immediately prior to its going into liquidation in 1974? Secondly, is it the intention of the Government now to permit those persons having judgment against persons who had third party insurance cover with the Northumberland Insurance Company Ltd to suffer due process of law, including execution against their property and goods and, possibly, bankruptcy?

ANSWER

I believe Northumberland was in fact an authorised insurer. In answer to the second part of the question, as far as I can see at the moment, I think that is the situation. Proceedings will take place. That is what is concerning everybody.

1616 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

I noticed a report in last night's Northern Territory News that there is to be a decision taken shortly by the Federal Government to upgrade the facilities of Radio Australia in the Northern Territory. Can the honourable Executive Member let this House have further particulars of that upgrading?

ANSWER

The report in yesterda's paper referred to an inquiry which has been undertaken by the Federal Government. The report has not been tabled as yet. I have spoken about this matter before in the Assembly, I think earlier this year. I was concerned with the situation at Cox Peninsula where we have the Radio Australia installation which has

not been used or repaired since the cyclone. I have written to the previous Government's minister and the present Government's minister asking what is to be done and each time I have been told that they are awaiting this report. I do not know why the report has not been tabled. The situation is serious as far as I am concerned. I think the recommendation is that Radio Australia in Darwin should have 5 transmitters to cover the area that it is responsible for. The Minister for Posts and Telecommunications will be in Darwin next Tuesday so I hope to be able to talk to him on the matter and possibly get some information about this inquiry.

1617 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING

I understand from the honourable member for Elsey that there is apparently a shortage of housing allotments in Katherine. Would he undertake to make representation to the department to have further allocation of housing residential blocks made available in the township of Katherine?

ANSWER

I am aware that in most urban communities in the Northern Territory - and I think Tennant Creek and Katherine could fall in that category - there is a shortage of land available to the private sector and I will certainly be making representations to the Government for early auctions of residential land in these centres.

1618 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

What steps are being taken to effect reciprocity between the States and the Territory in relation to facilitating probation and parole of prisoners?

ANSWER

The transfer of prisoners and probation and parole activities is a matter which the Standing Committee of the Attorneys-General has been discussing for some time. Ministers are generally in agreement that arrangements should be made for the transfer of prisoners and for the transfer of parole and probation orders from state to state and from state to territory and vice versa. Legislation will need to be uniform between all states and territories for this to be effective and a working party has been established to work on this and effect that measure.

1619 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a question which related to the sale of government homes. I have again raised this matter with the Minister and the following information was provided to me by the Minister's office. The Government has under consideration the reintroduction of the homes sale scheme, both in relation to public servants and the private sector. These schemes ceased to operate in Darwin after the cyclone. However, they have continued in other areas in the Territory. In considering the reintroduction of these schemes, the Government is taking into account the progress of the reconstruction program and build-up to a bank of rental housing and it is hopeful that an announcement about these schemes can be made in the near future. There are financial considerations which need to be considered by the Government.

1620 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member also asked a question which related to the structural improvement to homes which had received cosmetic treatment after the cyclone. The following information has been supplied to me by officers of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Twenty one houses have been completely upgraded and 24 partially upgraded. The remainder are to be completed before December 1977. This figure includes residences on which no upgrading work has been done. This excludes total rebuilds which are to the Darwin area rebuilding standard.

1621 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked a question which related to when work would commence on the repairs to the Doctor's Gully sewerage outfall. The answer provided by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is "The Commission expects to call tenders in February/March 1977 with work commencing in May 1977".

1622 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: I partially answered a question yesterday from the honourable member for Ludmilla concerning the Barkly Highway. I did take the matter up with the Department of Construction and I would like to give a short report on the condition of the Barkly Highway which is reasonably up to date. The highway is in a reasonable condition for this time of the year. The section from 30 kilometres west of Frewena to the Tablelands Highway turnoff has been deforming over the last few years and some sections are becoming quite rough. Some 12 kilometres of pavement in this section failed during the last wet season and were sheeted with gravel. I think the honourable member referred to these yesterday. Funds for carrying out permanent repairs are now available and this work will commence in January. If above normal rains fall again this year, and this has happened in the last 3 years, then it is expected that further areas of pavement could fail, causing disruptions to traffic during the wet season or, at the least, causing the imposing of weight restrictions. Some deformations are evident between Wonarah and Barry Caves and the crossings at the Ranken and James Rivers which were damaged during the last wet season but have been patched. So it does appear that if we have a bad wet season we could be in trouble with that area of highway.

1623 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Casuarina asked a question concerning the ABC. I have been unable to get hold of this information. I will wait until the Minister is here next week and take up the whole question of the effect on the ABC of these cuts.

1624 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Casuarina asked how much it would cost to reinstate the street lighting along the Trower Road section between Vanderlin Drive and Ellengowan Drive. The cost to restore this section of street lighting would be aproximately $70,000. This would involve removing the remaining poles which are damaged and replacing them with 60 new poles with high pressure sodium lights and underground cables. This system would provide a higher standard of street lighting than existed in that area before the cyclone.

ABC -
TAA building (Dondas) 1555, 1623
talks officers (Dondas) 1560, 1623
Aborigines -
community advisers (Kentish) 1481
hunting restrictions (Steele) 1575
speech by Mr Viner (Kentish) 1594
Airline schedules, Christmas period (Manuell) 1605
Alice Springs -
abattoir (Manuell) 1608
building permits (Robertson) 1572, 1614
casino (Vale) 1570
cyclone funds, disposal (Lawrie) 1610
grass fires (Vale) 1557
Hospital (Vale) 1561
railway line to Port Augusta (Vale) 1596
water supply, chlorination (Manuell) 1599
Animal Industry Branch, Department of NT (Vale) 1377
Avon Downs, police accommodation (Steele) 1589
Block 8 Cafeteria (Dondas) 1587
Casuarina Fire Station, extinguishers (Dondas) 1582
Civil defence training (Dondas) 1576
Compensation Ordinance, uranium mining claims (Robertson) 1604
Cyclone relief funds (Lawrie) 1610
Cyclone shelters, supplies (Dondas) 1571
Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund, reports (Dondas) 1559
Darwin electricity supply (Lawrie) 1600
Darwin Reconstruction Commission, statistics (Everingham) 1611
Doctors Gully, sewerage outlet (Withnall) 1568, 1621
Dripstone High School (Dondas) 1566
East Point Road (Steele) 1588
Edith River bridge (Ballantyne) 1595
Education Department, employment of convicted persons (Kentish) 1603
Export of live cattle (Steele) 1606
Fannie Bay Gaol, cyclone protection (Dondas) 1584
Government homes -
sales policy (Lawrie) 1556, 1619
upgrading (Lawrie) 1558, 1620
Groote Eylandt, courthouse (Everingham) 1583
Gunn Point Prison Farm (Ballantyne) 1602
Health Commission for NT (Everingham) 1565
Housing Commission -
expenditure (Dondas) 1598
tenancies (Dondas) 1597
Insurance, claims against insolvent companies (Lawrie) 1613
Katherine, land shortage (Robertson) 1617
Library books (Dondas) 1590
Lottery and Gaming Ordinance Inquiry (Lawrie) 1567; (Everingham) 1569; (Lawrie) 1601
Marina, Darwin Harbour (Everingham) 1607
Noise Exposure Forecast zone, Bagot Road (Steele) 1592, 1593
Northumberland Insurance Company (Everingham) 1615
NT highways, repairs (Steele) 1580, 1622
Prisons in NT, reciprocity with states (Everingham) 1618
Prisons, work release programs (Everingham) 1581
Prisoners, voting rights (Everingham) 1609
Radio Australia (Everingham) 1616
Recreation and Sporting Advisory Council (Ballantyne) 1564
Road use statistics, central Australia (Vale) 1482, 1483
Rothdale Road, high voltage lines (Everingham) 1591
Royal Commission inquiry into petroleum industry (Vale) 1563
Statehood for NT, press comment (Vale) 1574
Stuart Highway -
bridgeworks (Vale) 1483
sealing costs (Vale) 1483
Taiwanese fishing boat, valuation (Everingham) 1612
TB and brucellosis tests (Vale) 1377
Tourist Board, sacking of Government representative (Everingham) 1573, 1578
Town Planning Board, telegrams (Dondas) 1585
Trower Road, street lighting (Dondas) 1562
Water pressure, northern suburbs (Dondas) 1577
Water rates (Dondas) 1586

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

FROM 17 NOVEMBER 1976

1550 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS

Has there been a feasibility study made in the Northern Territory for the use of the Northern Territory rivers to load and transport live cattle for export?

FROM 7 DECEMBER 1976

1625 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS

What is necessary to raise the Alice Springs Abattoirs to export licence standard?

1626 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

Has a water filter been fitted at the departmental residence of the Director of Health in Darwin and, if so, was the filter installed at departmental expense and how much did it cost?

FROM 21 DECEMBER 1976

1628 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Could you please advise the following in respect of -

(1) Central Australian Aboriginal Medical Service;

(2) Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service;

(3) Central Australian Aborigines Congress;

(4) Aboriginal Hostels Ltd, Alice Springs -

(a) The number of persons employed;

(b) Titles and remuneration received, and other employment benefits;

(c) Who is responsible for the hiring and firing of their employees;

(d) Are the orgainisations' financial records and expenditure subject to any audit requirements, if so what;

(e) Are vehicle records and logbooks kept?

1629 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

1. Can he advise the name of the contractor company in charge of the construction of the Timber Creek Police Station?

2. Is it true that this company is having financial difficulties?

3. Is the construction of the Timber Creek Polic Station on schedule in keeping with the requirements of the Department of Construction?

4. If not, what are the problems and why the delays?

1197 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

1. As at 30 June 1975 and 1976, how many members were physically attached to the CIB Inquiry Section at -

   (a) Darwin
   (b) Alice Springs
   (c) Katherine
   (d) Tennant Creek, and
   (e) Nhulunbuy?

2. What support sections are available to the CIB, such as breaking, consorting and drug squads and how many members does each of these squads have?

3. Are any of these squads in the CIB to be expanded in the coming six months and, if so, by how many additional members and what new positions are proposed?

ANSWER

| | 1975 | 1976 |
|---|---|---|
| 1. (a) | 17<br>+ (Women Police 7) | 20<br>+ (Women Police 7) |
| (b) | 7<br>+ (Women Police 2) | 7<br>+ (Women Police 2) |
| (c) | 1 | 1 |
| (d) | 1 | 1 |
| (e) | 1 | 1 |

Owing to the accommodation problem in Darwin after 25/12/75 necessity required that members be assigned to temporary duties in other areas as follows:

| | 30/6/75 |
|---|---|
| (a) | 14<br>+ (Women Police 2) |
| (b) | 12<br>+ (Women Police 2) |
| (c) | 1 |
| (d) | 2 |
| (e) | 1 |

The physical strength as at 30/6/76 was as follows:

(a) 18
+ (Women Police 4)

(b) 7
+ (Women Police 2)

(c) 1

(d) 1

(e) 1

2. The Criminal Investigation Branch has the full support of all sections of the Northern Territory Police Service. The establishment of No. 1 Division, 'C' District consists of the -

1. Criminal Investigation Branch - 20 members

2. Criminal Intelligence Section - 3 members

3. Drug Squad - 2 members

4. Stock Squad - 2 members

3. No.

Nil.

The establishment of 'C' District is continually under review but any increases are dictated by Government policy and availability of finance.

1199 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

1. Is the Stock Squad of the NT Police presently functional?

2. How many members are there in the squad?

3. What vehicles are attached to the squad?

4. How many horses are attached to the squad?

5. How many cases has the squad investigated in the period 1 January 1976 to 30 June 1976?

6. How many kilometres has the squad travelled in the same period?

7. How many nights have members of the squad spent away from home on duty in the same period?

8. How many pastoral properties in the -

(a) Darwin Gulf District;
(b) Victoria River District;
(c) Barkly District; and
(d) Alice Springs District

has the squad visited in the past 12 months?

ANSWER

1. Yes.

2. 2.

3. Nil. The squad members have access to the 'C' District and General Duties ('D' District) motor vehicle pool.

4. Nil. If horses are required they would be obtained on a hire basis.

5. 4.

6. 1100.

7. 3.

8. (a) 5
   (b) Nil
   (c) Nil
   (d) Nil

   The squad is only required to attend other Police Districts when an inquiry is beyond the resources of local police.

1375 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

1. What is the cost of supplying and installing a water meter on a residential block in Darwin and how much has been spent for this purpose in the last eighteen months?

2. What is spent anually on the maintenance of water meters in Darwin?

3. How many water meter readers are employed in Darwin and what are their total annual wages and allowances?

4. What are the other annual administrative costs to the Government for the collection of excess water charges?

5. What revenue is derived annually from excess water charges in Darwin on -

   (a) residential blocks; and

   (b) parks and recreation areas under the control of the Corporation of the City of Darwin?

6. What proportion of the total revenue from the supply of water is represented by the amount collected for excess water charges?

ANSWER

1. The cost of supplying and installing a water meter on a residential block in Darwin is $40.00, divided equally between the cost of the meter and the installation cost. In recent years supply and installation costs have been as follows:

   1972/73 $39,736
   1973/74 $40,855
   1974/75 $15,327
   1975/76 $76,759

   The above figures do not include cyclone damage replacement costs, however in 1976 abnormal costs were incurred in replacing damaged meters on construction sites.

2. The annual cost for maintenance of water meters in Darwin is about $25,000.

3. One permanent water meter reader (Clerical Assistant Grade 2) is employed in Darwin while the water inspector (Clerical Assistant

Grade 4) carries out monthly check reads on large consumers for part of his time. For six weeks of the year an additional three readers are required (Water Inspector and two clerical assistants grade 2). Total salary payments are about $14,000 per annum. A proportion of this cost is applicable to meter reading outside Darwin.

4. No records are maintained of other administrative costs for the collection of excess water charges in isolation from water and sewerage billing costs.

The administrative costs for staff involved directly in billing for all water and sewerage charges is $35,000 and the proportion for water accounts is approximately $20,000.

Fifty percent of water accounts involve an excess charge calculation and this is estimated to require 25% of the time taken to produce an account. Approximate other administrative costs in the collection of excess charges is therefore $2,500.

5. (a) No recent statistics are available for excess water charges applicable to residential blocks only. Based on the distribution of charges in the charge year 1971/72, the latest year comprehensive statistics were extracted, the following estimates have been made for total excess charges, all consumers and excess charges residential blocks only.

| Charge Year | Estimated Total Excess Charges | Estimated Excess Charges Residential Blocks Only |
|---|---|---|
| 1971/72 | $439,000 | $57,500 |
| 1972/73 | 515,000 | 67,500 |
| 1973/74 | 670,000 | 88,000 |
| 1974/75 | 788,000 | 124,000 |
| 1975/76 | (Cyclone Disaster Regulations applied) | NIL |
| 1976/77 | 942,000 | 148,000 |

The above figures for excess charges on residential blocks do not include charges applicable to flats, domestic residences on business premises or domestic premises on Defence property.

(b) Excess water charges for parks and recreation areas controlled by the Corporation of the City of Darwin have been:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1971/72 | $20,500 |
| 1972/73 | 28,500 |
| 1973/74 | 38,000 |
| 1974/75 | 40,000 |

These include the two public swimming pools and the Mindil Beach Caravan Park.

6. Estimated excess water charge expressed as a percentage of total water revenue in Darwin and the Northern Territory is -

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (a) | Darwin | 68% |
| (b) | Northern Territory | 68% |

1376 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

1. Has the attention of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission been

drawn to any instances of "jerry-building", in particular, the structure in the course of erection on block 2911 Fannie Bay?

2. Was a "stop work" notice issued by the Building Board in respect of the structure on block 2911?

3. Has the connection of water, installation of a toilet and shower room and the connection of electricity to the block been carried out since the issue of the "stop work" notice?

4. Were these services provided in conformity with the relevant regulations and the work carried out by licensed tradesmen?

5. Is it the intention of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to prosecute the owner of the block for any violations of the Building Code perpetrated in the last three months?

ANSWER

1. Yes, the attention of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has been drawn to instances of "jerry building" including the structure on lot 2911 Conigrave Street, Fannie Bay.

2. Yes, a Stop Work Notice was issued on August 20, 1976. An inspection on September 29, 1976 showed that the notice had not been complied with and the Darwin Reconstruction Commission was informed.

3. Water supply, sewerage and drainage connections existed prior to the issue of the Stop Work Notice. (The water connection was made by the Department of Construction on August 19, 1976.)

   A temporary electricity connection was made on September 28, 1976 following the receipt of a completion notice on September 16, 1976.

   A toilet and shower room was installed after the Stop Work Notice.

4. Yes, the services were provided in conformity with the relevant regulations and the work carried out by licensed tradesmen.

   The premises were inspected by the Department of Health who consider power, water and drainage satisfactory.

5. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission proposes to review the matter in November and if the position is still unsatisfactory the Commission will prosecute under Section 15 of the Darwin Reconstruction Act.

   The occupier of the lot now has a caravan on the site and has undertaken to remove the unsafe parts of the structure.

1548 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

I refer to the Taiwanese fishing boat and its catch sold recently for $6,000 and $1,000 respectively and ask -

(a) which government department handled the sale;

(b) was any valuation or assessment of value of the boat and catch obtained by the department;

(c) did the department advertise or otherwise offer the boat and/or catch for sale either by auction, tender or private treaty;

(d) how many offers to purchase or approaches with a view to purchase did the department receive;

(e) what was the amount of each offer received;

(f) When, how and by whom was the decision made to sell the vessel for $6,000 and the catch for $1,000;

(g) was the sale for cash or on terms and, if cash, was it paid before the boat was released;

(h) if the sale was on terms, what were the terms;

(i) what was the cost to the government for arresting, escorting and detaining the vessel?

ANSWER

1. Attorney-General's Department did not handle the sale, it was handled by the Department of Primary Industries.

2. The valuation was carried out by officers of the Department of Primary Industries on the valuation of the vessel and the catch.

3. The department did not advertise the vessel or the catch for sale, either by auction, tender or private treaty.

4. Only one offer was received to purchase the vessel.

5. & 6. The value of the offer was $6,000 for the vessel and $1,000 for the catch.

7. & 8. The vessel was sold for cash before the boat was released.

9. Not applicable.

10. Because some 9 Government departments and agencies were involved in the arrest, apprehension, court procedures, storage, wharfage and disposal of the vessel, it is impossible to give any correct cost incurred by the Government.

1549 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

How do the recent increased allowances for isolated children compare with increased school allowances to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders under the ABSEG scheme?

ANSWER

A.B.S.E.G

| | 1977 |
|---|---|
| Living Allowances - junior grades | $440 pa |
| Living Allowances - senior grades | 440 pa |
| Books and clothing allowance | 250 pa |
| Plus, for students in the two senior grades boarding for the first time or involved in a change of school after initial enrolment | 50 pa |
| Personal allowances - junior grades | 1.50 pw |
| Personal allowances - senior grades | 3.00 pw |
| Boarding allowances - | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Boarding schools | $1450 (max.) |
| Hostels | 28 pw |
| Private | 20 pw |

ASSISTANCE FOR ISOLATED CHILDREN

| | 1977 |
|---|---|
| Basic Boarding | $500 |
| Additional boarding (max.) | 450 |
| Correspondence (basic) | 200 |
| Correspondence reimbursement (max.) | 300 |
| Second home - 1 child | 500 |
| - 2 children | 925 |
| - +3 children | 1275 |
| Short term boarding | 15 pw |

1551 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Is he aware that, at the public auction of land in Alice Springs at the end of September, the shopping complex designed to service the new Racecourse West subdivision was passed in through lack of bids? How was the reserve price determined and will this price be reviewed in order that the block can be re-offered with some hope of a sale eventuating and the development of the block taking place at an early date.

ANSWER

The shopsite, Lot 4583 Town of Alice Springs, was passed in at the land sale held on 30 September 1976.

The reserve price of $84,620 for Lot 4583 was the cost of servicing the lot and is in accordance with the formula for determining the reserve price of commercial land approved by the Minister.

The department is at present making preparations for the release of industrial land in Alice Springs. The target date for this sale is Januar, 1977 and it is proposed to offer Lot 4583 again at that time at the same reserve price.

1552 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

When will the ordinance passed by the Assembly on 27/5/76 to amend the Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance receive assent?

ANSWER

The Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance 1976 which was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 27 May 1976, was reserved by the Administrator on 30 September 1976, and now awaits the Governor-General's pleasure.

1553 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

How many persons have been convicted for drug offences in the Territory in the last two years and in each case -

(a) what was the name of the person convicted;
(b) what was the date of conviction;
(c) what was the drug involved; and
(d) who was the Magistrate who presided at the hearing?

ANSWER

298. (1 December 1974 - 30 November 1976).

(a) It is not our policy to divulge this information.

(b) Refer Appendix "A".

(c)

| | |
|---|---|
| Cannabis | 272 |
| Heroin | 11 |
| L.S.D. | 10 |
| Morphine | 1 |
| Dangerous Drugs | 1 |
| Hashish Oil | 1 |
| S.T.P. | 2 |

(d) Not available from our records.

Appendix 'A'

| DRUG TYPE | DATE OF CONVICTION |
|---|---|
| LSD | 3/12/74 |
| " | 3/12/74 |
| Cannabis | 2/12/74 |
| " | 3/12/74 |
| " | 5/12/74 |
| " | 5/12/74 |
| " | 9/12/74 |
| " | 12/12/74 |
| " | 24/12/74 |
| " | 12/12/74 |
| " | 13/12/74 |
| Heroin | 14/11/74 |
| Cannabis | 23/12/74 |
| " | 10/02/75 |
| " | 20/02/75 |
| Heroin | 14/03/75 |
| Cannabis | 12/03/75 |
| " | 21/03/75 |
| " | 26/03/75 |
| " | 26/03/75 |
| " | 26/03/75 |
| " | 26/03/75 |
| " | 26/03/75 |
| " | 26/03/75 |
| " | 26/03/75 |
| " | 3/04/75 |
| " | 12/06/75 |
| " | 3/04/75 |
| " | 11/04/75 |
| " | 11/04/75 |
| " | 29/04/75 |
| " | 23/04/75 |
| " | 23/04/75 |
| Cannabis LSD | 17/04/75 |
| " " | 17/04/75 |
| " " | 17/04/75 |
| Cannabis | 8/05/75 |
| " | 8/05/75 |
| LSD | 8/05/75 |
| Cannabis | 17/07/75 |
| " | 15/05/75 |

| DRUG TYPE | DATE OF CONVICTION |
|---|---|
| Cannabis | 11/07/75 |
| " | 9/06/75 |
| " | 26/06/75 |
| " | 13/06/75 |
| " | 13/06/75 |
| " | 20/06/75 |
| " | 10/06/75 |
| " | 27/06/75 |
| " | 27/06/75 |
| " | 17/06/75 |
| " | 17/06/75 |
| " | 1/07/75 |
| " | 18/09/75 |
| " | 27/06/75 |
| " | 27/06/75 |
| " | 27/06/75 |
| " | 3/07/75 |
| " | 3/07/75 |
| " | 28/08/75 |
| " | 3/07/75 |
| " | 7/07/75 |
| Dangerous Drugs | 8/07/75 |
| Cannabis LSD | 11/07/75 |
| Cannabis | 18/12/75 |
| Heroin, Hash Oil | 13/08/75 |
| Cannabis | 28/07/75 |
| " | 13/08/75 |
| Morphine | 18/08/75 |
| Cannabis | 18/08/75 |
| " | 18/08/75 |
| " | 20/08/75 |
| " | 20/08/75 |
| " | 28/08/75 |
| " | 28/08/75 |
| " | 20/08/75 |
| " | 8/09/75 |
| " | 27/08/75 |
| " | 27/08/75 |
| " | 25/08/75 |
| " | 28/08/75 |

| DRUG TYPE | DATE OF CONVICTION |
|---|---|
| Cannabis | 28/08/75 |
| " | 28/08/75 |
| " | 11/08/75 |
| " | 25/08/75 |
| Heroin | 12/09/75 |
| Cannabis | 19/09/75 |
| " | 19/09/75 |
| " | 19/09/75 |
| Heroin | 23/09/75 |
| Cannabis | 30/09/75 |
| " | 29/09/75 |
| " | 1/10/75 |
| " | 3/10/75 |
| " | 29/09/75 |
| Heroin | 26/09/75 |
| Cannabis | 22/09/75 |
| " | 3/10/75 |
| " | 8/10/75 |
| " | 14/10/75 |
| " | 8/10/75 |
| " | 16/10/75 |
| " | 20/10/75 |
| " | 20/10/75 |
| " | 21/10/75 |
| " | 21/10/75 |
| " | 21/10/75 |
| " | 21/10/75 |
| " | 21/10/75 |
| " | 17/03/75 |
| " | 20/10/75 |
| " | 11/11/75 |
| " | 20/10/75 |
| " | 18/11/75 |
| " | 7/10/75 |
| " | 7/10/75 |
| " | 10/11/75 |
| " | 12/11/75 |
| " | 17/11/75 |
| " | 1/12/75 |
| " | 26/11/75 |
| " | 1/12/75 |
| " | 1/12/75 |
| " | 1/12/75 |
| " | 1/12/75 |
| " | 5/12/75 |
| " | 1/12/75 |
| " | 8/12/75 |
| " | 3/12/75 |
| " | 24/12/75 |
| " | 6/01/76 |
| " | 6/01/76 |
| " | 6/01/76 |
| " | 6/01/76 |
| " | 22/12/75 |
| " | 18/12/75 |
| " | 17/12/75 |
| " | 13/02/76 |
| " | 20/01/76 |
| " | 15/02/76 |
| " | 10/06/76 |

| DRUG TYPE | DATE OF CONVICTION |
|---|---|
| Cannabis | 27/01/76 |
| " | 27/01/76 |
| LSD | 2/02/76 |
| Cannabis | 27/01/76 |
| " | 2/02/76 |
| " | 8/02/76 |
| " | 27/01/76 |
| " | 6/05/76 |
| " | 29/01/76 |
| " | 15/01/76 |
| Cannabis LSD | 13/02/76 |
| Cannabis | 13/02/76 |
| " | 19/02/76 |
| " | 24/02/76 |
| " | 23/02/76 |
| " | 23/02/76 |
| " | 9/02/76 |
| " | 3/03/76 |
| " | 26/02/76 |
| " | 5/03/76 |
| " | 25/03/76 |
| " | 10/03/76 |
| " | 17/03/76 |
| " | 22/03/76 |
| " | 24/03/76 |
| " | 30/03/76 |
| " | 29/03/76 |
| " | 29/03/76 |
| " | 29/03/76 |
| " | 29/03/76 |
| " | 22/02/76 |
| " | 2/04/76 |
| " | 5/03/76 |
| " | 5/03/76 |
| " | 5/03/76 |
| " | 7/04/76 |
| " | 1/04/76 |
| " | 9/08/76 |
| " | 9/08/76 |
| " | 9/08/76 |
| LSD | 9/08/76 |
| Cannabis | 9/04/76 |
| " | 9/04/76 |
| " | 9/04/76 |
| " | 22/04/76 |
| " | 13/04/76 |
| " | 13/04/76 |
| " | 2/11/76 |
| " | 14/04/76 |
| " | 21/04/76 |
| " | 3/05/76 |
| " | 3/05/76 |
| " | 3/05/76 |
| " | 13/05/76 |
| " | 13/05/76 |
| " | 11/05/76 |
| " | 29/04/76 |
| " | 28/05/76 |
| " | 5/05/76 |
| " | 12/05/76 |

| DRUG TYPE | DATE OF CONVICTION |
|---|---|
| Cannabis | 10/05/76 |
| " | 25/05/76 |
| " | 11/05/76 |
| " | 14/05/76 |
| " | 31/05/76 |
| Heroin | 2/07/76 |
| Cannabis | 2/07/76 |
| " | 28/05/76 |
| " | 1/06/76 |
| " | 10/06/76 |
| " | 22/06/76 |
| " | 23/06/76 |
| " | 22/06/76 |
| " | 8/07/76 |
| " | 29/06/76 |
| " | 29/06/76 |
| " | 29/06/76 |
| " | 29/06/76 |
| " | 5/07/76 |
| " | 5/07/76 |
| " | 5/07/76 |
| " | 5/07/76 |
| " | 21/06/76 |
| " | 6/07/76 |
| " | 16/07/76 |
| " | 16/07/76 |
| S.T.P. | 11/08/76 |
| Cannabis | 7/07/76 |
| " | 7/07/76 |
| " | 7/07/76 |
| " | 14/07/76 |
| " | 26/07/76 |
| " | 22/07/76 |
| " | 22/07/76 |
| " | 22/07/76 |
| " | 27/07/76 |
| " | 27/07/76 |
| " | 11/08/76 |
| " | 27/07/76 |
| " | 22/07/76 |
| " | 4/08/76 |
| " | 3/08/76 |
| " | 13/08/76 |
| " | 17/08/76 |
| " | 17/08/76 |
| " | 9/09/76 |

| DRUG TYPE | DATE OF CONVICTION |
|---|---|
| Cannabis | 6/08/76 |
| " | 20/08/76 |
| " | 20/08/76 |
| " | 20/08/76 |
| " | 20/08/76 |
| " | 24/08/76 |
| " | 20/08/76 |
| " | 20/08/76 |
| " | 24/08/76 |
| " | 28/10/76 |
| " | 28/10/76 |
| " | 28/10/76 |
| " | 25/08/76 |
| " | 15/09/76 |
| " | 15/09/76 |
| " | 30/08/76 |
| " | 30/08/76 |
| " | 13/09/76 |
| " | 31/08/76 |
| " | 2/09/76 |
| " | 3/09/76 |
| " | 16/11/76 |
| " | 7/09/76 |
| " | 29/09/76 |
| " | 13/09/76 |
| " | 16/09/76 |
| " | 16/09/76 |
| " | 16/09/76 |
| Cannabis STP | 5/10/76 |
| Cannabis | 15/09/76 |
| " | 20/09/76 |
| " | 20/09/76 |
| " | 15/11/76 |
| " | 28/10/76 |
| " | 25/10/76 |
| Heroin | 13/11/76 |
| " | 19/11/76 |
| " | 13/11/76 |
| " | 10/11/76 |
| " | 10/11/76 |
| Cannabis | 4/11/76 |
| " | 4/11/76 |
| " | 12/11/76 |
| " | 12/11/76 |
| " | 24/11/76 |
| " | 24/11/76 |

1554 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr POLLOCK

How many Aboriginal people on settlements and reserves are in receipt of unemployment benefits through the Department of Social Security?

ANSWER

There were 63 payments of unemployment benefit being made to persons on settlements and reserves as at 8/11/76.

1627 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN

What is the reason for the failure to commence the Motor Vehicles Ordinance No. 76 of 1972?

ANSWER

When the Motor Vehicles Ordinance No. 76 of 1972 was passed by the Legislative Council it was thought that Licence and Registration records at the Motor Vehicle Registry would be placed on computer within a short period of time. Several complications arose precluding this and it is only now that the records have been computerised.

The Ordinance provided for the prescription of all M.V.R. forms in Regulations rather than in the body of the Principal Ordinance. As computerisation meant a change in design of some of these forms, commencement of the Ordinance was delayed pending redesign.

The Legislative Draftsman is in the final stages of drawing up Regulations to give effect to the Ordinance and it is expected that commencement will eventuate within the next few weeks.

1630 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Would he make a statement to this House regarding the future supply of electricity to consumers?

ANSWER

I hope to make a statement on the electricity supply in Darwin later on during these sittings.

1631 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Because of the expected power cuts through the coming months, would it be possible for the Electricity Supply Undertaking to broadcast on the local radio stations the expected duration of the cuts and the areas in which they expect them to occur?

ANSWER

It is not always possible to determine how long a power cut will be. It sometimes takes a certain period of time to establish exactly where the fault has occurred. It has been the practice in the past that, when information is given out and cannot be adhered to for one reason or another, it seems to aggravate the public somewhat. I will undertake to have a talk with the electricity supply people and see if we cannot organise some more efficient method of public notification than exists at present.

1632 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN

The honourable Executive Member is aware of the awful congestion and traffic problems at Darwin airport, particularly on a Friday night when several aircraft have to discharge and load passengers. Will he take steps to have a plan prepared that will allow for the quick dispersal of passengers and vehicles from the airport, and will he, in the preparation of that plan, consult with the Minister for Defence regarding the desirability of obtaining a one-way outlet for traffic through the RAAF base?

ANSWER

I am aware of the problem that exists at the airport, particularly on Friday nights. It does occur during some of the day flights when more than one aircraft arrives. I do not know whether I will be able to have a plan prepared because the organisation of the airport comes under two Commonwealth departments. The whole area is on a defence base, so the overall controllers would be the Defence Department. However, I think the airport itself comes under the control of the Department of Transport. I will undertake to write to the Minister for Transport and ask him if he could get his department to look at the problem with a view to trying to overcome some of the congestion that occurs at the airport.

1633 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise when the Valuer-General will next visit Alice Springs to value homes occupied by government employees who wish to purchase those homes?

ANSWER

I have been informed by an officer of the Valuer-General's Department that an officer will be in Alice Springs in the week commencing Monday 6 December.

1634 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

If Housing Commission tenants had applied to buy their Housing Commission homes prior to Cyclone Tracy, are they eligible to participate in the six per cent home loan finance scheme?

ANSWER

I understand that the terms of eligibility for the Home Finance Trustee six per cent concessional loan scheme do include provisions for people who had established negotiation to purchase at the day of the cyclone with the scheme for the sale of government homes to public servants or had established a commitment of sale with the Northern Territory Housing Commission. I will have the matter checked further and advise the honourable member.

1635 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he advise if the position of Executive Director with the Centralian Aboriginal Congress, a position which was recently filled, was advertised? Under what circumstances were the applicants interviewed and by whom?

ANSWER

I do not know. I do not recall seeing any advertisement of the situation and news of the appointment came as quite a surprise. I will endeavour to ascertain the information if the organisation will provide it.

1636 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS

I refer to the two remaining pilot farms on the Adelaide River. Can the honourable member inform me what is the current position of the leaseholders after 7 years of negotiation with federal governments?

ANSWER

What I know of the present position is as follows. The Minister for the Northern Territory has established - wait for it - an interdepartmental committee to attempt to finalise the settlement with the pilot farmers at upper Adelaide River. An officer of the Department of the Northern Territory rang me yesterday to indicate that the interdepartmental committee will be visiting the Northern Territory on or about 20 December. They have asked to see me, and no doubt other people, and I understand that they have been asked to compile a report which will be the basis of a submission to Cabinet some time about January or February next year. That is the present state of the business. I would add by way of comment that I believe that this particular case is one of the darkest blots on the escutcheon of Canberra administration which I have come across in my time here. It is absolutely appalling that these two families have to go through yet another Christmas after, as the honourable member for Arnhem has indicated, about 7 years of uncertainty, not knowing what the future holds for them. I know it is a complicated and difficult matter and the situation is somewhat different in respect of the two farmers, but no-

body can tell me that after 7 years of consideration we really require another interdepartmental committee and that somebody cannot make a fair equable and just decision in this matter. I am appalled by information that I have to give to this Assembly.

1637 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Why has the Ombudsman Ordinance not been assented to? Has he had any discussions and, if so, what, with Commonwealth ministers on the subject of an ombudsman for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Ombudsman Ordinance, to use its nickname, has not been assented to because the Federal Government, in particular the Federal Government before this one, believed that the right thing to do was to establish a Commonwealth ombudsman service with a branch of that service to look after the interests of the Northern Territory people. I did draw attention to the argument that most of the public servants in the Northern Territory are Commonwealth public servants and therefore it is appropriate for the Commonwealth agency established for this purpose to look at such complaints. I do not accept the validity of that argument or the actions which the Commonwealth has taken. I can only say that, as the new Northern Territory Public Service comes into existence and expands, any case which formerly existed for having our complaints for Northern Territory people put before a Canberra based ombudsman will soon disappear. I have made this point of view known to the Minister for the Northern Territory and I would hope that some sort of local appeal will be instituted as soon as possible in the Northern Territory.

1638 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

This is a question that I have asked for the past 6 months. Can he yet indicate when the sale of Government homes will recommence in the Darwin area and upon what terms and conditions?

ANSWER

As I have repeatedly replied to the honourable member for Nightcliff for the last 6 months, I have again referred this matter to the Minister for the Northern Territory and to the Department of the Northern Territory. I understand that the settlement of the details is bogged somewhere between the senior officers of the Department of the Northern Territory and the Department of Treasury. I am unable to provide an answer to her question.

1639 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Can he advise this Assembly of the determination by the Department of Transport for resiting of the railway marshalling yards and passenger terminal in Alice Springs? If not, when does he expect to be in a position to advise this Assembly of a new railway site?

ANSWER

I do not have any information relating to the proposed new site. I will contact the Minister for Transport and ask what the situation is.

1640 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

When is it likely that commissioners will be appointed to inquire into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance?

ANSWER

I cannot tell the honourable member when this information will be available. She asked a similar question at the last meeting and I indicated that I believed that the appointment was pending. I pointed out that it would be the Administrator's privilege to make the announcement when the information was available. I understand the matter has advanced a little since I gave that answer. Once again, I referred the matter this morning to the Canberra administration. This is another situation where what should be the simplest of procedures is being impeded because more than one department is involved down there. I rang Canberra this morning and I believe that we are very close to getting the reply which the honourable member for Nightcliff seeks. I hope that we may get it during these sittings.

1641 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

Can she advise the last date of the Police Commissioner's visit to stations outside of Darwin? When does the Police Commissioner again propose to visit those areas?

ANSWER

I understand that the Police Commissioner last visited Alice Springs at the end of May 1975. Other stations were visited during October 1974. It is anticipated that he will be making a tour of as many stations as possible outside of Darwin early in the New Year.

1642 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH

Have petroleum leases and applications lodged by Magellan Petroleum and Oilmin for areas within the Amadeus Basin been granted? Is it a fact that the companies concerned have lodged writs against the Australian Government and the Administrator of the Northern Territory for failing to issue these leases?

ANSWER

As yet there have been no leases issued for the areas to which the member alludes and it is my understanding that an action between the principals of the exploration licence areas and the Government has begun.

1643 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

Is it a fact that two new police motor bikes are in storage in Alice Springs? How many police bikes are in service in Alice Springs? How many police officers are attached to the Traffic Section in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I did have some warning of this question. I understand that two police motor cycles are held in storage in Alice Springs to replace the two existing motor cycles currently in use. The motor cycles in use are due for replacement during February 1977 and the authorised establishment of motor bikes, I suppose, is only two. The authorised strength

of the Alice Springs Traffic Section is one second class sergeant and eight constables.

1644 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

It was reported yesterday in the press that he did nothing to help settle the firemen's recent dispute. Is that report in fact true?

ANSWER

In answering this question, I intend to go into a little detail to put the record straight. It was reported yesterday that a couple of gentlemen involved in the activities of a couple of unions stated that, apart from the fact that I have all the hallmarks of an adolescent - I do not know whether to take that as a compliment or not. "He has acted in a very irresponsible manner and has made no attempt to solve the dispute." This was stated by Mr Bonson the secretary of the Firefighters Association. On Thursday 25 November at 10 o'clock in the morning, I rang Mr Bonson and told him that I was going away at 1.30 and asked if there was anything that I could do to have the dispute solved. After a couple of hours on the telephone to Mr Bonson and the Assistant Secretary of the Department of the NT, I was able to arrange a meeting for 1.30 that afternoon in the office of the First Assistant Secretary. I left this city and from Mt Isa I rang the First Assistant Secretary at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. He informed me that the firemen did not turn up for the meeting. I thought this was rather strange because Mr Bonson had indicated that he was going to attend that meeting and, from the discussions that I had had with both of the gentlemen concerned, I felt that the strike could have been fixed up there and then.

Before I sit down, I would just like to dwell a bit on this irresponsibility. The irresponsibility was on the part of the union because it cost the men in the Northern Territory Fire Brigade somewhere in the vicinity of $40,000 in wages. If they had taken my advice and guidance back on the 25th, they might have saved about $30,000 of that. I will leave it to this House to decide who is irresponsible.

1645 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

Are there regulations drafted under the new Public Service Bill and, if so, when will they be made available to honourable members? In relation to clause 28(2) dealing with the filling of vacancies, could he advise to what class of person that refers?

ANSWER

Draft regulations have been prepared. They are to be regarded as a working draft at this stage, to be used for comments and constructive criticism and will undoubtedly be subject to amendment. They have been prepared, they are now available and I will see that the honourable member for Nightcliff and the honourable member for Port Darwin get a set this morning.

I will have a look at the section to which the honourable member refers in the second part of her question and provide advice later this day.

1646 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

Was on 8 May 1975 an application taken out in the Alice Springs Children's Court by a welfare officer of that town for a declaration that

an illegitimate Aboriginal child, Freddy, be deemed a neglected child? Was the application served on the child's mother on the same day? Was the child's mother at the time of such service in the Alice Springs Hospital with a broken leg? Was legal aid made available to the mother? Was the application heard in the Central Australian Children's Court on 9 May, the following day, without the mother being present? Was the welfare officer in charge of the application aware that the mother was in hospital? Was the Crown Law Office or Legal Aid Service involved in the application? Was the Children's Court told that the child's mother was in hospital? Was the child declared neglected and given to some European parents for adoption? Was the mother's consent to adoption obtained? Finally, did the lack of the mother's consent lead to a great and apparently expensive legal battle and disruption of the lives of the foster parents?

ANSWER

I was given warning of this question and I have received certain advice on the answers. I hope that I will be able to reply suitably to the honourable member.

I am advised that the mother of Freddy - just as background to answering the question - has been known to the Welfare Branch and Social Development Branch for quite a period, for at least 8 years, during which time she has abandoned all 4 of her children. I believe 3 of them have become wards of the state - wards of the Director of Social Welfare in the Northern Territory. The child Freddy is a specific case of a child who, despite continual medical attention over 6 months and counselling of the mother, was, in the opinion of the examining doctor, in danger of dying from malnutrition as a result of neglect. It was the opinion of the doctor that the child would only thrive if given foster care. The charge of neglect arose from police finding the child abandoned outside the Alice Springs Hotel. It was the fifth time in a period of some 6 months of the life of the child that it had been found abandoned or had been returned to hospital. So the answer to the first part of the question is yes.

On the second part of the question, I am unable to advise the honourable member.

The third part of the question was, "At that time was the child's mother in the Alice Springs Hospital?" The answer is yes.

"Was legal aid made available to the mother?" I do not know.

"Was the application made in the Children's Court on 9 May without the mother present?" Yes.

The welfare officer did know that the mother was in hospital.

"Were the Crown Law Office or the Aboriginal Aid Service involved in the application at the time?" No.

"Was the Children's Court told that the mother was in hospital?" I do not know.

Mr Everingham: Why?

Mr POLLOCK: Because I was not there at the time. Nobody seems to know here and I am unable to find out.

"Was the child declared neglected and given to some European foster parents for adoption?" The child was declared neglected. He was finally placed with European foster parents for fostering. I believe that 18 months later the foster parents applied to adopt the child. Prior to placing the child with the European foster parents, inquiries were made to see if one of the mother's relatives would be prepared to foster the child and care for it. These inquiries were made without success.

"Was the mother's consent for adoption obtained?" No. Attempts were made to find the mother, and it appeared to officers trying to find her that she had gone bush and was deliberately evading contact with the Welfare Branch.

In relation to whether the lack of the mother's consent led to a great and apparently expensive legal battle, the application to dispense with consent was made by the foster parents. I do not know whether it involved them in great expense. Under the Adoption Ordinance, the judge, on application, can dispense with consent in certain cases. One of the grounds to justify this application for the dispensing of consent is where the parent has neglected the child. Perhaps it needs to be pointed out that, during the period of fostering, some 18 months or more, the natural mother did not come near the child.

1647 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

Will plans for the proposed high school at Nhulunbuy be made public and, if so, when?

ANSWER

I do not know whether the plans are yet available; I certainly have not seen them if they are. I am sure they will be made available to the public when the department has the plans.

1648 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise whether or not it is a fact that work on the bridge presently under construction over Chinaman's Creek in Alice Springs has been suspended because of the water table level and because the Department of Construction made an error in the survey of the location of the bridge and positioned it too close to the old railway line?

ANSWER

I believe that construction has been halted on the bridge. I will check with the Department of Construction to confirm whether the honourable member for Stuart's claims about the incorrect location of the bridge are correct.

1649 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

At the last sittings and the sittings before that, I asked the honourable member certain questions regarding a Taiwanese fishing boat. Can he tell me whether the department concerned made an assessment of value of the Taiwanese fishing boat and, if so, what was that assessment?

ANSWER

The Department of Primary Industry have advised me that, in these cases, they do not have an official assessment made by boating experts on the value of these vessels. They rely mainly on the purchase price paid for the vessel as a measure for estimating its value. With regard to the vessel that the honourable member referred to, the vessel was unable to be brought into Australia because of our ship building regulations. The only value that the boat had was the value that the owner was prepared to pay for it - $6,000.

1650 Mr VALE to Mr SPEAKER

Are you aware that the Parliamentary Record number 14 has pages 23 to 47 bound upside down again? This has occurred on previous occasions. Will this matter be referred to the Government Printer?

ANSWER

I am not aware of this fault. I will take it up with the Publications Committee.

1651 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Does the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs intend to visit the Northern Territory this month? What centres will the Minister be visiting if he does tour the Territory?

ANSWER

I have heard on the grapevine that the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is visiting the Northern Territory during this month. However, like most ministers visiting the Territory, he has not extended the courtesy of advising members where he might be from time to time so we have an opportunity to discuss local problems with him. I do not know when he might be here.

1652 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

When will the regulations under the Northern Territory Public Service Ordinance be tabled in this House and open for debate?

ANSWER

According to the normal practice of making subordinate legislation, the regulations will be finally formulated after the final form of the principal ordinance is known. The regulations will then be submitted to the Administrator in Council and then will come to this Assembly. If the ordinance is passed at the current sittings, then the regulations should be available at the next sittings in their final form, subject to examination by the Subordinate Legislation Committee.

1653 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

When will the decision be given to recognise public holidays for the Northern Territory Police Force, Christmas and New Year holidays?

ANSWER

That is a question we would all like to know the answer to. Just to give a bit of background, the Police Association put in a log of

claims for all sorts of assorted determinations on 21 June of this year. They still have no reply and a young gentleman from the Industrial Affairs Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory told the Police Association the other day that if it got to the point of the Arbitral Tribunal the Department of the Northern Territory would not be ready to put their case before the judge because they had not had time to prepare it. It has been with them since 21 June and I think that a certain gentleman within the Department of the Northern Territory should pull up his socks and get moving.

1654 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

The honourable executive member will recall that at the last sittings I asked certain questions regarding the Northumberland Insurance Company and its demise, and the possible - in fact probable - bankruptcy of persons who have been sued and thought they were indemnified by the Northumberland Insurance Company. I am now asking the honourable Executive member, in view of the fact that the Government apparently does not propose to underwrite companies that it authorises pursuant to the Motor Vehicles Ordinance, and that therefore such authorisation is absolutely worthless, does the Government propose to continue with the system of authorised third party insurers?

ANSWER

I understand that the Government is going to continue with authorised insurers; I have had no instructions to amend the ordinance. However, I think the honourable member for Jingili has a good point and, as I have said before in answer to questions concerning Northumberland Insurance, it is a sad situation where people in good faith take out insurance then find that when the insurance company goes through the hoop they are left holding the bag. The Government has expressed a desire to keep out of the whole affair; they do not appear to be interested in helping to foot the bill and, as I explained before, neither do the insurance companies. I intend talking to the member for Jingili because I believe this is an extremely important matter and hopefully we can come up with something and ask the Government to give some assistance. Unfortunately, we do not have any real power in this area and we can only ask the Government if they would be of some assistance.

1655 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is the honourable executive member aware of a recent press statement, reputed to be attributable to the Federal Minister for Transport, stating that there would only be need for a review of the present railway line from Alice Springs to Maree, in terms of repositioning a siding north of Tarcoola, if Lake Eyre South was to overflow and inhibit railway traffic between Maree and Alice Springs? Has the honourable member taken any steps to inquire as to whether Lake Eyre South is likely to overflow in this coming wet season and, if it is not, whether this means that we can expect the Central Australian Railway to remain open from Maree to Alice Springs?

ANSWER

With regard to the Central Australian Railway, I believe that the comments made by the honourable member for Alice Springs are correct. I am not aware at this stage whether or not they expect Lake Eyre to fill up this year. I do not know whether or not it is going to fill up and if it is going to cause a problem. I hope that it does not, I

will have a look at the matter and see if I can find out exactly what is in mind. When we took the problem up with the Minister for Transport when he was up here, we asked him what was going to be done with the new railway line, and he was of the opinion that it would be best to proceed at least to the border before any decision was made to set up a staging station there. However, if the line does go under water, maybe there will not be any alternative but to bring the staging station down quite some way into South Australia which would be completely unsatisfactory for Alice Springs and tourism. We will have to wait and see what happens with Lake Eyre.

1656 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Is the honourable member aware that the Yirrkala Dhanbul Association proposes to build a council chamber at Yirrkala? If so, has he any idea of the cost of such a building, and when is it likely to be commenced?

ANSWER

I do not know but I will endeavour to find out and advise the House later on in the week.

1657 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

What is the number of unemployed at present in Australia and the number of unemployed in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Figures supplied to me by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations indicate that as at 6 December, 272,518 persons were registered as unemployed in Australia and 1985 of them in the Northern Territory.

1658 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

When will the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau be re-established in Darwin?

ANSWER

The honourable member may be referring to the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau Head Office which is currently sited in Alice Springs. The bureau is still operating in Darwin as a sales office but there is no immediate plan to return the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau Head Office to Darwin. However, I believe that it should return to Darwin as soon as it is financially and practically possible.

1659 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

How many people is it estimated that the uranium mining industry will employ in the Northern Territory, firstly, in the construction phase and later in the mining and processing phase?

ANSWER

I have had forewarning of this question and I have been unable to ascertain figures relating to any development by Pancontinental and Naranda on their respective projects. However, the proposed develop-

ment of Jabiru in the construction stage would involve a work-force of some 600 to 800 men for a period of 3 years and subsequently drop to 250 to maintain the operation. The development of the Queensland Mines operation at Narbalek would involve a construction force of some 300 to 400 men for two and a half years and subsequently drop to about 180 men to maintain the operation.

1660 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

How many fire officers are there in the Northern Territory fire service and how many, under the new bill, are senior officers and where are they?

ANSWER

There are 16 officers in the Northern Territory Fire Brigade. I am not quite sure where they are all located and I am unaware of the number of senior fire fighters or their location. I will get this information and relay it to the honourable member later in these sittings.

1661 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

At the last sittings, I asked him certain questions regarding a lease that had been granted in Darwin some years ago for the purpose of establishing a marina. Has he any answers to those 4 or 5 questions?

ANSWER

I rang the Assistant Secretary concerned with land this morning and he informed me that an answer is in fact in the system somewhere. I asked him if he could possibly get it out of the system and up to the Assembly so that I can give the honourable member an answer so that he may have a happy and worry free Christmas.

1662 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

What measures has she taken to reintroduce vagrancy laws for the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The Police and Police Offences Ordinance is currently under review with the idea of replacing it with 2 separate ordinances. The matter of vagrancy no doubt will be raised during the preparation of these bills.

1663 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

I asked a question at the last sittings regarding the government member on the Tourist Board sacking himself from the board by not attending 3 consecutive meetings. The honourable executive member was going to find out why this happened. I would like to know why.

ANSWER

I have sought from the Chairman of the Tourist Board in writing, the reasons for the non-appearance of the government member at the meetings. As yet, I have not received a reply but I assure the honourable member that I will do everything in my power to see that he gets the information.

1664 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a question earlier and I am now able to answer it. Clause 28(2) of the bill is related to the draft Regulation 4 which indicates that for the purposes of section 28(2) of the ordinance a vacancy with a designation of superintendent or above in the police force may be filled by an appointment, transfer or promotion made by the Executive Member. That is the Executive Member as distinct from the Chief Executive Officer as the principal ordinance states in most cases. This is similar to the present provisions applying in the police force except that we have raised the ante from sergeant first class where it now stands to positions of superintendent and above. There may be from time to time other classes of employees who could come under prescription by regulation but, at the moment, I have no others in mind.

1665 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Can he give any explanation for the frequent power cuts in the central city area? These do not seem to be connected to normal maintenance repairs.

ANSWER

The central city area has been subject to power cuts whenever the electricity supply has to rotate power cuts resulting from generation failure or from failure in the transmission system. Since the number 5 generator at Stokes Hill has been out of action, the gas turbine at Snell Street has been operating for about 12 hours a day. This generator has shut down several times lately as a result of low oil pressure. The city area is also affected by lightning strikes down the track. Since the cyclone in 1974, the electrical transmission system has not had the usual capacity to isolate power failures to one area. Therefore, although it may not be raining in Darwin, there could be an electrical strike down at the 20 mile or 30 mile, which will put the Darwin city area out as well.

1666 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

I preface my question by remarking that, since this Assembly was elected in October 1974, we have seen in Darwin a cyclone of immense magnitude which resulted in an almost complete turnover in the population. We have seen in Darwin new areas developed as a result of that cyclone and, in Alice Springs and other Territory centres, we have seen shifts in population by reason of new subdivisions being developed. I can think of 2 residential areas in Alice Springs which exist now and which did not exist in October 1974. What steps have been taken which might lead to a redistribution of electorates before the next election for this Assembly?

ANSWER

I am aware that some citizens of Darwin and the Northern Territory have written to the Minister for the Northern Territory suggesting that this question of population balance and possible redistribution be looked at. I did receive a copy of a letter which a group of citizens in the Howard Springs area of the electorate of Tiwi had written, pointing out that there had been a significant growth of population in that area. We are all aware of the development of the new suburbs of Anula and Walagi on the eastern side of the Sanderson electorate. Having this in mind, I have already discussed with the Minister for the Northern Territory, the almost certain need to have a redistribution. A census was taken this year which provides some basis for an electoral redistribution committee to work from plus other information which they would need. I pointed these matters out to the Minister and he gave me an assurance that machinery would be set in motion to do so. I now propose to write to the Minister formally as Majority Leader later this week and ask for confirmation that the redistribution question will be officially examined and for some idea of the timetable which he may have in mind, probably starting early next year, to make sure the necessary machinery is set up and the work carried out so that the people who are already members of the legislature or who have an interest in perhaps nominating before the next election may be aware, well in advance, of what the new boundaries might be.

1667 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Can he offer me any explanation as to why subscribers making telephone calls from Darwin to interstate areas on STD cannot enjoy the benefit of the recipient of the call being able to identify the call as an STD call by identification pips?

ANSWER

I believe the pips were not reintroduced after the cyclone. I am not aware of any reason why they should continue to be excluded from our STD calls. I will contact the local Telecom man today and see if we can get some answer which may further enlighten us on that particular item.

1668 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

Is it a fact that wildlife rangers have been instructed not to shoot feral animals even if they be in such fragile areas as Cannon Hill and that as a result of this instruction, the land is being severely disturbed? If it is a fact, can the honourable Majority Leader advise what steps he will take to correct this?

ANSWER

I am not aware of whether it is a fact that such instructions have been issued but I will make inquiries from the Chief Inspector of Wildlife and the head of the branch in which his section is located to determine the nature of any such instructions which have been issued. I can imagine that in that particular arm of government it is a very sensitive question at the moment because there has been a good deal of publication given to the fact that there was a shoot-out of cattle south of the Daly River some weeks ago, That matter has become the subject of a dispute and is still as yet unresolved as I understand it. I will find out what directions have been issued and if the directions are not sensible, if there has been an over-reaction, then naturally I will use what influence I can at this stage to bring about a more sensible policy, bearing in mind that hopefully after the 1st of January I will be able to have a much greater say in that policy. It does appear, from my knowledge of the subject, that there is some ambiguity or confusion possibly existing between 2 areas of legislation on the statute books of the Territory. One is in respect of the Crown Land Ordinance which refers to ownership of cattle on vacant crown land areas and refers to the apparent or reputed owner of such cattle as establishing ownership; and then there is the Wildlife Conservation and Control Ordinance, shortly to become the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Ordinance which has references to feral animals. The question of the definition of exactly what is feral and what is domesticated may need clarification in our legislation. If that is so, I undertake to take the matter up and to achieve necessary amendments to the legislation.

1669 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Does the Price Controller, in determining the price of bread, take into account power failures which cause loss to production and waste for the manufacturer?

ANSWER

The current price of bread in Darwin does not contain any contingency

for loss by the manufacturer as a result of power failures. The Price Controller can allow for recovery of a loss sustained from power failure. However, the loss would have to be documented and proven. I am advised that an application for a price increase on these grounds would not be entertained unless a substantial sum was involved.

1670 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is it a fact that private individuals who engage in private export activities overseas, and if they are successful in gaining an export sale, upon their return may apply to the Department of Overseas Trade for reimbursement of a percentage of their fare costs for their overseas travel?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the answer to the honourable member's question. I think it is going to take some time to get an answer and therefore ask him to put the question on notice.

1671 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS

Can he advise me whether it is proposed that the Tiwi Land Council in addition to the Northern and Central Land Councils will be set up at the commencement of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act? Can he find out and inform me what arrangement will be made for local descent groups to seek title to the land when the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act commences? Can he advise me how many Aboriginal groups, and from what location, have requested the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to approve the application to set up a local land council?

ANSWER

I am aware that the provisional Tiwi Land Council has made a request to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to be set up as a separate body on the commencement of the federal Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act. According to that legislation, the decision as to whether a new land council other than the original 2 proposed in the legislation is left to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. I am unable to advise what is in the Minister's mind at the moment or what decision he is likely to come to, but I will either personally or through my colleague, the Executive Member for Social Affairs, endeavour to find out what the policy might be. I believe somebody said yesterday the Minister is coming to the Northern Territory in the near future. I know that is so because, although he may not have contacted some other people, he did at least contact me and invite me to dinner. Thus, I have the opportunity to put that, and certain other questions, to the Minister and, as soon as I have some information, I will inform the honourable member.

The honourable member asked about local descent groups seeking title to their own lands when the act commences. I have not had many consultations or discussions on the latest amendments which have been brought in since the bill was originally introduced in June. As I understand the present amendments which have been carried by the House of Representatives, it is made clearer and probably somewhat easier for new trusts to be set up from the large existing trust which will be created by the bill in the first instance. I understand that the amendments will provide for separate trusts to be set

up out of the original larger trust somewhat more easily and without any ambiguity about it as there was previously. So I think that the amendments will make that easier, and I think that those amendments should be brought to the notice of the Aboriginal communities so that descent groups and clan groups who would wish to have their own title realised will know that the opportunity to do so is now in the legislation. I envisage that there will be quite a large number of groups who would like to take advantage of that opportunity.

Apart from the information I have already given about the Tiwi Land Council, on the third part of the question, I am unable to inform the honourable member how many other groups there might be and in what location they reside. I have requested the Minister to approve applications to set up further land councils. I will endeavour to find out that information as soon as possible and convey it to the honourable member. If I cannot find out the full information during the course of these sittings, I will give it to him as soon as it is available.

1672 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

Is she aware that the Police Commissioner has apparently issued instruction to his officers that they are to under no circumstances discuss police problems or personal problems concerning their homes etc with the members of this Assembly? If this instruction was given, why?

ANSWER

I am not aware that this instruction has been issued and therefore I cannot give any reason.

1673 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

What steps have been taken to upgrade the Yirrkala and Dhupuma Roads prior to the wet season, and has an inspection been made of these roads in recent times?

ANSWER

I believe that it is generally the practice to grade these roads just prior to the wet season. However, I will contact the Department of Construction and see if I can confirm that that in fact will be the case this year.

1674 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

In view of the Federal Government's media ban on cigarette advertising, can he tell me why Darwin cinemas are able to do so during intermission?

ANSWER

I understand there are no controls over cinema advertising of cigarettes, that is why.

1675 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW

Can the honourable member advise me if there is any movement or prospect of movement concerning the Katherine Rural College?

ANSWER

I understand that the Katherine Rural College has been deferred for this year, but has been by no means taken off the books. It will possibly be put on in the next financial year.

1676 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Has the Department of the Northern Territory formulated any policy with regard to the sale of caravans and demountables that are no longer required by them for temporary accommodation?

ANSWER

As is often the case, I am unaware of what goes on in the Department of the Northern Territory. As far as the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is concerned, I can assure him that at this stage there has been no consideration by the commission with regard to a recommendation for a policy for either the disposal or ultimate use of either the caravans or demountables. The commission has sought information from the various interested departments and organisations or bodies, such as the Housing Commission, in a hope to prepare recommendations on such a policy.

1677 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW

Has the Director of Education reached a policy decision concerning the employment or re-employment of persons with previous specified convictions?

ANSWER

It is the role of the Commissioner of the Commonwealth Teaching Service to set policy guidelines in so far as they are beyond legislation and I am not aware that he has done so. If the honourable member for Arnhem could place the question on notice, we could perhaps learn something more about it.

1678 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

I refer to a press report of the Chairman of the Reconstruction Commission, Mr Clem Jones, visiting the Stokes Hill Power Station and subsequently making some rather disparaging remarks. Was this done in his official capacity, both his visit and his subsequent remarks, and, if so, with the knowledge and consent of the other commissioners?

ANSWER

At the last meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, brief mention was made of the problems that were being encountered in a number of the operational areas attaching to the electricity supply in Darwin. I cannot recall any specific motions that resulted from that. I would not see it as being inconsistent that the Chairman of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in his own right, by occupying that office, could make inspections of any undertaking which the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has a functional role as part of its responsibility. I believe that any action of the chairman has probably resulted from a visit that he has initiated at his own goodwill.

1679 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

What facilities are there available for holding female prisoners at Fannie Bay Gaol or are they still being transferred to Alice Springs Gaol?

ANSWER

At Fannie Bay Gaol, the facilities for female prisoners have been upgraded and generally rebuilt and are much the same as they were prior to the cyclone. The female prisoners are being housed in the best accommodation that is available at Fannie Bay Gaol. It is Travelodge conditions compared to what other prisoners at Fannie Bay are being housed in. It is recognised that the facilities are not Travelodge facilities. The female cell block at Fannie Bay has been rehabilitated and is in use.

1680 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS

I refer to the Mailath Report. On page 33 it is stated that a rural reconstruction scheme will commence on 1 December 1977. What will primary producers do in the intervening 12 months?

ANSWER

I must confess that the honourable member for Arnhem is a little ahead of me in his study of the Mailath Report which is to be in any case debated in this Assembly a bit later on. I do not think that Mr Mailath, in the context of the report, which is one of making and giving advice and making recommendations to people to consider and possibly accept, can say that there is going to be a rural reconstruction scheme or body that is going to come into operation in December 1977. I think that is a matter still to be decided. In the meantime, the normal - or should I say abnormal - arrangements as far as they apply to the Northern Territory prevail. The Commonwealth and state ministers responsible for agricultural matters met some 6 or 7 weeks ago to examine the rural reconstruction needs for the whole of Australia and they came to arrangements and agreements as between the Commonwealth and the states as to what was required - what forms of assistance, how much money. That is pretty much cut and dried now and people in the states know where they are going in the future. We, as usual, still are not at that happy stage because our leads have to be put to the Commonwealth Government and the Commonwealth Treasury separately. They have been put to the Minister for the Northern Territory by the Primary Producers Board which has collected the information from Territory pastoralists and their organisations. I understand that the submission from the Minister has either gone to the Cabinet or is about to do so and we should expect a decision on what will apply during the next 12 months in the very near future. I make the point, though, that our case is always considered separately to that of the states and this puts us at a time disadvantage whenever any of these decisions are made.

1681 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

Can the Executive Member advise me to the latest situation regarding the Tiwi Mother's Home and can he also tell me if it is being fully utilised?

ANSWER

No.

1682 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

I preface my question by saying that I understand that, following the cyclone in Darwin, the Department of the Northern Territory undertook the purchase of a number of trail caravans from within the Northern Territory and without. I suspect that the bulk of the caravans may have been supplied by suppliers outside the Territory. In view of the number of purchases made and the apparent need now to dispose of some of these caravans, is it the policy of the Department of the Northern Territory to dispose of these caravans by auction within the Northern Territory alone, even though the suppliers of caravans within the Northern Territory did not participate in the original sale? If so, is it their intention to continue to do so, thereby jeopardising the economic viability of the caravan dealers within the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Alice Springs was apparently inattentive when I was answering a former question in which I supplied the information that I was not aware of any policies of the Department of the Northern Territory at this stage and nor had the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, at this stage, even considered any recommendations.

1683 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

Has she received an answer from the Minister for the Northern Territory regarding the recent submission by the East Arnhem Teachers Federation asking for approval for the single teachers to use Commonwealth houses in Nhulunbuy on a rental basis in the light of the inadequate single accommodation as supplied for the long-term residents at the Commonwealth Hostel in Nhulunbuy?

ANSWER

I have only had acknowledgement of receipt of my representation.

1684 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

Is it true that both juvenile detention centres are short staffed and, if so, has the Executive Member made representation to the Minister for Social Welfare to have the situation rectified?

ANSWER

The situation is that there are no juvenile detention centres in Darwin or anywhere in the Northern Territory at the moment. All juveniles who are required to be held in detention are unfortunately being held in gaols. There are some homes, they are not detention centres necessarily, they are homes for children who may be made wards of the department or the director. It is acknowledged that there is some staff shortage, but there is generally in the whole social development branch an extreme staff shortage as a result of the staff ceiling situation. With the opening in February or March next year of the juvenile detention centre in Alice Springs, this situation is going to be further aggravated. Appropriate representations are being made.

1685 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK

I preface my question by saying that previously in this House I asked the honourable member as to the date of the opening of the Alice Springs Hospital and a question relating to its staff position. If I recall, the answer for the first question was quite satisfactory in that the hospital was hoped to be opened by the end of this year. I also recall that the answer to the second question relating to staff gave some cause for concern. Is the honourable member now able to tell the House when the Alice Springs Hospital will open, indeed whether it will open as a whole with all departments operating simultaneously? And what is the current staff position with that proposed new hospital?

ANSWER

The out-patients department and other sections of the Alice Springs Hospital began to become operational as from last Sunday. I understand that this week patients are being moved into the hospital generally and the hospital basically should be fully operational by the end of this week. However, it is a 280-bed hospital and the former hospital had a capacity of less than 200. There are, therefore, large sections of the hospital which are virtually closed and not in operation, partly because of the lack of patients which is perhaps fortunate. Also of greater concern is that, because of the lack of staff, it is just not practical to open sections of the hospital which may need to be in operation. I have again, in the last fortnight, written to the Prime Minister pointing out the situation in relation to the staff but again there is some committee which deals with staff ceilings and that committee unfortunately is looking at the mathematics of staff ceilings rather than the practical side.

1686 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

Will the feasibility corridor study be made through Arnhem Land and, if so, will the Aboriginal communities be advised in advance of any such study?

ANSWER

I assume the honourable member for Nhulunbuy is referring to a corridor study for a road. Whether or not we will have a road through Arnhem Land is certainly in extreme doubt as far as I am concerned. I do not know of any intention to hold a corridor study into a highway across Arnhem Land. If this did come about, I am sure that the Aboriginals would be amongst the first to know because the Department of Aboriginal Affairs holds the key to any development of roads in the Arnhem Land area. I certainly do not know of any proposal at this stage.

Last year at the Rural Road Conference, I asked a similar question. I asked whether or not they were going to upgrade the road, and the question was redirected to the officer representing the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. They did not seem to have any strong ideas on the matter so I am not too hopeful that we are going to see a road across to the eastern side of Arnhem Land for some years to come.

1687 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

Has the contract for the rehabilitation of the Casuarina Fire Station been let yet? If so, when is the work likely to commence?

ANSWER

The contract has not been let. The tender has been approved and I expect that a contract would be let within the next week. I am not aware as to when it would actually be started but I would assume it would be fairly soon after the actual letting of the contract.

1688 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

My question relates to the questions that I asked the Executive Member for Social Affairs yesterday relating to the Aboriginal child Freddy. When answering my question, he chose to fly in the face of several findings of fact made in a case in the Northern Territory Supreme Court and also chose apparently not to answer certain other questions because his department was not strictly responsible for those areas.

Mr SPEAKER: Would you get around to asking the question please, honourable member.

Mr EVERINGHAM: Certainly, Mr Speaker. Was legal aid made available to the mother of the child? Was the Crown Law Officer or the Aboriginal Legal Aid Service involved in the application at all? Was the Children's Court told the child's mother was in hospital?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find answers to those questions for the honourable member and report to the House later in the day.

1689 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

I refer to a speech in Canberra on November 17 on the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Bill. Mr Calder said: "This bill, it is hoped, will give Northern Territory Aboriginals the ability to practise their laws and traditions on their own land in their own manner." Can the honourable member tell me if he is aware that this condition has not existed previously throughout most of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I do not believe that there has been any law in the Northern Territory that has prevented Aboriginal people from carrying out their practices and customs in any part of the Territory or any part of their reserves or other areas of land which they may traverse. Whether it is their land or not is perhaps a key to the answer there. As far as I am concerned, I do not think there is any law that stops Aboriginal people from performing their culture anywhere in the Territory at any time.

1690 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

Has the honourable member any assurance from the Department of the Northern Territory that disputes between a certain barge operator in Darwin and the Port Authority over compensation of lease arrangements will be resolved before the Port Authority is placed under the control of this Assembly?

ANSWER

I believe that the department is doing everything possible to resolve the dispute that has existed for some years. I did ask the Minister

whether he felt that this could be achieved by the transfer as I feel it is something that should be resolved before the transfer of the Port Authority takes place. The Minister advised me that everything possible would be done to achieve this.

1691 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he yet advise us when the sale of Government homes will recommence in the Darwin area and the terms and conditions? If he cannot, can he give any indication as to when he will be able to?

ANSWER

As I have indicated before, I share the concern of the honourable member for Nightcliff but the isues surrounding both the sale of Government homes to government employees and the terms and conditions of sale of homes to eligible Housing Commission tenants have not been resolved. I am aware that the proposals in both these instances have been with the senior officers of the Department of the NT for some months and I have received no cooperation in getting the answers. I made further representations yesterday as a result of her question. I am unable to give her any joy.

1692 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Stuart asked a question concerning the bridge under construction at Chinaman's Creek. There has been a delay because of a problem in excavating for the new bridge. The excavation is fairly close to the existing railway bridge and the Railways expressed some concern that this excavation may undermine their foundations. The Department of Construction has had discussions with the Railways and I believe that they are almost ready to start construction again. They have made some changes to their original design and strengthened the road bridge foundations which should maintain the strength of the railway bridge.

1693 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Gillen asked a question concerning the number of officers and senior firefighters in the Fire Brigade and their locations. In fact, there are 15 officers, I was under the impression that there were 16, including the Chief Fire Officer. There are 15 officers including the Chief Fire Officer. There could possibly be another one in a short time anyway with the reviews currently being undertaken, but the present strength of the officers is 15. Perhaps the honourable member for Nightcliff could relay that information back to her informant. Their location is: 1 in Alice Springs, 1 in Tennant Creek, 1 in Katherine and 12 in Darwin. Senior firefighters: 4 in Alice Springs, 3 in Katherine, 3 in Tennant Creek and 11 in Darwin giving a total of 21.

1694 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Jingili asked a question concerning the marina. There was a lease granted for a marina and multi-storey building in the Doctor's Gully area. This, however, has been surrendered. Preliminary details for a proposal for a marina have been lodged with the department for examination and subsequent advice as to ways and means of bringing such a project into existence. However, this advice has not been compiled.

1695 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Given the expected rise in housing costs due to the devaluation of the Australian dollar, would he support a move to the Minister for the Northern Territory and through him to Treasury for an increase of the ceiling of the Home Finance Trustee $42,000 6% loan?

ANSWER

I intimated in an answer to a question yesterday that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission in looking at its program was taking into account the effects of devaluation on the costs of home building in Darwin and the subsequent effects that devaluation would have on the capital works program both for housing and other projects of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I do believe that it would be consistent with that policy to ask the Minister to review the ceiling that was applied to the Home Finance Trustee loans in Darwin which were to help the private sector. The ceiling figure of $42,000 was originally struck on the basis of what similar contracts were costing for building of homes in Darwin by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I will certainly make a submission to the Minister and ask him to review the scheme in light of the actions also being taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

1696 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he yet advise this House when the sale of government homes scheme will be reintroduced in Darwin and its terms and conditions?

ANSWER

Since question time yesterday morning, I have received a letter from the Minister with regard to the government home sale scheme. It basically referred to a submission made to the Minister by the honourable member for Ludmilla. In his reply to the honourable member for Ludmilla, the Minister has stated that his department has been working intensively on this issue for some time and has now reached the position where it is necessary only for financial aspects including interest rates to be approved by the Government. The Minister has further stated that, until these negotiations are concluded, he would prefer not to make a statement other than to say that he appreciates the advantages of housing policies which place home ownership within the grasp of the community and at the same time have the effect of building up a stable workforce. I do not have the specific information sought by the member for Nightcliff but I will certainly be endeavouring to obtain it as quickly as possible.

1697 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

I regard his answer as reasonable if the honourable member was able to inform me that he was having confidential discussions with the Minister but was not free to disclose the information. It appears that is not taking place. Hasn't the Minister announced that, as a matter of policy, there is to be in the near future a single housing authority in Darwin and, if that is a fact, would it not be logical for the Executive Member responsible to be involved in the discussions as to the reintroduction of the sale of government homes scheme in Darwin?

ANSWER

The policies relating to a single housing authority for the Northern Territory have long been established as a policy of the Majority Party in this Assembly. At a number of functions in Darwin, I am aware that the Minister for the Northern Territory has referred to the possibility of a single housing authority. I believe from my own discussions with him that he has accepted that this is one of the policies that ought to be looked at very carefully, particularly in light of the possible earlier termination of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. I believe that, in the early stages of 1977, it would be appropriate for the Minister and myself to pursue the policies relating to a single housing authority. I do agree with the member for Nightcliff that any policy at the moment which relates to the sale of government homes should be carefully reviewed in light of the future policies that are to be proposed. I would hope that the Minister will give me the courtesy of looking at the proposed scheme relating to the sale of government homes.

1698 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

My question refers to his Housing Bill which would allow the sale of Northern Territory Housing Commission homes to approved tenants after 5 year's tenancy. Can he advise whether Treasury has yet given him an indication that they support this legislation or require amendments so that it can go through this House today and be brought into operation?

ANSWER

As I have indicated to the honourable member on a number of occasions, I am very disappointed at the tardy manner in which officers of the Department of the Northern Territory have processed the details of this particular bill. I have not yet received any advice, confirmation or information of the details of that bill. I have been informed by a senior officer of the Department of the Northern Territory that it is under active consideration, both by senior officers of that department and Treasury. I have no information which will enable me to proceed with the bill today.

1699 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Has the honourable member seen the report that 300 tonnes of kangaroo meat are to be exported to Asian markets as pet meat? Can he say whether such a market could be made available for buffalo, donkey and horse pet meat produced in the Northern Territory, and will he take the matter up with the appropriate Minister?

ANSWER

I have not seen the report mentioned by the honourable member for Port Darwin. I am aware that there has been a change in the Australian Government's policy in relation to kangaroo products, including meat; there was a complete ban on these items a couple of years ago. This has now been modified, and in conformity with the state and Commonwealth discussions and agreements on management methods for kangaroo populations, countries which accept the management and conservation methods which Australia uses are able to negotiate the import of meat. I do not know which particular market the honourable member is referring to.

Mr Withnall: Japan was the one I meant.

Dr LETTS: For any pet meat market which is available overseas and to which kangaroo meat is eligible to go, donkey, horse or buffalo meat would certainly be comparable and an adequate substitute. I will have a look at the matter in the light of the information that the honourable member has brought up here and see whether anything can be done to provide some incentive and encouragement to those who are engaged in existing industries in those fields, rather than break into a new industry which we have not got in the Northern Territory at the moment, namely the kangaroo meat industry.

1700 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

The Executive Member has been accused of making an inaccurate statement that an Aboriginal child, Freddy, had been abandoned 5 times by his mother. Did he make such a statement?

ANSWER

I did hear a report on the news that I had made a statement that an Aboriginal child, Freddy, had been abandoned 5 times by its mother. On reading Hansard, I find that I said that it was the fifth time in a period of some 6 months in the life of the child that it had been found abandoned or had been returned to hospital. I think that that is quite a different story to the report that apparently has caused some reaction from the legal officer attached to the Aboriginal Legal Aid Service in Alice Springs. It is unfortunate that he has not checked everything and has gone off half-cocked, as he usually does.

1701 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Following the presentation of a petition from the students of Nightcliff and Casuarina High Schools in this Assembly last session, can she advise me if she has advised the Minister of their concern and if the building of Dripstone High School has received a higher priority than it presently enjoys in the capital works program?

ANSWER

I have conveyed the message of the petition presented by the honourable member for Nightcliff. However, whilst people in the Northern Territory have made representations in every possible way to both the Minister for the Northern Territory and the Minister for Education, I am unaware of the actual priority in their minds of Dripstone High School on the current capital works system.

1702 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr PERRON

Is there any scheme to educate under-privileged people and the Aboriginal people on the role of Consumer Protection Council and how to get help from them? If not, would he ensure that such a scheme is started?

ANSWER

I will undertake to look into the matter that he has raised this morning and see what can be done.

1703 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

How much money is spent in the Territory on bilingual programs for Aboriginal people and has the Education Department given considera-

tion to furthering the bilingual program in the Territory for other ethnic groups and Australians.

ANSWER

I ask him to place that question on notice.

1704 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked yesterday about the grading of the Yirrkala Road. Apparently the road was graded 10 weeks ago and should be graded again in approximately 4 weeks time.

1705 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK

Press reports have indicated that the St John Ambulance is introducing a subscription scheme for its services in the Darwin area. Could he inform the Assembly whether or not such a scheme will apply to areas outside of Darwin?

ANSWER

The subscription service for the St John Ambulance will be operative for the Darwin area or the Top End only. St John Ambulance has taken over all ambulance services in the Darwin and Top End area and from 1 January will be effecting charges. Subscriptions paid to the St John Ambulance service in the Top End will have effect throughout Australia for members who pay the subscription. In other Territory centres, the present system will operate. No charges are made for services provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

1706 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Is he yet in a position to indicate when the Government home sales scheme will recommence and the terms and conditions of that scheme?

ANSWER

Since the honourable member last asked that question on Tuesday 7 December, I have made daily representations to both the Minister's office and the Department of the Northern Territory. I do not have an answer for the honourable member.

1707 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Has Treasury approval - or any other approval necesary - been given for the passage of the legislation before us to enable the sale of Housing Commission homes to recommence?

ANSWER

This matter is related to the former question. I understand that the discussions that are taking place are between officers of the Department of the Northern Territory and officers of the Department of the Treasury. There has been no indication at this stage with regard to the issues that need resolution before the bill before this House can proceed.

1708 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

Is it a fact that the authorities were taken completely unawares, as some press reports would indicate, by the arrival in the lat few days of a Vietnamese motor boat with a number of Vietnamese refugees on board?

ANSWER

The impression which I gained when first hearing some of the press reports does not accord with the official version of the incident. According to the official information that I have received, at 3pm on Saturday a Malay-type boat was reported in Darwin Harbour a mile and a half off North-West Channel Rock. A message stated that it appeared to have refugees on board. The boat was then tied up at Storm Buoy as directed, and a sergeant from the Darwin Police Station, along with representatives of Customs, Immigration and Health, carried out the

normal checks on that vessel. The vessel was intercepted before it became in contact with land and the normal checks were carried out.

1709 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

My question concerns the outbreak of fruit fly in Alice Springs. Has the fruit fly been identified, what plans are in hand to eradicate the fly, and is it a fact that no legislation exists to prohibit the entry of fruit into the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

The Mediterranean Fruit Fly has been positively identified in the Alice Springs area. The extent and severity of the outbreak is not yet known. Immediate action is being taken to contain and eradicate the pest which is ranked amongst the world's 6 most damaging fruit flies. The only other part of Australia in which it has hitherto been known has been the south-western part of Western Australia. I understand that it is proposed immediately to undertake ground treatment using baits and spraying techniques similar to those techniques used for Oriental Fruit Fly in Darwin in the past using a mixture of an attractant and a pesticide. It is at the same time proposed to undertake an intensive trapping campaign to survey the extent of distribution of the beast. It is intended to invoke the Northern Territory Plant Diseases Control Ordinance to gazette Mediterranean Fruit Fly as a notifiable pest and to declare an area within a 50 kilometre radius of Alice Springs as a quarantine area and, as a follow up action, to extend the survey work to outlying missions and settlements and communities from the South Australian border to Tennant Creek. In order to do this it will be necessary to use additional manpower to that which is already available. Nothing I understand is known at this stage about the source of the outbreak, which way it came in. One would guess that it most likely came from the Western Australian area, in which case it could have come in either from South Australia in host fruit or possibly even State shipping around to Darwin and down from here. Amongst the characteristics of this fruit fly that are known or believed to be true is that is does not readily co-exist with Oriental Fruit Fly, but it is a serious pest and all necessary steps are being taken.

In the Plant Diseases Ordinance, as it stands at the moment, there are powers to prevent introduction of plant material to the Northern Territory. Fruit for human consumption normally has an exemption from the certification required for other plant material; however, if a fruit is known to be infested or if the disease is declared under the ordinance, then additional steps can be taken. We will examine the legislation to make sure that it is sufficient and, if it is not, corrective action will be taken. I believe that under the legislation that already exists there are very strong powers for quarantine and for declaration of this as a notifiable disease and for appropriate action to be taken. I will report to the Assembly from time to time on any further developments in this outbreak.

1710 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

An announcement this week in the "Australian" says: "The Federal Government has slashed its spending this financial year by $250m". Has the honourable member's advice been sought at any level as to what part of the capital works program or any other area under his control could be cut with the least effect in the Territory?

ANSWER

My advice was not sought as to what cuts were to be made in Northern Territory capital works expenditure. I have made my own inquiries since the announcement of the saving of $250m and I have been unable to establish whether there have been any cuts to anything in the Northern Territory.

1711 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What steps have there been taken to assist the residents of Anula and Wulagi in the flooding that occurs every time it rains in that area? Perhaps the honourable member could buy them a pair of boots.

ANSWER

I am aware that the Chairman of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission flew into Darwin yesterday and I do not know if he has the same capabilities as the honourable member for Sanderson who often does play Santa Claus. Perhaps a pair of boots per family may be the immediate answer. It is agreed that the position is untenable with regard to a number of properties in the Sanderson area. This is caused largely because of the new development and the fact that vegetation and the normal suburban gardening has not yet commenced to assist with the storm water drains. I have been informed that the General Manager of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has visited the sites concerned over the past few weeks and has issued directions to provide for drainage where required.

1712 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Has he heard whether the Public Service Board have made a decision on another orthodontist for the Territory? Knowing that the service is very poor in the Territory at the moment, will other steps be made to try to increase this essential service?

ANSWER

I do not know whether the Public Service Board has approved the appointment of a further orthodontist to the Northern Territory. The honourable member may be aware that the Department of Health has made submissions to the Public Service Board in a number of areas to provide increased specialist services such as orthodontists to centres outside of Darwin. However, the Public Service Board has not been particularly receptive to applications from the department which of course is hindering the general health coverage of the Territory.

1713 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH

Is he aware of reports that Taiwanese fishing crews have actually landed on the Australian coast for the purpose of resupply and foraging? If so, what information can he supply to the Assembly on this matter?

ANSWER

I have heard reports alleging that foreign fishermen do camp on our coast and run pig and chicken farms to service their fleets. I have been unable to get any documented evidence from the various departments. If the question is placed on notice, I will endeavour to obtain from Immigration and Customs an explicit answer to the question.

1714 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Is she able to advise whether the scheduled building of Dripstone High School has been brought forward as requested by so many sections of this community?

ANSWER

No.

1715 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN

Could he advise me whether the owner of Lot B of Section 290 Hundred of Bagot at Howard Springs intends to build an engineering workshop 150 feet long on the block mentioned?

ANSWER

I do not think that I will have time today to get an answer for the honourable member. I therefore ask him to put the question on notice.

1716 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

Is it a fact that the Acting Area Adviser at Nhulunbuy issues liquor permits for Arnhem on personal request, and without reference to town councils?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not know the answer to the question. I know that the Area Community Adviser at Nhulunbuy issues the permits for the Arnhem Land area but I do not know how he goes about consultation. If he does not consult the community councils, that is quite disturbing and not in keeping with the policy being espoused by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. I will take the matter up with the department and advise the member personally later.

1717 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

I refer to the recent increase in child endowment payments, which to some settlements brought an extra $100,000 a year. Has there been any monitoring to see what effect this extra money has or how it is being expended in these areas?

ANSWER

I am unable to advise the honourable member on this matter. If he would put the question on notice, an answer will be obtained.

Aboriginal Councils and Associations Bill (Kentish) 1689
Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Tungutalum) 1671
Aborigines -
  Centralian Aboriginal Congress (Vale) 1635
  child endowment (Kentish) 1717
  consumer affairs advice (Tungutalum) 1702
  unemployment benefits (Lawrie) 1554
Adoption of Aboriginal child (Everingham) 1646, 1688; (Vale) 1700
Adelaide River, pilot farms (Kentish) 1636
Airport traffic (Steele) 1632
Alice Springs -
  Amadeus Basin oil leases (Manuell) 1642
  fruit fly (Vale) 1709
  Hospital (Robertson) 1685
  police bikes (Vale) 1643
  railway line (Manuell) 1655
  railway yards, resiting (Manuell) 1639
  shopping complex (Vale) 1551
  Valuer-General (Vale) 1633
Arnhem Land, corridor study (Ballantyne) 1686
Assistance for isolated children (Ballantyne) 1549
Bilingual education (Ballantyne) 1703
Block 2911 Fannie Bay (Steele) 1376
Bread, price of (Dondas) 1669
Capital Works Program, cuts (Lawrie) 1710
Casuarina Fire Station (Dondas) 1687
Centralian Aboriginal Congress, director (Vale) 1635
Chinaman's Creek, bridge (Vale) 1648, 1692
CIB (Vale) 1197
Cigarette advertising (Dondas) 1674
Department of NT, sale of caravans (Dondas) 1676; (Manuell) 1682
Department of Overseas Trade (Manuell) 1670
DRC, Chairman (Lawrie) 1678
Dripstone High School (Lawrie) 1701, 1714
Drug offences in NT (Dondas) 1553
Education Department, employment of convicted persons (Kentish) 1677
Electoral redistribution (Everingham) 1666
Electricity supply (Dondas) 1630; (Lawrie) 1631; (Dondas) 1665
Encouragement of Primary Production Ordinance (Vale) 1552
Fannie Bay Gaol, female prisoners (Dondas) 1679
Feral animals, control of (Lawrie) 1668
Fire Brigade -
  dispute, Executive Member's role (Everingham) 1644
  number employed (Robertson) 1660, 1693
Flooding, new suburbs (Dondas) 1711
Fruit fly (Vale) 1709
Government homes, sales (Lawrie) 1638, 1691, 1696, 1697, 1706
Home Finance Trustee, loan ceilings (Lawrie) 1695
Housing Bill (Lawrie) 1698
Housing Commission tenants, eligibility for home finance scheme (Lawrie) 1634
Housing Commission, home sales (Lawrie) 1707
Howard Springs, Lot B Section 290 (Tungutalum) 1715
Juvenile detention centres (Dondas) 1684
Katherine Rural College (Kentish) 1675
Mailath Report (Kentish) 1680
Marina (Everingham) 1661, 1694
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Ballantyne) 1651
Motor Vehicles Ordinance No. 76 of 1972 (Withnall) 1627
Motor Vehicles Ordinance, third party insurance (Everingham) 1654
Nhulunbuy -
  liquor permits (Kentish) 1716
  proposed high school (Ballantyne) 1647
  road repairs (Ballantyne) 1673, 1704
  teacher accommodation (Ballantyne) 1683
Oil leases (Manuell) 1642
Ombudsman for NT (Withnall) 1637
Orthodontist services (Ballantyne) 1712
Pet meat, export (Withnall) 1699
Port Authority, dispute (Dondas) 1690
Police Commissioner -
  instruction to officers (Vale) 1672
  visits outside Darwin (Vale) 1641
Police Force -
  appointments (Lawrie) 1664
  holidays (Dondas) 1653
Public Service Bill, regulations (Lawrie) 1645, 1652, 1664
STD (Manuell) 1667

St John Ambulance, subscription scheme (Robertson) 1705
Stock squad (Vale) 1199
Taiwanese, foraging on Australian coast (Robertson) 1713
Taiwanese fishing boat (Everingham) 1548, 1649
Timber Creek Police Station, construction (Steele) 1629
Tiwi Mothers and Babies Home (Dondas) 1681
Tourist Board, government member (Everingham) 1663
Tourist Bureau (Dondas) 1658
Unemployment (Everingham) 1657
Uranium mining, employment (Everingham) 1659
Vagrancy laws (Dondas) 1662
Vietnamese refugees (Everingham) 1708
Water supply (Dondas) 1375
Yirrkala, council house (Ballantyne) 1656

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 15 MARCH 1977

FROM 17 NOVEMBER 1976

1550 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS

Has there been a feasibility study made in the Northern Territory for the use of the Northern Territory rivers to load and transport live cattle for export?

FROM 7 DECEMBER 1976

1626 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

Has a water filter been fitted at the departmental residence of the Director of Health in Darwin and, if so, was the filter installed at departmental expense and how much did it cost?

FROM 21 DECEMBER 1976

1628 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Could you please advise the following in respect of -

(1) Central Australian Aboriginal Medical Service;

(2) Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service;

(3) Central Australian Aborigines Congress;

(4) Aboriginal Hostels Ltd, Alice Springs -

(a) The number of persons employed;

(b) Titles and remuneration received, and other employment benefits;

(c) Who is responsible for the hiring and firing of their employees;

(d) Are the organisations' financial records and expenditure subject to any audit requirements, if so what;

(e) Are vehicle records and logbooks kept?

1629 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

1. Can he advise the name of the contractor company in charge of the construction of the Timber Creek Police Station?

2. Is it true that this company is having financial difficulties?

3. Is the construction of the Timber Creek Police Station on schedule in keeping with the requirements of the Department of Construction?

4. If not, what are the problems and why the delays?

FROM 1 MARCH 1977

1720 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

1. Is there an emergency power supply provided for the ABC television transmitter in Darwin?

2. If so, what is the nature of the emergency supply?

3. Is the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club situated adjacent to the ABC television transmitter in Darwin?

4. Who or what is the registered lessee of the land on which the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club is situated?

5. Is the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club provided with an alternative supply of electric power to the normal Darwin reticulated power supply?

6. If so, what is the source of the alternative power supply?

7. If the alternative power supply is not provided by the club itself was its provision to the club authorised by the supplier?

8. If not, what then is the basis of the supply? If so, what charges are levied for the supply?

9. Was there on 5 January 1977 a strike by Public Servants which necessitated the shut down of the normal Darwin power supply?

10. Was on 5 January 1977 the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club supplied with power from an alternative source?

11. If so, who authorised the supply of power on that day?

12. What charges were made for the supply of power on that day, if the supply was authorised?

13. Is it the policy of the Australian Broadcasting Commission or the Post Master General's Department to permit use of their emergency power supply by outside bodies?

14. If not, why was this exception made?

1722 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW

How many persons were breathalyser tested in the Territory in 1976 and what was the blood alcohol concentration in each case?

1723 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

I refer to the 1,500 sheets of high-quality teak ply wood given to the people of Darwin from the Government and people of Burma and ask -

(a) how many of these ply wood sheets have been distributed;

(b) by whom were they distributed;

(c) to whom were they distributed;

(d) when were they distributed;

(e) how many remain in stock;

(f) where are the remaining sheets being held; and

(g) to what purpose is it intended to put the remaining sheets?

1724 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

I refer to the Aboriginal Development Foundation and ask -

1. (a) how many members does it have;

   (b) do members of this foundation meet and, if so, how often;

   (c) are elections held and, if so, when; and

   (d) are financial statements issued and, if so, to whom?

2. Is this foundation holding $100,000 received from various sources since Cyclone Tracy and, if so, what audit checks are made on the funds received?

FROM 15 MARCH 1977

1810 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

1. From whom or where did the Department of Aboriginal Affairs obtain or purchase the galvanised iron with which they built the shed oon the Maranboy commonage near the creek adjacent to Bamyili settlement?

2. Can he confirm that this iron was removed from a number of buildings on mining leases at Maranboy?

3. In view of the answer given by a Mr Lovegrove on 25 July 1974 to the effect that road-building material possibly came from an area of land over which there were mineral leases, authorising the mining of tin, will the Department of Aboriginal Affairs undertake the expense of cleaning out the shaft since, as a result of the removal of this gravel from the collar, there has been dumped into the shaft, a large quantity of gravel which makes it necessary for considerable work to be done before the shaft can be worked again?

1625 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS

What is necessary to raise the Alice Springs Abattoirs to export licence standard?

ANSWER

The administration of export abattoirs falls within the province of the Department of Primary Industry and an on-site inspection of the premises by personnel of that department would be necessary to determine precise alterations and additions necessary to upgrade to export licence standards. From general knowledge only these alterations would be extensive, involve considerable capital outlay and, as a consequence, necessitate a greatly increased throughput to recoup that outlay.

1718 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN

Is it the intention of the owner to build an engineering workshop measuring 150 feet long on his property Lot V of Lot B of Section 240 in the Hundred of Bagot?

ANSWER

It is the intention of the owners of Lot V Section 290 Hundred of Bagot to build an engineering workshop on that land. The approximate dimensions of the proposed building are 115 feet by 52 feet. A permit to construct the building was issued on 19 October 1976.

1719 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

Has any attempt been made to monitor the effects of the increased cash flow on the economy, the work force, liquor consumption, and possible improvement in living standards as a result of the recent increases in Family Allowance payments, which provide additional funds of up to $100,000 per year to some larger Aboriginal settlements?

ANSWER

So far as the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in the Northern Territory is concerned the short answer to this question is "no".

The department has from time to time made an examination of the total inflow of money to some Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory and attempted to assess the use to which it is put and the advantages, and disadvantages which may have resulted to the communities concerned. It has been able to get some idea of the amount of money per capita flowing into these communities and to ascertain the percentage which appears to be utilised on such things as food, clothing, payment for accommodation and services, and the amount used on what might be termed as luxuries, such as entertainment, liquor, other luxury foodstuffs, motor cars.

This sort of examination has not been carried out in respect of all major Aboriginal communities and in those places which have been examined the use of the Family Allowances component of total income has not been separated.

The department in the Northern Territory does not have a Research Branch and therefore any examination which has been undertaken has lacked the expertise of properly qualified researchers and the sort of methodology and longevity which would disclose long term benefits and disadvantages.

1721 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

What action has the Government taken or does the Government propose to take with respect to the implementation of the Else Mitchell Report in so far as that report applies to urban land?

ANSWER

An inter-departmental committee comprising representatives of the Department of Administrative Services, Capital Territory, Northern Territory, Attorney-General's, Prime Minister and Cabinet, Treasury and Environment, Housing and Community Development, was established early in 1976 to consider the final report of the Commission of Enquiry into Land Tenures. The Australian Taxation Office, the National Capital Development Commission and the Department of Transport were also involved.

A number of meetings were held during last year and a further meeting was held on 3 February of this year.

The final report of the inter-departmental committee is expected shortly.

1725 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

Is it intended, and if so when, to reintroduce the sale of government homes scheme in Darwin?

ANSWER

This morning the Administrator mentioned that a bill for a sale of homes scheme for the Housing Commission would be again presented to this Assembly and I have just given notice of that bill. In the negotiations to finalise the details for the scheme, I have been mindful that we would also like to see a scheme introduced to enable public servants to purchase their homes in Darwin. I have been advised by the Minister for the Northern Territory that he has instructed his department to align the terms and conditions of the sale of government homes scheme as closely as possible to that of the Housing Commission. I have been advised by officers of the Department of the Northern Territory that they are working to that objective and, hopefully, following the reintroduction of the Housing Commission scheme, a scheme will be introduced for the sale of government homes.

1726 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise this Assembly if houses that are not fully repaired will be included in the terms of the sale of those homes to public servants?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide any information with regard to the availability of substandard housing.

1727 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Why is airconditioning in government offices left on overnight and at weekends when power is being rationed in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

The airconditioning in government owned office blocks was turned off during day and night during recent major generation failures at Stokes Hill powerhouse. However, when load shedding is necessary as a result of a short term generation failure, it is usually impractical to call in personnel after hours or on weekends to turn off airconditioning as the fault may be corrected before such action is taken. Therefore, it is considered that the action would be rather unwarranted.

1728 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he indicate when a Beef Industry Conference is likely to be held in the Northern Territory and where such a conference will be held?

ANSWER

There are arrangements being made for a Beef Industry Conference to be held in the Northern Territory. It is anticipated that the conference will be held in Alice Springs on 23 April, possibly continuing on to 24 April. The Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry, Mr Sinclair, has indicated that he will be endeavouring to attend on those dates

and also the Northern Territory Cattle Producers Council is planning to have its annual general meeting the day before in Alice Springs.

1729 Mr KENTISH to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he explain why persons brought into hospital at Health Department expense from remote areas are repatriated in different ways? Some are returned to their homes on travel warrants, while others are told to find their own way home at their own expense.

ANSWER

I will seek the information and supply it later in the sittings.

1730 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Why has the Department of the Northern Territory refused to allow persons on the housing list to move into homes which are completed but which have not been connected to the electricity supply because of an industrial dispute?

ANSWER

The houses in question have not been handed over to the Department of the Northern Territory and therefore cannot be allocated to persons on the government housing list.

1731 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he advise how many beef producers have availed themselves of carry-on loans this financial year? Are sufficient funds remaining to satisfy anticipated demands until June this year? Will funds be available for this scheme to continue after 1 July this year?

ANSWER

I am advised that 29 producers have been allocated assistance under the 1976-77 carry-on loan scheme. The Primary Producers Board has sufficient applications under consideration for next week's board meeting to probably exhaust funds available to this scheme. No decision has been made to provide funds for the Territory for the continuation of assistance beyond 30 June at this stage. However, one will be pursuing the matter to ensure that sufficient funds are available for the Primary Producers Board to effectively assist cattle producers who are facing difficult times.

1732 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

We have heard quite a bit in the media lately about the Home Finance Trustee loans, their scope and availability. Does he propose to make any representations to increase the maximum amount of the loans from $15,000?

ANSWER

The Majority Party intends to seek an increase from $15,000 to $20,000 for the Home Finance Trustee Loan Scheme at the moment and a further increase to $25,000 in a subsequent financial year. In making that statement, I would also draw members' attention to the fact that the Home Finance Trustee does draw his funds from the loan market and loans currently available within that market. We would always have to

be careful that any increase in the limits of funds does not then restrict then the numbers of people that may be eligible to receive such loans.

1733 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

When will the report on the Aboriginal live-in colleges be available and, if it becomes available shortly, will it be tabled in this Assembly?

ANSWER

The report is in the final stages of being compiled and I will undertake to seek from the department the date on which the report will be available and see if I can get a copy for the honourable member.

1734 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

Is it the intention of the Majority Party to require those people having Cabinet status to declare their interests in commercial and/or shareholdings within the Northern Territory and within Australia? If so, on what terms and conditions?

ANSWER

The short answer is no. I do not have any intention of asking the Cabinet Members to do this. However, I am quite prepared to have the item listed as one for Cabinet discussion and see what the view of the Cabinet is on it. My personal opinion has been for a long time that this is a grossly exaggerated situation and one in which it is impossible in many cases to get an accurate definition as to how far interests extend. When you take family interests, husband and wife interests, partnership interests etc into account, how do you find what an individual member's interest is? That is largely my personal view but I would be quite happy to have it discussed by the Cabinet and the member might like to ask me the question at some subsequent time.

1735 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

I have read in the Centralian Advocate about the sale of the Alice Springs Abattoirs to a company called Wales Meat Exporters. I would like to ask him whether in fact the shares owned by shareholders of the Alice Springs Abattoirs have in fact been purchased by Wales Meat Exporters? If they have been purchased by that company, is it the intention of that company to raise the Alice Springs Abattoirs to an export licence standard and, if so, to what export licence standard? Has it indicated at this stage what export contracts it has negotiated? If the reports in the Centralian Advocate that it has sufficient work contracts substantiating the export of beef from Central Australia are correct, what provisions has it made to accommodate the additional workforce that will be necessary to sustain that manufacture?

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable Cabinet Member for Resources may require time to write these questions down. I do suggest that questions like this should be put on notice.

Mr POLLOCK: I am unable to provide all the information required of the honourable member but I shall endeavour to make a full answer tomorrow.

1736 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he advise the present status of the fruit fly eradication campaign, how successful it is and if any indication can be given as to when the embargo on the movement of fruit and vegetables out of that prohibited area in Alice Springs will be lifted?

ANSWER

There has been an outbreak of Mediterranean Fruit Fly in the Alice Springs district and a quarantine zone has been declared in respect of the area. During the month of February, as a result of a campaign conducted by the Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch, only one fruit fly of the species was detected - on 14 February. It is hoped that the present campaign will continue for at least another 4 to 6 weeks depending on the discovery of any more flies. If there are no more flies discovered in the next 4 weeks, the campaign will be scaled down to a degree and a trapping program continued. There is no indication at this stage when the ban on the export of fruit and vegetables from the Alice Springs area may be lifted. One could not expect that it will be in the foreseeable future - that is, within the next 12 months - and this is a matter for concern. Over recent years, a large amount of citrus fruit has been exported from Alice Springs to Darwin and people in Darwin will be deprived of that supply unless some fumigation arrangements can be made. It looks as if that will be remote.

1737 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

Is it a fact that telephone conversations going into and coming out from police stations and Police Headquarters in Darwin are taped and, if this is the case, by what authority and for what reason?

ANSWER

I know that the telephone calls going through the 815555 number are taped. This matter was investigated last year and I am sure that the appropriate authorities have been procured by the Northern Territory Police under the terms of Telecom arrangement.

1738 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Many things have changed since the last sittings of this Assembly; Cabinet Members are now accepting Cabinet responsibility. Is it her intention to continue to persist in the situation whereby Police Officers are not easily identified - that is, they wear neither identification number nor name?

ANSWER

The matter is under review.

1739 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

My question concerns the budget allocation for work on the road west of Alice Springs to Jay Creek. Can he advise whether in fact that entire road section is to be bulldozed or whether the existing bitumen road is to be only widened?

ANSWER

I would ask that the question be placed on notice.

1740 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Prior to Christmas 1974, there was a service available to the members of the Legislative Assembly whereby ordinances were available to each member. He will be aware that, due to the cyclone, nearly all of those volumes have disappeared. Has he or anyone on his behalf taken any steps to secure that printed copies of ordinances will be available to each member of the Legislative Assembly? If he has not done so, will he take such steps that are available to him immediately, so that members can at least be able to have within their offices a copy of the laws of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I have a somewhat different recollection and interpretation of the situation before the cyclone than the one the honourable member has suggested. In the 10 years that I have been associated with the legislature, I have never known an up-to-date copy of the ordinances of the Northern Territory being available to every member, and I do not believe that has ever been the situation.

Mr Withnall: Every member had the books.

Dr LETTS: The full range of fully up-dated ordinances are available, as far as I am aware, only in 2 places - in a set of drawers in this Chamber and also in the library of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly. Other than that, people had to look after their own ordinances as best they could. This should be the situation. I understand, Mr Speaker, that this is actually more in your province than mine. Following the cyclone and in the reconstruction period, I did have a number of discussions with the Clerk and we did set about trying to get sets established in strategic places and availale to members as reference documents. I will check as to how that situa tion has developed and I will advise the honourable member later. The situation is not as he put it as far as I know.

1741 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Will he provide me with further information if I assure him that my question was directed to the possession by each member of the Legislative Council prior to the elections in 1974 of a copy of the laws of the Northern Territory up to 1960, together with annual volumes from 1961 to 1966. Those were presented to each member and were then understood to be his personal property. Ordinarily, each member kept them within his office and they were very regularly used by each member. Since the cyclone those volumes have disappeared, and I ask the honourable member what steps he will take to replace the material which was available to every elected member before the cyclone?

ANSWER

The honourable memer's question in its amended and more precise form is now clearer to me. Once again, I think the honourable member for Port Darwin should know that this was a service provided by the office of the Speaker and the Clerk of this legislature to the people concerned, and I believe that that would still be the case; it was a service provided by the office of the Speaker. However, I will make

representations to Mr Speaker, sir, and see if the honourable member's request can be met.

1742 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Did he recently attend an ATAC conference in Hobart and, if so, in what status did he attend the conference; was it delegate or observer status?

ANSWER

I attended a meeting of the Australian Transport Advisory Council in Hobart on Friday in the esteemed position of observer.

1743 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Since we last met, she has assumed many responsibilities which are rightfully the province of this Assembly. Having regard to that, is it the honourable member's intention to introduce legislation bringing back vagrancy laws in the Northern Territory or is it her intention to agree with the repeal of these dreadful former provisions?

ANSWER

The Police and Police Offences Ordinance is currently under review and, amongst other questions, the question of vagrancy is being considered by the relevant committee.

1744 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

At the Hobart ATAC conference, was there any indication that the Federal Government would be appropriating funds to the South Australian Government to be put towards the redevelopment and upgrading of the Stuart Highway south of Alice Springs to Port Augusta?

ANSWER

At the conference the Federal Minister made available the 1977-78 road fund figures to all the states and it is now common knowledge; it has been released to the press. The South Australian Government is receiving about $18m for national highway development in South Australia. Through the Chairman of ATAC, who was the Federal Minister for Transport, I asked the Transport Minister for South Australia whether there were sufficient funds to start upgrading the Stuart Highway in South Australia and he informed me that there would be no way that they would be spending money on upgrading the Stuart Highway. So it does appear that the upgrading of the Stuart Highway could be delayed although I think that the Minister for Transport in South Australia was also playing a little bit of politics, knowing full well that we are very keen to see the Stuart Highway upgraded. He would expect that we will lobby the Federal Government to ensure that South Australia will get sufficient funds. I believe that they are going to do a short stretch of road between Pimba and Port Augusta, about 30 kilometres. I understand that that is in fact going to be done next year so that is really the start of the upgrading of the highway.

I mentioned at a private meeting with the Federal Transport Minister, shortly after the meeting, that I was concerned with the funding of the South Australian highways and expressed the desire that possibly the Government could look at extending further funds to South Aust-

ralia so that they can continue to upgrade the highway. It is very difficult to assess exactly what will happen because I think the South Australian Government will be playing politics on this particular issue.

1745 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

Is he aware of the present overcrowding in the Community College at Alice Springs? Are there any plans or proposals under way to expand the facilities of that college and when?

ANSWER

There is an interim committee being set up in the Northern Territory called the Technical and Further Education Council. It is being set up by the Minister for Education, Senator Carrick. One of its tasks is to look at the role of the Community College in Alice Springs and its future, I will endeavour to give a complete answer to the honourable member at a later date.

1746 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

I refer to the answer she gave to my previous question regarding the reintroduction or not of the law regarding vagrancy in the Northern Territory; she stated that this particular aspect was being reviewed by the relevant committee. I am aware that she now alone has cabinet responsibility for this area and I ask her what this relevant committee is?

ANSWER

Whilst I might be the Cabinet Member for Law, I do not have expertise in all the areas of law and administration that is required and, as with most other people with responsibilities in various areas, there are certain advisers who take the first look at changes in legislation and offer their advice. That is indeed the stage which any proposed change to the Police and Police Offences Ordinance is at. I think my answer was satisfactory.

1747 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

I asked who the committee was and I have received no reply. I repeat my question, who are the members comprising, to use her own phrase, "the relevant committee"?

ANSWER

I consider this committee to be a committee of my own personal advisers who have been chosen for their expertise. It is not a statutory authority and I see no need to discuss names.

1748 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

What advance has been made with proposals for obtaining something in the nature of Commonwealth employee's compensation for members of this Assembly and also for contributory pensions for members?

ANSWER

I am aware that submissions have been made to the Minister for the Northern Territory in this regard, both by your office, Mr Speaker,

and by the Majority Party, as part of the overall review that must be made by the Remuneration Tribunal. I can indicate that members of the Majority Party have certainly made known their views to the Minister that this matter has been dragging on for too long and has been tardily handled by the Commonwealth Government.

1749 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he advise what proposals are underway by the Health Department and the Department of the Northern Territory in Alice Springs to utilise the sewerage water for irrigation and on what date that may take place? Are there any proposals to suspend the sending of the $105,000 allocated in this year's Budget for the provision of another sewerage pond?

ANSWER

The Health Department would only be one agency involved in the utilization of waters from the sewerage ponds and it would be acting in an advisory capacity. The question could be redirected to the honourale Cabinet Member for Transport and Secondary Industry as this project would fall under his jurisdiction.

1750 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

What is the Aboriginal education content in the police recruit training program?

ANSWER

This has recently been increased. There are approximately 24 hours involved now in the initial 16 week period of training. About 4 hours are spent on health and education, about 10 hours on anthropology, about 10 hours on Aboriginal communities and 2 hours are taken up in examination. There are courses available as a part of in-service training. At the retention course undergone by police officers at the end of their first year, there is a further 6 to 8 hours spent in general education regarding the Aboriginal communities.

1751 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

The question of the honourable member for Stuart seems to have fallen on deaf ears in the end. I wonder if the Cabinet Member for Transport and Secondary Industry might answer that question bearing in mind that the Civil Works Program for the Northern Territory in 1976/77 actually had detailed that amount of $105,000.

ANSWER

The question related to the Civil Works Program and, as spokesman for Works, I have an answer. An item of $105,000 was put aside for the building of a new sewerage pond. However, due to the changed Department of Health requirements, funds not expended on the additional pond will be put towards an irrigation system currently under investigation by the Department of the Northern Territory and the Department of Health.

1752 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

I preface my question by reading an answer he gave to a question on notice. I asked the honourable member what action the Commonwealth

Government had taken with respect to the Else-Mitchell Report as it dealt with urban land tenure. I received the following answer:

"An interdepartmental committee comprising representatives of the Departments of Administrative Services, Capital Territory, Northern Territory, Attorney-General, Prime Minister and Cabinet, Treasury and Environment, Housing and Community Development, was established early in 1976 to consider the final report of the Commission of Inquiry into land tenures. The Australian Taxation Office, the National Capital Development Commission and the Department of Transport were also involved. A number of meetings were held during last year and a further meeting was held on 3 February this year."

Will the honourable member obtain an answer from the Commonwealth Government as to why it was necessary for interdepartmental committees to consider a report of acknowledged experts such as Mr Rae Else-Mitchell and the other 2 members who sat with him? Why, if there was a need for some interdepartmental committee, has nothing been done since the report was tabled, and is it considered necessary that Alice in Wonderland should be appointed as an additional member?

ANSWER

The question reminds me somewhat of the previous questions which were asked about sewerage. Normally, on receiving a reply in a question from the department in the terms which he has read out, I would send it back for re-treatment. However, I thought that the opportunity was too good to miss to have such an answer recorded in Hansard for our great-great-grandchildren to look back on the state of the Territory in present times. I intend to frame my copy of the answer alongside a photo I have on my wall of a boar pig.

I will take on board the further questions asked by the honourable member for Port Darwin and endeavour to supply him with information in respect to those questions.

1753 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Upon what terms and conditions and at what times are uniformed police in urban areas armed?

ANSWER

I will obtain that information for the honourable member. I have an idea but I am not sure.

1754 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

Some honourable members and yourself, Mr Speaker, might remember the long saga that I had last year with the then honourable Executive Member for Resource Development in relation to the sale of a $6,000 Taiwanese, or some sort of oriental fishing boat, back to its owners. Now it appears to have turned up again in Port Darwin, once again having been arrested by the naval authorities. What I am seeking to obtain from the honourable Cabinet Member is an assurance to this House that the vessel will not again be sold to its previous owners.

ANSWER

Regrettably I am not in a position to give a direction as to what might happen to this fishing boat. The wish expressed by the honourable

member that the boat not be sold back to its former owners or any other owners under any conditions has been transmitted to the Minister responsible. One would hope that he will concur with our wishes.

1755 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

This is a follow-up to a question which I asked in December last year. Could she tell me if we are going to get a police boat at Nhulunbuy, and when? Are we going to get one, will it be equipped for ocean-going or just bay work, and will the police be liaising with other areas such as Groote Eylandt and Elcho Island?

ANSWER

Perhaps the honourable member for Nhulunbuy could make representations to a certain company involved in this area. He could see the Cabinet Member for Resources regarding a certain boat in the harbour. On the subject of the provision of a boat for Nhulunbuy, I understand that it is planned to provide one this year; it depends on the estimates and the success in getting a certain amount of money for equipment of the Police Force.

1756 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

I redirect the question pertaining to sewerage farms in Alice Springs to the Cabinet Member for Resources. I think that the proposal is bogged down somewhere in the Health Department of the NT. I seek assurance from the Cabinet Member for Resources to get it pushed out the end of the line so that the water can possibly be utilised, rather than having the unnecessary expenditure of $105,000 of taxpayers' money.

ANSWER

My principal interest in this matter of course is that it is in my electorate and I have raised the matter in debates in this Assembly from time to time. All I can do in answer to the honourable member's question is to assure him that I will be doing everything to ensure that the matter is finalised, and finalised satisfactorily and quickly.

1757 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

Last year, when he was Executive Member for Social Affairs, I asked him a question several times regarding the Block 8 cafeteria. I have been asking the same question for 18 months now and now that he has taken over the resources portfolio, maybe he can give this House an undertaking that the Block 8 cafeteria will open very shortly?

ANSWER

I do not think that this is a matter which falls into my present portfolio. I am not sure where the matter stands at the moment, apart from the fact that the Block 8 cafeteria of course is not operating and is not open, and there is no sign of it opening. The honourable member would be perhaps better advised to make a direct approach to the department responsible to see if something can be got going.

1758 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Having in mind the fact that he bears some responsibility for both hous-

ing and representation on the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, can he advise this Assembly of the arrangements made for officers of the Reconstruction Commission who presently occupy Government housing and the DRC, presumably at the end of this year?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Minister for the Northern Territory will be making the announcement that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is to wind up on 31 December. The Minister is mindful of the emplomet and associated conditions of all employees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and is currently undertaking a series of arrangements to ensure that employment and other conditions are satisfactorily met.

1759 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

When is it expected that the permanent head of the Department of the Northern Territory will reside permanently in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

My understanding is that he spends approximately 50% of his time in Canberra and 50% of his time in Darwin. He has residences in both those centres and I suppose he could claim either address as far as the electoral roll or other identification of place of residence is concerned. I believe that it is not his intention to take up full time residence in the Northern Territory because of commitments in parliamentary and other duties to his Minister in Canberra. He expects to divide his time between those 2 centres.

1760 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Can he please advise how many loans in the Northern Territory have been approved over the last 5 years by the Home Finance Trustee for the $15,000 loan, and is there an estimate of how many loans there are likely to be approved in 1977?

ANSWER

A number of loans have been granted by the Home Finance Trustee over the last 5 years in response to applications received. In the last 5 calendar years: in 1972 73 loans were approved; 1973, 102; 1974, 106; 1975, 31; 1976, 194. On previous trends, and from the applications which are being submitted at the moment, it is estimated that 200 loans will be approved in 1977.

1761 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he give any indication of the outlook for the beef market in the Northern Territory in 1977?

ANSWER

The Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch have given me some advice on this matter. They tell me that the outlook for beef in 1977 according to the Australian Meat Board as at 4 February is that the world beef market has grown stronger than at any time since world prices commenced the downturn in late 1973. The major reasons for this assessment are briefly: the cattle price cycles in North America and Europe will level off and turn upward; the EEC will change its import control system from jumelage to one of variable levels and its officials are forecasting increased opportunities for importers in 1977; the economies of the United States of America, Canada and Japan are continuing their gradual recovery and there should be corresponding improvements in demands in these countries; the devaluation in November increased the ability of the Australian exporters to take advantage of the greater number of inquiries by prospective overseas buyers; and cattle populations in America and EEC have declined substantially and are continuing to do so. The American herd has dropped from 130m to 122m. The following represents the Board's current assessment of likely export levels and should not be interpreted as a precise forecast but indications are that the Australian beef and veal exports in 1,000 tonnes of boneless equivalent to United States of America in 1976, 268; 1977, 288; Canada 51, 23; Japan 71, 75; EEC 13, 20; USSR 14 to 70; Eastern European 15 to 50; other destinations 134 to 130; canned beef and veal 33 to 35; in total, an increase from 599,000 to 691,000 tonnes boneless equivalent.

Also this morning, a market note for livestock and meat published weekly by the Australian Meat Board gave a further indication of prospects of a greater flow of beef to Egypt. There are encouraging signs that there is an increasing amount of export markets for the Australian beef industry. I would be cautious in any forecast of any overnight outstanding increases. I think that the prospects are a bit brighter than they were in the last 12 months.

1762 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

How many residential lots of land are currently available in Darwin and what are the proportions of government and private ownership?

ANSWER

A survey has just been completed by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission which identifies that there are 11,097 residential sites in Darwin. Of these, 10,677 are for house lots and the remaining 420 are for sites containing flats. The statistics relating to flats, where there are 420 sites, indicate that the sites would accommodate approximately 3,000 housing units or flats.

1763 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

What construction standards will be observed with the work on Newcastle causeway?

ANSWER

The question asked by the honourable member for Stuart is as a result of a rumour which is persisting that the standards for the bridge works proposed at Newcastle Creek will not be sufficient to carry heavy transport. In fact, the standards of the bridge works there are in accordance with the National Highway Standard. The Stuart Highway is a national highway and the bridge work, I can assure members, will be of the highest standard possible. Maybe one of the reasons for the concern is that a couple of the bridges that were built under the first 3-year road program were not built to this particular standard and we do have some problems at the moment: the Taylor Creek bridge approaches were washed away last week. I would like to point out to honourable members that under the first 3-year road program, which has now been completed - we are now in the second 3-year program - the Stuart Highway was not designated a national highway and the bridges were built on 50-year flood levels. However, this does not apply to the present situation and any bridges now constructed on the Stuart and Barkly Highways will be to national highway standard and I think we will see a great improvement over the situation that exists at present. Finally, I am hopeful that the contracts for the upgrading and bridging of the Newcastle Creek will be let within the next week or so.

1764 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

What speech therapy is available for children in the education system in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I will endeavour to find out that information and reply to the honourable member later.

1765 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

My question concerns the proposed Dripstone High School. Since the exam results came out for matriculation last year, it may now be apparent that we should perhaps have more technical colleges and fewer high schools. When is it proposed to call tenders for the Dripstone High School?

ANSWER

An application has been forwarded to the Government to obtain approval to go to tender on the Dripstone High School in April of this year with the view to commencing construction in June of this year. At

this time, word has not been received from the Government. I will undertake to find out the latest information for the honourable member.

1766 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON

Why is no education officer available at the Darwin gaol?

ANSWER

Applications have been invited for the position of teacher in charge at the Darwin gaol. However, no suitable applications have been received by the department. The Department of Education is endeavouring to fill the position as soon as possible.

1767 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What is the current interest rate charged by the Home Finance Trustee for additional $15,000 loans and what are the total borrowings of the Home Finance Trustee for the additional home scheme and at what rate of interest has this money been secured and what additional monies will be required to fund the scheme at the end of 1977?

ANSWER

The Home Finance Trustee must ensure that his lending rate of interest is in line with his borrowing rate of interest. The trustee has been able to establish his new rate at 10% with a 1% reduction for payment on or before the due date making an effective 9% interest rate. The rate of 9% effective on loans approved by the Home Finance Trustee was established only after considering outstanding loans and estimated loans to June 1977 and future borrowings at 9.5%. It is not anticipated that a further review of interest rates will be undertaken before 30 June 1977.

With regard to the total borrowings of the scheme and at what rate of interest this had been secured, total borrowings at the last available date - several weeks ago - were of the order of $4.15m at an effective overall repayment interest rate by the Home Finance Trustee of 8.42%. Additional monies have been secured with regard to meeting the present commitments of the Home Finance Trustee. These additional monies were raised at 9.5% interest rate and this in turn raises the trustee's effective repayment rate to 8.58%. It is anticipated that a further $3m will be needed to finance the scheme in 1977-78 based on the applications and the indicated figures that I gave in answer to an earlier question. The borrowing of this additional $3m will raise the repayment interest rate to 8.93% if funds can be secured at 9.5%.

1768 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN

I asked him on Tuesday 21 December 1976 if the owner of lot B of section 290 Hundred of Bagot at Howard Springs intends to build an engineering workshop 150 feet long on the block mentioned. Could he please give me an answer on that question.

ANSWER

I am not too sure whether I asked him to put that question on notice. I do believe that I have seen an answer to that question from the department. I will check and advise him, but I feel sure that the question has been answered.

1769 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Has the $30,000 allocated in the last budget for a tourist development study yet been provided?

ANSWER

I presume that the money has been allocated because the study is under way.

1770 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Has the sale of the Alice Springs Abattoirs to Wales Meat Exporters had any effect on the supply of beef to the local domestic market in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I can give some advice in relation to that matter. First, I will answer some of the questions that the honourable member asked on the general subject yesterday. He asked whether it is a fact that the shares owned by shareholders to the Alice Springs Abattoirs have been purchased by Wales Meat Exporters. I am advised that the Alice Springs Abattoirs has been sold to Wales Meat Exporters. It is the intention of that company to convert the abattoirs to export standard and I am told that there is intense construction and renovation activity at the moment at the abattoirs to bring it up to export standard. It will be raised to the Department of Primary Industry standard which is based on American requirements for meat. I am told that the abattoirs at this stage considers it does have markets and, although I have not been advised officially, I am told that they are looking at the prospect of processing some 70,000 head per annum through the works. This would be a considerable number of cattle and perhaps more than what would be turned off in Central Australia itself.

He also asked whether provision was being made to accommodate the workforce. I am told that work has already started on staff quarters in the abattoirs area and one would imagine that the company would have other interests in town in securing accommodation through the normal channels.

In relation to the local market, these renovations have resulted in the abattoirs ceasing to kill and local domestic suppliers are restricted at the moment. This is causing some concern. The department is endeavouring to arrange a meeting of all the butchers concerned. It was unsuccessful on Friday and again on Monday but they are hopeful that a meeting can be arranged so that adequate arrangements can be made to maintain a supply of meat to the domestic market in the Territory. At the moment, quite a deal of meat is being imported to the Territory. This is causing concern because Territory officials are not satisfied with some of the inspection standards at the abattoirs at which this meat is being killed.

1771 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

The Cabinet Member replied to a question concerning the number of residential blocks currently available in Darwin. What is the proportion of government and private ownership? Is information available concerning the reconstruction status of housing units in Darwin and does this information give details of the number of sites on which no work has been done?

ANSWER

I apologise to the honourable member for not giving the full answer to the question and the information he sought. Of the 10,677 house lots in Darwin, 5,268 are owned by the private sector. The Government has 3,072, the Department of Defence 552, the Australian Broadcasting Commission and the Australian Railways have 85 and the Northern Territory Housing Commission, 1,700. The Government has 5 sites for flats and members will recognise that they are rather large and the Housing Commission has 7 whereas the private sector has 408. With regard to the reconstruction status, the survey that has just been completed by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission gives comprehensive details with regard to the number of houses that have been rebuilt or new homes that have been built, homes that are currently being rebuilt, homes on which temporary repairs have been carried out or perhaps the building was restored as it was precyclone. It also gives further information relating to sites where no work has been done or where perhaps the sites are just clear. In the private sector, there are 715 sites identified as having no work done and a further 474 that are clear sites. In the Government sector, there are 652 sites where either no work has been done or the sites are clear and available. Similarly, there are statistics availale for each of the other categories and I will be pleased to make these available to all honourable members.

1773 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise when the unsealed northern section of the street known as Norman Jones Street and in fact now renamed Price Street in Alice Springs is going to be sealed? If it is not to be sealed, what work will be carried out immediately?

ANSWER

This particular section of road is used by residents of Alice Springs to by-pass a section of the Stuart Highway. This section of the Stuart Highway will be under construction shortly and the honourable member for Stuart is concerned that the extra traffic on that particular section of gravel road will cause it to deteriorate. We have made approaches to the Department and asked for that particular section of road to be sealed. There are some difficulties, however, because the land on which the road is built belongs to the Railways and while the Railways are not particularly active in the Northern Territory there are still certain provisions which have to be looked at before another department can carry out roadworks on the Railway property. I am still liaising with the Department of the Northern Territory on the matter. They are going to do some gravelling of the road which will improve it slightly but, with the assistance of the honourable member for Stuart, I will continue to press for the road to be sealed even if this means the granting of a lease to the Department of the Northern Territory for the land on which the road is built. The amount of money involved is not significant and I feel sure that, providing we keep the nose to the grindstone, we will get a satisfactory result.

1774 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

Is it a fact that the 2 major airlines are proposing to charge the same air fares on the Sydney-Alice Springs-Sydney direct route as are now being charged for the circuitous route via Adelaide and Melbourne? If so, what is his attitude to such a fare structure, does he think it justified and, if not, what is he doing about it?

ANSWER

Last week I spent several days in Alice Springs and this particular matter was brought to my attention, that the pricing of the direct flight from Alice Springs to Sydney was going to be the same as the longer flight through Adelaide. As far as I am concerned, that is absolutely ridiculous, particularly from a tourism point of view. If we are going to attract people from Sydney, which is the place where most overseas tourists arrive in Australia, obviously we have got to be able to offer them a satisfactory rate on a flight. I took the matter up with the Minister for Transport in Hobart on Friday; he agreed with me that there should be some reduction in the cost and has asked me to remind him of the matter. I also on the way back happened to cross paths with the managing director of TAA, and I mentioned to him that we considered that it was ridiculous that they should charge the same price for a direct flight from Alice Springs to Sydney, that I had taken the matter up with the Minister for Transport, that he had agreed with me and that I would be making further application to the Minister to intervene. I also intend to contact the airlines and bring the matter up.

A similar situation existed I believe in the direct flight between Alice Springs and Cairns. I believe that the airlines made a single approach and, with a certain amount of pushing and shoving, they did reduce the fare to something which is now considered reasonable. I hope we can achieve the same result if we speak with the airlines on this particular flight.

1775 Mr KENTISH to Miss ANDREW

What action, if any, has been taken in respect to a number of my constituents at Galiwinku in Arnhem Land who threatened an aeroplane and a pilot with spears?

ANSWER

I do not have the information immediately available. I will obtain it for the honourable member before the end of this sittings.

1776 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

How did the Home Finance Trustee secure the finance for the additional home loan scheme, and what effect will the increase in the loan limit ceiling - to say $20,000 or $25,000 - have on the operation of the scheme?

ANSWER

Honourable members might be aware from the Home Loans Ordinance, that the Trustee may accept an advance made to him by a bank or a body corporate, an institution or person approved by the Minister. The Home Finance Trustee competes with other building societies in the money market to secure finance for the scheme's continuance. However, if funds cannot be secured from private lending institutions, he does have recourse, as a last resort, to Treasury for loans at the going rate of interest at the banks to building societies. No funds are appropriated to the Home Finance Trustee under the Appropriation Bill for this scheme. In the past, the trustee has been able to ask the Treasury to seek Loan Council approval on his behalf for his borrowers. However, in 1977-78, he must present a borrowing program to the Loan Council. This is because it is estimated that $3m - that is,

200 loans at $15,000 each - will be required. Constraint on the amount of borrowing the trustee will be able to undertake in 1977-78, will be subject to Loan Council approval to his program, the availability of funds for the loan market, the amount of funds Treasury are willing to advance him, and the going rate of the banks' interest to building societies.

In consequence of an increase in the loan limit from $15,000 to $20,000 or $25,000, as has recently been called for - and, I might mention, endorsed by the Majority Party as a necessary policy initiative - it would have to be borne in mind that it would be necessary for the trustee to make a bid for further funds from those already estimated for; that is, the $3m in the coming financial year. At the present rate of interest charged by banks to building societies of 9.5%, further borrowings by the Home Finance Trustee in 1977-78 beyond his estimate may result in a further increase in the interest rate on his lendings.

1777 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

With the proposed opening of Casuarina Hospital, is it intended that that hospital will be a training hospital for nurses and will Darwin Hospital continue to be such a hospital?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the Casuarina Hospital will become a training hospital, and not just for nurses aides but for the complete nursing course. As to whether similar functions will continue at the present Darwin Hospital, I will ascertain that information and reply at a later date.

1778 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

I refer to the answer to the question before last from the honourable member for Stuart. I take on board the remarks he made to that question about the washing away of the approaches to the Taylor Creek Bridge but I would like to ask the honourable member if there is any truth in the rumour that the bridge itself has shifted in its foundations since the most recent floods?

ANSWER

This matter was raised in Alice Springs. I was there the day that the washout occurred, and I heard secondhand that a police sergeant had spoken to somebody who in turn spoke to me. The story was that the approaches to the bridge had washed away and that the bridge proper had moved. It seemed unlikely to me, but anything is possible, so I rang the Department of Construction in Darwin and spoke to one of the engineers. I was unable to get onto the person that I had asked for but the engineer that I spoke to was aware of the problem. They were still awaiting full reports from the area. When I said that the approaches were washed away, he said, "That's right, they have been washed away approximately 100 metres from the end of the bridge and about 1 metre deep". This was a bit unfortunate because they had been about to let a contract for the strengthening of the approaches. May be somebody would like to ask me why the approaches were not made strong in the first place and I might guess at an answer. When I mentioned the fact that the bridge had moved, he thought that it would be extremely unlikely and suggested that that particular bridge is built on a corner it would have a certain amount of camber. I have

not spoken to anybody since then to confirm or deny whether he was right or not, but he did suggest that the bridge would be built on an angle if it was built on a corner and, with the approaches washed away, to anybody standing back having a look it would appear that the bridge had tilted to one side. I have not confirmed this suggestion, I may do so to try to clarify the situation.

1779 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Will he take the necessary steps to have the building covenants on residential blocks extended from 1 year to 2 years?

ANSWER

It is the policy of the Majority Party to have the times for complying with covenants on residential blocks extended to requiring commencement within 2 years and completion of the dwelling within a further 2 years after the sale of blocks by the Government. I will be approaching the Federal Government in the near future in regard to this matter to see if we can have this policy implemented.

1780 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH

Could he tell me if there is a shortage of anaesthetists in the Territory? If there is, can he tell us what the intention of the Health Department is to bring into the Territory more people qualified in this work?

ANSWER

Yes, there has been and it appears there will always be a shortage of such professionals as anaesthetists, orthodontists, dentists, paediatricians and other people who work in very specialised fields. The Department of Health accepts this as a fact of life and has a continuing program of recruitment going on but it rarely sees the occasion that meets the demand.

1781 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Honourable members may have heard this morning a news report to the effect that the Fourth Division Officers' Association has voted to continue its bans on overtime and the like which have been affecting life in Darwin recently. Are the continuation of these bans likely to lead to any further power cuts being imposed on the citizenry of Darwin and, if so, what recommendation, if any, has the honourable Cabinet Member to offer to the Minister for the Northern Territory, or other responsible authority, to see that this intolerable situation will not continue?

ANSWER

If there are people who can come up with the answer how to stop intolerable situations continuing, I am sure they are going to be very welcome in this country. However, being more specific in regard to the question, I understand that there are members of the Fourth Division Officer's Association in the powerhouse itself and I will undertake to find out whether, if they went on an overtime ban, they are in a position to restrict the power supply to Darwin. I will advise the honourable member on the next sitting day.

1782 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

On December 8 last year, I asked the then Executive Member for Law whether she was aware that the Police Commissioner had apparently issued instructions to his officers that they were under no circumstances to discuss police problems or personal problems concerning their homes etc with members of this Assembly. The Executive Member replied that she was not aware that this instruction had been issued and therefore could not give any reason. Is she now aware of any such instruction and, if so, will she table a copy of it in this Assembly?

ANSWER

No such instruction as such has been given. The Commissioner did issue a communiqué, number 2 of 1977, and I will read it to you. It is regarding communications with members of the Legislative Assembly. "In order that the best possible information may be supplied to the Executive Member for Law and other politicians, it is essential that the answers to questions asked by those persons be supplied through headquarters. Members are directed that they are not to provide any information under such circumstances except as outlined. Any member approached is to note the question respectfully and formally reply that the answer will be supplied from headquarters. Reports setting out details of the request and all relevant information are to be immediately forwarded through the usual channels to the Commissioner of Police for a reply."

This is in line with the policy of other government departments where the director or permanent head usually signs the information that is supplied to any elected member or anyone else for that matter. It is an administrative matter so that the person who is responsible can keep his finger on the pulse of his department or organisation. The Commissioner did not intend in any way to deprive the police from raising their personal problems with members. There seems to have been some misunderstanding amongst some police officers, especially in the southern region, and the Commissioner will issue a further communiqué pointing out that this relates only to matters concerning the police force and the work the police do.

1783 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When will the No. 5 generator at the power station be in service?

ANSWER

The infamous No. 5 generator at Stokes Hill power station is expected to be brought back on line in about the middle of March.

1784 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is he aware that the Nightcliff Dental Clinic is offering to students of primary schools in the area a dental therapy service but the department is refusing to supply any means of transport? If he is aware of this, would he take all steps to correct it?

ANSWER

I am not aware of this problem. I am aware that no such ferry service is available to the other communities of the Territory but I will endeavour to follow it up with the Director of Health and see whether it can be resolved.

1785 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON

Is it a fact that there is no uniformity of curriculum amongst senior and junior schools in the Northern Territory and, if so, why not? Can he advise me if the Northern Territory Director of Education has control over the curriculum standards of these schools?

ANSWER

I believe that I should seek detailed information from the Department of Education and present it in this House at a later date.

1786 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Is this year's allocation to the Northern Territory of export tonnage of beef to United States markets more or less than last year? With the purchase of the Alice Springs Abattoir, will any export contract that that abattoir gains in the near future with the United States affect present allocations of tonnages to existing Top End abattoirs?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question because I do not have the figures with me. One would hope that the allocation of any additional quota to the proposed Alice Springs export abattoir would not affect the existing operators in the Territory. I will endeavour to find more information and provide it to the member during this session.

1787 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Will he examine the archaic covenants attached to the many rural holdings in the Northern Territory with a view to initiating replacement of the present land title restrictions with incentive covenants for investment and improved production efficiency?

ANSWER

Yes.

1788 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Will future Housing Commission policy include the construction and sale of units by use of strata title?

ANSWER

There is no present intention of the Northern Territory Housing Commission to be involved in strata titles.

1789 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Is it a fact that the homes sales scheme for Commonwealth public servants will not be reintroduced until the final form of the proposed single housing authority is known?

ANSWER

I indicated clearly yesterday that the Minister for the Northern Territory in determining the terms and conditions for the sale of government homes was of the opinion that it should be reintroduced on lines similar to those proposed by the Majority Party in its reintroduction

of a Housing Commission home sales scheme. I believe that there is no constraint for the government to wait until such time as there is a single housing authority.

1790 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr RYAN

Has the finishing and sealing of Whitewood Road and the stabilising or sealing of Hillier Road, which is the bus circuit to the new school, been placed on the estimates for 1977-78?

ANSWER

I do not have that information available. I will get it and advise the honourable member for Tiwi later on in these sittings.

1791 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN

Can he confirm that there was a fire at Fire Brigade Headquarters this morning?

ANSWER

I cannot confirm whether there was a fire at Fire Brigade Headquarters. I will endeavour to find out if in fact it took place. If there was a fire at Fire Brigade Headquarters, I am quite sure that the Fire Brigade of the Northern Territory would have handled the situation admirably.

1792 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN

Would he investigate the possibility of installing traffic lights to function during peak hours at the Berrimah crossroads or stationing a traffic policeman there at peak hours?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any plans to put traffic lights at the Berrimah crossing, nor am I aware of any intentions to put a traffic policeman out there. However, I will make some inquiries and find out what the intentions are. I realise that there are some problems out there during peak traffic times and I will try to establish what the plans are for that crossing.

1793 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

When will the reconstruction of Trower Road between "Crystal Corner" and Rapid Creek Road commence?

ANSWER

The reconstruction of that section of road is under the control of the municipal council.

Mrs Lawrie: Are you sure?

Mr RYAN: Yes, I am sure that the repairs and upgrading of that section of road are to be undertaken by the council. I do not know whether the honourable Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Government could add anything to that. I believe it was originally on this year's program but I have an idea that it may have been postponed until next year. I will try to confirm that later on.

1794 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

We are aware that the DRC is to cease operation in December 1977. What is to be the fate of the Citizens' Advisory Council?

ANSWER

I would hope that the fate of the Darwin Citizens' Council will be the same as the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and it will fade out on the same date.

1795 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Is funding to be made available to shift the speedway to another location to allow the release of that land for other purposes?

ANSWER

The issue of relocation of the speedway is a complicated matter because the current Speedway Association only has permissive occupancy of an area that is a city corporation reserve. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission, as part of its planning proposal, has been trying to locate a suitable alternative site for the relocation of the speedway. Several have been looked at in detail, including sites behind Coonawarra and sites at the far end of the airport adjacent to McMillans Road in the Berriman area. I am not aware that the final stages of any agreement have been reached and I am aware that the Minister will also have to be involved with regard to the allocation of any funds for the acquisition of the considerable capital improvements that have been made by the Speedway Association on the present site.

1796 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN

I draw his attention to the state of the road between Wave Hill and the Hooker Creek settlement. Could he see that the road is immediately graded so that development materials can get in and cattle from the pastoral projects get out?

ANSWER

I will contact the Department of the Northern Territory which has the responsibility for looking after these roads and see if something can be done.

1797 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is the Registrar of Motor Vehicles continuing his investigation into alternative coloured number plates for use in the Northern Territory? Is there any comment that the honourable Cabinet Member can give to this House at this stage?

ANSWER

The Registrar is not conducting any further investigations into the matter. Last year they did fit number plates of various colours to vehicles in Darwin to test their durability. The next step will be, I would assume, for the Majority Party to examine the various colours that have been suggested and come up with a proposed new colour for Northern Territory number plates. I anticipate that I will be bringing it before Cabinet some time this year.

1798 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

This question is asked on behalf of the member for Elsey. Can the Cabinet Member advise if Northern Territory abattoirs will this year announce a predetermined price for cattle so that producers can arrange cattle musters and transportation well in advance of the cattle season, and will he seek this cooperation from the abattoirs? Is it also a fact that Northern Territory abattoirs sell on a forward market?

ANSWER

I do not know what the abattoirs are going to do this season in relation to their pricing structure or how they are going to go about it. I will certainly take the matter up with them. As far as selling on a forward market, we have heard it said that the Alice Springs Export Abattoir has not got any markets yet, so I do not know how they are going to set a price. It is principally a commercial decision for them as to whether they set their prices in advance or whether they set the price as the season goes on. No doubt if they set a certain price and the market took a sharp upturn, the cattle producers would want to see the prices rise, so it is a dog-chasing-its-tail situation. I will take the matter up with the abattoirs and see if some advice can be given to producers.

1799 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Will he summarise the results of the 1976 disease eradication program in the beef industry and say whether the results were up to expectation?

ANSWER

I did have some advice of this question, but unfortunately all the information to adequately answer the question is not available from the department as yet. I will provide a full answer to the honourable member on the next sitting day.

1800 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

Is it the intention to introduce legislation to control the pest control industry, which is flourishing in Darwin, to control the use of pesticides and provide minimum standards of safety for people operating in that industry?

ANSWER

Legislation of the type mentioned by the honourable member for Nightcliff is on our legislative program. It has been cleared as legislation necessary to be introduced, along with something like 90 other items. It has been necessary, because of the volume of legislation that needs attention, to give these various priorities and I am not quite certain where this particular piece stands on that priority list. As always, we are very much hampered by drafting facilities and when the Premier of Western Australia contacted me some weeks ago, before the election, and offered resources, I did give him some indication that an area in which we would probably appreciate some help would be parliamentary and legislative drafting. I hope to be able to follow that matter up with him now that the results of the election are known. Subject to drafting constraints, we would hope to make some progress with such legislation this year.

1801 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

I have asked this same question for about 5 years now. Is it the intention to introduce controls on the use of antibiotics in stock feeds in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I believe that some legislation in respect of quality of stock feeds is also on the list, but I do not think it has a very high priority and it is unlikely, with the drafting bottlenecks that exist, that it would be introduced this year.

1802 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH

Will the inaugural meeting of the Northern Territory Consultative Committee on Social Welfare take place today?

ANSWER

Senator Guilfoyle, Chairman of the Northern Territory Consultative Committee on Social Welfare, has already convened the meeting in Block 8. It started at 10 o'clock and it will continue throughout the day. I do not have any advice on the items on the agenda that will be discussed at the meeting.

1803 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked me what speech therapy is available for children in the education system in the Northern Territory. The Department of Health has recently acquired the services of 2 speech therapists who will be available for consultation by children in the Northern Territory. Further, the Department of Education is in the process of advertising 3 further vacancies for speech therapists.

1804 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Jingili asked me a question relating to the continuing overtime bans by the Fourth Division Officers' Association and I undertook to find out if this would affect power supplies in Darwin. I am advised that, although there are a considerable number of members of the Fourth Division Officers' Association on the turbine floor at the powerhouse, the overtime bans were not extended to the powerhouse. As a result, we do not expect any power disruptions from that quarter.

1805 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The honourable member for Arnhem asked me what action had taken place following the threatening of an aircraft and pilot with spears at Galiwinku. In fact, I am advised that the constituents at Galiwinku did not have any spears. There are no police charges proposed against the persons involved in this incident because police inquiries do not show that any weapon was used. I understand that what is described as a strong verbal protest was made to the pilot by an Elcho Islander that charter aircraft operators should not be allowed to bring liquor onto the island.

1806 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked about the terms and conditions under which the police in urban areas are armed. I would advise that the police draw firearms at the discretion and direction of the officer in charge of the station to which they are attached - that is, the officer in charge of the station and not the officer in charge of the shift. During day and evening shifts firearms are to be concealed when carried. Concealment of firearms does not apply to members whilst on money escort duty.

1807 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Miss ANDREW: For the further information of the member for Nhulunbuy, the boat that is hoped to be ordered, providing sufficient funds are available, is a sixteen foot dinghy with a 35 horsepower motor and trailer.

1808 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: The member for Arnhem asked whether there was any explanation as to why persons brought into hospital at Health Department expense from remote areas were repatriated in different ways, some at their own expense and some at the expense of the Commonwealth. I have been advised by the Department of Health that the evacuation of a patient is at public expense but the entitlement to repatriation is based on the means test. If the former patient's income is below a certain figure, the person is repatriated at public expense. Other persons pay their own fares.

1809 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked: "With the proposed opening of the Casuarina Hospital is it intended that that hospital will be a training centre for nurses, and will Darwin Hospital continue to be such a hospital?". I indicated that it was my understanding that Casuarina would become a training hospital for nurses. I have received further information to suggest that the Darwin Hospital training facilities should be used for training Aboriginal Health workers. However, no firm decision has been made on this aspect.

Mrs Lawrie: What about Casuarina, will it be a training hospital?

Mr TUXWORTH: Yes.

1811 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can you give a firm date as to the introduction of the sale of government homes in the Darwin area and advise of the terms and conditions of that scheme?

ANSWER

The policy with regard to the reintroduction of a sale of government homes in the Darwin area rests entirely with the Minister for the Northern Territory. In answer to a similar question last week, I did indicate that the Minister was keen to reintroduce the scheme as quickly as possible on terms and conditions broadly similar to those currently before this House in the sale of homes to Housing Commission tenants.

1812 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Does the Government intend to satisfy local needs for housing before disposing of the remaining Tindal homes?

ANSWER

The situation with regard to Katherine housing is that the Department of the Northern Territory is responsible for the construction and management of homes for government servants in Katherine and the Northern Territory Housing Commission looks after the general community. Both the department and the Housing Commission regularly survey the needs and are aware of the housing requirements of that community. The remnant of houses at Tindal which was formerly a RAAF base are the property of the Department of Administrative Services. That department is seeking to sell and dispose of the old housing at Tindal.

1813 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Is it a fact that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has agreed to a marina proposal and, if so, what is the location and who are the owners of the land?

ANSWER

There has been considerable press coverage to date with regard to certain town planning proposals considered at a meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission some months ago. A particular developer sought endorsement for the site which would be best described as the northern end of Mindil Beach, the area adjacent to Darwin High School. The commission and the Town Planning Board have agreed in principle that the site would be suitable. However, the owners of the land are the Department of Education, which owns the areas that approach the cliffs on the Darwin High School side, and the Corporation of the City of Darwin which has a reserve over part of the flat land at the base. There has been considerable liaison between the corporation and the planning authority to look more carefully at the issue and to continue the arrangements to facilitate the development of a marina in that area.

1814 Mr STEELE to Mr PERRON

If it is a fact that the marina proposal will take in high school land, would he have this matter looked at very closely on the basis that there is not enough land available for those facilities there and make

sure that the interests of the school are safeguarded?

ANSWER

I will keep a particular eye on the application to take land from an educational facility in the Northern Territory for other use and try to ensure that the educational use is protected.

1815 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

I ask a question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Has he sought advice as to whether the administration of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 and the proposed supporting legislation constitute a breach of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975? If he has sought such advice, what were the terms of that advice?

ANSWER

I have not sought advice myself. I have brought the matter to the attention of both the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister for the Northern Territory and informed them of the comments made by the member for Port Darwin in the second reading debate on the complementary legislation in the earlier sittings of this Assembly. I believe that further advice from the Attorney-General's Department will be sought by both those ministers and that the Minister for the Northern Territory will advise me of the outcome.

1816 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH

Advertisements have appeared in newspapers recently calling for organisations concerned with the advancement of cultural, sporting and recreational facilities in the Northern Territory to apply for grants under the community grant scheme. As it has been the practice to make grants to organisations involved in social service type activities, has there been a change of policy in that direction?

ANSWER

The omission in the advertisement of any reference to organisations that perform social functions in the community has been brought to my attention from many quarters of the Northern Territory. I would like to say, without any reservation at all, that there has been no change in policy. It is the wish of the Majority Party to assist any organisation which contributes in any way at all. The last thing that this party would like to see is any erosion of the existing contribution that these organisations get.

1817 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

We are all aware that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is closing down its operations in the Territory and I believe some technical and advisory staff have been given notice and are leaving. In view of this, is the public relations department of the DRC to be the last part of that organisation disbanded and will it remain on the payroll until the bitter end?

ANSWER

I am aware, as is the honourable member, that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission is to terminate its activities on 31 December. With regard to the administrative arrangements that must be made to ensure a sat-

isfactory transition to other departments and to the community generally, it will be important that most government departments have a direct liaison with regard to the technical and other fields. I have not seen any details as to how the administrative arrangements will be made. I would hope that some of the public relations staff, at least, will remain until the bitter end, whether or not it would be the full department I do not know but I will certainly seek further information for the honourable member.

1818 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN

Does the operation of the Tender Board include obtaining a full financial appraisal of those companies and persons applying for a tender? Does the Tender Board require from tendering companies a list of the details of company directors? Is the Tender Board a fixed group of people and what are the qualifications of the board members? Is it a fact that a company owned approximately 75% by the Government recently lost a government contract?

ANSWER

I do not have an answer to the first 3 parts of the question. To the last part, I do have an answer which is yes. A company which is 75% owned by the Government did lose a contract recently. I will get answers to the other parts of the question and advise the honourable member later this sittings.

1819 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

I refer to an announcement that agreement has been reached between the Commonwealth and the states on the preparation of a Federal Companies Act applying throughout the Commonwealth of Australia to be administered by a joint administration on which the Commonwealth and the states would be represented. I ask whether he or any other member of his administration has been consulted on this matter or in the matter of Territory participation in the joint administration of the new federal act. If the answer is no, will he press strongly a claim that the Territory should be accorded full participation upon the same basis as the states?

ANSWER

No approach has been made to me in this matter and I believe that no approach has been made to the Cabinet Member with responsibilities in the field of law. I think the answer is probably no, and that being so I will follow up the claims of the Northern Territory along the lines suggested by the honourable member for Port Darwin. To get confirmation of the situation I suggest that the first part of the question at least might be redirected to the Cabinet Member for Law.

1820 Mr WITHNALL to Miss ANDREW

I redirect the first part of the question to the Cabinet Member for Law.

ANSWER

The answer is no. This matter was brought to my attention after a visit by myself, the Majority Leader and the Deputy Majority Leader last week. I have had discussions with the Minister, Mr Howard, and there

was a meeting on 11 March to which the Territory was not invited. I asked why. They said that the ACT was not invited either so I pointed out that there was a grave difference between the state of constitutional development in the 2 territories. I understand that Mr Howard will contact me this afternoon to discuss the matter.

1821 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH

When will the rebuilding of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory commence and on what site will it be relocated? Is he aware that the statutory body has stored most of its very valuable artifact collections since the cyclone? In fact, the only exhibits that I know of are the art works.

ANSWER

I am aware of the difficulty that the Museums Board is having in storing its artifacts and other items of interest. In answer to the first part of the question, the rebuilding of a museum in this city has not been one of the first priorities of the DRC and understandably so. At the moment, it has been held up by the allocation of land. In a recent communication I had with the Chairman of the DRC concerning the allocation of land so that budget provisions could be made for a museum in future, he advised me that the matter is being looked at, as it has been for the past 2 years.

1822 Mr KENTISH to Mr TUXWORTH

Has he any knowledge of a move to revive the annual Darwin Eisteddfod and has there been any support from the DRC in that direction?

ANSWER

The answer to both questions is no. I have no knowledge in either instance.

1823 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Will the report compiled by the Bureau of Transport Economics on the Northern Territory freight and transport problems be made available to the public?

ANSWER

When I attended the ATAC conference in Hobart several weeks ago, I did ask the Transport Minister about the current situation regarding that report. I have followed it up with a telegram this morning asking him if he could advise me when he expects the report to be tabled in the Federal Parliament.

1824 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

In view of the apparent desire of the honourable member for Nightcliff has displayed in her earlier question to boost unemployment in Darwin by dismissing the entire public relations staff of the DRC and the apparent desire of the honourable member for Arnhem to have the members of the DRC sing for their supper, I ask whether there are any plans in hand for the absorption amongst existing departments of members of the DRC staff?

ANSWER

A number of the staff of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission are Australian public servants and have been either seconded or appointed to positions within the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. They will naturally have the right to transfer back into the Australian Public Service. With regard to people who were employed from outside the public service, I am aware that the Minister for the Northern Territory has instructed that the full employment implications of all people employed should be carefully looked at and, wherever possible, they should be appointed to positions that may be available in various departments. The Northern Territory Public Service would also be keen to look at the particular abilities and availabilities of certain staff of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission.

1825 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What is the position regarding an amendment to the Local Government Ordinance to ensure that bylaws made by the council are valid and enforceable?

ANSWER

Discussions have taken place between officers of the Finance and Local Government Department and the Corporation of the City of Darwin and tentative drafts have been prepared for examination by both the Darwin and Alice Springs Corporations. If the drafts are accepted by the corporations and the Northern Territory Cabinet, they will be processed and amendments introduced into this Assembly.

1826 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

Has a tender been let for road work from Larapinta Drive between Alice Springs and Jay Creek? If so, what is the nature of the work, who is the successful tenderer and what is the cost of that work? Has any decision been made on upgrading the Standley Chasm Road between Jay Creek and Standley Chasm?

ANSWER

A tender has been let for the roadworks on Larapinta Drive between Alice Springs and Jay Creek. Concerning the second part of the question, I have been informed that a press release has gone to the federal member for his information and to pass on to the press. I was unable to get that information and it cannot be release to anyone else; he has been designated to make the release. The upgrading of the particular section between Jay Creek turnoff to the major creek crossing about a kilometre from the chasm itself is on next year's draft program.

1827 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TUXWORTH

Is he aware that the double-storey flats in Mitchell Street, previously occupied by the Fire Brigade, are now occupied by some 50 people who have no authority to be there? Is he aware that there is no water connected to the premises and these people are defecating in the yard of the premises? Is he aware also that the Department of Health has steadfastly refused to do anything about it, that the police have refused to do anything about it and that every person in the administration of the Northern Territory who has been approached has refused to admit that it is his responsibility? Since it clearly is the honour-

able member's responsibility, what is he going to do about it?

ANSWER

The first thing that comes to mind would be to collect some rent. I am not aware of any of the claims made by the honourable member. I will look at the problem and report back again in this sitting as to what action should be taken and can be taken.

1828 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Can he advise if a beef carcase classification chain is to be installed in the upgrading of the Alice Springs abattoir?

ANSWER

A beef carcase classification chain which is proposed to be experimented with at other abattoirs throughout Australia will not be installed at the Alice Springs abattoirs during the upgrading project. This is perhaps unfortunate in some respects. I have spoken to the Department of Primary Industry and they advise that some 16 chains are to be installed on an experimental basis at abattoirs throughout Australia, in all the mainland states but none in the Northern Territory or Tasmania. Originally, there were to be 16 to be installed costing some $25,000 each; however, with devaluation, the funds will only now allow the purchase of 13 so the chances of getting one are remote. In fact, the department advises that it will not be possible and therefore a chain will not be installed at Alice Springs.

1829 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

I understand that the preliminary report of the Electricity Commission of Inquiry has been delivered to the Minister for the Northern Territory and I was wondering whether the honourable Cabinet Member would find it possible to table a copy of that report in this House at his earliest convenience?

ANSWER

The minister concerned is actually the Minister for Construction. I have been in touch with the Minister's office since he has received the report and have asked if he would be able to let me have a copy of the interim report for tabling in this House. He has advised that, as this report is not the final report and as the committee has still to complete its investigations, in order that the committee's further investigations will not be prejudiced, the Minister had decided not to make this interim report public. The committee members will be returning to Darwin during April and the Minister expects to receive the final report by the end of May. That report will be made public.

1830 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

When is it expected, if at all, that uniformed police will again be identified either by number or by name?

ANSWER

The manner is under review.

1831 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Has the Cabinet Member, following representations made earlier to the Federal Minister for Transport, received any advice from that Federal Minister as to the restructuring of fare costs between Alice Springs and Sydney?

ANSWER

I have not received any further notification from the Minister for Transport. I have, however, spoken to senior employees of one of the airlines and explained the problem to them. The initial reaction was that they would do something about it and I intend to follow that up and ensure that they do in fact have a look at thefare structure between Alice Springs and Sydney. I took the trouble to measure the distances and work out the approximate mileage, and there is a difference of approximately 300 kilometres going through Adelaide to Sydney rather than direct from Alice Springs to Sydney, so there is a fairly significant distance plus the inconvenience of having to land and take off one extra time. I hope that the companies concerned will take the necessary action. I intend to follow it up to see that they do.

1832 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

What action has the Department of Construction taken over the past 2 years to complete the Dowsett houses at Papunya and Areyonga? When will work be effected to complete construction?

ANSWER

I have been in touch with the Department of Construction. Unfortunately, they were unable to give me the answer before the Assembly sat this morning but I hope that I will have it after lunch.

1833 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise this Assembly the outcome of a conference held in Adelaide last week concerning the need to upgrade the Stuart Highway to South Australia?

ANSWER

The conference held in Adelaide on Saturday was reasonably successful. There was quite a large roll-up of people who were interested. There were the members of the Chamber of Commerce including the president and vice-president from Alice Springs, the federal members, Mr Calder and Senator Kilgariff. There were also representatives from industry and the pastoral industry in South Australia as well as opposition members of the South Australian Parliament, The question of the road into the Northern Territory was discussed at some length and something which I think in the Northern Territory we have been aware of for some time was confirmed, that the road is a very important link to the Territory. I think South Australians are at last coming to realise that the road link is an important link to them, particularly to their industry. I think they realise now that because of the sealing of the road from Queensland and the subsequent use of that road by a large number of truck operators their business with the Northern Territory has been reduced.

The day before the meeting, I went to see the Minister for Transport in South Australia to ask him what the current situation is regarding any future work on the highway. I may have mentioned at the last sittings that, with the road funds as they are this year, most states are extremely unhappy with the amount of money being given for the upgrading of roads in Australia, and South Australia was amongst them. The Minister informed me that, in view of the fact that they have had insufficient funds granted to them this year, there is a very strong possibility that they will reduce the amount of work that they were going to do next year, which was to seal a section of road between Port Augusta and Pimba. It is quite likely, according to the Minister, that this will even be taken off the program in South Australia next year, which means that the Stuart Highway is going backwards instead of forwards. That is one of the reasons I proposed that motion to be debated tomorrow. I am hoping that South Australia will also keep the pressure on. The purpose of this meeting also was to ensure that the federal members interested will also, in the form of submissions which have been asked for from all people interested, be putting the pressure on the Federal Government to make funds available.

1834 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Has he had any indication from the Federal Minister responsible for the Australian Boradcasting Commission or Telecom about the connection of Alice Springs with the microwave link? When can Alice Springs expect to be connected with that link and receive and enjoy current television programs as enjoyed by other states?

ANSWER

I do not have any information as to when that is likely to happen but I will attempt to find out and advise the honourable member for Alice Springs later in the sittings.

1835 (Number not used)

1836 Mr STEELE to Mr PERRON

Are new primary schools for Darwin being designed for the 3-tier school system?

ANSWER

The answer to that question is no. Preliminary investigations in Darwin are now being conducted in all sections of the community to determine whether or not such an arrangement as the 3-tier school system best suits Darwin's needs.

1837 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

Recently, Canada, the United States, Russia and, to a lesser extent, Japan, unilaterally declared 200 mile prohibited fishing zones off their coasts. Now that countries such as Japan, Korea and Formosa have been chased out of coastal waters off Russia, Alaska, Canada and the United States will the Federal Government take any action to counter what will obviously become a massive move by all those fishing countries to fish in waters off the Australian coast and seriously deplete our fisheries reserves?

ANSWER

The matter of the 200-mile limit has been of some contention throughout the world for some time, My understanding is that the Commonwealth Government's attitude has been not to take unilateral action but rather to get a consensus and to act in concert with an internationally defined agreement. We have been waiting and no action internationally has been agreed upon. I understand that the countries of the South Pacific region had a conference in Suva last year and resolved that if the forthcoming Law of the Sea Convention did not make a decision on the matter, then all countries in the South Pacific region would act in concert to implement the 200-mile sea limit. This is the situation at the moment, If the next conference on the law of the sea does not agree on the matter, then the countries of the South Pacific will act in concert and implement the 200-mile limit.

1838 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

What facilities will there be available at the Casuarina Hospital for the training of nurses?

ANSWER

I have had further advice from the Department of Health concerning training schemes for nurses. It is intended that a school of general nursing and a school of midwifery nursing will be established at the Casuarina Hospital. Students from the school of general nursing will spend time in both Casuarina and Darwin Hospitals whilst gaining clinical experience. I have also another comment to make about the possible use of the Alice Springs Hospital as a training centre: the department is still of the opinion that it will remain as a major school for training nursing aides, in the future.

1839 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is he aware of hardship being caused to residents in the Victoria River district by the failure of the Government to provide reasonable access over the King River on the Victoria Highway?

ANSWER

I am aware of the problems that exist on the Victoria Highway with regard to the King River bridge. I believe that the King River bridge is not on the program for upgrading and I have found out that, while the Victoria Highway is being designated a national highway, there is some proposed corridor study to establish where the road is going to run as a national highway. This is news to me and if it is in fact true it would appear that we have once again seen the abuse of a corridor study being thrown up which as far as I am concerned only holds up the upgrading of any highway. In fact, I think that might be a problem we will strike with the Barkly Highway. So things do not look all that good out on the Victoria Highway. But we will keep pressing and hope that we will get something done to upgrade the bridge as well as many of the other trouble spots which occur in the Northern Territory road system.

1840 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

Is the honourable member aware of the proposal to rezone lot 4589 Freshwater Road, Jingili? This is presently held under an agricultural lease and to what use does the applicant for rezoning intend to put the land? Are there any objections to the proposal and, if so, how many?

ANSWER

I am aware of an application by a proposed developer of the site in Freshwater Road. I believe the applicant is a sporting association which would like to use the lease for both recreational and clubhouse facilities. It has been advertised and objections have been invited. I have not yet seen any resubmission of the proposal with any objections.

1841 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Is he aware that Lands Branch is sending out letters to holders of Darwin town leases who have residential leases and who presently have caravans on those blocks advising them that the leases will be forfeited unless they move the caravans within 28 days? I am seeking to know whether there was any liaison between Lands Branch and the DRC before this action was taken.

ANSWER

I am aware that there has been consultation with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the Corporation of the City of Darwin with regard to a number of very unsatisfactory caravan tenancies, if I can call them that, on residential allotments in Darwin and that the matter is currently under review. I am not surprised that the Lands Branch may have taken action where these unsatisfactory situations have been highlighted. I would be keen to learn of any situations where the honourable member may believe that the Lands Branch has acted generally rather than looking at specific cases.

1842 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

This question is asked on behalf of the honourable member for Barkly. Can he advise what the position is regarding the removal of kerbside petrol pumps in Tennant Creek?

ANSWER

For some time the petrol bowsers in Tennant Creek, where there are a number of them still on footpaths, has been a very lively topic in that community. The Town Management Board and the Department of the Northern Territory were actively involved in it. My department has been looking very carefully at this over the last couple of months and we have now reached an agreement with the Department of the Northern Territory that any action will be deferred until an auction for a future service station site has taken place. In addition, an extension to the existing service station site will be permitted to allow rebuilding and installation of the pumps in an acceptable location.

1843 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

Have tenders yet been called for the construction of the bridge over the Todd River in Alice Springs and, if so, when do tenders close?

When is it expected that work will commence on the contract and does he have any idea of the completion date of that bridge?

ANSWER

I ask him to place that question on notice.

1844 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

My question is of particular relevance because late last year we saw the passage of the Counter Disaster Ordinance. Is the honourable Cabinet Member aware of the stress that was caused to residents of low lying property along Rapid Creek last night by flooding, and the further distress which may be expected later today when the tide comes in? If so, what steps have been taken to alleviate this distress? Are accommodation centres being made ready if these are to be needed and are sandbags to be placed in position to attempt to mitigate damage to the houses?

ANSWER

Yes, I am aware of the flooding danger at Rapid Creek. The Director of Emergency Services and members of his department and representatives of the Police Force are currently out in the area conducting a survey as to what is best to do. I will report to the House the results of that survey later in the day.

1845 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

A report relating to the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund was tabled in the Federal House last month. Why has that report not been tabled in this House?

ANSWER

I believe the report referred to by the honourable member was a routine monthly report or several of them that were tabled in the Federal House. I will seek to obtain a copy and have it tabled.

1846 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Is he able to tell me when the contract is to be let for the building of the Dripstone High School?

ANSWER

I have constantly, over the past few months, sought information from the Darwin Reconstruction Commission as to the progress with the plans to construct the Dripstone High School. During the first week of this sitting I answered a question to the effect that the Government had not as yet replied to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's requests for permission to go to tender before the end of the financial year. I believe the situation may still be the same at the moment. However, I will undertake to get the information today and supply it to the honourable member.

1847 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

He has no doubt seen news reports recently in relation to the Land and Business Agents Ordinance which was passed through the Legislative Council in 1974. Why has the ordinance not yet come into effect?

ANSWER

The Land and Business Agents Ordinance has been with the drafting office for some considerable time awaiting modifications so that it could be brought into effect. The ordinance as it was passed through the then Legislative Council left much to be desired. The structure

of the board which was to be set up was quite unsatisfactory. It seems that there had been insufficient consultation with the government departments who would have responsibility for administering the ordinance at the time that the ordinance was being drafted and passed through the House. I have done an extensive amount of work on the ordinance and made recommendations to the people who write up drafting instructions. The bill is bogged along with many others in the system because we are faced with a shortage of drafting facilities. The Majority Party is as anxious as the Northern Territory Real Estate Institute is to get this ordinance into effect so that there is some control, particularly over the trust account activities of real estate agents in the Northern Territory.

1848 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Is he aware that in Alice Springs there are no scaffolding inspectors and that fees are apparently being collected for the inspection of building scaffoldings? Will he undertake to have either a building scaffolding inspector appointed immediately or to have those inspection fees suspended?

ANSWER

I have an answer somewhere here on my desk. It would appear it has been misplaced. I am afraid I will have to find the answer and relay it to the honourable member as soon as I can.

1849 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON

Are Aboriginal children required by law to attend school in the same way as white children are?

ANSWER

Yes, the Education Ordinance in the Northern Territory does not differentiate between Aboriginal children and non-Aboriginal children, so in fact I understand Aboriginal children are legally obliged to attend school.

1850 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he give any indication as to the fate of the demountable units purchased by the DRC for use by the Department of the Northern Territory? When is it expected that vacated units will be disposed of and has the method of disposal been decided, will it be by auction or by what method?

ANSWER

I am aware that the demountables are the property of the Government. A number of them were purchased by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and a number of them were purchased prior to funds being made available to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. The commission has currently under review a recommendation to go to the Minister on how the demountables ought to be disposed of and the Minister for the Northern Territory has also instructed his department to ascertain what community interests are expressed in this; for example, should a number of the demountable toilet and facility blocks be made available to the city corporation, should service clubs and community organisations such as Old Timers Homes - not necessarily in Darwin - have access to them. I am aware that the Minister has commissioned a

study of the implications of making the money available to community groups and the terms and conditions that Treasury would find acceptable.

1851 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

Why has the new wing of the Katherine Hospital not been used?

ANSWER

I will obtain the information for the honourable member.

1852 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise whether it is a fact that, as early as 1974, plans were designed for the augmentation of the sewerage system at Rapid Creek and, if that is a fact, why has the contract not been let before today?

ANSWER

The design of the sewerage requirements for Rapid Creek was carried out in 1974. Cyclone Tracy had a major impact on the Darwin community late in that year and, as a result, a large proportion of the area was naturally affected by what became known as the surge area. Further, there were insufficient funds in the 1974-75 works program for the contract to go ahead. I am now advised that the job will go to tender on Thursday 17 March.

1853 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Has Treasury made a decision on the request for surplus transportable buildings for the Old Timers Home in Katherine?

ANSWER

This matter is related to the study that the Minister for the Northern Territory has commissioned with regard to the use and financial implications of making demountables available to community organisations. I am not aware that Treasury has finalised the terms and conditions under which such units can be transferred to community organisations.

1854 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

On 1 March, I asked a question about the police boat at Nhulunbuy and the Cabinet Member gave me an answer with which I was not too happy. Is the 16 foot boat with the 35 hp motor only an interim measure to help overcome the problem and will the commissioner give consideration in the future to buying a much larger boat to go out into the ocean and provide a rescue service in that area?

ANSWER

The provision of boats or other equipment is always governed by financial restriction. The provision of the 16 foot motor boat for Nhulunbuy was the best that could be done under the current financial arrangement. Further consideration to the whole scope of the provision of boats for police forces throughout the Northern Territory, whether it be for crossing rivers in the Tennant Creek area or in

the coastal situation, is being reviewed by the planning and research section of the police force and consideration is being given to other types of boats.

1855 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

Are there any proposals to increase the number of police officers on settlements from 2 to 3 and, in those other remote areas where there is one officer, to increase the number to 2?

ANSWER

The police force would be only too delighted to have a minimum of 3 officers on these settlements. The placement of police officers is governed by the ceiling restrictions placed on the Northern Territory Public Service and there are only so many men to go around. There will be a continuation of this policy of 2 men and, in some situations, 1 man on the settlements until such time as the numerical strength of the police force is increased.

1856 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

At the last sitting I spoke of illiteracy in Northern Territory schools. Has he discussed this problem with the Director of Education? Has he received any advice from the director, if so, could he advise this House? Further, is it his intention to make representation for special remedial teachers to be made available to overcome the incredible problem of illiteracy?

ANSWER

If I recall correctly, the honourable member's question earlier in these sittings related to a number of positions for speech therapists which were still vacant.

Mrs Lawrie: No, it had nothing to do with speech therapists.

Mr PERRON: If the honourable member is referring to her adjournment debate speech, no, I have not studied it in detail at this stage nor made any representations on her behalf to the Director of Education.

1857 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is he aware of a virus in the Territory called the Roys River Virus? If so, can he tell me if there has been any research done on this virus in recent years? Is he aware that there have been cases recently I understand in the Nhulunbuy area, and have there been cases known in the Darwin-Top End area in recent times?

ANSWER

I must confess I have no knowledge of any virus called the Ross River Virus. In reply to the rest of the member's question, I will endeavour to get the answers for him during this sittings.

1858 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

I was very pleased to see the report in last night's paper of a redistribution plan. What type of machinery will have to be set up to carry out the proposed redistribution and how long might that take? Is it possible that seats such as Port Darwin which have lost 1,000

constituents might disappear in the redistribution?

ANSWER

I was also pleased to see that the Minister has decided to initiate a redistribution following representations which I have made to him for some time. The machinery is set out in the Northern Territory Administration Act. The announcement said that a committee would be established within a month but I hope that it will be earlier. Two of the 3 members of the committee are prescribed by the Northern Territory Administration Act so there is really only one member to be appointed. On the assumption that it could be set up within the next fortnight, I do not believe that it has a very large task to do because some of the matters which it has to take into consideration have no doubt already been considered by the committee which was set up in 1974 for this purpose. The physical features have not changed, the means of communication have not changed to a great extent and the diversity of interest has not changed markedly. Thus, it will be mainly a redistribution based on distribution of population. I do not think that the committee will have a very prolonged task in drawing lines on a map and publishing those maps in the Northern Territory Gazette. I am not trying to pre-empt the work of the committee but I think that, with the information that they have available, probably 2 to 3 weeks would be sufficient to consider the population distribution. On publication of the maps, they would have to wait 30 days for public comment and reaction to those maps. That would take us up until early May and, after examining the public comment, they submit their final report to the Minister and the electoral boundaries become fixed. It seems that the whole thing could be done by the end of May.

As far as Port Darwin electorate is concerned, the committee has to take into account the population figures as well as electoral roll figures and 2 sets of figures have been issued in the last day or so which illustrate the discrepancies between those. For example, Victoria River is one of the biggest electorates in terms of total population but it is not so high in terms of people on the electoral roll. If Port Darwin is to disappear by virtue of its diminution of numbers, and that is a job for the electoral committee to decide, I would be quite happy to accept it as an extension of the Darwin Harbour which is at present in my electorate.

1859 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK

Is it true that the shipping of livestock will again take place through the port of Darwin, what numbers of cattle and buffalo are expected and are shipping facilities available to satisfy the needs of the exporters?

ANSWER

I understand that live herd cattle shipments are to recommence through Darwin but, at the moment, the facilities are not available. I have asked the departments for advice on the matter and will advise the honourable member during this sittings.

1860 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN

Is he aware of any provision in the estimates for the sealing of the branch road to Umbakumba on Groote Eylandt?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any provision for the sealing of the Umbakumba Road but I will seek the information.

1861 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Has his attention been drawn to the fact that a sewerage inspection pit in Conigrave Street Fannie Bay has overflowed during every wet season for the last 15 years and, if so, has he invited the attention of the Department of Reconstruction to this problem?

ANSWER

My attention has not been drawn recently to this problem. However, I will make the necessary representations.

1862 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Is he yet able to answer my question concerning building scaffolding inspectors?

ANSWER

I have found the answer but I am not all that happy with it. I will discuss it further with the department because I do not think it answers the question satisfactorily.

1863 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Alice Springs asked me whether it is true that there is no uniformity of curriculum amongst senior and junior schools in the Northern Territory and, if so, why there is not. He also asked whether the Northern Territory Director of Education has control over the curriculum standards of these schools. A reply has been supplied to me by the department:

*For all primary schools in the Northern Territory, there are recommended course outlines in all subjects. The diversity of our schools demands an extensive range of recommended courses to be available. Not all of these are always in print as limitations on funds and printing facilities make it impossible to keep up with the high turn over in staff and consequent loss of published materials. Most schools have recommended courses in most subjects and have access to those that they lack through the curriculum advisers services upon demand. The professional judgment of teachers determines the manner in which the courses will be used and, on many occasions, such of the options available as will best suit a particular school or group of children within a school.*

*Particularly upon matters where community values are not clear, community participation in such decisions is required. An example would be in the elements of cultural education programs in Aboriginal communities or choice of vernacular language for a bilingual program. This is much less likely to happen where the recommended guidelines on writing, reading and mathematics are concerned.*

*Secondary schools are all constrained by the fact that the South Australian Public Examination Board's matriculation will be taken by all those who plan to go on to tertiary education. This influences all levels of secondary education and it is argued that, where so*

*small a proportion of children actually seek a tertiary education, the strength of the influence may well be inappropriate and even damaging. Teachers are very aware of this and various programs are under way to try to protect the best interests of those for whom a tertiary education is not likely. Some 80% in the Northern Territory will quite certainly not seek tertiary education. Within the last year a scheme both to promote and control the development of more appropriate courses for such students has been underway. A registration committee of the Northern Territory Division of the Australian Department of Education checks the planning and documentation of all year-11 and year-12 courses which are not directed to the Matriculation examination. A register of these courses will be published within the next few weeks as it is currently in draft form. Courses included in this register will be available upon request from either the school or the head office of the division in Darwin and only these, or recommended South Australian courses, may be included in the Northern Territory School Leavers Certificate for year 11 and 12 school leavers.*

1864 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Nightcliff asked questions with regard to the widening of Trower Road and what provision has been made for this to commence this year or next year. The information that has been supplied to me is that the proposal to widen Trower Road in Nightcliff involves a 2-stage program. The first stage, the widening of the outbound lane between Nightcliff Road and Oliver Street, went to tender on 17 March this year. The second stage, the widening of the inbound lane, has been proposed for the 1977-78 financial year. Such a proposal, of course requires the approval of the Federal Government and, if such approval is granted, it is proposed that stage 2 commence after stage 1 has been completed.

1865 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The other question asked of me by the honourable member for Nightcliff related to the Bagot Speedway, as to when it would be relocated, where it is to be relocated and whether any money had been made available for its relocation. The additional information provided to me is that the relocation of the Bagot Speedway is related to the proposed development of the residential subdivision adjacent to the present speedway site. No date for any relocation of the speedway has been set but a proposal to change its site has been put forward for the next financial year. The proposal has yet to be considered by the Federal Government. If approved, the proposal for the relocation of the speedway involves the development of a new site at the eastern end of the Darwin airport runway. No funds have been expended on the proposal to date.

1866 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Tiwi asked whether the sealing of Whitewood Road will take place in the financial year 1977-78. The answer is that no proposal to extend the sealing of Whitewood Road has been included in the proposals for the next financial year. However, at present a program of safety sign posting is being undertaken on this road.

1867 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Tiwi asked me about the building of

an engineering workshop. The following information has been supplied to me: "It is the intention of the owners of Lot 5, Section 2190, Bagot to build an engineering workshop on that land. The approximate dimensions of the proposed building are 115 feet by 52 feet. A permit to construct the building was issued on 19 October 1976."

1868 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: I was asked a question about the Taylor Creek bridge. There was some doubt about its stability. I have been assured by the Department of Construction that the bridge has not moved. As I speculated earlier, the bridge is located on a corner and there is super elevation on the bridge which gives the impression that it is leaning one way.

1869 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: Yesterday I received a question from the honourable member for Port Darwin concerning the illegal occupancy of a set of double storey flats in Mitchell Street. The Department of Health has provided the following answer: "The building referred to is controlled by the Department of the Northern Territory and it is to be transferred to the Department of Health for use as a sobering up centre and headquarters for the Darwin Foundation for Drug and Alcohol Dependency. The Department of the Northern Territory is currently in contact with Crown Law concerning the eviction of illegal squatters and believes it is quite false for the honourable member to say that the Department of Health and the Department of the Northern Territory have refused to take action.

1870 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS

Has the Commonwealth Government been asked for a clear statement of its policy concerning the 2 kilometres of sea adjoining Aboriginal land? Has the Government stated a policy and, if so, what is that policy?

ANSWER

The answer is yes. On 7 February this year, I made a formal request to the Government through the Minister for the Northern Territory to indicate the policy on the 2 kilometre off-shore sea ownership. I pointed out that a number of ministers were involved including the Minister for Primary Industry who issues Commonwealth fishing licences, the Minister for National Resources who is concerned with off-shore exploration and resources, the Minister for Environment who is concerned with marine parks where they occur off the Australian coastline, the Minister for the Northern Territory, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and possibly some other Commonwealth Ministers - I sought a collective government view on the matter but I have not yet received that view.

1871 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Is any provision made by the Department of the Northern Territory for the loading of livestock onto aircraft at the Alice Springs airport? If there is no provision at the present time, is there any plan by the department to provide these facilities, thereby permitting the export of live cattle by air from Alice Springs and the Central Australian region?

ANSWER

At present there are no facilities at the Alice Springs airport for the loading of live cattle onto aircraft. I had a preliminary discussion a couple of weeks ago with a departmental officer about the matter and it is our feeling that if a need arises for the loading of livestock at Alice Springs, then the use of portable yards and facilities could be quite easily made available and there would not be any great problem in providing the facility at relatively short notice. I am quite confident that if something more positive or more long-term was needed, then the appropriate steps would be taken in that regard.

1872 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

Will she give consideration to placing an additional police officer temporarily at settlements on pay weekends?

ANSWER

Certainly consideration will be given to this but, as I stated in my answer yesterday, restrictions on both finance and manpower make this virtually impossible at the moment.

1873 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

Is he aware that the Rules of the Supreme Court Ordinance are not available anywhere in the Territory; one has to write to Canberra for copies? Would he take immediate steps to see that copies are made available in the Territory for people wishing to purchase them?

ANSWER

I was not aware of this and I thank the honourable member for drawing it to my attention. I will do the best I can in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Law to see that the needs of the people of the Northern Territory are met in this regard,

1874 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK

Will the financial collapse of the Parkes group of companies last week have any affect on the Katherine meatworks?

ANSWER

I am advised that the collapse of the Parkes group of companies last week will not have any affect on the operation of the Katherine meatworks. There is no financial connection between the two operations although the principal of the Parkes group of companies is a member of the board of the company which does have connections with the Katherine abattoir. The connection is no more than a manpower situation and there is no financial implication.

1875 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Can he advise me to what extent the latest Aboriginal claims for land cover the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I can provide some information. Claims are still being lodged through the land councils with the office of the Interim Land Commissioner. There is difficulty in obtaining some details of these claims. The Interim Land Commissioner can indicate the name of a particular claim but not always the actual details of the total area involved in each claim. The office of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs also has some information in this regard. The Woodward Report suggested that, on claims being received, they should be transmitted to the Department of the Northern Territory so that the Lands Branch there can have this information and examine it. I understand that this is not the general rule, that there are considerable delays in obtaining that information and it is not always possible to obtain it in detail. However, I have been attempting to map the known claims that have been lodged as they come in and I have a rough map prepared. I am trying to get this done in the form of a properly printed map which would be available to members of this Assembly. I hold up this copy which indicates in terms of the coloured areas the extent of the claims now officially lodged with the Land Commissioner and indicate that to the best of my calculations this now represents some 35% of the land area of the Northern Territory. I am still working on this and I will provide further details to the honourable member as soon as they are available.

1876 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS

Is it a fact that the Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser is involved in a company that has some organisational or management effect in the Northern Territory? Is it true that there is a land claim on that cattle property?

ANSWER

I cannot answer the question with any degree of accuracy. The only connection that I know is that one of Mr Fraser's relatives was a member of the board of a cattle station in the Northern Territory. I understand there is now a claim over part of that station.

1877 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

What effect, if any, has the cutback on the day labour force within the Department of Construction had? If the cutback in day labour has had a detrimental effect, has the private sector been able to take up the slack that has been created?

ANSWER

The government attitude towards the public sector has been to reduce staff wherever possible. This is reflected in the Department of Construction and I believe that there are some problems being encountered in the day to day operation of certain types of work. The day labour force has been fairly active over past years in the Northern Territory carrying out emergency repairs and also general maintenance. As a result of the reductions, it was hoped that the private sector could pick up the slack. It does appear, however, that certain types of work are difficult to handle through the tender system. Documents have to be prepared and then the normal time lapse occurs between the calling of the tenders and the letting of the tenders. With a day labour force, the supervisor is able to inspect a road and then deploy part of the day labour force to carry out the work. Whilst there has been a certain picking up of the work by the private sector, the Government should look closely at its attitude to the day labour force and make sure that they do not leave us in a situation where emergency work cannot be carried out because of red tape.

1878 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

What was the total amount spent by the Commonwealth Government in reconstructing Darwin after the cyclone?

ANSWER

I am sure honourable members will appreciate that the Commonwealth Government's contribution to the reconstruction of Darwin has been quite substantial. It is basically funded through a number of agencies: the Darwin Reconstruction Commission which handles the civil works program that the Commonwealth takes as a liability, the Northern Territory Housing Commission and also the special 6% loan scheme conducted by the Home Finance Trustee. The figures that have been made available to me - and I will round them off to the nearest million for convenience - show that an amount of $22m was spent on restoration work in the first 6-month period after the cyclone, that is, Commonwealth restoration of a capital nature; the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has spent in its program to date approximately $21lm; the Northern Territory Housing Commission has spent on capital projects in the same period approximately $29m; and the Home Finance Trustee for the 6% reconstruction loan has provided $22m. That gives a total at this stage of $284m. I would point out that a considerable proportion of the expenditure by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the Northern Territory Housing Commission would have been expended in the normal course of events under the civil works program.

1879 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

How many blocks of industrial land in the Darwin area have been auctioned by the Department of the NT each year since 1970 and what was the average price paid for land per block at each of these auctions?

ANSWER

I sought to have answers to these questions yesterday from the Lands Branch and so far I have failed to get those answers. I have no option but to ask the honourable member for Casuarina to place the questions on notice.

1880 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

In the adjournment debate last night, I advised him I would be asking for answers to questions relating to the Cyclone Tracy Trust Fund. I have discussed the matter with the honourable member so there is no need to repeat the question in detail. When can the answers be expected?

ANSWER

I have made representation to the Minister's office and to officers who service the trust fund for the information. I am sure that the honourable member will appreciate that it is complex to get some of this information out and the department is seeking to do so today. The Minister for the Northern Territory is absent overseas and the matter will have to be referred to the Acting Minister's office. I was advised this morning that hopefully the answers would be available this afternoon.

1881 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Would he also attempt to obtain an answer to the question I asked him 2 days ago as to why the monthly reports from the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund have not been tabled in this House?

ANSWER

I have already asked for that information.

1882 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When will the next industrial land auction be held?

ANSWER

I am informed that this is a matter of policy and the answer would not be supplied to me.

1883 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

Is he aware of the tour DC9 service from Perth to Cairns being established by TAA? Is he aware that already we have a jet service from Perth to Nhulunbuy by MMA which is a long standing company in the Territory and Western Australia? Is there any action to be taken for MMA to extend its service from Perth, Darwin, Nhulunbuy and Cairns?

ANSWER

I know that 2 weeks ago TAA did have what they called a proving flight from Perth. The service has not yet been started. There are still some problems on interpretations of the court ruling. I assume that they will go ahead as soon as they have been clarified. MMA has had a jet service from Perth to Nhulunbuy for some time. I have certainly no objections to another company starting up a similar service. A bit of competition can have some beneficial results for the people who live in the area. I do not know of any reason why Ansett could not have a jet service from Nhulunbuy to Cairns. I think it is up to the companies themselves to decide whether it is worth it. As far as the Territory is concerned, we do not care how many flights come in and go out of the place as long as there are plenty of them. We will have as many as they are prepared to put on.

1884 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

Is a Darwin farmers' produce market to be established and, if so, under what control and when and where will it be?

ANSWER

In recent weeks, there have been talks between the Mayor and myself. Last Friday, there was a public meeting called in Darwin to discuss the proposal and some 35 people attended. We all agreed that such a market would be quite a valuable acquisition to the Darwin area, to encourage the production of primary produce and also to provide an outlet for that produce. The matter will rest with the Darwin City Corporation. I understand that the corporation is moving to obtain a piece of land suitable for a market. This is a matter for negotiation with the relevant Northern Territory department. Subject to the provision of the land, a market should be established in the relatively near future. It is also envisaged that the market will provide an outlet for home industries, arts and crafts and nurserymen.

1885 Mr STEELE to Mr PERRON

In reply to the honourable member for Casuarina, he said that the department was unable to give him an answer because it was a policy matter. Does this mean that he has no liaison with the department, does it mean that he has to go to the Minister for every fiddling little thing that has to be explained to the people of Darwin? What does his answer mean?

ANSWER

The answer does not mean that I have to go to the Minister for every little thing. Obviously, it depends on which section of the Department of the Northern Territory I am dealing with as to whether I get answers to your questions or not. In regard to these land questions, I am particularly disappointed that the answers were not made available within 24 hours. It isn't difficult information to collect but I seem to strike an obstacle there, particularly with matters relating to policy.

1886 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK

What action is being taken in respect of outstanding applications for entry into the limited Northern Territory barramundi fishery? What provision will be made for those people who do not currently hold a

barramundi licence and who have commenced building a fishing vessel with the intention of entering the barramundi fishery?

ANSWER

The matter of the barramundi fishery has been a matter of conjecture for some time and, after discussions, an ad hoc committee has been established to advise the Chief Inspector of Fisheries on all matters relating to the management, control, protection, regulation and development of the Northern Territory barramundi fishery. This ad hoc committee consists of the chief inspector, the president of the Commercial Fishermen's Association and myself. We have had a meeting and made certain recommendations regarding the total number of gill net licences to be issued for the 1977 season and the extension to coastal waters of the existing prohibition which currently applies to inland waters in relation to where the fish may be caught. In relation to people who have commenced building a boat, those people would be well advised to advise the Fisheries Department of their intention to apply for a fishing licence because it is the feeling that persons who now want to commence building boats may find themselves in a difficult position to obtain a licence at a later date.

1887 Mr STEELE to Mr TUXWORTH

I refer to the dole. Is it true that you are prevented from getting social service benefits if you hold a restricted fishing licence and you cannot fish?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any such circumstances. It would seem to me to be totally iniquitous if it exists and I will look into it and see what the story is and reply later this day.

1888 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

When will the Department of Health start recruiting staff for the Casuarina Hospital?

ANSWER

I will try to get the information.

1889 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

In view of the fact that almost 8,000 people were redirected yesterday from McMillans Road bridge because of flooding, what steps are being taken to reintroduce planning for an arterial road to the northern suburbs where some 50% of the population reside?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has undertaken a series of reviews on town planning and this includes a major review of the transport studies and the requirements of Darwin. It is currently being conducted and will be presented to the Darwin Reconstruction Commission within the next month or so.

1890 Mr WITHNALL to Mr PERRON

Will he take up with the unemployment office in Darwin the matter of providing more staff so that the public can be served without waiting for interminable lengths of time?

ANSWER

I have recently received information that the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations throughout Australia is to get an increase in staff of some 300 employees. This is to be spread throughout Australia and I believe that the Territory branch of that department will be getting some assistance in this regard. I will take it up with the people concerned and ensure that the Northern Territory is fully represented in this regard.

1891 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

I asked him earlier about the availability of demountables for private sale. I understand they are not yet available and I now ask him what is to be done with the large number of government caravans collecting on government blocks in their hundreds? Are they to be auctioned, made available to the general public for purchase or what?

ANSWER

With regard to the question that the honourable member asked, I believe yesterday, with regard to demountables, I struck one of the cooperative sections of the Department of the Northern Territory and I have an answer supplied. It is that it is intended to phase out the demountable units when they are no longer required for temporary accommodation. Timing is not clear at this stage as this will depend on the rate of handover of houses to the department. The Department of the Northern Territory has circularised other departments, government authorities and charitable bodies to ascertain future requirements for other than residential accommodation in Darwin. A decision will then be made on the disposal of the remainder, possibly either by auction or by tender. With regard to caravans, I believe that several of these vans have already been offered for sale or for tender and the whole matter is currently under a similar review as to how they will be disposed of. I believe they are looking at letting them out in large numbers to ensure that there is no flooding back into the residential accommodation problem of Darwin.

1892 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Gillen asked a question about houses at Areyonga and Papunya. In June 1975, Dowsett Constructions went into liquidation and at that time they had 7 contracts with the Department of Construction. On 5 June 1975 one contract was cancelled and 6 were taken over to be completed at the contractor's expense. One of the contracts taken over was No. 197 of 1972-73, stage two, industrialised buildings, and this contract included 2 residences at Areyonga and Papunya as well as 7 residences and 2 toilet ablution blocks at Maningrida, 4 residences at Snake Bay, 5 at Umbakumba, 4 on Bathurst Island, 2 at Hooker Creek, 2 at Roper River, 2 at Warrabri and 2 a Yuendumu. Of the work taken over under contract No. 197 of 1972-73, the Department of Construction has completed all outstanding work at Maningrida, Snake Bay, Umbakumba, Bathurst Island and Roper River. Plans for the completion of work at the remaining areas are well advanced. However, additional funds are required and submissions have

been made by the client department to the Department of Finance for these funds.

1893 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Stuart asked me a question about scaffolding inspectors. There does appear to be a problem with the scaffolding inspectors visiting Alice Springs. The situation is that when a contract is let a scaffolding inspection fee is paid relating to the cost of the contract. In Darwin, where we have permanent inspectors, an inspection takes place on a regular basis. However, in Alice Springs they are only visited irregularly. The department hopes that this will be improved in the future and in fact are trying to establish a permanent inspector in Alice Springs. I have asked, in view of the iniquitous situation between Darwin and the other centres in the Northern Territory, whether or not the department could look at the possibility of having 2 scales of fees - one for Darwin where the permanent scaffolding inspectors are available to carry out the service which the contractor is paying for and another scale of fees in the areas down the track where the visits of the inspector are fairly wide apart. This could solve the problem. They have said that they will look at possible amendment to the regulations prescribing a smaller fee in the centres outside Darwin.

1894 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Arnhem asked me a question concerning the sealing and upgrading of the Umbakumba Road. This job is not on any program. I believe it has almost made the program on a couple of occasions but has been taken off. At the moment it does not sit on any program. The only work that will be done in this dry season will be some resealing of the road.

1895 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The member for Nhulunbuy asked me questions in relation to power failure at Dhupuma College at Gove. He asked what caused the 2 AC generators to become unserviceable. There is evidence that moisture in the alternaters caused the breakdown. There is no indication of trouble due to lack of maintenance. He asked me also whether a proper maintenance plan would be drawn up according to the manufacturer's recommendations. The manufacturer's recommendations are used as a basis for maintenance. He also asked if the dismantled engine on the large generator set would be restored to operational order. It is intended to restore the set when parts become available. This may take 6 months as parts have to be imported from overseas.

In further explanation of the breakdown, the Department of Education employs an operator to make daily checks on fuel, oil and water and also to keep the station clean. It has been suggested that the operator, when hosing down the floor, may have inadvertently directed water into the alternaters and that would explain a failure due to moisture. This matter has been discussed with the principal with a view to ensuring that every precaution is taken to avoid water entering electrical equipment.

INDEX TO QUESTIONS

1 - 3 and 15 - 17 March 1977


Aboriginal -
colleges (Ballantyne) 1733
compulsory schooling (Kentish) 1849
Family Allowance Payments (Kentish) 1719
Aboriginal land - 2 kilometre area (Dondas) 1870
Airconditioning of Government Offices (Dondas) 1727
Air fares, Sydney-Alice Springs (Robertson) 1774; (Manuell) 1831
Alice Springs -
Abattoir (Manuell) 1625, 1735, 1770
Community College (Vale) 1745
livestock, aircraft loading (Manuell) 1871
Microwave link (Manuell) 1834
Road work, Jay Creek (Robertson) 1826
Scaffolding inspectors (Vale) 1848, 1862; (Ryan) 1893
Anaesthetists, shortage in Territory (Ballantyne) 1780
Areyonga, Papunya housing (Robertson) 1832; (Ryan) 1892
Assembly members, pensions and compensation (Withnall) 1748
ATAC conference (Manuell) 1742; (Vale) 1833
Bagot Speedway (Lawrie) 1795; (Tambling) 1865
Barramundi fishing licence (Steele) 1886
Beef -
carcase classification (Vale) 1828
Conference (Vale) 1728
disease eradication (Vale) 1799
market in NT (Vale) 1761
Berrimah traffic lights (Kentish) 1792
Block 8 cafeteria (Dondas) 1757
Building covenants (Dondas) 1779
Business Agents Ordinance (Everingham) 1847
Cabinet Members, declaration of interests (Lawrie) 1734
Cabinet Member for Education and Planning, liaison (Steele) 1885
Caravans on residential lots (Lawrie) 1841
Carry-on finance (Vale) 1731
Casuarina Hospital -
nurse training centre (Lawrie) 1777; (Dondas) 1838; (Tuxworth) 1809
staff (Lawrie) 1888
Cattle prices (Vale) 1798
Child speech therapy (Lawrie) 1764; (Perron) 1803
Citizens Advisory Council (Dondas) 1794
Coloured number plates (Manuell) 1797
Community grants (Robertson) 1816
Conigrave Street, sewage (Steele) 1861
Council Bylaws (Dondas) 1825
"Crystal Corner" road construction (Lawrie) 1793; (Tambling) 1864
Cyclone reconstruction cost (Manuell) 1878
Cyclone Tracy Trust Fund (Lawrie) 1845, 1880, 1881
Darwin Eisteddfod (Kentish) 1822
Darwin live cattle export (Steele) 1859
Darwin residential lots (Steele) 1762, 1771
Day labour force (Manuell) 1877
Demountable units (Lawrie) 1850, 1891
Department of NT permanent head (Lawrie) 1759
Dhupuma College power failure (Perron) 1895
Dole (Steele) 1887
DRC -
employees housing rights (Lawrie) 1758
employees redeployment (Everingham) 1824
public relations (Lawrie) 1817
Dripstone High School (Everingham) 1765; (Dondas) 1846
Electoral redistribution (Everingham) 1858
Electricity inquiry (Everingham) 1829
Extent of land claims (Withnall) 1875
Federal Companies Act (Withnall) 1819, 1820
Fire Brigade Headquarters, fire (Withnall) 1791
Fishing limit 200 mile (Everingham) 1837
Fraser, Malcolm and NT cattle station (Steele) 1876
Fruit fly (Vale) 1736
Galiwinku, spear attack on aeroplane (Kentish) 1775; (Andrew) 1805
Gaol education officer (Kentish) 1766
Government homes, electrcity connections (Dondas) 1730
Government home sales (Everingham) 1725; (Steele) 1726, 1789; (Lawrie) 1811
Health Department, repatriation of patients (Kentish) 1729; (Tuxworth) 1808
Home Finance Trustee Loans (Dondas) 1760; (Everingham) 1732
interest rate (Dondas) 1767
loan ceilings (Dondas) 1776
Housing Commission strata title policy (Steele) 1788
Howard Springs lot B engineering workshop (Tungutalum) 1719, 1768; (Ryan) 1867
Howard Springs road (Tungutalum) 1790;

(Ryan) 1866
Industrial land auctions (Dondas) 1879, 1882
Illiteracy (Lawrie) 1856
Jay Creek road (Vale) 1739
Katherine Hospital (Dondas) 1851
King River bridge (Vale) 1839
Lot 4589 rezone (Everingham) 1840
Marina proposal (Steele) 1813, 1814
Market (Kentish) 1884
Mitchell Street flats, squatters (Withnall) 1827; (Tuxworth) 1869
Newcastle causeway, construction standards (Vale) 1763
Nhulunbuy police boat (Ballantyne) 1755, 1854; (Andrew) 1807
Northern suburbs arterial road (Dondas) 1889
NT Art Gallery and Museum (Ballantyne) 1821
NT beef exports (Vale) 1787
NT freight report (Vale) 1823
NT Welfare Committee (Robertson) 1802
Old Timers Home, transportable buildings (Dondas) 1853
Ordinances,bound volumes (Withnall) 1740, 1741
Overtime bans, Fourth Division Officers Association (Everingham) 1781; (Perron) 1804
Parkes Companies (Steele) 1874
Perth-Cairns jet (Ballantyne) 1883
Pest control (Lawrie) 1800
Police, armed (Lawrie) 1753; (Andrew) 1806
Police Commissioner's instruction (Vale) 1782
Police identification (Lawrie) 1738, 1830
Police telephone recordings (Everingham) 1737
Police training, Aboriginal content (Ballantyne) 1750
Power Station, No 5 generator (Dondas) 1783
Primary schools (Steele) 1836
Racial discrimination and land rights (Withnall) 1815
Rapid Creek flooding (Everingham) 1844
Redeployment of DRC staff (Everingham) 1824
Ross River virus (Ballantyne) 1857
School curriculum uniformity (Manuell) 1785; (Perron) 1863
Sealing of Norman Jones Street (Vale) 1773
Settlement Police numbers (Vale) 1855, 1872
Sewerage at Rapid Creek (Everingham) 1852
Stock feeds (Lawrie) 1801
Stuart Highway upgrading (Manuell) 1744
Supreme Court Rules (Lawrie) 1873
Taiwanese fishing boat (Everingham) 1754
Taylor Creek Bridge (Manuell) 1778; (Ryan) 1868
Tender Board policy (Steele) 1818
Tennant Creek bowsers (Vale) 1842
Tindal housing (Tambling) 1812
Todd River bridge tenders (Manuell) 1843
Tourist development budget (Vale) 1769
Transport to Nightcliff Dental Clinic (Lawrie) 1784
Umbakumba roads (Kentish) 1860; (Ryan) 1894
Unemployment office (Withnall) 1890
Urban land (Withnall) 1721, 1752
Vagrancy laws (Lawrie) 1743, 1746, 1747
Wave Hill road (Steele) 1796

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

FROM 21 DECEMBER 1976

1628 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Could he please advise the following in respect of -

(1) Central Australian Aboriginal Medical Service;

(2) Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service;

(3) Central Australian Aborigines Congress;

(4) Aboriginal Hostels Ltd, Alice Springs -

(a) The number of persons employed ?

(b) Titles and remuneration received, and other employment benefits ?

(c) Who is responsible for the hiring and firing of their employees ?

(d) Are the organisations' financial records and expenditure subject to any audit requirements, if so what ?

(e) Are vehicle records and logbooks kept ?

FROM 1 MARCH 1977

1722 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW

How many persons were breathalyser tested in the Territory in 1976 and what was the blood alcohol concentration reading in each case?

FROM 3 MAY 1977

1895 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Would the Honourable Member arrange for the tabling in this Assembly of an audited set of accounts for the Aborigines Benefit Trust Fund, established under the Northern Territory (Administration) Act, for the years from the year ended June 1973 to June 1977, or such of these accounts as are available at the time of tabling?

1898 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

As from the start of 1977 school year, how many students have been -

(a) suspended;

(b) recommended for expulsion;

(c) recommended for permission to leave school before the required age, at:

(i) Darwin High;

(ii) Nightcliff High; and

(iii) Casuarina High?

1899 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

1. How many students at Darwin High School -

   (a) sat for matriculation; and

   (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?

2. How many students at Nightcliff High School -

   (a) sat for matriculation; and

   (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?

3. How many students at Casuarina High School -

   (a) sat for matriculation; and

   (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?

1550 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS

Has there been a feasibility study made in the Northern Territory for the use of the Northern Territory rivers to load and transport live cattle for export?

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

"Yes. A feasibility study into the use of the Victoria River to transport live cattle was carried out in 1951. The outcome of the study was not encouraging in terms of the economics of such a transport system, although it was established that the river was navigable, albeit with some difficulty, to shallow draught vessels as far upstream as Victoria River Depot. Some ten years later when the proposal was revived the earlier navigational aspects were confirmed by a further survey of the river but this review also did not include an economic evaluation of such a form of transport.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics undertook a survey in 1961 into the physical and economic practicability of moving cattle by water from the Cape York Pensinsula and Gulf region to abattoirs on the east Queensland coast. That survey was extended to include contiguous areas of the Territory (Wearyan, McArthur and Roper Rivers). In summary, the report found that existing methods of transport were inadequate and suggested that by using water transport the cattle industry in the survey area would benefit.

In the same year, and for several years following, the then Department of Territories, through the medium of the Port Superintendent, carried out navigational/hydrographic surveys of the major rivers. The main purpose of these surveys was to determine which rivers could be used to promote the development of local industries including beef cattle. Generally these rivers presented some navigational difficulties; deep inland penetration was poor other than to specially designed shallow draught vessels; construction of holding and loading facilities were required; and frequent maintenance of channel marker buoys would be necessary.

It is considered that the implementation of the Beef Roads Program has considerably alleviated the earlier need for an alternative method of transport to overcome the shortcomings in the cattle movement ment systems.

1626 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

1. Has a water filter been fitted at the departmental residence of the Director of Health in Darwin and, if so, was the filter installed at departmental expense and how much did it cost?

ANSWER

Experimental work has been carried out with water filters at a departmental residence which at present is temporarily occupied by the Director of Health.

The first filter was connected at the water meter and this trial confirmed that the particular type was not suitable. An alternative was then arranged to serve the house only, and as this trial filter

was only installed on 2 December, results are not yet available.

The possibility of installing filters has been under consideration for areas giving particular trouble and little reliable local information is available on performance. The experimental work now in progress required a reliable observer and the residence selected will enable an expert opinion to be obtained. Information gained from this installation will be of assistance not only in relation to Government residences but also to privately owned residences.

The cost of the project, including the filter and associated installation costs, was approximately $190.00.

1629 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

1. Can he advise the name of the contractor company in charge of the construction of the timber Creek Police Station?

2. Is is true that this company is having financial difficulties?

3. Is the construction of the Timber Creek Police Station on schedule in keeping with the requirements of the Department of Construction?

   If not, what are the problems and why the delays?

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

1. The company in charge of construction of the Timber Creek Police Station is Gateway Constructions Pty Ltd.

2. The department is not aware that the company is experiencing undue financial problems in conducting their general business activities.

3. The contract is 35% complete and it is anticipated that the contractor will complete all the work by August 1977 which is the current completion date for the contract.

1720 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

1. Is there an emergency power supply provided for the ABC television transmitter in Darwin?

2. If so, what is the nature of the emergency supply?

3. Is the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club situated adjacent to the ABC television transmitter in Darwin?

4. Who or what is the registered lessee of the land on which the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club is situated?

5. Is the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club provided with an alternative supply of electric power to the normal Darwin reticulated power supply?

6. If so, what is the source of the alternative power supply?

7. If the alternative power supply is not provided by the club itself was its provision to the club authorised by the supplier?

8. If not, what then is the basis of the supply? If so, what charges are levied for the supply?

9. Was there on 5 January 1977 a strike by public servants which necessitated the shut down of the normal Darwin power supply?

10. Was on 5 January 1977 the Postal Institute of the Northern Territory Social Club supplied with power from an alternative source?

11. If so, who authorised the supply of power on that day?

12. What charges were made for the supply of power on that day, if the supply was authorised?

13. Is it the policy of the Australian Broadcasting Commission or the Post Master General's Department to permit use of their emergency power supply by outside bodies?

14. If not, why was this exception made?

ANSWER

The following information is provided for the Honourable Member:

1. Yes.

2. There is an emergency power plant at the Telecom Australia Radio complex at Blake Street, Darwin. If commercial power fails facilities at the site are automatically supplied with power from this emergency power source. At the present stage of development, the emergency power plant has sufficient capacity to feed all facilities on the site and the adjacent studio of the commercial television station, whose transmitter is located within the Telecom Australia Radio complex.

3. The Post-Tel Institute is located on the same site as the Telecom Australia Radio communications terminal and the national and commercial television transmitters.

4. The area of land on which the Post-Tel Institute activities are situated is not leased. It is land reserved for PMG (now Telecom Australia) purposes. Reserve No 993 refers.

5. Yes.

6. The power supply for Post-Tel Institute activities is via the radio Communications building and, if the commercial power fails, power feed is maintained from the emergency power plant referred to in 2 above.

7. In the sense that power is automatically supplied from the emergency Telecom Australia source when normal commercial power fails, it was authorised by Telecom.

8. No charges are levied.

9. Industrial action did disrupt normal power supply.

10. Yes.

11. See answer to 7.

12. See answer to 8.

13. So far as Telecom Australia is concerned, it is regarded as appropriate to supply emergency power to facilities on an establishment where the emergency power source is located, up to the normal limit of capacity of the generating plant.

14. Not exceptional. See answers to 3 and 13.

1723 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

I refer to the 1,500 sheets of high quality teak plywood given to the people of Darwin from the Government and people of Burma and ask:

(a) how many of these ply wood sheets have been distributed;

(b) by whom were they distributed;

(c) to whom were they distributed;

(d) when were they distributed;

(e) how many remain in stock;

(f) where are the remaining sheets being held; and

(g) to what purpose is it intended to put the remaining sheets?

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

(a) 191 sheets

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (b) | The Department of Northern Australia | 8 sheets |
| | The Corporation of the City of Darwin | 183 sheets |
| (c) | The German Club | 36 sheets |
| | Private citizens with special needs | 68 sheets |
| | Corporation projects | 87 sheets |
| | TOTAL | 191 sheets |

(d) From August 1975 to the present.

(e) 760 sheets.

(f) Under cover at the Corporation's municipal depot.

(g) The organisations listed below have plywood reserved for them of which they have not yet taken delivery. The remainder is available on application to the City Corporation by any voluntary organisation, service club or sporting body that can use it in a reconstruction project. Because of the small quantity available the Corporation does not issue the plywood to

private citizens unless there are special circumstances.

| | |
|---|---|
| Brown's Mart | 177 sheets |
| Museums and Art Galleries Board | 40 sheets |
| Nightcliff Sports Centre | 30 sheets |
| Darwin Sailing Club | Amount not specified |
| Boy Scouts Association | Amount not specified |

There is a discrepancy of 549 sheets between the original consignment which was received by the Department of Construction and the quantity issued and on hand in the Corporation's Municipal depot. The organisations concerned are investigating this discrepancy.

1724 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

I refer to the Aboriginal Development Foundation and ask -

1. (a) how many members does it have;

   (b) do members of this foundation meet and, if so, how often;

   (c) are elections held and, if so, when; and

   (d) are financial statements issued and, if so, to whom?

2. Is this foundation holding $100,000 received from various sources since Cyclone Tracy and, if so, what audit checks are made on the funds received?

ANSWER

The following information is supplied in answer to the Honourable Member's question:

1. (a) Clause 4 of the foundation's constitution reads:

   "The Association's Executive Committee may admit to membership any Aboriginal who agrees to accept the rules of the Association".

   It has at present approximately 50 financial members but it should be borne in mind that the services of the foundation are directed mainly towards unsophisticated Aboriginals who do not seek formal membership. The number of Aboriginals therefore dependent on the foundation is considerably in excess of the above figure.

   (b) Clause 11 of its constitution reads:

   "General meetings shall be held monthly."

   Monthly meetings are held by the foundation and the proceedings appropriately recorded.

   (c) An annual general meeting is held for the election of the Executive Committee in accordance with the provisions of its constitution.

   (d) Under the Grants in Aid Scheme, funds are provided by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to Aboriginal organisations

subject to certain conditions which are repeated below:

"An organisation receiving funds shall, at the end of every quarter and not later than one month after the end of that quarter, furnish to the Department a certified statement of income and expenditure to the end of the quarter, comparing it with the approved budget. This statement shall be certified by the book keeper or accountant to be correct and shall be countersigned by the President.

"At the end of each financial year and not later than two months after its close, the organisation shall furnish to the Department -

(a) a certificate under the signature of the President to the effect that the funds have been used only for the purpose for which they were provided and that the conditions stipulated have been complied with;

(b) an Auditor's report with an audited statement of income and expenditure for the financial year in question, comparing it with the approved budget, and a balance sheet showing assets and liabilities at the close of the financial year; and

(c) a certified inventory of assets together with explanations of any missing items."

These requirements are being observed by the foundation.

2. This presumbaly refers to a grant of $40,361.76 (not $100,000) made to the foundation by the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust and representing part of a donation made to the trust by the government of Papua New Guinea. The purpose of the grant was to construct a brick and mortar community facility at Knuckeys Lagoon. The construction of this community centre has been delayed pending the grant of legal land title to the Foundation at Knuckeys Lagoon and it is hoped that this will be finalised with a few months. When received on 1 August 1975, the grant was placed in a separate trust account where it is still held and there has been no expenditure.

1810 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

1. From whom or where did the Department of Aboriginal Affairs obtain or purchase the galvanised iron with which they built the shed on the Maranboy commonage near the creek adjacent to Bamyili Settlement?

2. Can he confirm that this iron was removed from a number of buildings on mining leases at Maranboy?

3. In view of the answer given by a Mr Lovegrove on 25 July 1974 to the effect that road building material possibly came from an area of land over which there were mineral leases, authorising the mining of tin, will the Department of Aboriginal Affairs undertake the expense of cleaning out the shaft since, as a result of the removal of this gravel from the collar, there has been dumped into the shaft, a large quantity of gravel which makes it necessary for considerable work to be done before the shaft can be worked again?.

ANSWER

The following information has been supplied in asnwer to the Honourable Member's question:

1. All new galvanised iron was used which was supplied by Cyclone - K. M. Products, Order No. B5033/72, dated 8 June 1973.

2. No.

3. A certain amount of material was used to surface a short tract into the shed area. The place from which the material was removed was not near any mine or shaft and its removal would not have caused the dumping of gravel in a mining shaft. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs does not accept a responsibility of having any mining shafts on the Maranboy Tin Fields cleaned out.

1896 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

1. Has the tender for the construction of a bridge over the Todd River been advertised?

2. When will the tender close?

3. When is construction planned to commence?

4. What is the proposed completion date?

ANSWER

1. Yes on 8 March 1977.

2. Tenders closed on 23 March 1977.

3. On present indications late May 1977 depending on availability of increased funds.

4. Period of contract is 52 weeks from date of acceptance.

1897 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

1. Has the Department of Northern Territory decided that the present Stokes Hill Power Station and subsequent extensions will adequately supply Darwin's power requirements for the next seven years?

2. Has the Department of Northern Territory suspended work on the Environmental Impact Study for Darwin's second power station?

3. Has the Department of Northern Territory shelved plans for a submission to Cabinet so that funds could be made available to allow preliminary design work on Darwin's second power station to proceed?

ANSWER

1. No.

2. Yes, pending receipt of the Final Report of the Inquiry into Public Electricity Supply, Northern Territory.

3. Any such decision will be taken following the receipt and evaluation of the Final Report of the Inquiry into Public Electricity Supply, Northern Territory.

1900 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

How many applications for the 6% concessional loan have yet to be approved by the HFT? What is the total value of these outstanding applications?

ANSWER

The information sought by the honourable member is similar to information that I sought of the Minister for the Northern Territory on 20 April. I have not yet received that information. As soon as I have it, I will make it available to honourable members.

1901 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

I refer to an article which appeared in the Bulletin on 23 April written by Richard Hall. Is there any accuracy in this statement: "Already there have been a good number of unreported incidents of mass killing of expensive stud cattle on at least one property?"

ANSWER

I have seen the article to which the honourable member refers. The whole article is composed of inaccuracies, not the least of which is that particular paragraph mentioned in the question. The inference from a previous sentence in the article is that, because of the build-up of racial tensions in the Northern Territory following activities by this Assembly, Aboriginals are shooting stud cattle belonging to station owners. The incident to which he refers is quite the reverse situation. It refers to a case which has not been kept in the dark as Mr Hall suggested. It has been public knowledge for some time. Officers of the Wildlife Branch in pursuit of their duty to destroy feral cattle on a piece of Aboriginal land which is also a wildlife sanctuary, inadvertently shot some branded and ear-marked cattle on a neighbouring pastoral lease and on an area where the Aboriginal cattle company is running cattle. It is a case of government officers taking action to the detriment of Aboriginals and also of the station owner rather than the suggestion which has been made by Mr Hall. I notice that his articles from time to time on the Northern Territory bear little resemblance whatever to the facts of life up here. I suggest that the gentleman might pay us a visit so that he can get things in better perspective.

1902 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

What steps have been taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to provide a suitable site and funding for a Darwin Museum?

I would prefer a statement from a responsible member of the Commission rather than relying on press reports or off-the-cuff statements by the chairman.

ANSWER

I will have a statement prepared that lists the actions that have been taken over a long period.

1903 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

Has the Counter Disaster Ordinance passed by this Assembly in December 1976 yet been assented to?

ANSWER

No.

1904 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Following the cattle industry conference held in Alice Springs on 23 and 24 April, has an application by the Alice Springs abattoir to participate in current beef quotas been granted?

ANSWER

The matter is still under consideration by the Meat Board which meets this week. We will be making recommendations to the Minister in relation to the matter. It is hoped that the situation was spelt out fairly clearly to the Meat Board representative who was at the conference and also to the Minister. It is quite important to the cattle industry in Central Australia that a quota be made available to the Alice Springs abattoir when it opens in about July.

1905 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

If the Counter Disaster Ordinances 1976 has not been assented to, under what authority were emergency services proposing to operate had cyclone Verna struck Darwin as it appeared likely yesterday?

ANSWER

I understand that the basis was a letter from the Minister for the Northern Territory to the Administrator that authorised the exercise of all powers and functions of the Administrator as deemed under the ordinance and these were to be exercised as though the ordinance was passed. It was a letter of instruction.

1906 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Is he aware that money allocated for repair work on the Sandower Highway was recently reallocated to repair work on the Plenty River Road? If not, would be undertake to investigate the reason why that money was reallocated and would he also undertake to have the Department of Construction contact pastoralists in the Plenty River area to find out what sections of the road are most urgent in need of repair?

ANSWER

I will take the matter up with the Department of Construction and advise the Assembly later.

1907 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Has the Education Department any plans to upgrade the grounds of the Casuarina High School by top dressing the grounds and oval and installing a water reticulation system? That high school is the host school this year for the inter high school sports.

ANSWER

I will undertake to have the question answered later during these sittings.

1908 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Is it his intention, within the life of this Assembly, to introduce legislation to license or regulate in some other manner secondhand car dealers?

ANSWER

This particular legislation would come under the control of the Cabinet Member for Community Affairs.

1909 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When are tenders to be called for construction of the Dripstone High School? Does he expect any further delays in the original intention of the Minister for Education to call tenders by March 1977?

ANSWER

The saga of the tenders for the Dripstone High School has been going on for some time and certainly there is quite a history of this in the question papers of this House. I undertook before the sittings to find out again exactly what the latest situation was because it was obvious that it was going to come up as it has at every sitting ever since the matter was raised some 12 months ago or more ago. At this stage, because of the unavailability of certain people in the Education Department, I have not got an answer for today. However, I do hope to have an answer by tomorrow.

1910 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is it his intention to legislate to license or regulate secondhand car dealers in some manner within the life of this Assembly?

ANSWER

The member who had the portfolio before me has done a great deal of work on this and I have followed on in his steps. It is anticipated that we could have drafting instructions ready later this year for the introduction of legislation to control used car operations in the Territory, but it is a matter of physical ability as to whether we can get this through before the end of this Assembly.

1911 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS

Can he advise me of the present estimated cattle numbers in the Central Australian region and do these numbers represent a real threat to land and soil conservation in that area? If in fact a threat does exist, what steps to control this situation currently apply?

ANSWER

I did not have forewarning of this question and I would normally ask for the question to be placed on notice. However, a week or so ago, I was present at the Cattle Industry Conference in Alice Springs where some figures were qrovided by the Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch which illustrated the extent of overstocking throughout the whole of the Northern Territory. Every pastoral district at present is regarded as being overstocked to a greater or lesser extent. The problem is probably potentially more serious in the Alice Springs district than

elsewhere because it is a truly arid area and more susceptible to the affects of periodic drought. As I understand at the moment, the number of cattle in Alice Springs, based on stock returns and statistics held by the branch and the Commonwealth Statistition is over half a million head which is approximately twice the safe stocking rate estimated for that district by the New South Wales Conservation Authority some years ago. The only reason that there is not a disaster on our hands at the moment is because of the succession of abnormally good seasons, including this recent summer, in Alice Springs.

It is true to say that unless something is done to lighten the stocking that the next drought spell - which is certainly overdue statistically to come upon that district, possibly even next summer - could produce a major catastrophe of a type in which the Commonwealth Government no doubt would be forced to provide aid either in the form of drought relief subsidies or the shooting of cattle as we have seen in other parts of Australia. What we are attempting to do, as you will hear later I think, is to impress upon the Commonwealth Government the need to provide some short term assistance to the industry which will bring about the lightening of the stocking burden in the district. This can be done by measures such as freight assistance, a scheme which applied last year and needs to be reactivated this year, and probably in a way which will give even greater encouragement to turnoff, and also through moves to support the opening and throughput of the Alice Springs abattoir, which an early question referred to, so that they may obtain a maximum throughput there. This, combined with a stock will be transported interstate will at least help to alleviate this very serious problem.

1912 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS

I direct this question without notice to the Majority Leader in his capacity as a delegate to the Beef Industry Conference held in Alice Springs recently. Has the Majority Party considered the formation of a Meat Marketing Authority and, also, have discussions taken place with Government to provide freight assistance to beef producers?

ANSWER

These matters were raised at the Cattle Industry Conference at Alice Springs. Following on that conference, there was a comment in the newspaper by a spokesman for the Australian Labor Party who said that nothing worth while had been attempted or achieved at that conference, and he referred to his party's policy on freight assistance and a statutory authority for marketing. In fact, I believe that a great deal was achieved at the conference at Alice Springs. I was agreeably surprised at how much useful information came forward, and the useful nature of motions and resolutions which were passed for forwarding to government and appropriate authorities.

The conference did pass a resolution calling for the reactivation of the freight assistance scheme for 1977, and the formula that was adopted in that motion was the formula that I proposed: 60 per cent rebate for females and 40 per cent rebate for other cattle.

The conference passed an additional resolution referring to the adapting of export standards to suit particular markets and to get away from the problem that we have at the moment where all exporters are tied virtually to the American standards which some other countries do not necessarily require.

The conference also passed a motion requesting the Government to give further consideration to a fuel price equalization scheme, and the conference reiterated its support, which also happens to be the policy of the Majority Party, to bring about more orderly marketing and price stabilisation in the beef industry. The exact way in which this is to be done is not yet quite clear.

The conference passed a resolution calling on the Government for clarification of policy regarding Aboriginal land claims outside reserves and also, I understand, raised the question of a marketing authority, although it was raised very late in the conference after most people had gone. An earlier reference to a marketing authorit- did not attract very much enthusiasm or support from the conference. I recall, Mr Speaker, that it is a matter which you have suggested for examination from time to time.

The conference did set up a committee, a sort of working party, to have a look at the advantages or disadvantages of a Northern Territory statutory beef or meat marketing authority, and it is clearly necessary to do this before one can establish a policy on it. Obviously, the setting up of an authority is going to cost money in administrative costs and the fees of people who will be on the board, and one has to judge what would be the advantages compared with the cost of doing this. What we do know is that more than 90 per cent of Territory beef is suitable and usually destined for the export market, and export markets in Auwtralia are controlled by the Department of Primary Industry at a Commonwealth level, and by the Australian Meat Board. So what the advantages of having a small, Northern Territory Meat Authority at this stage would be, are still not clear and no doubt the working party will throw some more light on it. It is not yet a policy which has been adopted and supported by the beef industry itself.

Finally, in the light of certain criticisms which the ALP has made of our activities in the beef industry, I would just like to advise members of the Assembly that the Cattle Producers Conference, which preceded the Beef Industry Conference, passed a note of appreciation and confidence in members of this Assembly for the work which they have been doing to try and support the beef industry and alleviate the depressed conditions in the industry.

1913 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

Is the honourable member aware that there are still a large number of street lights in Darwin that have not been restored following the 1974 cyclone? Will he take steps to remedy this situation particularly in the city area where dark streets such as Litchfield Street are becoming a favourite refuge for drunken and unruly persons?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are many street lights still requiring restoration as a result of Cyclone Tracy. There is a program for the repair and, where necessary, reinstallation of lights in the city and it is linked to the Reconstruction Commission's financial program for the coming years. I will seek to have that program detailed and information from it made available to the honourable member.

1914 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

My question relates to congestion on Bagot Road. Is any action likely to be taken in the foreseeable future to provide an alternative access to the city for northern suburbs residents, particularly since it now appears that these silver tails and planners who live in Fannie Bay have managed to torpedo the Palmerston freeway?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Jingili is spot on when he refers to the congestion on Bagot Road. This morning, the traffic was banked up from the Stuart Highway back to McMillans Road, a distance of approximately 2 miles. The DRC are planning to build a road to the back of Ludmilla. This has been brought forward and hopefully will be on next year's program. This will not alleviate the problem completely but it may help to take some of tbe traffic away from the Stuart Highway Bagot Road intersection. It would have been much more realistic to bring a road from Coconut Grove Road through Kulaluk down to the proposed road. This would have meant that people travelling from Nightcliff would have been able to travel right through without getting onto Bagot Road. However, the decision has been made to put it into the back of Ludmilla I am concerned with the situation that exists right now; even if they started building that road tomorrow, we would expect some delay.

At least once a week, there is a holdup for various reasons on Bagot Road and, between 7.30 and 8.30 in the morning, it can take up as much as half an hour to get from the northern suburbs into town, I intend to take the matter up with the Department of NT which still has the responsibility for control of roads. However, I may be able to get some assistance from the Cabinet Member for Law in that it may be wise to introduce police control of traffic rather than lights. This seems to be a retrograde step but there is only so much that traffic lights can do. In some cities they switch the lights off at peak hours and have traffic police because they are able to see where the problems are.

I would hate to think of the cost to Darwin in man hours of people arriving late for work every morning. The situation going home of an evening is not quite as bad because they are spread out somewhat. I certainly intend to look into the matter and see if we can do something in the short term to improve it.

1915 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise the present waiting time for the allocation of government homes in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I cannot provide that information without reference but I will certainly seek it for the honourable member.

1916 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

By way of prefatory remarks, Mr Speaker, no doubt you saw newspaper reports of a sensational nature last week pointing out that the salary of the Northern Territory Public Service Commissioner might well exceed the Prime Minister's salary. I believe that Senator Wright, Liberal, Tasmania, was reported as putting these questions at a Parliamentary Estimates Committee hearing. I would like to ask the Majority Leader whether in fact the true position is as put by Senator Wright.

ANSWER

The answer is no; the facts were quite wrong. I do not know whether this was the fault of Senator Wright or in the reporting. Nor is it clear to me why the departmental officers who were present did not correct any misapprehension which the good Senator may have had.

Instead of the fee being, as I think are reported, $35,000 for a 6 months period of service, it is actually set at the rate I understand of $33,000 per annum - this is less than half the level suggested in the report - plus $1,000 per annum allowance. This works out at about deputy secretary level in the department and compares quite reasonably with salaries paid for this level of responsibility in other states.

1917 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

I have asked this question on previous occasions in relation to the Nakara Primary School. Has a decision been made by the Education Department as to the future of the Nakara Primary School? I ask the Cabinet Member that question, Mr Speaker, because I have had information that the Education Department are thinking of using the Nakara Primary School as office accommodation for the Education Department.

ANSWER

I too have heard with some dismay that the Education Department were considering using the Nakara Primary School, or parts of it, for administrative purposes. I was rather horrified at that considering some of the needs around Darwin for more space for educational purposes. I have written to the Minister on this subject and have had some talks with the Department of Education on the matter. I will undertake to find out whether a decision has in actual fact been made, as at this date, and supply the honourable member with that answer.

1918 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

This question results primarily, Mr Speaker, from statements made by yourself in the media and also discussions I have had with you. Is the honourable member aware of a survey of the highways of the Northern Territory conducted in March 1977? Will a report of that inspection be made public and will the report be acted upon?

ANSWER

Mr RYAN: I am not quite sure what the honourable member is asking about. I am not aware of any report on highways.

Mr ROBERTSON: Are you aware of the survey carried out in March 1977? Is there a report and will you make it public?

Mr RYAN: I am not aware of that particular report. I assume that the question does not relate to the survey done by the Bureau of Transport Economics last year on Territory transport in toto and which is due to be released this month. If it does not refer to that report, I am unaware of any other. However, I will ask the department concerned if there has been one carried out and, if possible, see that it is made available.

1919 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

What is the reason for the delay regarding grading of the Dhupuma

College Road at Gove? Will this horror road be fully graded or partly graded?

ANSWER

Certainly, the honourable member for Nhulunbuy cannot be accused of not keeping the pressure on in this matter. I was under the impression that it had been fixed up. There is a problem of delays with the tenders. I will take the matter up with the Department of Construction.

1920 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Is this Assembly likely to see tabled at this sittings a copy of an interim or final report of the Enquiry into the Northern Territory Electricity Supply System?

ANSWER

He certainly will not be seeing a copy of the interim report tabled at this sittings or at any future sittings.

However, the Minister has undertaken to make public a copy of the final report which is expected to be completed at the end of this month and tabled in the House.

The honourable member for Jingili asked me a similar question at the last sittings. I advised that the Minister had advised me that as the committee still had to complete its investigation, he felt that the releasing of the interim report might prejudice the final report. He was not prepared to have it released, and he still stands by this conviction. However, the final report will be made public and I will endeavour to obtain copies and table them in the House as soon as they are available.

1921 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Following the closing of tenders for the bridge over the Todd River, have the tenders been examined, when will the successful tenderer be announced and when will work commence on that bridge?

ANSWER

There seems to be a delay in the final letting of the tender. I am not too sure why this is. I will take the matter up with the Department of Construction.

1922 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS

Some time ago, I asked a question of the then Executive Member for Resource Development relating to alleged base camps being set up by foreign fishing companies and vessels on Australian soil. Is he aware of any authenticated reports of any such bases being set up on the mainland of the Northern Territory and, if so, will he make them available?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any authenticated report of any base camps being set up on the mainland of Australia by foreign fishermen. I have always been in some doubt about these reports or rumours because, if this had

happened, it would not take any time at all for the matter to become well known. When Indonesian fishermen land on the coast here, it is not very long before they are discovered and everbody knows about it. I will endeavour to find out more information and advise the honourable member later.

1923 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

When it is now anticipated that tenders will be called for a construction of the Dripstone High School.

ANSWER

That very question was asked of me earlier in these sittings and I undertake to supply an answer as soon as I could, hopefully tomorrow.

1924 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

How much has it cost the Corporation of the City of Darwin to redevelop the park on the corner of Mitchell Street and Bennett Street? I refer to the one next door to the Reserve Bank.

ANSWER

I understand that the park on the corner of Mitchell and Bennett Streets has not been developed by the city corporation. My understanding is, and I stand corrected on this, that that piece of land is not under the care or control of the Darwin City Corporation. If the work on that project has been undertaken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, I will endeavour to obtain a statement with regard to the contract for the landscaping and improvement of that area and the associated area of all the government offices on the adjoining blocks.

1925 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Is it his intention to allow this year the same disgraceful transient camp at East Point?

ANSWER

It is outside my responsibilities, I believe, to control a camp in that area. The camp that existed last year was conducted by the Darwin City Corporation under a special licence of land given by the Department of the Northern Territory. From discussions I have held with the Mayor and other people, I was of the understanding that there was not to be another camp of that nature this year. However, I will seek confirmation of that and make the information available to the honourable member.

1926 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise of the outcome of discussions be held last week in Canberra with the Federal Minister for Transport pertaining to the sealing or upgrading of the Stuart Highway south of the Northern Territory border?

ANSWER

Among other items, I did discuss with the Minister for Transport the question of the sealing of the South Road through from the border of the NT to Port Augusta. I think we are all aware that the upgrading of that

highway is the responsibility of the South Australian government. Funds for the national highways, of which that route is one, are made available by the Federal Government through the Department of Transport to each of the states. South Australia have said that insufficient funds are being made available next year to start work on that highway. I have asked the Minister for Transport if it is possible for him to do anything about it and he has agreed to see if anything can be done.

1927 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

What is the status of the land on the Rapid Creek side of the Lakeside Drive? This includes the Alawa sporting complex and the toilet block.

ANSWER

I would ask the honourable member for Nightcliff to place the question on notice.

1928 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is there any truth in the rumour that Alice Springs teleqhone subscribers will be offered STD facilities within the next 3 months?

ANSWER

I will check with Telecom and advise the House later.

1929 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Has the Department of NT given any indication as to when a decision will be made to allow the Hooker Corporation to develop the Brinken subdivision?

ANSWER

I will seek the information.

1930 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Would he be willing to make representations to the South Australian Minister for Transport to lift the road tax charges levied against freight haulers for unsealed sections of the Stuart Highway in South Australia?

ANSWER

I find it difficult to believe that the Transport Minister would in fact wish to do that unless he really had pressure put on him from the Federal Government. I am not too sure whether I would like the idea because it would obviously be reflected in higher freight rates for the Northern Territory. I would much prefer to sit quietly to see if the Federal Minister can do something about it.

1931 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

When are reflectorised licence plates going to be introduced into the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I would say that we will be introducing reflectorised plates next year; they have been under test for some time. One of the biggest things we have to decide - and this could also take some time - is the colours which we would have on number plates in the Northern Territory. I know that the honourable member for Alice Springs would like number plates to match the cars he has and as he changes cars very regularly this could mean that we would have to have a fairly wide spectrum of colours. I do not necessarily agree with that and because of this I would assume that the party discussions could take some time.

1932 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

My question relates to a block of flats on the corner of Cavenagh Street and Daly Street which I have noticed has been unoccupied since prior to Cyclone Tracy. I believe that these flats are owned by the Commonwealth Government or the Australian Atomic Energy Commission. Is it proposed to sell off these flats or let them be occupied rather than stand idle at a time when accommodation is badly required in this city?

ANSWER

The honourable member did give me some advice of the question and I made some representations to the appropriate federal department. They have advised me that the then Commonwealth Department of Services and Property purchased the flats from Qantas on behalf of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission on 17 July 1975. The flats were required to house Darwin based members and families of the commission's uranium exploration division. The flats suffered considerable damage as a result of Cyclone Tracy and were virtually uninhabitable when acquired. They were repaired and renovatored by the commission as quickly as possible after possession was granted in July 1975 and were occupied by commission staff as they became available.

With the change of government and the change of policy in relation to uranium exploration, the commission was requested to wind down its exploration activities and withdraw from the field by the end of 1976. This was done although approval was subsequently granted to carry out a limited drilling program on the commission's Number 1 prospect. The flats in question were, however, all vacated by late December 1976. They were offered to the Housing Commission of the NOrthern Territory on a temporary lease basis until approximately July 1977 but the offer was declined. They are now in the hands of the Department of Administrative Services which is arranging for the Department of Northern Territory to lease them on behalf of the commission.

1933 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

On what basis did the Motor Vehicle Register consider change of colour for the registration plates to be attached to motor vehicles in the Northern Territory? If in fact a colour change is being contemplated, will the plates be reflectorised as he has described? Is it not a fact that the reflectorised plates have nowhere near the long life of the current plates? If in fact the reflectorised plates are not as durable as the conventional plates we now have, is it expected that the registrar will continue to own the plates as opposed to the motor vehicle owner?

ANSWER

The selection of the colour will be, I imagine, a decision for the Majority Party. That is why I mentioned it in answer to the previous question. It may take some time to arrive at a decision. I would be quite happy to accept the responsibility to pick the colour. In the test they did on reflectivity and longevity, the green reflectorised plate did perform quite well. However, I think there are other colours that would be more suitable for the Northern Territory. I do not think that the registrar will have much say in the colour of the plates. He will advise us of the tests carried out on various colours. I would prefer the plates to be reflectorised, whether or not the life of the plate is affected. I would assume that the plates would still belong to the registrar.

1934 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Has any investigation been made by him or members of his department as to whether the existing microwave towers between Mt. Isa and Darwin and those supposed to be installed between Tennant Creek and Alice Springs could be used for medium wave broadcast bands by the installation of low power transmitters on those powers? This would give people travelling within the Northern Territory along the Barkly and Stuart Highways the opportunity of utilising medium wave broadcasts.

ANSWER

It is not within the capabilities of my Department to investigate that particular matter. However, I will write to the Minister for Post and Telecommunications to ask if such a proposal is practical.

1935 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When will the next industrial land auction be held in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

Twenty five lots will be available for auction at the next industrial land sale to be held in Darwin on 23 June 1977. Details of the lots in question will appear in the Government Gazette on 13 May 1977.

1936 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

When will the next residential land auction be held in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

A further residential land auction is planned for Darwin in August provided full details can be assembled at an early date on the locality of serviced lots which will be available. This auction will follow the release of 50 lots on 21 April and the industrial auction which is timed for 23 June.

1937 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise when the next auction of government caravans through the Darwin Reconstruction Commission will take place? Also, has he any further advice as to the manner of distribution or auction of demountables?

ANSWER

I am not able to provide the information sought by the honourable member with regard to caravans or demountables. I am aware that a study is being undertaken with regard to the distribution of a number of the demountable and mobile type of units and that this should be available shortly for consideration by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the Minister. I will seek further information with regard to caravans from the Department of the Northern Territory who have responsibility in this regard.

1938 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

How many applications for loans received in 1976 by the Home Finance Trustee have been held over or are for some reason not yet finalised?

ANSWER

As I indicated in reply to a question yesterday, I have repeatedly sought from the Minister for the Northern Territory over the last several weeks detailed statistical information with regard to the operations of the Home Finance Trustee. This information has not been forthcoming despite further representations I made yesterday and last night to the Minister. I hope that information will be available at some stage today. When I have it I will make it available to honourable members.

1939 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Is it his intention to introduce legislation within the life of this Assembly dealing with certificates of roadworthiness for motor vehicles?

ANSWER

I am not quite sure what the honourable member for Nightcliff means by certificates of roadworthiness. I want some clarification on that.

1939A Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Legislation along these lines was introduced by myself in the dying stages of the Legislative Council. It dealt with such things as the sale of secondhand vehicles which should have a certificate of roadworthiness or not so that the purchaser knew the condition of the motor vehicle. In some states there is provision for checks by police and a motor vehicle can be put off the road until it has obtained such a certificate.

ANSWER

There will be, as far as I know, no legislation introduced on that matter in the life of this Assembly. At the moment, vehicles must undergo a test to be registered. There is no intention at this stage of extending that any further. However, if legislation is introduced concerning the licensing of secondhand car dealers, there may be some complementary legislation that is necessary, but I have not got anything on the move at the moment.

1940 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

Can the cabinet member provide any information on when the proposed farmers' market will be operational in Darwin?

ANSWER

I understand that negotiations are moving fairly favourably with the City Council and the Department of the Northern Territory to secure a site for the market. When this is finalised tin the next few weeks, I understand the council will take appropriate steps to finance the improvements which will be required for that land. However, it must be in the next financial year as the council advise that there are no funds in the current financial year. It looks as if it will be a few months before anything positive will firm up. This is perhaps a little disappointing in view of the earlier enthusiasm but I am assured that the council is taking every step possible to implement the proposal with the least possible delay.

1941 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Why is government house number 112 in Woods Terrace, on which construction was completed over 12 months ago, still vacant?

ANSWER

I will seek an answer to that for the honourable member.

1942 Mr KENTISH to Mr RYAN

Is he aware that many guide posts are missing from the causeway on the east side of the Adelaide River, Arnhem Highway? Is he aware of the length of underfined road that is involved in this area and what proposals are there for replacing the posts?

ANSWER

I was not aware that there are guide posts missing. I will ask the Department of Construction what is being done.

1943 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

I asked this question yesterday but I believe he misunderstood it. Would he make representations to the South Australian Minister for Transport to have road tax on the unsealed section of the Stuart Highway in South Australia removed?

ANSWER

I was confused; I thought lifted meant increased. I could undertake to ask the South Australian Minister to reduce the road tax on that piece of road but I feel that this would be a waste of time. However, it may add some strength to our argument to get the road upgraded. I will discuss the matter further with the member for Stuart and possibly follow it up with a telegram to the minister in South Australia. I would not hold out too much hope of being successful.

1944 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

How many Housing Commission homes which suffered damage in Cyclone Tracy have still to have repairs effected to them and how much is this likely to cost? How much money was allocated for this purpose in 1966-1967, and how much money has been sought for this purpose in 1977-78?

ANSWER

Relating to Housing Commission homes only, not flats, at the time of the cyclone, the Housing Commission had 1,154 homes tenanted, and 318 under construction. Of the tenanted houses, there are still 653 houses left to be repaired. Of course, these will be repaired and restored to the cyclone code. With regard to the money that it will cost to continue work on the 653 houses, it is estimated that the cost will exceed some $11m.

The latter part of the honourable member's question related to the money sought both in the current financial year and the coming financial year. It is difficult to provide a precise answer to this question. In 1976-77, the total Northern Territory Housing Commission program was of

the order of $21m, possibly - and I can only guess at this stage - well in excess of half of that figure would have been for cyclone restoration work in Darwin.

With regard to the coming year probably a figure of the same order will have to be included in the budget estimates for the Housing Commissions restoration program. At the time of assessing the original damage of the Housing Commission as a result of cyclone Tracy, it was estimated that they would require approximately $40m over a period of some 3 or 4 years to repair the damaged housing in Darwin.

1945 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Has the Northern Territory Housing Commission made a decision to allow tenants to purchase their cyclone damaged houses?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Housing Commission Board has considered this matter and has taken the decision not to sell homes in a substandard or damaged state, even though a number of the tenants may well be eligible under the terms and conditions of sale. This was before the Australian Government reintroduced its home sale scheme for public servants where the Minister did allow the Australian Government to sell homes in a substandard state, so possibly the Housing Commission may well review their earlier decision. The commission did accept that there was a need for certain options to be made available to people who were eligible to purchase but could not buy the actual house they were living in and the Commission has resolved to make other houses available, either new homes or restored homes in the same suburban area as the applicants currently live.

1946 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Will the honourable member ask the Administrator this morning the following two questions and today report to this Assembly the Administrator's answers? Has the Administrator received from the Minister any general instructions as to the reservation for the Governor-General's assent of ordinances made by this Assembly and, if any such instructions have been received by the Administrator, what is the text of those instructions? Was any instruction received by the Administrator from the Minister which required the reservation of the Northern Territory Disasters Ordinance for the Governor-General's assent and, if so, what were the terms of any such instruction? I also direct the following question to the honourable member on the same subject. Since in every other parliament under the Westminster system, a fully elected legislature has a complete and regularly exercised oversight by persons responsible to that parliament of the matter of assent or non-assent to laws made by that parliament, will the honourable member set in train a vigorous campaign to ensure that the matter of assent to ordinances of this Assembly should be determined by the only executive body responsible to this Assembly - that is, by the Administrator in Council?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Part Darwin did give me some forewarding of these questions and I have already had a discussion with the Administrator regarding the questions asked by the honourable member. The advise I have received from His Honour is that communications from

the Government through the Minister to the Administrator and vice versa are regarded as the property of the two parties concerned; in other words, that such communications are confidential and the text and terms will not be made available to me or to this Assembly. I think that also takes care of the second part of the question in relation to the Disasters Territory ordinance.

The honourable member's further question deals with the campaign on the matter of assent to ordinances. I have already raised this matter with the Minister for the Northern Territory following the transfer of 24 functions on 1 January. When he visited the Territory shortly after the transfer occurred, I made very strong representations that it was entirely within the terms of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report on Constitutional Development for the Northern Territory that legislation in respect of transferred functions and the assent to that legislation should become the business of this Assembly and its Executive and there should be no question of reservation of such legislation. I further pointed out to the Minister that, in relation to powers still exercised and retained by the Australian Government, the joint committee had recommended that any question of assent, reservation or non-assent should only be exercised after fullest consultation and discussion with the Territory Executive and that this did not appear to be being carried out as a matter of policy. The Minister undertook to examine the points that I made to him. I still have not received any further advice from the Minister on this matter.

1947 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

I asked the Majority Leader to ask the Administrator the following 2 follow-up questions: Has the Administrator received from the Minister any general instructions as to the reservation for the Governor-General's assent of ordinances made by this Assembly? That question could be answered yes or no; it does not involve the disclosure of any text. Secondly, was any instruction received by the Administrator from the Minister which required the reservation of the Northern Territory Disasters Ordinance for the Governor-General's assent? That question could also be answered yes or no.

ANSWER

I will undertake to convey the questions to the Administrator.

1948 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

When is it expected that tenders will be called and let for the first stage of the new Darwin gaol?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has given a very high priority in its proposed 1977-78 civil works program to the tenders for a new Darwin gaol. In fact I was of the opinion that it was to be let as early as possible, probably in July of the next financial year. However, this matter is subject to budget consideration and until such time as the Federal Cabinet has determined its budget strategies and policies, I do not believe a firm answer can be given.

1949 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

Has the Alice Springs municipal council in this financial year experienced a shortfall in its fund for road reconstruction, that shortfall being represented by a difference between appropriation and allocation? Is the shortfall creating any embarrassment to that municipal council? If embarrassment is being experienced, what measures are being taken by the Department of the Northern Territory or the Minister for the Northern Territory to offset that embarrassment?

ANSWER

I am sure the honourable member for Alice Springs is aware that local government was a transferred function on the 1st January and therefore any changes or alterations to the financial situation for this year has to be done in consultation with myself and the Minister. However, in answer to the general question, in the agreement between the Commonwealth and the people of Alice Springs on acceptance of the offer of local government, the Commonwealth agreed to start work on certain roads to bring those roads to an acceptable standard. The allocation for 1976-77 included a transfer from other votes of $748,000. The actual cost incurred by the corporation exceeded this amount by approximately $182,000. As there was no possibility of additional funds being provided by Treasury nor any means by which savings of this amount in other votes could be found, the corporation was advised to obtain a bank overdraft for the short term loan. The corporation was also advised to seek reimbursement in the next financial year for the interest charges involved. However, we did not guarantee this reimbursement. The corporation has since resolved that the shortfall will be covered by Commonwealth Bank overdraft.

1950 Mr ROBERTSON to Dr LETTS

In light of the fact that the Land Councils in the Territory seems to have unlimited legal resources paid for by the taxpayer of Australia, will similar legal aid be granted to people whose land is the subject of a land claim by Aborigines through the various Land Councils?

ANSWER

It has become evident in the administration of the Commonwealth Act that the resources that the Land Councils, acting on behalf of Aboriginal claimants, are able to muster are quite considerable and fairly effective in presenting claims to land commissioners. We have already seen in respect of the claims in the Alligator River area that the Land Council, with the assistance of senior legal advice, anthropologists and consultants from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, mounted a fairly formidable and, I suspect, fairly expensive team to support such claims. On the other hand, people who consider that they have an interest in the area under claim, apparently have to do their own thing, appear on their own account and support their own case. In fact, in some cases, they have had difficulty in being able to obtain an audience in order to do so. These matters have been brought to the attention of the Attorney- General and to the Prime Minister. I am sure that the Government is anxious to see equitable arrangements made, and that there is no discrimination in the community as regards the opportunity to deal with claims and is anxious to preserve the harmony on which Judge Woodward placed such heavy emphasis in his report. I have made representation that other interests in the community should be able to receive assistance as required, whether it is from the Australian Legal

Aid Office or some other kind of expert assistance. These matters are under consideration and I have not had any final response to them as yet.

1951 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM

I appreciate the tabling of the 3 reports in the Assembly yesterday relating to the operations of the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund but I would ask him if he could advise if any subsequent reports will be made available to this Assembly and to the Corporation of the City of Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would answer the question of the honourable member for Nightcliff pursuant to Standing Order 91 which I think covers the situation. I can do no better than quote from a letter that I received this morning from the Minister for the Northern Territory replying to a telex from me of 21 April:

> *In your telex message of 21 April 1977, you sought information regarding the presentation of further financial statements of the Darwin Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund. As you are aware, the trustees moved to wind up the fund on 30 September 1976, but the disbursement of funds which was made as a consequence of that decision was subsequently required by me to be re-paid following advice from the Commonwealth Solicitor General. Finalisation of the Trust Fund Reports had progressed to the stage where the final report had been compiled and was to be submitted to the Auditor-General for his certification. The subsequent events have changed the situation and the normal monthly reports have been resumed from October 1976. Reports up to the end of April 1977 should be presented during the first week in May 1977.*

I would hope to have reports to present either tomorrow or probably next week. If not then, I will have them at the next sitting of this Assembly.

1952 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TUXWORTH

I refer to a question I asked at the last sittings with reference to the unlawful occupation of Fire Brigade flats in Mitchell Street. I received an answer that action to evict people from the building was then under way. In view of the fact that no action has been taken since that date, in view of the fact that hepatitis has been diagnosed in persons from those premises and in view of the fact that the Department of Health now will not accept the building and that the Department of the Northern Territory disclaimed responsibility even for cleaning up the place and that, when the city council proposed to clean the place up, the Department of Health warned the corporation that the corporation's responsibility ceased at the front gate, will the honourable member for God's sake do something urgently to sort out this incredible bungle?

ANSWER

I am well aware of the honourable member's concern over this matter. As I indicated in my last reply to his question, the Department of Health advised me that the Department of the Northern Territory had taken steps to have the occupants of the building evicted. As the honourable member points out, very little appears to have been done. I had a personal

head count this morning and there were no fewer than 35 people after 6 had gone to work while I was watching them. This morning the Department of the Northern Territory advised me that Crown Law has been given instructions to have the building cleaned out.

Mr Withnall: That is a nice way of telling a lie. They have not been given full instructions.

Mr Tuxworth: All right. They have further intimated that they will do everything in their power to have the persons removed from the building today.

I would just like to add my support to the honourable member's concern in the sense that it is now a very serious health hazard. There are far too many people living in the building without adequate sanitation. I will be putting it to the Department of the Northern Territory, that they board the building up in such a manner that it cannot be used for habitation or that it be pulled down.

1953 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

Will she personally investigate the problems in the supply of office supplies and equipment to police stations in outlying areas of Central Australia? Will she also seek to have airconditioning fitted in the police station office at Hart's Range and the police station residence?

ANSWER

I shall make some enquiries regarding the supplies to police stations in the centralian area. However, it is very difficult to know exactly what the honourable member for Stuart means when he just says "supplies to police stations" because it is my understanding that any supplies not available at the moment are on order and if the officers in these one and two-man stations mention the fact to their sergeant, I am sure their needs will be met.

1954 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What action is proposed to review city council bylaws to ensure that the problems that occurred several months ago in Darwin and Alice Springs will not return?

ANSWER

The general powers and bylaws aspects of the Local Government Ordinance have been reviewed by my department and the Cabinet has issued drafting instructions with high priority for new legislation in this regard.

1955 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Has the honourable Cabinet Member been consulted in relation to the proposed widening of Trower Road in two stages rather than in one stage? If so, can he tell me what the reasons are for the widening taking place in two stages?

ANSWER

No, I have not been consulted at all with regard to the widening of Trower Road. I am not aware of the reasons for the splitting of the contract. I will make inquiries and advise the Assembly.

1956 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

Could he explain the purpose of the steel work structure being erected on the Fort Hill Wharf?

ANSWER

The steelwork which is being erected on Fort Hill Wharf is for the loading of cattle. Some $26,000 is being spent by the Port Authority on the wharf to enable the loading of live cattle to be handled more easily. At the same time, they are also spending $10,000 on the wharf canteen and facilities for the wharfies. This may erase some of the criticism that I sometimes get that we do not do much for the wharfies. We are spending $26,000 on cattle and $10,000 on wharfies - I reckon that is a pretty good comparison Mr Speaker.

1957 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

The Minister for the Northern Territory has recently announced that Government housing has been made available to certain industrial employees of the Australian Public Service. Can the Cabinet Member advise me what similar arrangements have been made for employees of the NT Public Service?

ANSWER

Identical arrangements are being made for industrial employees of the Northern Territory Public Service. As a result of the transfers powers on 1 January, a number of employees of the Northern Territory Public Service came under our control and are possibly not eligible for housing under the terms that the Minister announced for Australian Government employees. However, I have taken the opportunity to discuss the matter personally with the Minister for the Northern Territory and he has informed me that the employees will be treated on the same basis as if they were eligible employees under any Australian Government Department.

1958 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

In the last month or two, my inquiries as to delays in granting Home Finance Trustee loans has led me to believe that there could be some problems in relation to delegation of functions by the Home Finance Trustee himself. I ask whether the Home Finance Trustee has in fact the power to delegate his functions and, if not, will anything be done to give him such power?

ANSWER

This matter has been brought to my attention as a result of some claims that progress payments and the initial applications for approval were delayed because these matters had to receive the endorsement of the Home Finance Trustee personally. I have asked officers of my department to look at this matter and, if any action can be taken by way of legislative amendment, it will be presented to this Assembly as soon as possible.

1959 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Several months ago, a press release was issued through the NT News that the Tracy Village complex was going to go partly to the Northern Territory Housing Commission, partly to the Corporation of the City of Darwin, and partly to the Youth Hostels Association of Australia. When will a decision be made regarding the future of the Tracy Village complex for those applicants?

ANSWER

The commission's proposals for the future use of the area now occupied by Tracy Village have been put before the Department of Defence which has control over the land in question. Discussions have been held with the department, and the commissions is aware of the need to reach an early decision on the future use of the Tracy Village site. However, at this stage, the Defence Department is still considering the matter and has made no commitment to relinquish control over the area.

1960 Mr STEELE to Dr LETTS

I refer to an ABC broadcast news item this morning in which was stated that the Majority Leader, Dr Letts, has been accused of "running with the hare and hunting with the hounds in his statements on Aboriginal land rights". I ask the Majority Leader if he could either run with the hare or with the hounds and give us the facts.

ANSWER

I am not aware which are the hounds and which are the hare in this case to be quite honest, so it makes it a bit difficult to give a precise answer. I am aware that the person to whom the statement was attributed, Mr Neville Perkins, has not been present at any of the discussions I have had with the Northern Land Council, the Central Land Council, Cattle industry representatives, or in fact any of the parties with whom I have discussed this matter at all. So how he can purport to be an authority on the attitude I take in those discussions, I am not sure.

In relation to the particular matter that I was suggesting to pastoralists that Aboriginals might be able to seize their land either now or when leases expired, I do not believe that I have ever made suggestions in those terms. I have pointed out some of the problems which exist in the administration of the Act as it is affecting and may affect pastoral land in the future. As to the pastoral leases which have been acquired for Aboriginal use such as Wave Hill, Kildurk, Willowra, Mount Allen, Chilla Well - there may be others but those are some of them - I understand that people acting on behalf of the Aboriginal people are putting forward submissions and claims to have this land converted to Aboriginal freehold title. I have made the point that, should this be done, it will have an effect on the pastoral industry. The northern part of the Territory, the Kimberleys of Western Australia and the gulf country of Queensland are going to be faced with grave difficulties within the next 6 or 7 years in trying to carry out a cattle disease control program to keep pace with the rest of Australia. Should it not be successful in doing this, the future of the cattle industry in the northern part of the Territory will be greatly

jeopardised. It could be that within 6 or 7 years export markets will be completely denied to the area and also the marketing of cattle from that area to other parts of Australia. The only way to avoid this is to have a properly coordinated and thorough going disease control program on cattle properties. In order to do this, it is not sufficient just to have the Stock Diseases Ordinance, one has to have the resources with which to carry out the terms of that ordinance. In other words, you must have yards, fences, paddocks watering points and all those other things. If the present pastoral leases which have been acquired by the Aboriginals are converted to freehold title, there will be no way to ensure that proper disease control occurs. It will be entirely optional to the owners under that form of title as to whether they will do anything. This does represent a serious problem for the cattle industry. I have made that point. I have made the point that the granting of claims over the recent crown land areas could cut across land use developments programs which have been established in the last 15 years or so and could have a detrimental effect on pastoral productions there.

It is also true to say that, where a claim has been registered over a pastoral lease, even though it does not take effect in any way, the fact that some people representing Aboriginals have said that if the lease should come on the market for sale the Aborigines will move to acquire it, this in itself has an effect on the negotiability of lease instruments and an effect on the pastoral industry. I have said all these things and I am prepared to stand by them.

Members: Hear, hear.

1961 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

I understand that the Minister for the Environment has announced a housing cost inquiry. Will this inquiry effect the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Approximately one month ago, Mr Newman did announce that the Government was proposing a wide ranging inquiry into escalating land and housing costs in Australia. Following his statement, I advised him that the Northern Territory Cabinet would be keen to have details of this inquiry and to participate in it. At the Housing Minister's Conference last week in Melbourne, the matter was again raised with the state ministers, terms of reference have now been established and the details forwarded to the Prime Minister. I hope that this inquiry will get underway in the near future. I have indicated to Mr Newman that the resources of the Northern Territory Housing Commission will be made available to such an inquiry for any hearings that they might like to hold in the Northern Territory. There is a very strong need for the Northern Territory to participate in any inquiry that is looking at reducing housing costs.

1962 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Has she yet reached a decision on whether the police will be identified either by name or number? If not, when is such a decision likely to be made.

ANSWER

This matter is still under consideration by the Party.

1963 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Has he had expressed to him any concern about drunkenness on the streets of Alice Springs or other Territory centres having a detrimental effect on tourist numbers in the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

During the recent visit that I made to the centre, concern expressed that this was causing a detrimental effect on the tourist industry in Alice Springs. I do not have any figures to support this but it seems to be the opinion of quite a few people in Alice Springs.

1964 Mr DONDAS to Mr SPEAKER

Has there been any development in implementing a retirement benefit and pensions scheme for members of this Assembly?

ANSWER

I have a statement on this matter. After a long period during which was thought that an officer of the Treasury was preparing a retirement benefit scheme for the consideration of members, the responsibility of preparing a proposal was returned to the Assembly. Accordingly, in November 1976, I sent to the Minister for the Northern Territory, a proposal for Parliamentary Retiring Allowances (Northern Territory Legislative Assembly) Act together with a detailed explanation. The draft Act was virtually a copy of the Act giving a contributory pension scheme to members of the Federal Parliament. I asked that this matter

should be on of the references to the Remuneration Tribunal in the hope that it could be dealt with in the tribunal's next review and enacted and implemented before the end of the first Assembly. The Minister for Administrative Services made a formal reference to the Remuneration Tribunal on the 3 March 1977. The honourable Cabinet Member for Resources and I appeared before the tribunal on 4 April 1977 on behalf of all members and the Majority Leader and his deputy represented the Cabinet Members at a hearing on 26 April 1977. The tribunal has the pension scheme before it and it has the services of an expert in this field to assist in its consideration,

1965 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

You may have heard several editions recently of an ABC program called "Broadband".

In the last 6 weeks, I have noticed that certainssegments of the program seem to present only one particular point of view and there does not seem to be any attempt at an even-handed presentation of points of view. Last night's "Broadband" program was nothing but a full-scale, blatant, political attack. Did he hear last night's program regarding Aboriginal land rights and, if so, what action does he propose to take?

ANSWER

I did hear last night's "Broadband" program. I say quite frankly that I was disgusted that a responsible organisation such as the Australian Broadcasting Commission funded by taxpayers' money could present a program in this way. I believe that the ABC has a responsibility to report newsworthy items and controversial issues but it would be expected by the taxpayers that a balanced viewpoint would be presented if there are 2 sides to an argument and that the facts should be kept under control and the hour not devoted largely to the realms of fantasy. Because of the biased nature of the program and certain allegations which were made against individual members of this legislature and the Assembly generally, I am sending a message of portest ot the Prime Minister, the Minister for Post and Telecommunications and to the Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. I am awaiting a transcript of the program which is being prepared. I believe, sir, that I will be speaking to -ou later in this House on possible questions of privilege raised by this broadcast.

1966 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

I refer to a question I placed on notice on December 21 last year and as of May 3 this year it is unanswered. The question sought certain information about appointments to the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Medical Service and Legal Aid. I ask the Cabinet Member Why are those questions still unanswered?

ANSWER

I am unable to say at this stage exactly why they are unanswered but I would tend to consider that the department and possibly the Minister are having some difficulty in being able to furnish all the information required to answer the honourable member's question. Some of the organisations concerned, despite the fact that they are funded principally and primarily by public moneys, have refused to provide certain information to the Minister and to myself in answer to questions raised about them on previous occasions. I dare say that the department is having similar problems in getting all the information to answer the

see questions which are quite reasonable. I will take the matter up again with the department and see if something can be done to pull them into line.

1967 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

How many bailiffs are presently carrying out service and execution of process from the Darwin Court and what delay is there being experienced in having a warrant of execution levied?

ANSWER

This work is still the responsibility of the Commonwealth Police Force and there is presently one senior constable on full time duty. However, local provision has been made for assistance to be given from time to time by one clerical assistant and, additionally, 2 other clerical assistants on occasions. All personnel can give assistance sometime to serve process although they are not designated as bailiffs, and in addition to that, two private firms operate in Darwin doing work which includes service of process. I am sorry I am unable to answer the second part of that question but I will get information and convey it later in the day.

1968 Mr BALLANTYNE to Miss ANDREW

Is the coastline of the Northern Territory patrolled proportionately with that of the Queensland and Western Australia coastline?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

1969 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Who owns the land where the Alawa Oval complex is situated?

ANSWER

The area of land bounded by Trower Road, Lakeside Drive, the Darwin Community College and Rapid Creek is shown as vacant crown land on the Darwin Town Plan and is designated as open town space. Action is being taken to reserve for recreation and amusement of the public the area which includes the three playing ovals and the toilet block. The reserve is to be vested in the corporation. These lakeside ovals are already maintained by the Darwin City Corporation.

1970 Mr TUNGATULUM to Mr PERRON

Has the DRC resumed land at the Humpty Doo tip? If so, what is its proposed use and will the DRC provide an area for a tip?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Tiwi asked this question of me several sittings ago and I asked that it be placed on notice. I do not recall what the answer was. However, I will undertake to find out what the answer was and relay it to the honourable member.

1971 Mr DONDAS to Dr LETTS

Has the Majority Party any intention of accepting ethnic affairs as a responsibility of this Assembly in the new NT Government.

ANSWER

The answer generally is yes. The arrangements now being made between state governments and the Commonwealth in respect of sharing responsibility for migrants and ethnic affairs only came to my notice recently. The Department of Immigration is still responsible for the migration program. When they arrive here, some of the difficulties which are faced by migrants have been taken care of in the past by the Department of Social Security. To a greater extent in the last couple of years, by agreement between the Commonwealth and the states, the state governments have been establishing agencies to look after migrant problems in the community. In all the other states, branches now exist for this purpose and resources are provided by the state government. In Sydney, in the last 6 months, something like 4 new migrant aid centres have been opened by the state government there. At the moment, there are a few staff in Darwin who are working in the migrant aid area advising migrants where to obtain legal advice, where to find interpreters, organising English classes etc. These people at the moment are working for the Department of Social Security. I have already made contact with the Minister for Immigration and I intend to follow this up with the Minister for Social Security indicating our interest in this area. I will be making representations to have this considered, in part at least, as a state-type function so that we may plan to assist the very large migrant community in the Northern Territory in the best possible way.

1972 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Why does the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau no longer service people wishing to travel overseas? I have had many complaints about this issue.

ANSWER

It was a decision of the board that they no longer carry out this function. The function of the board, is to promote tourism within the Northern Territory. There are quite a number of privately operated tourist organisations which cater for this type of business and it was felt that the board should concentrate on the promotion of the Northern Territory.

1973 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

Has the allocation of funds for the creches and child-minding centres in the Northern Territory in the current financial year, 1976-77, been sufficient, or are children being turned away from these centres?

ANSWER

The funding of creches and child-minding centres, particularly those run by community organisations is conducted by the Department of Social Security. My understanding is that it would not matter how much money the department poured into this area, the community could absorb it. Throughout the year, I have had the opportunity of supporting several creche organisations in their efforts to get more federal funding to

enable them to conduct their activities. I believe that some community creches are constrained by their financial resources. One of the problems is tied up with the fact that the consumer is not always able to pay the difference between the cost paid by the Commonwealth and the cost is incurred by the creche organisation and creches, rather than put their fees up and have a selective clientele, keep their fees down and prefer to take as many people as they can. In doing so, they will always be turning people away.

1974 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Has the policy by the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau not to take overseas bookings resulted in loss in revenue? If he does not have the information, would he undertake to provide it later this sitting day?

ANSWER

Quite obviously, if you give away some of the business, you lose some of the money that comes in. The purpose of the Northern Terriotry Tourist Bureau is to promote tourism in the Northern Territory not to run at a profit. My policy will be that the board shall concentrate on the promotion of tourism in the Territory and the selling of tickets is a secondary interest within the Territory. However, I would say that we were able to have a federal Cabinet decision reversed. They had intended to close the interstate offices because they thought that they were not necessary. Obviously, these offices do sell tickets for various tours in the Northern Territory. Many of the smaller tourist operators within the Territory rely very heavily on the interstate office. Once again, I point out that the job of the Tourist Bureau is not to make money but to get tourists into the Northern Territory. Subsequently, those tourists will spend money and this will benefit the Territory.

1975 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Is it a fact that the Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau was not an IATA accredited tourist bureau and therefore all overseas travel being sold by it was at no commission at all until it received its IATA accrediation?

ANSWER

I will have to find out the information.

1976 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

What progress is being made in the government sponsored tourism study of the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

The study is in progress at the moment. Two officers in the tourism section of my department are spending quite a lot of time on the project as are some members of the Department of NT. It will be an ongoing study and will take some time before the results are known.

1977 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

Can he advise when parks and playing fields will be provided for the Braitling School in central Australia?

ANSWER

I have sought this information for the honourable member but have not yet received an answer.

1978 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

What steps have been taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to provide both finance and a site for a new museum in Darwin?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Nightcliff asked a similar question several days ago. The question on that occasion asked for the details since some period in 1974. I have several pages of detailed notes in that regard and I will make it available to the honourable member. This sets out the consequential studies, arrangements and decisions of the Reconstruction Commission. In March 1977, the Department of the Northern Territory took over the investigation for a site for a museum. With regard to the funding, it has been accepted for a long time that an amount of approximately $1m will be required from the Government as an insurance replacement for the building that was destroyed in the cyclone. If the building does not commence by December this year when the Darwin Reconstruction Commission ceases to exist, and I doubt that it will, then the appropriate sponsor for that building will be the Northern Territory Cabinet. The Northern Territory Cabinet has already put forward preliminary suggestions to the Commonwealth Government, as part of its forward estimates, that it would like a museum to be established.

1979 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Is he aware that an application by the Top End Junior Motorcycle Club for a special purposes lease over an area of land where it has been operating now for some years has been rejected after a prolonged series of negotiations, as usual by the Department of the Northern Territory? If the honourable Cabinet Member is aware of this, can he tell me the reasons for the rejection and whether the department is prepared to reconsider the matter?

ANSWER

I was not aware that the application the honourable member referred to has been rejected by the Department of the Northern Territory. However, I will be happy to liaise with him and the people who made the application and see if we cannot get some review of the decision from the department.

1980 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr RYAN

What is the current position regarding reported negotiations between transport owner-drivers and the major hauling companies? Can he advise what effect the successful bid by the owner drivers would have on the cost of goods in the Northern Territory or, alternatively, what would be the effect of the continuity of transport in the Northern Territory if those present negotiations break down?

ANSWER

No negotiations have taken place between the transport operators themselves: the owner-drivers and the transport companies, the freight forwarders, and thus is of course the reason for the dispute. The subcontractors believe that they are being unfairly treated and they have asked to meet with the freight forwarders, or the major transport companies, to discuss the situation and to arrive at a better price per tonne on the goods that they are carrying. This has been going on for some months.

A meeting was arranged initially by the Minister for Transport, Mr Nixon, at which departmental people were present, plus the owner drivers, but the transport companies did not turn up. Subsequently, there has been the threat by the owner-drivers from both South Australia and Queensland that, if Mr Nixon does not organise a meeting by 15 May, then they will cease to deliver goods to the Northern Territory. I have spoken to Mr Nixon on this point several times and he has made it quite clear that the area is not within his control; it is a dispute concerning prices between two companies, you could say - the owner-drivers, who are an industry of individual operators, and the companies themselves. It is out of his jurisdiction. He is concerned about the situation, and I believe that one of the owner- driver organisers rang him yesterday and was keeping him fully informed.

I myself feel that the transport companies should meet with the owner-drivers to see if some arrangement can be made. Of course, if this does not happen, and if the strike goes ahead, we will possible see disruptions. Whether or not they will be able to fill in with other drivers, I do not know. An increase in subcontract rates, according to the subcontractors, should not effect the cost in Darwin because they claim that the major companies do have enough margin to cover a higher subcontract rate. I believe, however, that if an increased rate was forced upon the major companies, we would see an increase in freight costs into the Northern Territory.

1981 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

Is she aware that delays of up to 12 months are being experienced in Darwin in the finalisation of coronial inquiries? Can she inform me when the coronial inquiry into the unfortunate death of the lad Beutel who died recently as a result, we hear, of not receiving treatment from the Darwin Hospital, is to be set down and completed?

ANSWER

I understand on the morning of 13 May.

1982 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

This question is asked on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Community Affairs. When will the motor registry function be removed from the police station in Tennant Creek and established in the district office?

ANSWER

As a result of Cabinet Decision, I have asked my department to look at the rearranging of motor registry procedures in both Tennant Creek and Katherine.

Mr Ballantyne: What about Nhulunbuy?

Mr Ryan: We are not considering Nhulunbuy at this stage although in the future this matter will be taken up. At the moment we are only considering Katherine and Tennant Creek.

When the Motor Registration Branch was under the Department of Northern Territory, it was the intention of the Government to build motor vehicle test sheds at Katherine and Tennant Creek. Our party has decided against this. We feel that it is a waste of money to spend a large amount in erecting a test shed. We feel that this could be more aptly handled by a sub-contractor to let to a local garage to test vehicles. This would be on the basis that tenders would be called for the testing of vehicles for registration purpose and the lowest tender obviously would get the business. People would then attend that particular garage and have their vehicle tested free, the payment being made to the garage by my department. This then brings the other centres into line with Darwin and Alice Springs, where the facilities are now available and we cannot do much about them but they get free testing.

In addition to this, the facility will most probably enable, as in Darwin, other garages to test vehicles. If people cannot get into the official one, they could still go to another garage, the same as they can in Darwin, and pay for the test.

With regard to the payment of moneys, we are hoping to get this function right away from the police and possibly into the district office through the good offices of my colleague, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Government.

1983 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

What progress has been made in regard to the completion of the Casuarina Hospital, and would it be possible for members of this Assembly to make an inspection?

ANSWER

I understand that the construction state of the Casuarina Hospital is in the middle of the concrete pour on the seventh floor. I would think that the workmen, the companies and the department concerned with the erection of the hospital would be delighted at any interest shown by members of this Assembly. If they should like to have a look around, I will ask the Director of Health to organise an inspection tour.

1984 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

Are there any plans available for the proposed extensions to pre school at Nhulunbuy and if so, will they be available to the public? Has the contract been let for the extensions? If so, when will the building commence. Is there an estimated finishing date for that building?

ANSWER

I have been advised that the extensions have been designed for some time and thats when the first designs were completed, the proposal was sent to Nhulunbuy for comment, in about February of 1975. However, further copies of the plans could be made available immediately for interested residents of Nhulunbuy to view. As far as tenders are concerned, it is expected that a contract will be let in the immediate future for this project. The contract completion time is 28 weeks.

1985 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise formally the current statistical position of the cyclone reconstruction loans of the Home Finance Trustee?

ANSWER

In the debate yesterday afternoon on the Home Finance Trustee, I did make certain broad information available. I will provide now the detailed statistical information. This is up to the end of the week ending 29 April 1977 for the 6% concessional loan scheme for the reconstruction of private homes in Darwin. The number of loans approves since the inception of the scheme are 928 with a total value of $28,235,427. Applications not yet approved total 637. It is anticipated that there will be some wastage in this figure as some people will not want to take up the loan for various reasons; for example, if they should leave the Northern Territory. The Minister has announced that the scheme is a commitment of the Government and the people have the right to take them up any time between now and 1980.

The value of progress payments made since the inception of the scheme up to 29 April is $23,966,754.

1986 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

You may have noticed that the city council has been tree planting along the Stuart Highway approaches to Darwin. What steps has the Department of Transport, which owns the railway land adjacent to the highway out as far as Berrimah, taken to co-operate with the city council on tree planting and beautification of the land along the approaches to Darwin?

ANSWER

The DRC are the people responsible for the tree planting. I think the Railways would be doing nothing. Whilst I do not agree with this, I find it fairly difficult to believe that we would be able to induce the Railways to spend money on planting trees along the railway line when in fact they closed the railway line down because of financial difficulties.

1987 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

What state has the program for a recreation lake in central Australia reached?

ANSWER

My understanding is that government departments and organisations in Alice Springs have been looking at the prospect of having a recreation lake in one of 4 sites. I am not aware of any decision that has been taken or any commitments that have been made by government. I will endeavour to get the information for the honourable member later.

1988 Mr MANUELL to Dr LETTS

I have received this morning a report from the Department of Northern Territory Animal Industry and Agricultural Branch. I would draw his attention to page 4 and I would ask if he would request that turnoff figures be provided for the years 1975-76 back to 1967-68. I notice that the populations are listed and there would be some interesting contrasts gained by looking at the turnoff figures.

ANSWER

The honourable member's question should have been directed to the Cabinet Member for Resources. I am sure that honourable gentlemen will endeavour to provide the figures for the member for Alice Springs.

1989 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

I refer to my last question to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Industry. I was rather disappointed with the negative answer but I was interested to hear that the DRC was responsible for planting the palms trees. Will he induce the DRC to plant palms on the railway land as well?

ANSWER

I am sure that the honourable member for Jingili's intentions are well founded but there is a problem of funds in relation to the beautifying and planting of trees. I have no objections to asking the DRC if they could plant trees along the railway line and I undertake to do so. Once again, I am being a little bit negative and I am sorry if that offends the honourable member for Jingili but I thought he possibly would want straight answers.

1990 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise the cost of the landscaping the park on the corner of Bennet and Mitchell Street which I understand was undertaken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?

ANSWER

A similar question was asked by tye honourable member for Casuarina and I have not yet been supplied with details for formal reply. I understand that the contract is part of a park for the entire block which surrounds blocks 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. It was originally let as a tender in 1974 as part of the construction programs that were going on for office blocks in that area. As such, it represented a very small percentage of the Government's construction program in that area. I do not have this authenticated, but I understand the figure is of the order of $110,000.

1991 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Has land been applied for in Central Australia, in both the northern and southern approaches of Alice Springs, to provide parking bays and an information centre for tourists?

ANSWER

Up to the present, nothing has been done to get hold of land, This situation has been discussed by the Tourist Board, I also discussed it with the Tourist Promotion Association in Alice Springs last week and we intend to try to acquire land so that there is a tourist information bay in Alice Springs. Whether there will be one at both the southern and northern ends of the town, I would not like to say at this stage. I was hoping that we could establish one single centre.

1992 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Has a site for the new Casuarina Library been selected and, if so, where?

ANSWER

The siting of the Casuarina Library is very important, because it is one of the major projects being looked at in the coming financial year. A number of sites were looked at in the areas adjacent to the Casuarina Shopping Centre and my understanding is that the site in Bradshaw Terrace, where the current demountables are situated, will be the one that will be approved.

1993 Mr VALE to Mr TAMBLING

Has he any information on the question I asked yesterday concerning 112 Woods Terrace in Alice Springs? If that house is not to be occupied in the near future, will the owner clear the grass which is a fire danger?

ANSWER

I do not usually attend to domestic matters such as grass clearing. The honourable member for Stuart is well capable of ringing up any maintenance officer in Alice Springs and having that matter attended to.

However, with regard to the questions that were asked in the last couple of days with regard to waiting time for government homes in Alice Springs, I do have inofrmation now available. The waiting time for government homes in Alice Springs is 10 months. With regard to the government home at lot number 112 in Woods Terrace, I am advised that this is an executive stype house which has been built to house the medical specialist for the Alice Springs Hospital. Health have been attempting to recruit such a person.

1994 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

Has any further action been taken to have the port facilities of Darwin upgraded?

ANSWER

An inquiry was undertaken last year by the Bureau of Transport Economics. The latest advice I have from the Department of Transport is that that report should be available this month. This will affect some of the decisions that are to be made but I also believe that the Department of Northern Territory have a proposal to go to Cabinet regarding the upgrading of the port.

1995 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

How many residences owned by the Commonwealth of Australia damaged by cyclone Tracy still have to be repaired.

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission's housing program is now estimated to be 73% complete, Work in hand or programmed at this stage involves 2745 dwellings. Completions to date total 2,025, I will make the detailed information available to the honourable member. On work still

to be done, proposals have been considered for work on a further 405 blocks for the Department of the Northern Territory and 340 for defence services.

1996 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

In the light of the recent problems with the toilet blocks at the school at Elcho Island can he tell me if the toilet blocks have been operating effectively since? Has he any indication of the cost of transporting the demountables to Elcho Island?

ANSWER

I am not quite sure whether the ablution block problems Elcho Island have been corrected. I understand that there has been a contract let for the transport and installation of two demountable ablution blocks from Kormilda College to Elcho Island. I am not sure at what stage the transportation and installation has reached. However, the contract price for the transportation and installation was $53,000. The price included provision of power and water to the block and the provision of septic tanks.

1997 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked two questions:

*"Has the Administrator received from the Minister any general instructions as to the reservation for the Governor-General's assent of ordinances made by this Assembly?" and, secondly, "Was any instruction received by the Administrator from the Minister which requires the reservation of the Northern Territory Disasters Ordinance for the Governor-General's assent?"*

I have been in touch with the Administrator and the information he has provided to me is in the same general terms as the answer which I gave to the honourable member for Port Darwin yesterday, that instructions given by the Minister to the Administrator are regarded as the province and property of the parties concerned and the Administrator is not prepared to provide the details of them unilaterally in the way in which this question has sought. I am certain that the honourable member will not be very happy with this answer and I am certain that the Administrator does not have any wish to be obstructive to the business of this Assembly. As the question relates to an instruction from the Minister to the Administrator in both cases, we may find it more productive to direct this inquiry to the Minister himself. The source of any instruction of this nature has been given and, should the honourable member so desire, I am quite happy to redirect this question to the Minister.

1998 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The member for Ludmilla asked a question with regard to the temporary camp at East Point. I have sought information from the Corporation of the City of Darwin which has advised that at its April general meeting a recommendation was accepted that no one he allowed to camp at East Point this year. One caretaker is resident in the area.

1999 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked what action had been taken by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission to replace and upgrade street lighting in Darwin, in particular in Litchfield Street. I am advised by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that a program has been initiated of expenditure totalling $1.4m over a two and a half year period to restore street lighting throughout Darwin. The current program for 1976/77 covers lighting at the following locations: Rothdale Road, Nightcliff Road, Progress Drive, various bus stops and telephone booths, and at intersections involving high mast lighting at Daly and McMinn Streets, Stuart Highway-Bagot Road, Stuart Highway-Goyder Road, Stuart Highway-Ross Smith Avenue, Goyder Road-East Point Road, Bagot Road-McMillans Road, Bagot Road-Trower Road-Nightcliff Road, Trower Road-Rothdale Roads, Trower Road-Vanderline Drive, Lee Point Road-McMillans Road, Rothdale-McMillans Road and at various dangerous intersections and pedestrian crossings, I would advise the honourable member that a temporary light has been erected in Litchfield Street pending the commencement of the next stage of under-grounding power in the city area.

2000 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Arnhem asked about guide posts missing on the approach to the Adelaide River on the Arnhem Highway. The Department of Construction are presently using their resources to repair pavement surfaces and will replace these guide posts as resources become available. This is not expected to eventuate until the next financial year.

2001 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Gillen, asked me a question concerning a possible report on the state of the highways in the Northern Territory, I have chased this up myself and so far as I can establish from officers of the Department of Construction, there is no official report. I believe several senior engineers did drive down the highway and inspected it. This does happen quite regularly, but there is no official report on the state of the highways and roads in the Northern Territory.

2002 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Alice Springs asked about a rumour concerning STD facilities for Alice Springs. The answer that we have received from Telecom is that Alice Springs cannot be provided with STD until facilities are provided between Tennant Creek and Alice Springs and these are expected to be completed in 1978/79.

2003 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Nhulunbuy asked about the Dhupuma Road, Apparently quotes were called to grade the road and there was some dispute over the granting of the contract to the lowest tenders which resulted in some queries back through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Subsequently, the grading of about 1 or 2 kilometres of the road was awarded to the lowest tenderer. There are still 3 or 4 kilometres to complete. The Department of Construction is presently looking at getting quotes for the rest of the work. There was some serious damage done recently during the heavy rains they had over at Gove and

the Department have asked that these be graded forthwith to solve that problem. I would ask that the honourable member for Nhulumbuy contact me if they are not getting a satisfactory result and I will follow it up with the Department of Construction to see if we can get over the problem he continually has over there.

2004 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member from Jingili asked a question concerning the breaking into 2 contracts of the repairs to Trower Road. I have not been able as yet to get confirmation from the DRC on the reasons. I believe that it has been something to do with the money situation. When I get the answer I will pass it in to the honourable member for Jingili.

ABC television transmitter, emergency power (Everingham) 1720
Aboriginal Development Foundation (Lawrie) 1724
Aboriginal land claims, legal aid (Robertson) 1950
Aboriginal land rights, "hare and hounds" (Steele) 1960
Alawa sporting complex (Lawrie) 1927, 1969
Alice Springs -
abattoir, quotas (Manuell) 1904
allocation time government homes (Vale) 1915
approaches, parking bays and information centre (Vale) 1991
municipality road reconstruction fund (Manuell 1949
STD (Manuell) 1928, 2002
Arnhem Highway guide posts (Kentish) 1942, 2000
Assent to ordinances, instructions to Administrator (Withnall) 1946, 1947 1997
Bagot Road congestion (Everingham) 1914
Bailiffs (Everingham) 1967
Base camps by foreign fisherman (Robertson) 1922
Beef producers, freight assistance (Dondas) 1912
Bennett Street Park (Dondas) 1924; (Lawrie) 1990
Braitling School playing fields (Vale) 1977
Brinkin Subdivision (Dondas) 1929
"Broadband" (Everingham) 1965
"Bulletin" article on stud cattle shooting (Vale) 1901
Bylaws of municipal councils (Dondas) 1954
Caravan and demountable auction (Lawrie) 1937
Casuarina High School grounds (Everingham) 1907
Casuarina Hospital (Dondas) 1983
Casuarina library (Dondas) 1992
Cattle numbers in Central Australia (Manuell) 1911
Cattle transport by river (Ballantyne) 1550
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (Vale) 1966
Central Australia, recreation lake (Vale) 1987
Child minding centres, funds (Everingham) 1973
Commonwealth residences, cyclone repairs (Everingham) 1995
Coronial inquiries (Everingham) 1981
Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund reports (Lawrie) 1951
Darwin approaches beautification (Everingham) 1986, 1989
Darwin new gaol (Lawrie) 1948
Darwin museum (Lawrie) 1902, 1978
Dhupuma College road (Ballantyne) 1919, 2003
Director of Health residence, water filter (Dondas) 1626
Disasters Ordinance (Everingham) 1903, 1905
Dripstone High School (Dondas) 1909; (Everingham) 1923
East Point transients camp (Steele) 1925, 1998
Elcho Island School toilets (Ballantyne) 1996
Electricity inquiry report (Everingham) 1920
Electricity supply (Dondas) 1897
Ethnic affairs (Dondas) 1971
Flats corner Cavenagh and Daly Streets (Everingham) 1932
Fort Hill Wharf, steel structure (Ballantyne) 1956
Highways survey (Robertson) 1918, 2001
Home Finance Trustee, delegation of powers (Everingham) 1958
Housing Commission, cyclone damaged homes (Everingham) 1944; (Dondas) 1945
Housing and land cost inquiry (Steele) 1961
Housing loan 6% (Dondas) 1900, 1938, 1985
Humpty Doo Tip (Tungutalum) 1970
Industrial employees housing eligibility (Dondas) 1957
Industrial land auction (Dondas) 1935
Maranboy mining leases (Withnall) 1810
Market in Darwin (Kentish) 1940
Meat marketing authority (Dondas) 1912
Medium wave broadcast bands (Manuell) 1934
Mitchell Street flats, squatters (Withnall) 1952
Motor vehicle licence plates (Dondas) 1931; (Manuell) 1933
Nakara Primary School (Dondas) 1917
Nhulunbuy pre school (Ballantyne) 1984
Northern Territory coastline, patrolling (Ballantyne) 1968
Owner-driver dispute (Robertson) 1980
Pension scheme for MLAs (Dondas) 1964
Plenty River Road (Vale) 1906
Plywood from Burma (Lawrie) 1723
Police identification (Lawrie) 1962

Police station supplies, Central Australia (Vale) 1953
Port facilities (Dondas) 1994
Public Service Commissioner's salary (Everingham) 1916
Reflectorised licence plates (Dondas) 1931; (Manuell) 1933
Residential land auction (Dondas) 1936
Roadworthiness certificate (Lawrie) 1939, 1939A
Secondhand car dealers, licensing (Lawrie) 1908, 1910
Street lighting (Withnall) 1913, 1999
Stuart Highway sealing and road tax (Vale) 1926, 1930, 1943
Tennant Creek, Motor Vehicle Registry (Vale) 1982
Timber Creek Police Station (Steele) 1629
Todd River Bridge construction (Manuell) 1896, 1921
Top End Junior Motorcycle Club, lease application (Everingham) 1979
Tourism and public drunkenness (Manuell) 1963
Tourist Bureau and overseas travel (Lawrie) 1972, 1974; (Everingham) 1975
Tourism study (Dondas) 1976
Tracy village complex (Dondas) 1959
Trower Road, two-stage widening (Everingham) 1955, 2004
Tree planting (Everingham) 1986, 1989
Turn off figures (Manuell) 1988
Woods Terrace, house No. 112 (Vale) 1941, 1993

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

FROM 21 DECEMBER 1976

1628 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Could he please advise the following in respect of -

(1) Central Australian Aboriginal Medical Service;

(2) Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service;

(3) Central Australian Aborigines Congress;

(4) Aboriginal Hostels Ltd, Alice Springs -

(a) The number of persons employed?

(b) Titles and remuneration received, and other employment benefits?

(c) Who is responsible for the hiring and firing of their employees?

(d) Are the organisations' financial records and expenditure subject to any audit requirements, if so what?

(e) Are vehicle records and logbooks kept?

FROM 3 MAY 1977

1895 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Would the Honourable Member arrange for the tabling in this Assembly of an audited set of accounts for the Aborigines Benefit Trust Fund, established under the Northern Territory (Administration) Act, for the years from the year ended June 1973 to June 1977, or such of these accounts as are available at the time of tabling?

FROM 7 JUNE 1977

2005 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

What is the current market value in the Valuer-General's estimation of the land and improvements at Lot 2904 Trower Road Alawa?

2006 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is it a fact that aerial spraying to combat mosquitoes and sand flies is carried out at Nhulunbuy, and if so -

(a) What spray is used and under whose supervision is the work carried out?

(b) What areas are actually sprayed and for how long has spraying on Gove Peninsula been practised?

1722 Mr STEELE to Miss ANDREW

How many persons were breathalyser tested in the Territory in 1976 and what was the blood alcohol concentration reading in each case?

ANSWER

1,627 persons were so tested.

Blood alcohol concentration readings were as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| .08 and under | 220 | .24 | 51 |
| .09 | 22 | .25 | 59 |
| .1 | 60 | .26 | 27 |
| .11 | 74 | .27 | 29 |
| .12 | 68 | .28 | 21 |
| .13 | 73 | .29 | 13 |
| .14 | 74 | .30 | 19 |
| .15 | 89 | .31 | 12 |
| .16 | 114 | .32 | 5 |
| .17 | 107 | .33 | 5 |
| .18 | 103 | .34 | 2 |
| .19 | 86 | .35 | 2 |
| .20 | 84 | .36 | 1 |
| .21 | 67 | .37 | - |
| .22 | 86 | .38 | 1 |
| .23 | 53 | | |

1896 Mr MANUELL to Mr TAMBLING

1. Has the tender for the construction of a bridge over the Todd River been advertised?

2. When will the tender close?

3. When is construction planned to commence?

4. What is the proposed completion date?

ANSWER

1. Yes, on 8 March 1977.

2. Tenders closed on 23 March 1977.

3. On present indications late May 1977 depending on availability of increased funds.

4. Period of contract is 52 weeks from date of acceptance.

1897 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

1. Has the Department of Northern Territory decided that the present Stokes Hill Power Station and subsequent extensions will adequately supply Darwin's power requirements for the next seven years?

2. Has the Department of Northern Territory suspended work on th Environmental Impact Study for Darwin's second power station?

3. Has the Department of Northern Territory shelved plans for a submission to Cabinet so that funds be made available to allow preliminary design work on Darwin's second power station to proceed?

ANSWER

1. No.

2. Yes, pending receipt of the Final Report of the Inquiry into Public Electricity Supply, Northern Territory.

3. Any such decision will be taken following the receipt and evaluation of the Final Report of the Inquiry into Public Electricity Supply, Northern Territory.

1898 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

As from the start of 1977 school year, how many students have been -

(a) suspended;

(b) recommended for explusion;

(c) recommended for permission to leave school before the require age, at: -

(i) Darwin High;

(ii) Nightcliff High;

(iii) Casuarina High?

ANSWER

(a) As from the start of 1977 school year, seven (7) students have been suspended from school:

(i) Darwin High School - 3 students
(ii) Nightcliff High School - 2 students
(iii) Casuarina High School - 2 students.

(b) Since the beginning of the 1977 school year no student has been recommended for explusion from any of the three Darwin High Schools.

(c) Three students have been recommended for exemption from school before the required leaving age since the beginning of term 1:

(i) Darwin High School - 1 student
(ii) Nightcliff High School - 2 students
(iii) Casuarina High School - nil students.

1899 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

1. How many students at Darwin High School -

(a) sat for matriculation;

(b) passed that examination in the following years: 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?

2. How many students at Nightcliff High School

   (a) sat for matriculation;

   (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?

3. How many students at Casuarina High School -

   (a) sat for matriculation;

   (b) passed that examination in the following years: 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976?

ANSWER

Prior to 1974 individual school records were not kept by this Department. Students results were sent direct to schools. Since the cyclone, accurate records cannot be readily obtained. However in 1970 there were 27 students who matriculated. The percentage of matriculants in 1971 was 52%; in 1972, 48%; and in 1973, 52%. Nightcliff High School commenced matriculation in 1972 but did not have a class in 1975 due to the reorganisation following the cyclone. Casuarina commenced matriculation in 1976.

The table below gives the relevant information for 1976, 1975 and 1974.

MATRICULATION

| | DARWIN H.S. | | NIGHTCLIFF H.S. | | CASUARINA H.S. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | No. of Students Who: SAT | MATRICULATED | No. of Students Who: SAT | MATRICULATED | No. of Students Who: SAT | MATRICULATED |
| 1976 | 89 | 31 | 26 | 8 | 36 | 6 |
| 1975 | 123 | 54 | - | - | - | - |
| 1974 | 52 | 27 | 69 | 30 | - | - |

2007 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

I understand that the Federal Government has stated that the Department of Health is studying the subject of ciguatera and that it is following the developments of overseas research centres. Accordingly I ask -

(a) What current research is being carried out by the Department?

(b) Is the Department to conduct marine biological research at Gove, or if not, by whom will this work be undertaken?

(c) Will the Department make available already accumulated information on the problems of a ciguatera at Gove?

ANSWER

No research is being done on ciguatera poisoning by the Department of Health in the Northern Territory or elsewhere in Australia, However, the Department is most interested in the problem particularly in the Gove

area. Extensive research has been carried out, particularly by Professor Banner in Hawaii and by Professor Hashimoto in Japan. The South Pacific Commission is playing a major role in the co-ordination of the research.

However, the research required is of the most detailed nature and the extent of the problem at Gove would not justify the scale of research which would be entailed.

The Department will make available to Mrs Lawrie a paper written on the subject of ciguatera poisoning at Gove.

2008 Mr KENTISH to Mr TUXWORTH

I understand from a news item yesterday that VD is ripe in the electorate of Arnhem. I have heard that children as young as 10 years old are affected. Can the honourable member advise me of the most affected areas and whether the Health Department have efficient resourses to deal adequately with the disease? Are there any special problems associated with the outbreak?

ANSWER

I will provide the information later in this sittings.

2009 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Bearing in mind the motion passed by this Assembly at the last sittings, can he advise whether adequate finance is available to finance the $15,000 Home Finance Trustee loan and, if not, when is it expected that this finance will become available?

ANSWER

The Department of the Northern Territory issued a press statement several weeks ago which pointed out that a large claim had been made on the operation of the $15,000 loan scheme operated by the Home Finance Trustee. In fact, at the end of April, the loans approved during this financial year were just over double those approved in the previous financial year and several financial years before that. The figures also indicated that approximately 111 applications were also on hand. The statement by the Department of Northern Territory alluded to the fact that the Home Finance Trustee was seeking to raise further finance from his traditional commercial lending sources. I have not been advised whether additional funds are required in order to meet the expectations of those applicants but I will seek the information for the honourable member. I would point out that, before the cyclone in Darwin, the average waiting time for applicants under that scheme was about 8 months. I will seek the information and will make it available this week.

2010 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Have the present operators of the Alice Springs abattoirs delayed their announced opening date and, if so, for what reason? What is the revised opening date?

ANSWER

I have not been able to speak to the principals of the abattoir directly but I have spoken to officers of the Department of Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch who have been in regular contact with the abattoir operators. It was hoped that the abattoir would commence killing for the domestic market in Alice Springs on 30 May, however, there have been some delays and that date was not able to be achieved. The company has now decided that it will not commence killing for the domestic market before killing for the export market because it may possibly prejudice the grading of the export licence requirements. It is anticipated that killing will begin in about mid July.

2011 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Can he advise when the freeze on processing applications for

subdivisions of industrial land will be lifted by the Department of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, I cannot advise when this freeze will be lifted. I have asked the Minister for the Northern Territory several times over the past 4 months to lift this unnecessary restriction on the private subdivision of industrial land but I have only received notification from the Minister that he is looking into the matter.

2012 Mr EVERINGHAM to Dr LETTS

No doubt he has seen press reports recently that would indicate that because of the closure of markets in West Germany, the Northern Territory buffalo meat exporters and breeders are likely to be wiped out. At the same time, I have noticed that West Germany appears to be one of countries that are seeking Australian uranium. I would ask the Majority Leader whether it would be possible for him to see, if uranium mining went ahead, that countries such as West Germany were encouraged, at the same time as they sought to purchase our uranium, to lessen their import restrictions on beef and buffalo.

ANSWER

I will use my best efforts to secure that happier situation. I have little doubt that Ministers who are connected with Australian exports will be doing the same thing. I imagine that the Prime Minister on his European trip would be taking that sort of line. I know that the Acting Prime Minister is extremely concerned about what happened with the threatened levy on buffalo meat. I would point out that normal market forces would tend to operate in the other way in that, if we sold uranium to a country and thereby changed the balance of trade situation to that country, it would normally be looking for the right to sell something back to us. In spite of that, we will use our best efforts to secure the future welfare of the buffalo meat industry and the meat industry in general.

2013 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREW

Can she advise whether the uniformed policemen in the Territory will be identified either by name or number? If she is not in a position to so advise, can she advise when the decision is likely to be made.

ANSWER

The answer is no to both questions.

2014 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

Is he aware that R.J. Bennell Constructions Pty Ltd which has remunerative Housing Commission contracts is in serious financial difficulties and cannot pay its debts? Since this company is a foreign company not registered in the Northern Territory, will he provide an explanation as to how the company received the contract in breach of the Ordinance? Is it a fact that the company has a nominal capital only? Is he aware that the persons holding shares in and having the management of R.J. Bennell Constructions Pty Ltd have recently taken over a Northern Territory company registered as Artifax Pty Ltd which is said to be about to receive a further lucrative contract from the Housing Commission? Is it a fact that this company has a nominal capital only and will

he have the matter of the allocation of a contract by the Housing Commission suspended pending investigation of these companies and their personnel?

ANSWER

The issue associated with the R.J. Bennell Pty Ltd have been brought to my attention and I have sought a report from the Housing Commission on the operation. Several of the aspects raised by the honourable member's questions have been previously raised with me and I have also sought the information. As soon as this information is to hand, I will make it available to the honourable member. I will certainly be looking at any further contracts that are proposed.

2015 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Is he aware of the statement made by a senior geologist, Mr Ryan, recently that the Northern Territory mining legislation is the most archaic in the world? Has any review been done on the Mining Ordinance recently?

ANSWER

I did hear reports in the media that Mr Ryan told a recent seminar in Darwin that the legislation was the most archaic in the world. However, officers of the Mines Branch assure me that that is not a true assessment of the legislation because there is other legislation that is more archaic than ours, The Mines Branch has for some time been dissatisfied with the legislation and has had an officer preparing instructions for the draftsmen. This is quite a complex and detailed job and it will take some time even though the officer has devoted a fair amount of time to it over the last 9 months. Recently, there was a meeting between the Secretary of the Department of Northern Territory, officers of the Mines Branch and myself. It was agreed that this work would proceed more quickly and it is hoped that, in the next few months, they will be in a better position to again approach me on the matter. We hope that, in the not too distant future, a total review of mining legislation in the Northern Territory will be completed. In the meantime, there will be a need to effect amendments to the existing legislation.

2016 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

In the past few weeks, I have been approached by members of the liquor and allied trades complaining bitterly about legislation supposedly before the House. They have seen it and I have Could he advise when a redrafted liquor licensing bill will be presented to this House. Secondly, if there is a draft in circulation to the community would he pay the honourable member for Port Darwin and myself the courtesy of showing it to us? We have been asked to comment but we do not know a thing.

ANSWER

I would just like to emphasise that there is no drafting legislation in circulation. However, there has been a great deal of work done by the Legislation and Drafting Section on the preparation of a new licensing ordinance to bring our laws into the era of the 1980s. This ordinance is being drafted along the lines of the Adams Report. As soon as there is a draft, I can assure both honourable members that they will be among the first to receive a copy.

2017 Mr TUNGATULUM to Miss ANDREW

A human body has been found at Cape Fourcroy. Can she give further information on this matter.

ANSWER

It is my understanding that in actual fact possibly six bodies have been found at Cape Fourcroy. This morning a brigade of CIB men and a pathologist have gone over and I would prefer to give further comments when they return.

2018 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

What is the present position in relation to the bringing into operation of the Land and Business Agents Ordinance which was passed by the Legislative Council in 1974,

ANSWER

The Land and Business Agents Ordinance is quite an unsatisfactory piece of legislation to be brought into operation. There has been a great deal of work done on this piece of legislation with a view to ascertaining what amendments are required so that it can be implemented. This work is proceeding but I could not undertake to give a date as to when the amendments will be introduced.

2019 Mr WITHNALL to Mr PERRON

Has the Majority Party adopted the policy expressed in the report of the Select Committee on the Landlord and Tenant(Control of Rents) Ordinance? If so, when will a bill be introduced into the Assembly?

ANSWER

At this stage, the Majority Party is considering the select committee report with a view to its adoption or modification. The honourable member will have further information on this in the near future.

2020 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Is it a fact that the NT Housing Commission has decided to allow eligible tenants to purchase damaged houses and, if so, under what terms and conditions?

ANSWER

A number of honourable members have made representations about the availability of Housing Commission homes to eligible tenants. As a result of the legislation that was recently passed by this Assembly, I asked the Housing Commission Board to reconsider its plans on the sale of substandard homes. The Housing Commission did last week reconsider and has agreed to make substandard homes available to the tenants of those homes provided they meet the other eligibility criteria. This now gives 4 options to an eligible tenant: first, may elect to buy that home for cash but the Housing Commission is not in a position to make mortgage funds available for its purchase; secondly, he may elect to move to a new Housing Commission Home; thirdly, he may elect to transfer and purchase an upgraded Housing Commission Home in a similar suburban location; and, fourthly, he may wait for the home itself to be upgraded and then purchase it with Housing Commission financial assistance.

2021 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is he able to advise me when the long-awaited report from the Australian National Railways on the resiting of the passenger and marshalling yards at Alice Springs will be made available?

ANSWER

I am not aware when or if a report will be made available. I will seek the information and advise the member for Alice Springs later in these sittings.

2022 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

My question concerns the Select Committee Report on Regional Councils for Social Development. What action is being taken as a result of that report and what financial arrangements are being made for regional councils, particularly those in Katherine and Alice Springs, to continue their work in the new financial year?

ANSWER

The full consideration of the report has not yet taken place. However, the principle has been established by the Majority Party that the funding for the continued operation of all councils throughout the Territory will continue. I have met with 3 of the 4 councils to inform them of the finance that will be available to them in the coming period. They will be catered for in the supply bills which will be introduced today. In addition, I also indicated to them that they will no longer be on an open-ended operation. They will be provided for financially on the basis of work and project commitment and they have accepted this ruling.

2023 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING

I preface my question by referring to the recent elections in the third Alice Springs town council. It is now an extended council because there are a number of new members. What plans, if any, has he in mind to provide assistance and advice to that new council.

ANSWER

I would like to indicate that my department and I will be pleased to extend all the usual courtesies and advice to any corporation in the Northern Territory, particularly the new Alice Springs corporation. In addition, I have made arrangements with the new Alice Springs corporation to sponsor a special seminar in Alice Springs on local government on 3 July. The participants at this seminar will include a specialist in local government administration, Dr Michael Jones of the Canberra College of Advanced Education, 2 senior officers of my department, the Director, Mr Godwin, and the Chief Executive Officer of Community Development. I also hope that a representative of the political science section of the Darwin Community College will participate. It is proposed that the seminar will provide basic information on local government for the newly elected aldermen. At the same time I propose to issue invitations to council employees and to members of Aboriginal councils in communities near Alice Springs. I propose to conduct similar seminars at a later date in Darwin and other Northern Territory centres.

2024 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

What is the present position with regard to assent to the Succession Duties Repeal Ordinance which was passed by the Legislative Council some

4 years ago.

ANSWER

The Majority Party supports the principles of the legislation. I understand the Majority Leader issued a statement this morning with regard to this legislation. We will negotiate with the Federal Government with regard to the implementation of suitable legislation.

2025 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Has he made a decision about the Nightcliff Fire Station? Is it to be rebuilt and, if so, to what standard or, if not, what fire appliances are to be housed in the Nightcliff area for use in emergencies?

ANSWER

It is not my intentions to rebuild the fire station at Nightcliff. The Casuarina fire station was originally planned to cover the whole of the northern suburbs, including Nightcliff, Casuarina is presently being repaired and very soon should be back to its complete strength.

2026 Mr TUNGATULUM to Miss ANDREW

Prisoners at Fannie Bay are making artifacts which they would like to send to their wives or relatives but they are not allowed to. Can the honourable member tell me why?

ANSWER

Under the present legislation, all artifacts made by the prisoners during their period of sentence are the property of the Department of Correctional Services. The Department of Correctional Services is unable to sell these but, with the approval of the prisoner, it has sometimes given paintings and pieces of craft work to charity. Since the transfer of powers on 1 January, we have been looking at the feasibility of setting up a trust fund which we can operate so that the prisoners have the opportunity to sell or give away artifacts, providing that they make some contribution to the materials being used. I hope that, in the very near future, I will be able to announce the implementation of this policy to give or hand over work that he had made.

2027 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

I refer to my question number 1895 relating to the tabling of audited accounts of the Aboriginal Benefit Trust Fund. What progress has been made in this matter.

ANSWER

The question asked by the honourable member has been referred to the appropriate authorities. I will check on its progress and inform him later.

2028 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Is he able to advise when he will table a copy of the report of the committee enquiring in the Northern Territory electricity supply?

ANSWER

I have been endeavouring to contact the Minister for Construction and Planning over the last few days to find out when I can expect to receive copies of the report. I have not been able to contact the Minister as parliament is in recess. I have spoken to one of his aides who informed me that, as a result of an accident in Queensland, the delivery of the report to the Minister has been delayed by some 2 weeks. As soon as copies are available, they will be supplied to me.

2029 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr PERRON

Will he investigate the possibility of converting one wing of the Commonwealth Hostel in Katherine to accomodate outback children requiring primary and secondary education?

ANSWER

I will have the matter referred to the appropriate authorities for their assessment.

2030 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

Will he advise me when the report of the Inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance will be tabled in this House?

ANSWER

The investigation was completed a month ago. It anticipated that the report will be tabled at the next sittings.

2031 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

I address my question to the member with responsibilities for education and planning. Could he advise as to the present state of Carpentaria College, its likely future and the date when one can expect something to be done to rehabilitate the present wreck which is a daily invitation to marauding and irresponsible members of the public?

ANSWER

I will correct the honourable member that I have liaison responsibility for education and planning and not responsibility for education and planning and there is a very real difference. I will seek the information for which the honourable member has asked. Perhaps it would be advisable for her to place the question on notice.

2032 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Is he aware that a group of federal and state politicans were travelling by bus to Alice Springs last weekend and that, during the course of that journey, the bus experienced mechanical failure? Is it a fact that the mechanical failure occurred near Coober Pedy and was the mechanical failure a result of the condition of the road? Since the tour of inspection was largely for the benefit of Northern Territorians, does he consider that a note of apology to members of that tour would be in order in case they experienced inconvenience and discomfort and also will he send a letter to the South Australian Government expressing his dissatisfaction at the state of the South Australian section of that road?

ANSWER

I wish I could answer that by saying yes but I do not know what sort of trouble that would get me into. I was aware that state and federal politicans were travelling to Alice Springs via that particular stretch of road, I did have an invitation to go myself but I declined. I did not think I had anything really to learn because I am well aware of the state of the roads,

It may have been better for the people in the bus if I had have gone as a mechanic because I may have been able to fix the mechanical failure. I do not think we should apologise because the road is in South Australia. I think the honourable gentleman who visited the weekend before last should be making some apologies for the state of the road.

2033 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr POLLOCK

Would he advise the result of the much publicised pilgrimage to the "holy city" Canberra for the purpose of urging a decision on the proposed Alice Springs refinery?

ANSWER

Along with the honourable members for Stuart and Alice Springs, I did go to Canberra and had meetings with the Minister assisting the Treasurer, the Minister for the Northern Territory and officers of his department concerning the proposed Alice Springs refinery, I was quite happy with the talks and I am much more confident that decisions will finally be made and that the companies concerned will be able to move forward with a little bit more certainty, I was a little sceptical at first about going but I am quite happy that the trip was very worthwhile. I am quite confident that, as the results of the talks last week and the remarks of the Minister for National Resources in Alice Springs the previous weekend, the refinery project is much more a goer now than it was 10 days ago.

2034 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr POLLOCK

In order that I can avoid that particular store, could he tell me where he bought his coat.

ANSWER

I bought it from a reputable Swanson Street trader,

2035 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Is it true that a contract has been let to underground the electricity supply in Tiwi and, if so, who is the contractor and when is the contract likely to be completed?

ANSWER

I will undertake to obtain the information.

2036 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise where and when the next Rural Road Conference will be held?

ANSWER

Yes, if I had brought the piece of paper across with me. I will give the information later.

2037 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Did the Minister for Transport appoint a committee last year to inquire into costs and standards associated with the construction of the Tarcoola to Alice Springs standard gauge rail link? If he did, has the inquiry concluded anything about the costs and standard of construction or made any report?

ANSWER

I am not aware of whether or not the Minister for Transport did undertake to inquire into the costs. I will obtain information for the honourable member.

2038 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

How many breaking and entry officers have taken place within the town of Alice Springs in the last 6 months and what steps are proposed to reduce these offences?

ANSWER

I have had some warning of this question so I do have some facts before me. There were 79 break and enter offences reported in the commercial area of Alice Springs during the last 12 months. Of these, 9 were committed by juveniles, 5 by adults and the remaining 65 offences are yet to be cleared up. The area is patrolled as frequently as possible to prevent this type of offence. Indeed, foot patrols in conjunction with mobile patrols are carried out in this area as frequently as staffing permits.

2039 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Will the Daly Waters Hotel be supplied with electricity after 30 June this year?

ANSWER

There are only 2 consumers at Daly Waters at present and this has been the case for some period. The Department of the Northern Territory has decided that it is uneconomical to continue supplying electricity to the area on a public electricity supply basis. They have advised the two consumers concerned, the police station and the hotel at Daly Waters, that supplies would be terminated on 30 June. This notification was given verbally by phone on the 29 March this year and followed up by a letter on 1 April. The consumers will have to make their own arrangements about alternative supplies. However, the instructions that have been given are such that the power supplies will not be cut off by throwing a switch at midnight on the 30 June if it is felt that the consumers have not had reasonable time to arrange alternative supplies.

Thus, I believe that power probably will not be terminated on the night of 30 June unless the consumers have alternative power supplies.

2040 Mr TUNGATULUM to Miss ANDREW

With the increase of population in the Howard Springs and Humpty Doo area, what plans are being made to establish a police station in the area?

ANSWER

As with all areas where population is growing, the matter is being looked at but there is no immediate proposal to put a police station in the Howard Springs area. However, the matter is being reviewed.

2041 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

What subdivisions and how many blocks of land are expected to become available to the public at auction during the years 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1980 in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

I have had some forewarning of this question and I have some details. Lots are expected to become available for auction to the public in the Darwin area as follows: In 1977, approximately 60 blocks from Wulagi subdivision: in 1978, approximately 140 blocks from Malak stage 1 subdivision: in 1979, approximately 20 blocks from the Milner subdivision and approximately 50 blocks from the Malak subdivision; in 1980, approximately 80 from Malak stage 2 subdivision and approximately 100 from Kerama subdivision. The above does not take into account blocks in the existing service lot areas. Some of these should be available to support the 60 lots from Wulagi to be auctioned during 1977. Also, as the 222 lots currently being used for demountables become available in 1979, this will assist the short fall for auction in that year.

2042 Mr TUNGATULUM to Miss ANDREW

Can she advise the number of times patrol cars visit the Howard Springs and Humpty Doo areas?

ANSWER

I understand that patrol cars go into that area once a day. Traffic patrols are conducted at random, particularly over the weekend when the traffic through the area is increased.

2043 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Is he able to advise me what decision the Education Department has made on the use of Nakara School?

ANSWER

I attempted to have answers to this question and one or two others on education here this morning, but they have not been able to be prepared in time. I will undertake to have the answers submitted later during this sittings.

2044 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

Can he advise whether or not the contract has been let for the construction of a bridge over the Todd River and, if not, can he advise when it will be let?

ANSWER

So far as I know the letting of the contract should be announced within the next week or so.

2045 Mr ROBERTSON to Miss ANDREW

I apologise for the length of this question but it arises out of comments made by Mr Justice Muirhead in his reasons for judgment in the matter of an appeal against sentence filed on behalf of a minor previously sentenced in the Alice Springs Children's Court. His Honour's remarks refer to the failure of that child to successfully enter into a bond with surety at Papunya on 13 January this year. The matter has been given wide national publicity and it is a matter that should be raised before this Assembly. I ask the honourable Cabinet Member is it not a fact: that the boy was represented at Papunya by a solicitor from Aboriginal Legal Aid; that there were a total of 139 individual charges dealt with by the magistrate at Papunya on the day in question and that, as a result, bond documents could not be prepared until the rising of the court; that a willing surety had in fact been found; that the surety and the convicted boy were abandoned by the representative of Aboriginal Legal Aid before that solicitor was satisfied that her clients interests had been properly looked after; that because of that neglect the surety disappeared from the precincts of the Papunya court and, despite all efforts by police, could not be found; and that the solicitors from Aboriginal Legal Aid made absolutely no subsequent inquiries whatever to any of the officers of the Alice Springs Police Station, the Clerk of Courts, the Alice Springs Gaol or anyone else, to ensure that they had discharged their duty to their young client.

ANSWER

It seems to be saga of failures. The boy was represented at Papunya by a solicitor of Aboriginal Legal Aid. I understand that there were a total of 109 individual charges dealt with on that day and, as a result, the bond documents could not be prepared until the rising of the Court. A surety had been found who, I understand, was a brother of the defendant and he was asked to wait. However, with the preparation of the documents associated with the sitting of the Court that day, the waiting time no doubt was considerable and on 13 January no doubt the temperature was rather high in Papunya. The solicitor of Aboriginal Legal Aid, according to my information, talked to the defendant just prior to leaving Papunya by plane and assured him that a surety had been found and it would be simply a matter of time waiting for the document to be prepared. By the time the documents were prepared, the surety was not to be found even though the police spent hours during the night looking everywhere around the Papunya area. There were no inquiries made by Aboriginal Legal Aid on 14 January or subsequently to ensure that recognizance had been duly entered into and that the fellow had been released. Because the papers were completed in Papunya and did not need to be done in Alice Springs, the matter was therefore not brought to the attention of the Clerk of Courts in Alice Springs so she had no idea of the situation.

2046 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Can he supply me with any information regarding government policy con cerning the extension of time for residential lease covenants in relation to lots sold at auctions for single dwelling constructions?

ANSWER

I have had a reply from the Minister to a request I put to him that he consider altering the time which is required for compliance with covenants on land which will have single dwelling units constructed on it. He told me that the existing situation whereby the purchaser of a block is required to commence construction within 12 months and finish within 2 years is believed by himself and his department to be a good policy and preferable to the proposal I put to him that the time constraint be 2 years to commence and a further 2 years to complete. I find the Minister's answer somewhat unsatisfactory from my party's point of view. I will endeavour to take the matter up with him and with officers of his department to see if we can not have them take into consideration the fact that the situation has changed somewhat from when these covenants were first established. It is difficult to obtain sufficient initial capital these days to purchase the block of land - and they cost anything from $8,000 to $12,000 and even more for a residential block - and within a 12 month period also obtain sufficient finance to pay a deposit on $40,000 or $50,000 house. This is a pretty unrealistic proposition for the average young couple in the community. I hope to prevail on the minister to change his mind.

2047 Mr TUNGATULUM to Dr LETTS

Is he aware of the moves by people at Bathurst and Melville Islands to have their own land council? Can he assure my people that the Majority Party support us to establish this council?

ANSWER

The Majority Party has always supported in the promulgation of legis lation for Aboriginal land rights the primary place of the traditional owner in the scheme of ownership and adminisration. In the federal act, the provision is made for land councils to assist the traditional owners and clearly they are the administrative agents and servants of those traditional owners. Provision is also made for the establishment of more than the 2 initial land councils on application to the Minister. Within the system which is laid down in the act, the closer that land councils can get to the traditional owner groups, the more effective should be the co-operation and misunderstanding should be minimised. The Tiwi people have had this concept under consideration for a couple of years. They have discussed it and the matter has been put to a vote among the Tiwis on a number of occasions. On a recent occasion, I was present at Garden Point when this issue was canvassed. There is no doubt in my mind that there is a very strong feeling among the Tiwi people that they wish to have their own land council even though they may choose to use the services of a central body in Darwin such as the existing land council. While that is their view, the Majority Party will give them strong support in that move.

2048 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

Could he tell me why we have had so many breakdowns on the Tropo Scatter communications system to Nhulunbuy? Is this the aftermath of cyclone Tracy or are we going to continue to have these breakdowns? We have all

the modern technology in the world and I am just wondering whether this matter is being overlooked.

ANSWER

I have not had the time to confirm this but I believe the problem exists because the transmitter is operated by an emergency generator set which has to undergo service. This is the reason that they do have interruptions. The question of the facilities over at Cox Peninsular are still up in the air although there does seem to be some indication that the Federal Government intends to reactivate the facilities over there and I am now speaking about general facilities relating to Radio Australia. I know unofficially that they are in the process of purchasing further generating equipment for the area and I would assume this could possibly alleviate the problem and could be tied up with the eventual rehabilitation of the whole complex on Cox Peninsula. I certainly hope so.

2049 Mr TUNGATULUM to Dr LETTS

Can he advise me of the conditions under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act under which the Catholic Church may continue to hold leases on Bathurst and Melville Islands.

ANSWER

The Aboriginal Lands Right Act provides for the declaration of certain land to be Aboriginal land in the first schedule and that includes Bathurst and Melville Islands. It provides for the title to be issued when a trust has been setup. It provides, I think in section 18, that where a mission existed by licence or permission before such time, that mission can continue in occupation and use of the land. However, it also provides in section 18 that a land council can direct the land trust to terminate the lease of the mission at a date no earlier than 12 months after the date of service of the notice. Thus, whilst they have immediate rights to continue occupation and use, a land trust at the direction of a land council could terminate that use at 12 months notice. There is provision in such cases for payment of compensation for facilities that are established there. There is a further provision for the granting by a land trust of leases to mission authorities in the place of their existing tenure but the term of such leases is not to exceed 5 years.

2050 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

How many new houses has the Housing Commission allocated to tenants since 1 January this year? What is the current waiting period for Housing Commission homes both in Darwin and in Alice Springs.

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

2051 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

Will copies of the second Fox Report be made available to members of this Assembly?

ANSWER

It is not possible at this time to give all members a copy of the second Fox Report. They have available to them the copy which was tabled and there are some 4 or 5 copies available for those who wish to study the subject before the debate comes on. The arrangements that were made for the distribution of the second Fox Report did not include the Assembly Executive or any Assembly members. As I understand it, the bulk lot of copies which came to the Northern Territory came through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, presumably because that department had a representative on the expert panel advising Mr Justice Fox. I do not know that any other Department received any bulk copies at all. We have obtained from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs apparently all the copies which we were able to get from that source. There were some available in shops for sale at $10 or more a copy, I understand that those copies have now been exhausted for the time being. My office has further copies on order and I am not quite sure when they will arrive. As soon as they do arrive, I will endeavour to make copies available to each member. In the meantime, we will have to do the best we can by sharing the copies that are available.

2052 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

On 17 November 1976, I asked question 1582: "On Sunday 17 October at 8.45am, I had reason to visit the Casuarina Fire Station as the dash board of my vehicle was on fire. I had a small electrical fire and I pulled into the Fire Station thinking that they would be of some assistance. Unfortunately, there were no fire extinguishers at the station. Can the Executive member tell me why not?" The member replied at the time that there was not one handy. Are there fire extinguishers at the Casuarina Fire Station now?

ANSWER

I do not make it a practice to call at the Fire Station regularly to check to see if they have fire extinguishers available. I have a chief officer who looks after those matters, I will ask him if there is a fire extinguisher available at Casuarina and if not, whether he could make one available to ensure that, should the honourable member for Casuarina's car or any one else's car catch fire, they could be put out. There are other methods of putting out fires, some of which the honourmember may not like.

2053 Mr TUNGATULUM to Mr TUXWORTH

Is the Consumer Protection Council making any efforts to reach the 25% of the Northern Territory population who are Aborigines and require special attention because of literacy problems?

ANSWER

The Consumer Protection Council in the coming 12 months will embark on an increased program of education amongst all Territorian . One of the weaknesses that the council feels in its present provision of services is that it does not cater adequately for the needs of Aboriginals. They have undertaken to look into this and see what form of education they can provide and how extensively they can offer it within the limits of funds available to them.

2054 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Even if there is likely to be assurfeit government housing available in the next 6 months, is it likely that some of these homes will be offered to the Commission or is it likely that a single housing authority can be brought into being earlier than otherwise expected?

ANSWER

The issues raised by the honourable member are under active consideration The Northern Territory Cabinet has formulated a policy with regard to a single housing authority and has put forward certain proposals to the Minister for the Northern Territory. It would like to see the Housing Commission becoming that authority by way of transferring certain housing stock from the government pool and arranging suitable financial terms and conditions. The various officers of the Northern Territory Public Service are currently holding negotiations and discussions with officers of the Department of the Northern Territory to tender advice to Mr Adermann to enable an early resolution of this matter. I would hope that, if there are any surplus stocks arising from the government building programs, houses of this type can be made available as quickly as possible.

2055 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

My question relates to an answer I received yesterday concerning the introduction of a new liquor and licensing bill. Could he advise the probable date of introduction of that legislation? Having regard to the expected life of this Assembly, can he assure us that there is time for the introduction and passage of that legislation before this Assembly expires?

ANSWER

At the risk of being difficult, I cannot give the honourable member the assurance she is looking for.

2056 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH

What plans does the Government have for converting the unused buildings of the North Australia Railways in Katherine into a detoxification centre?

ANSWER

I have no knowledge of any plans to turn those buildings into a detoxification centre. I am aware that the Regional Council in Katherine that operates a detoxification operation is looking for alternative premises but I have no other information on that.

2057 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

What aid, if any, has his department given to the Darwin Regional Tourist Promotion Association plan for a "Back to Darwin Week" in May 1978?

ANSWER

I attended a recent meeting of this particular group which is doing a pretty good job in organising the "Back to Darwin Week" for next year. One of the problems they have concerns the promotional side of the

event. I have asked that the Northern Territory Tourist Bureau take up the matter and assist, wherever possible, in promoting the forthcoming event with posters etc. It will be a fairly important event for Darwin and it will affect other parts of the Territory because anybody coming to Darwin has to go through the rest of the Territory. We believe many people will be travelling by car and we are giving all the support that we possibly can to that particular event.

2058 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH

What is the latest information regarding the future of a new gallery and has land been made available to the Museums and Art Galleries NT?

ANSWER

I am aware that the Museums and Art Galleries Board have had discussions with officers of the Department of the Northern Territory and have come to an amicable conclusion over the provision of a block. I am unable to tell the honourable member where the block is and when it will be developed.

2059 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

My question relates to the pedestrian crossing on Trower Road near the intersection of Francis Street. The honourable Cabinet Member would be familiar with that intersection because, under the redistribution, it will be in his new electorate. In the light of the considerable use of that pedestrian crossing by school children from the Millner Primary School and St. Pauls School and the number of accidents which have occurred to people using the cross-over, is consideration being given by his department to either the installation of lights or a pedestrian walk-over similar to the Ludmilla one?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Jingili has a fairly valid argument for provision of some sort of system but whether or not money could be made available for an over-pass, I do not know, Certainly, the situation that exists there at present is unsatisfactory and, with the advent of the Rapid Creek shopping centre, many more people are using the crossing and crossing the road at a number of places. The council propose to upgrade that section of the road shortly and this will also cause problems during the construction period. However, I will take the matter up with the planning people to see if something can be done and no doubt I will continue to take an interest in the area after my re-election.

2060 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

Does the fire department have a program during this dry season to burn off uninhabited blocks?

ANSWER

It is generally the fire brigade's intention to burn off any uninhabited blocks or any blocks that are overgrown with grass. It could also be their intention in some cases to charge owners of blocks. If a complaint is lodged, the opportunity is given to the owner to clean up the block himself. If he takes no action, in the interests of safety the fire brigade then burn the scrub off the block and send the bill to the owner.

2061 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he advise the status and future of Carpentaria College?

ANSWER

I cannot answer the question the honourable member asked yesterday. We had an extremely busy day yesterday and I have not been able to get the answers from the Department as yet.

2062 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Dr LETTS: The honourable member for Port Darwin yesterday asked a question without notice relating to a question on notice 1895 which dealt with the call for tabling in this Assembly of an audited set of accounts for the Aboriginal Benefits Trust Fund. Since I rose to answer that question yesterday, I have received some information which I would normally add to the answer to the question on notice. The information indicates that audited accounts for the Aboriginal Benefits Trust Fund are not available as the Auditor-General is not required to carry out a full audit of the fund as is the normal practice for commercial enterprises. This information from the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs then goes on to give a number of references to the Auditor-General's report which apparently it was thought may throw some light on the subject. However, I find that, of the 15 references given, 12 of them are inaccurate and evidently give the wrong page numbers. I will have to refer the information received from the Minister back to him to ask him for some clarification before I can present the honourable member with a final answer.

Mr Withnall: Don't worry. They are not audited.

2063 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: I would like to provide information relating to a question asked of me yesterday by the honourable member for Port Darwin. The question related to a certain company R.J. Bennell Constructions Pty. Ltd, and its arrangements with the Northern Territory Housing Commission. There were a number of issues raised in the honourable member's question The Housing Commission has advised that R.J. Bennell Constructions Pty Ltd is in financial difficulties and that Shepherd and Partners accountants of Darwin are acting as unofficial managers. With relation to the question about the registration of a foreign company, the company R.J. Bennell Constructions Pty Ltd by signing a contract with the Commission was in breach of the Companies Ordinance by not registering as a foreign company in the Northern Territory. In relation to capital, as at 30 June 1975 - which I gather must be about the date in which the terms for the original contract were arranged - the authorised capital of R.J. Bennell Constructions Pty Ltd was $10,000 with issued capital fully paid amounting to $2. A further question related to whether a company by the name of Artifax Pty Ltd was about to receive a further contract. The Commission has no dealings with a company called Artifax Pty Ltd. However, a company known as Artifacts Pty Ltd has tendered for commission contracts but is not about to receive a contract from the Housing Commission. It is not known what the authorised issued or paid-up capital of Artifacts Pty Ltd is due to the fact that this information is only required when a contract offer or acceptance is to be made. The final question was whether I would have any proposed contracts suspended pending an investigation. The Housing Commission will not enter into contractural arrangements with either

Artifacts Pty Ltd or Artifax Pty Ltd pending an investigation into these companies and their personnel.

2064 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Casuarina asked if a contract had been let for the undergrounding of electricity in Tiwi and, if so, who had received the contract and when it would be completed. The contract has not been let for undergrounding of electricity in Tiwi. A decision to award a contract for either underground or overhead reticulation of the electricity supply is expected to be taken about the end of this month.

2067 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Is it a fact that Berkeleys relinquished the Darwin school ground maintenance contract for 1977 because it underestimated the job and were rewarded the contract when tenders were called a second time even though they were not the lowest tenderer?

ANSWER

The answer to the question is yes. Berkeley Cleaning Company withdrew from their original contract for school ground maintenance for 1977-78. Tenders were recalled and Berkeley Cleaning Company, with the approval of the permanent head of the Department of Education, were re-awarded the contract.

2068 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Is it the intention of the Department of Primary Industry to have an inspection of the upgraded Alice Springs Abattoirs upon the completion of the current works? If it is satisfied with the inspections, is it the intention of the department to grant that abattoirs an export licence and, if so, to what standard. If it is granted an export licence to US standards. is it intended that the Alice Springs Abattoirs will be permitted to participate in the current US beef quota?

ANSWER

If the Alice Springs Abattoirs proprietors apply for an export licence, officers of the Department of Primary Industry would certainly inspect the premises and officers of the United States Government would also inspect the premises. I understand that there is only one standard of export licence at the moment and that is the standard which satisfies United States Government requirements. As to whether they can participate in a quota, I understand that the company has applied to the Meat Board for a special quota in respect of the Alice Springs Abattoirs. This matter has not been finalised to any degree. There is considerable conjecture whether the company does have ways and means within its own structure to be able to allocate some of its meat towards the United States market. However, I do believe there is a substantive case for the granting of some special quota to the Alice Springs Abattoirs for the United States market. I have conveyed those sentiments to the Chairman of the Meat Board as recently as today.

2069 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

Is he aware of the value of the used railway line to the pastoral industry for yard and fence building? Is he also aware the Railways have sold all the used rail in the Top End for export? What representations has he made or can he make to ensure that this valuable commodity is available to the pastoral industry?

ANSWER

I have received some representations expressing concern that much of the used railway line, which is of considerable value to the pastoral industry for fence building and yards and grids, has been sold for export and that there is very little left for use in the Top End. I understand there is a considerable quantity of unused railway line in a stockpile here in the Darwin area and no doubt in other places along the railway. I have made representations to the Commissioner of Railways that, if this rail is of no use to them, some consideration should be

given to allowing pastoral interests to have first chop of the cake before they dispose of it by export.

2070 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr RYAN

Could he advise if it is a fact that, if the Nightcliff Fire Station is closed, the areas of Nightcliff and Ludmilla North will be more than 3 miles by road from the nearest fire station and this distance is outside the guidelines laid down for urban fire control.

ANSWER

I believe that the areas referred to will be within 3 miles, I will check the matter and advise if that is a fact. However, if they are slightly outside of the 3 miles limit, I doubt whether this will change my intention not to have the Nightcliff Fire Station rebuilt. I might add that the fire station has not worked since the cyclone and everything seems to be operating satisfactorily. I have had no representations from the residents of either Nightcliff or Ludmilla nor have I ever had any representations from the honourable member for Nightcliff so I would assume she has not had any complaints about the lack of a fire station.

2071 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

Does the Department of Education promote sex education in schools? if so, is the subject compulsory and are the teachers involved qualified in this field?

ANSWER

The Department of Education does promote sex education in schools. However, such subjects are not complusory for students. The department holds in-service training inconjunction with the Family Planning Association for teachers involved in sex education.

2072 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON

Is he aware that there have been some recommendations made by the Minister for Education or his department that existing plans for the upgrading of the Ross Park Primary School be shelved? Is he aware that there is a recommendation in the plans to establish a Sadadeen Primary School? Is he aware that the basic criterion for the decision appears to be cost and is he aware that, if adopted, this will still leave students at the Ross Park Primary School without adequate library and other facilities considered essential by parents and teacher bodies? Finally, has the proposition been discussed with the parent teacher body at that school and, if so, what was their reaction?

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow this question but I do request that lengthy questions be placed on notice.

Mr PERRON: I do not have details of the matters the honourable member has raised. However, I will undertake to investigate the matter and report to the honourable member during this sittings.

2073 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

I refer to the City Corporation's policy of sidewalk beautification in some suburbs. What does the council propose to do to the footpaths that

are not planted with lawn because the residents refuse to co-operate? Are there any special arrangements for those people who do not co-operate?

ANSWER

This is a policy matter for the Darwin City Corporation. I will seek the information and make it available to him.

2074 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

What plans has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for the 5 wrecked houses in Packard Street which have been an eyesore since the cyclone and with respect to which no reconstruction work has been performed?

ANSWER

The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has details of all of the substandard housing owned by the Government in the Darwin area and has categorised that housing into various groups. Much of the work is to be undertaken in the 1977-78 financial year. I will seek the specific information with regard to the 5 houses in Packard Street and make it available to the honourable member.

2075 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

How much finance does the Regional Council for Social Development require to operate their Darwin organisation satisfactorily for the period 1 July 1977 to 1 October 1977?

ANSWER

I have already had discussions with officers of the regional council in Darwin and they have intimated that they will be seeking $14,000 for July, August, September in this coming financial year. I have every reason to assume that they will get the money and, if there is any further information required by the member relating to this finance, I will be only too pleased to supply it.

2076 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he adivse as to the status and future of Carpentaria College?

ANSWER

The honourable member asked this question last week. The Department of Education informed me that the matter rests with the church concerned and the Department of Northern Territory. I have yet to pursue the matter with those bodies.

2077 Mr WITHNALL to Mr TAMBLING

Has the Reconstruction Commission approved of the erection of 3 silo-type structures on land overlooking Kahlin Bay?

ANSWER

As one of the residents in the properties immediately below the silos, I am very well aware that they have appeared in the area adjacent to the Darwin Hospital. In fact, one of my neighbours at first thought the Darwin Hospital had extended its boundaries for its boiler room

operation. However, I will find out what Building Board permits have been issued. I am sure that the owner of the property, a local Darwin architect, will be well aware of the requirements to obtain building permits.

2078 Mr STEELE to Mr RYAN

Is he aware that visitors to Australia disembarking through the international terminal at Darwin Airport are not afforded the use of a luggage carrier or any other conveyance to move their luggage from the customs area to the car park? If this is correct, would he advise the Department of Transport that a suitable conveyance for the carriage of luggage is not just desirable but essential?

ANSWER

I will speak to the Department of Transport officials at the airport to see if anything can be done.

2079 Mrs LAWRIE to Miss ANDREWS

I refer to an article in the NT News of Wednesday 8 June relating to the acquittal of constable James Anthony Ryan. Mr Ryan has been under suspension from January and, following his acquittal, he is entitled to arrears of pay for those 5 months. Will she advise his present status within the Northern Territory Police Force and whether he is entitled to superannuation rights if he is not to continue in that force.

ANSWER

I understand that this particular officer's suspension is being lifted and that the salary to which he was entitled during the period when he was under suspension is to be paid as soon as possible. The officer has applied to be retired on medical grounds and his rights for superannuation will be the same as anybody else who would be entitled to superannuation under such circumstances.

2080 Mr KENTISH to Dr LETTS

In a news report today I heard a remark attributed to Mr Justice Kirby that it had been accepted that Australia would be a multi-cultural, multi-lingual society. Considering the context of his remarks, I presume that it would also be offically multi-lingual and have more than one law structure. Can he inform me whether this is the present policy of the coalition party in Canberra and how long have they had this policy?

ANSWER

I see no conflict between a statement that a country will be multi-lingual and multi-cultural yet in fact still remain one nation. I think that the United States and a number of other countries and federations in the world give evidence of that.

I do not see the reference under the act for the Law Reform Commission to investigate the place of Aboriginal law in the Australian legal code as being in any sense a direction to that eminent body to establish such a place. It is their job to investigate the matter. I sincerely hope that, while there may be some special situations which may require special treatment of Aboriginal people, we will still have one legal

code for all Australians and I believe that is the policy of the coalition party.

2081 Mr STEELE to Mr POLLOCK

I refer to recent media reports that indicate that there is a move to again provide a market place for local growers. Will the market be funded by the new Northern Territory government? Will the City Corporation fund the proposed market? Will the market be funded by non-ratepayers? Will he make a statement about these proposals so that tax and ratepayers will know what their liability is likely to be?

ANSWER

There is a move to establish in Darwin a farmer's market. The member for Ludmilla should know from statements I have made here and statements by the Mayor that it is not envisaged that funding for the market will come from the Northern Territory government. Funds for the establishment of the market will come from the municipality which derives its funds from the taxpayers, My understanding is that those who use the market will be required to contribute towards its operating costs and one would hope that the market would be successful enough to at least break even in its operation. If it does not, the ratepayers may have to assist in financing it.

2082 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

Is it true that the manufacture of the "Darwin Stubby" by local brewery is to be discontinued?

ANSWER

It is not true. There is no doubt that the continued production of the item known as the "Darwin Stubby" was certainly under threat earlier this year. The Australian Standards Association, a body made up of industry and government officials, met to set standards relating to the volume of packages that were being produced in this country and the volume of the "Darwin Stubby" was not included in this schedule of sizes. At a conference in Melbourne last week, an officer of my department presented a case on bahalf of the Northern Territory and Northern Territory Brewers pointing out that the "Darwin Stubby" was a very important tourist gimmick to the north and one which we feel should be maintained. By all accounts, we have won the case. The Standards Association has accepted in principle the fact that the production of the stubby by glass manufacturers should continue till 1987 at least or until the dies wear out whichever comes first.

2083 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he advise if and when demountable housing units become available through the Department of Northern Territory they will be offered to the Housing Commission as interim accommodation for needy families or can he advise whether any such policy decision is under condsideration or has been made?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Housing Commission already has a considerable stock of demountable units which are owned by the Australian Government and they have been using these units for the provision of accommodation to needy people ever since they have been available. The Department of the Northern Territory is also conducting a major review of the disposal

or relocation of demountable units and other caravan units as a result of the reconstruction program in Darwin. I am aware that further units are being considered for relocation and transfer to the Housing Commission for use in a special village which may possibly be sited on the site of the existing Tracy Workers' Village at Wanguri and that quite a considerable amount of money has already been expended in investigation of those future developments. I have certainly supported the case of the Housing Commission to continue in this type of role.

2084 Mr KENTISH to Mr PERRON

When will the instant school which sprang up at Berry Springs last week be in operation?

ANSWER

I cannot advise when the Berry Springs School will be in operation. I noted a hint of glee in his voice that the Department has now got around to producing instant schools.

2085 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Is he able to provide any information regarding the fate of the Nakara Primary School?

ANSWER

The honourable member has asked me a number of questions in the past relating to the future of the Nakara Primary School. The Department is currently using the Nakara Primary School for a pre-school, for sections of the Curriculum Development Section and also for media and migrant education activities. in 1978, the school will continue to be used for the same purposes but there will be an extension of activities to take the pre-school activities up to year 3 for 1978.

2086 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

I refer to a small article in the Northern Territory News of Wednesday 8 June 1977 where it was advised on page 3 that tenders for Dripstone High School have been called and will close on January 26. However, the Department of Construction today would not confirm when the contract would be let for the school or whether one would be let at all. Having regard to certain statements made in this House in response to questions by the honourable members for Jingili, Casuarina and Sanderson concerning the likelihood of Dripstone High going ahead, could the member give us some assurance that it is still departmental policy for Dripstone High School contract to be let as soon as possible and practicable.

ANSWER

I know little more than other members about the contract for the Dripstone High School. I have only been able to pick up what has appeared in the press. The minister and the department have made no attempts to keep me fully informed on the matter. However, I will make inquiries and advise the honourable member later.

2087 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS

Have there been any recent changes to the permit system for Nhulunbuy residents travelling from Gove to Katherine? I have just heard that there will be a holdup of some 2 to 3 months. If there is a hold up, was this caused by the recent legislation presented to this Legislative Assembly in March?

ANSWER

There is no reason at all why any legislation introduced into this Assembly and not yet passed, and still I believe a considerable way from being passed, should have any influence whatever on the existing system under the existing law. I would ask the honourable member to place the rest of the question on notice.

2088 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

Can he advise has a contractbeen let for repair and maintenance work to Yirara College, what does the work entail and how much is it expected to cost?

ANSWER

There were 2 items programed for 1976 77 for repairs and maintenance to Yirara College. Retiling of the kitchen floor was completed in January 1977 at a cost of $12,500. There were insufficient funds to enable repairs to domitory doorways, doors, window frames, ceiling panels and light switches to be carried out in the 1976 77 financial year. This contract will belet at a cost of some $23,300 next financial year.

2089 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Can he give me any indication as to whether or not the new Berrimah jail will go ahead in the foreseeable future?

ANSWER

This is a bit like 40 years later. I understand that tomorrow the tenders will be called for the new jail at Berrimah.

2090 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

What accommodation is offered to single teachers by the CTS when they are being recruited for service in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

I do not have specific details of the offer that is made to teachers joining the Commonwealth Teaching Service. However, I will obtain the information in some detail and supply it to her at the next sittings.

2091 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Could he also advise the basic rates of salary for single teachers in the various bands and length of service?

ANSWER

I will undertake to have that information supplied by tomorrow.

2092 Mr DONDAS to Miss ANDREW

It has come to my notice that a student marijuana selling ring may be operating at the Alawa Primary School. Would the Cabinet Member undertake to have this matter investigated?

ANSWER

I will.

2093 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Has any advice been received of a grant made for research into the barramundi fishery?

ANSWER

The Fishing Industry Research Trust Account has made a grant of $90,300 to be spent during the 1977-78 financial year by the CSIRO in co-operation with the Department of Northern Territory and the fishery section of the Queensland Government for research into the barramundi fishery.

2094 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

This question is asked on behalf of the honourable member for MacDonnell. Can she advise when the Hermannsburg Police Station, which was opened 6 months ago, will be provided with a standard fingerprint plaque slab and when will work be completed to allow the permanent officers appointed to the station to take up residence?

ANSWER

The fingerprint pad has already been sent from the Darwin police stores and I am advised by the Department of Construction that the facilities at Hermannsburg Police Station will be completed by the end of August. Delays have been experienced in obtaining interested tenderers.

2095 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

I refer to the recent TDT on uranium. During the program, the reporter was standing at the end of the Arnhem Highway. He said that the Arnhem Highway was intended to go to Gove but was not finished because of pressure from the Aboriginal people. Could he elaborate on that?

ANSWER

I did in fact watch the particular program mentioned by the Honourable Member for Nhulunbuy and was astounded when the announcer stood at the end of the highway and said that this road was intended to go through to Gove but, because of Aboriginal pressure the road was stopped at Jabiru. I was so annoyed about this sort of information being broadcast Australia-wide that I got onto the telephone and, after a quarter of an hour, managed to get hold of the bloke who was directing the show. I can assure you that, after about 10 minutes, he definitely had the right information about that road. The road was never intended to go to Gove; it was intended to go to Jabiru.

2096 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

How many employees are engaged in the operation of powerhouses in the Northern Territory? Are all employees union members and, if so, of what unions are they members?

ANSWER

There are 4 manned powerhouses in the Northern Territory which are operated by the Electrical Supply Division. There is one in Darwin with 81 employees, Katherine has 24, Tennant Creek has 11 and Alice Springs has 30. All the employees in the powerhouses are union members. The Electrical Trades Union covers the electrical fitters and switch operators, the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union covers boilermakers, welders, fitters and turners, sheet metal workers and trade assistants, the Transport Workers Union covers truck drivers and crane drivers and the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union covers riggers, painters, brick layers and labourers.

2097 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Dr LETTS

Where does the Northern Land Council get its funds to have the Land Rights News printed?

ANSWER

I refer to the May issue of the Land Rights News which I happen to have with me which states that Land Rights News is published with the assistance of a grant from the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council and this assistance is gratefully acknowledged. I do not know whether that is where the full funding of the publication comes from but certainly some money comes from that source,

2098 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

How many new government houses are waiting for connection of electricity?

ANSWER

The information that I have on the electrical connections does not distinguished between government houses and government installations generally. The government list includes electrical connections for things like bus stops, telephone booths etc. As at Tuesday 7 June, there were 122 government installations awaiting connection, 32 Housing Commission houses and 67 private applications for connection. The waiting time at the moment for private connections is approximately 2 weeks and the backlog which was caused by the ban on connections has now been caught up and new connections are being made at the rate of over 100 per week. The Electrical Supply Division feel they are operating in a more normal capacity now than they have been for a long time.

2099 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

At what stage is the planning for the proposed recreation lake in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the honourable member's question. I ask that it be placed on notice.

2100 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What stage has the transfer of the core unit at Tracy Village to the Corporation of the City of Darwin reached?

ANSWER

The area of Tracy Village has been under a defence reserve title for some time and, whilst the village was initially put there in 1975, the issues surrounding the future use still have to be resolved, The Darwin Reconstruction Commission has put forward a number of proposals to divide the area generally into 3 sections, the centre of which would come under the care and custody of the City Corporation and an area of the southern boundary of the lease would be transferred to the Housing Commission for the establishment of a mobile home camp. I am not aware what stage these negotiations have reached. However I will seek the information.

2101 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Has he been advised by the Federal Minister for Posts and Telegraphs whether there has been a revised date on the planned opening for the new Alice Springs Post Office and, if so, what is the date?

ANSWER

I have not been advised of any proposed change in the date nor when the opening will take place. If the honourable member wishes, I will seek that information.

2102 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

When will an adequate system of street lighting be restroed to the Rapid Creek area?

ANSWER

The repair and upgrading of street lighting in Darwin generally, including Rapid Creek, will be done in conjunction with the rehabilitation of the total electrical distribution system. The Rapid Creek area is currently planned for upgrading by October 1978 at the same time as the Millner and Nightcliff areas. The upgrading of major arterial roads and intersections is currently planned for completion by December 1977.

2103 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: I wish to answer a question asked by the honourable member for Stuart last week concerning the Rural Roads Conference. The conference is scheduled for Tennant Creek in the last week in September or the first week in October. The actual date will depend on when the budget is brought down in the House of Representatives because it is felt that any discussions relating to road construction in the Northern Territory should take place after the budget has been brought down when we will know exactly how much money will be available.

2104 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked about the rebuilding of 5 government homes in Packard Street. I am advised by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that the houses in question are being appraised for inclusion in the 1977-78 rebuilding program. A decision on the economic viability of the existing structures will determine whether the houses are rebuilt or demolished to ground level so that new homes may be built of the sites involved.

2105 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Port Darwin asked a question about the construction of a home in Kahlin utilising 3 silos from Rum Jungle. He asked whether this had Building Board approval. The answer is no. The building section has not granted approval for the structure and is awaiting the production of appropriate drawings concerning the erection of this home. A stop work notice relating to this building has been issued.

2106 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Ludmilla asked a question relating to the Darwin City Corporation's policies on the establishment of lawns on nature strips, I am advised that the City Corporation is hoping for full resident co-operation, However, they are giving consideration to by-laws or legislative amendment that may be necessary to help them enforce responsibility for maintenance. I would certainly encourage them to look carefully at the Western Australian situation where lawns are registered and a rebate of rates is subsequently made where this type of activity is carried out.

2107 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Casuarina asked a number of questions relating to the Northern Territory Housing Commission's reconstruction program in the Northern Territory generally and preferred specifically to new houses. It is difficult to give specific details of new houses because, in Darwin at the moment, it is hard to define what is a new house and what is a rebuilt house. For example, if you classified new homes as being those built off existing slabs and houses and flats restored and upgraded since the cyclone, then the figure would be of the order of 174 housing units in Darwin. However, if you included the built or restored housing up to the end of May, the figure is significantly different. For example, rebuilt or new homes in Darwin are 390, restored houses 230, restored flats 190, a total of 810. It is also estimated that an additional 450 houses and flats in Darwin will be restored or built between now and the end of December 1977. In Alice Springs, I believe the figure is of the order of 20 new houses.

2108 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: The honourable member for Casuarina also asked questions relating to the length of waiting time to obtain tenancy of properties. This is a difficult to assess and the only indication I can give is the period of time on the waiting list for people presently being allocated housing. You must take into account that, if more houses come off the production line, this wait could alter drastically. At the moment in Darwin, houses of 3 or 4 bedrooms are being allocated to applicants who have been waiting 19 months, people who are seeking 1 bedroom flats wait for a period of 17 months and people seeking 2 bedroom flats also wait 17 months. In Alice Springs for a 3 or 4 bedroom house, the waiting time is 11 months and for flats with 1 bedroom, 2 months and for flats with 3 bedrooms 3 months.

2109 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The member for Nightcliff asked me what accommodation is offered to single teachers when they are recruited to the Northern Territory and what are the basic rates of pay for single teachers in the Northern Territory. I am advised that, in towns where accommodation is controlled by the Department of Northern Territory, single accommodation is generally in hostels or single quarters, In places other than those, single accommodation provided by the Department of Education for single teachers can vary from a 13 metre caravan to a 3 bedroom brick house, depending upon location.

The basic rates of pay for single teachers in the Northern Territory are: for band 1, there are 16 rates ranging from $10,159.00 to $15,334.00 per annum, and rates vary according to the years of training and the years of experience in the service; for band 2 teachers in primary schools, the rate is $15,729.00 and,in secondary schools, $18,778 per annum; and for band 4 teachers in primary schools, $20,820 per annum. In addition to these basic rates of pay, we have various district allowances ranging from $310 per year to $2,040 per year and special teaching allowances which vary from $532 to $857 per annum.

2110 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise when $1.7m contract for the Head Street subdivision in Alice Springs will be let?

ANSWER

I hope the Minister for Construction will make an announcement concerning this subdivision within the next 2 weeks.

2111 Mrs LAWRIE to Dr LETTS

This is a follow-up question to one I asked some time ago relating to instructions to wildlife rangers not to shoot feral buffalo, particularly in the Cannon Hill area. This was causing some distress and disturbances. Can he advise if this instruction has been waived and, if so, when?

ANSWER

I did obtain some information at the time that the honourable member asked me that question and I regret that I did not pass it on to her. The Director General informed me that no such instructions was in fact in operation. Certainly, such a blanket instruction not to reduce feral animals would be against my wishes as the Executive member responsible for this area. I will make a further check in the light of the honourable member's question and make sure that my policies are being pursued by those who issue directives to field officers.

2112 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Is any effort being made to ship live cattle from the Gulf area of the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

As far as I am personally aware, there are no specific efforts being made to transport live cattle from the Gulf of Carpenteria. I know that it is a matter that has been looked at by a number of people from time to time but I do not know of any firm proposition to undertake such a venture. If anyone wants to export live cattle from the Gulf and it is feasible, I will do all I can to assist them.

2113 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise when the badly potholed and washed out section of the Stuart Highway approximately 30-35 miles south of Barrow Creek will be repaired?

ANSWER

A contract should be let within the next week for resealing that section.

2114 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he give an indication when will the report of the inquiry into the Lottery and Gaming Ordinance be presented to this House?

ANSWER

I hope that the report will be tabled at the next sittings.

2115 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

Can he advise when will a fence be constructed around the Tea Tree School in Central Australia?

ANSWER

I have been seeking information over the last couple of days but as yet I am unable to give an answer to that question.

2116 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he yet advise me what accommodation is offered to single teachers when they are being recruited by the Commonwealth Teaching Service in Canberra?

ANSWER

I am advised that, when teachers are recruited for the Northern Territory, they are interviewed in various places, most often in a Commonwealth office in each state where various Commonwealth employees are interviewed for Commonwealth jobs. At these interviews, they are normally given some very thorough details of the accommodation which exists in various areas in the Northern Territory and the cost and availability of that accommodation. I spoke this morning to one of the officers of the Department of Education who goes south occasionally to interview teachers for the Northern Territory and he went into great detail how he explains to teachers coming to the Northern Territory what the situation is regarding accommodation in both outback schools and urban areas. As part of his job, he keeps up to date with the current accommodation situation in each place. He also advised me that perhaps 50% of the teachers who come to the Northern Territory have spent some short time in the Northern Territory during their teaching training. They come to the Territory for a period of weeks quite often and spend some time in an out-station or in some other school and they stay in the normal accommodation which is available. For single teachers, this is most often hostel accommodation. However, in some cases, there issshared house accommodation and, in outback areas, caravans and demountables. I will supply to the honourable member a booklet which is provided to all teachers who are coming to the Northern Territory when they are recruited which explains to them accommodation availability and conditions in the Northern Territory. Every teacher gets one of these and should be informed as to the position before he comes to the Northern Territory.

2117 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

In the event that an Aboriginal who desires to make a claim for traditional land is dissatisfied with the service available through the Central Land Council will the Commonwealth Government meet the reasonable expenses of any other person whom they may choose to represent him before the Land Commissioner?

ANSWER

As I understand the act, the land councils are given a specific responsibility in relation to the presentation of claims and the registration of traditional owners who may be making a claim. This is specifically their job and they have the task of preparing claims and making representations on behalf of traditional owners and of getting legal advice for this purpose. I understand it is also the policy of the Minister for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to use the land councils virtually in every case.

I understand the point of the question and I have considerable sympathy with his point of view that should an Aboriginal or group of traditional owners wish to proceed outside the Land Councils, to be consistent with the policy of self determination which the Government now applies to Aboriginal people, they should have the right to do so. I do not know whether this would be permitted and whether the funding would be provided to support such action but I will endeavour to find out the answer to the question.

2118 Mr TUNGATULUM to Dr LETTS

How many Aboriginal groups have requested the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to approve an application to set up a local land council?

ANSWER

As far as I am aware, there is one group which has put in a formal written application and it has reinforced its application on several occasions. I refer to the group of Tiwi councils representing Bathurst Island, Garden Point and Snake Bay. There are at least 2 other areas which have expressed their wish to the Department and the Minister to move in this direction and certain steps are being taken in one case to examine the proposition of a separate land council. One group is the north east Arnhem Landers centred around Yirrkala and probably including as far west as Elcho on the one side and down as far as Numbulwar and Roper River to the south and possibly Groote Eylandt. This group has definitely expressed a wish to have a separate council; they expressed it personally to me on a recent visit. The other group is the Pitjantjatara in Central Australia who occupies the south western corner in the Docker River and Aryonga area. They have joined forces with elements of their own tribe in Western Australia and South Australia. Meetings of Government officers from those 2 states, the Territory and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs have taken place with the Aboriginals to examining the feasibility of forming a land council. Those are the 3 cases I know of.

2119 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

In the light of statements in recent days by the Western Australian and Queensland Premiers concerning the territorial and economic fishing zones, what is the current situation concerning the proclamation of a 200 mile fishing zone around the Australian coastal waters?

ANSWER

This matter has been raised on a number of occasions in recent months in this House and I have advised the members of the situation. I have sought further information from the Department of Primary Industries in relation to the Australian Government attitude. I am advised that, at

the current sixth session of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference, the Australian Government is actively supportingsthe extensionnof the national fisheries jurisdiction to 200 miles. The Australian Government, in seeking the successful conclusion of a comprehensive and internationally agreed convention which will cover a wide range of interests other than fisheries, has not followed the example of a number of other countries in the unilaterally declaring a 200 mile fishing zone in advance of the current session of the conference. Australia, along with other South Pacific countries, in agreeing to wait the outcome of the current Law of the Seas Conference recognises that, if acceptable progress towards an agreed convention does not eventuate, governments will need to consider unilateral extension of national fisheries jurisdiction. There is little doubt that Australia will declare a 200 mile fishery zone. However, the timing of such a declaration is of critical importance to Australia's relations with her near neighbours and to her standing generally in the international legal community. In preparation for an extension of fisheries jurisdiction, a working group has been established by the Australian Fisheries Council to examine management strategies and policies in relation to a zone of extended fisheries jurisdiction. This working group, which comprises Commonwealth and state government representatives and a fishing industry representatives in several states to discuss matters of direct interest to the Australian fishing industry such as increased Australian participation in the fishery zone. The working group is to report to the Australian Fishery Council later this year and a meeting will be held in Bundaberg. I hope to attend that.

2120 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

I refer to the recent clean-up by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Is it a fact that the lessees of the properties that were cleaned up did in fact agree to pay the charges but now have not paid those charges?

ANSWER

At a recent meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission a paper was presented to the Commissioners concerning a number of bad debts of people who have not met certain financial liabilities that have been incurred with regard to the demolition and clean up of properties. At the moment, there are 25 bad debtors still outstanding with regard to this program and their individual liabilities vary from approximately $100 to approximately $1,230. The total debt figure is at the order of $6,630. It is quite remarkable to see some of the names on the list but that is a personal comment. I believe that Darwin Reconstruction Commission did a remarkable job in the clean-up, particularly prior to the last wet, in making safe a number of buildings. I would hope that further legal action can be taken against these outstanding debtors.

2121 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

With the proposed establishment of the Meat and Livestock Corporation, does he anticipate that there will be any special advantages that currently do not exist under the existing Meat Board arrangements for producers within the Northern Territory,

ANSWER

I do believe that the establishment of the Meat and Livestock Corporation will provide the Northern Territory with some advantages

which it does not have at the moment. The membership of the board will include 4 representatives of the Australian livestock producers who will be nominated by a producers consultative group. This will comprise 17 members, who will be elected by producers in the various states and territories. The Northern Territory will have a representative on this producer group. Thus, we will have representation on the proposed corporation which we do not have at the moment in relation to the Meat Board. Also, the new corporation will have control over live export markets and the power to oversee these activities which does not happen at the moment. In the light of the growing export activities from the Top End and the encouragement that this sector of the market needs and the potential that it has if the new corporation can give support to the activities of those actively engaged in the export of live cattle from the Territory in a more organised manner, that will also be of considerable advantage to Northern Territory producers.

2122 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TUXWORTH

Has an analaysis of domestic water supply at Areyonga been carried out and, if so, what were the results of the last 3 tests so far as those tests

ANSWER

An analysis is normally carried out by the section that controls water reticulation in the Northern Territory. At the moment, this is being done by the Health Department on an agency basis. I will endeavour to get the information.

2123 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

In view of the recent dog baiting in Alice Springs, what proposals are under consideration to combat this problem?

ANSWER

The irresponsible baiting of dogs in Alice Springs has been a community problem there for some 20 years. It is one that has been very difficult for the authorities to prevent. The honourable member for Stuart approached me on an earlier occasion asking that a moratorium be declared in Alice Springs for people who possess poisons and ask them to bring any illegal poisons forward so that an opportunity may exist for police to remove any unnecessary poisons out of the public area and perhaps give them an opportunity to restrict the indiscriminate baiting that is going on. I have not had an opportunity to follow this throughbut I am most certainly in favour of the proposal, I will bring it before the Executive at an opportune time.

2124 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

Is he aware of a recent circular of the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association, dated 10 June 1977 which indicates mortgage repayment scales for a house valued at $55,000? Just by way of information, the top of class 4 repayment is $143,000 a fortnight and the top of class 8 is $210. Would he make some representation to the Minister for the Northern Territory to try to work out a solution because at that scale no one will buy any of them?

ANSWER

I am aware that, whenever it is necessary to have a 2 tiered interest structure with regard to repayment of mortgage, there has to be a cut-off point and from that point there will be differentials with regard to the actual amount of repayment. In both of the home sales schemes of the Northern Territory Housing Commission and the sale of Government homes, that cut-off point has been negotiated at a very high level of income. In fact, it is assessed in the Northern Territory at 125% of the average weekly earnings, That at the moment is somewhere in the order of $14,000 per annum income. In the states, the arrangement for housing finance generally means that the low interest finance is restricted to people whose incomes are below 85% of the average weekly earnings and people above that level have to arrange their mortgage finance on the private market and of course this imposes a particular hardship because it would be even higher than the 9% charged in the higher income group here. I believe the schemes that we were able to influence and negotiate earlier this year have recognised the very unusual situation of the Northern Territory in that Government does in fact finance people with higher incomes. I can assure honourable members that the other ministers at the State Housing Ministers Conference were very envious when they heard of the terms and conditions that we had been able to arrange with the Commonwealth Government. However, I will continue to argue the case with the Commonwealth Government for a tiered interest system rather than 2 interests; at the moment, it goes directly from the five and three quarter per cent or the 6% to the 9%. I personally would like to see a system where, as income progresses, the interest structure also goes up progressively but not as harshly as the present agreement. However, it is certainly an advantage that, in the Northern Territory, people above an income of $14,000 do receive government assistance with regard to their mortgages.

2125 Mr TUNGUTALUM to Mr TAMBLING

Will he investigate the serious litter problem in the Howard Springs and Humpty Doo areas and ensure that prosecutions are made against offenders?

ANSWER

The problems associated with litter in these rural areas have been brought to my attention. I am particularly mindful of the problem that exists on the Arnhem Highway. It would probably be very difficult to catch a guy actually throwing a can out the window. However, I will bring the honourable member's concern to the appropriate authorities in my department and the Department of Law.

2126 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

What is the level of investment made by the new owners of the Alice Springs Abattoirs since its date of purchase? Is it anticipated that the abattoirs, with its present level of investment cost will be a viable proposition without participation in the U.S. export beef quota?

ANSWER

To provide a detailed answer to that question, I would require the question to be placed on notice. I do understand that millions of dollars have been invested there. The investors have gone into the project with open eyes and with no guarantee that an export quota would

be allocated to them. If a quota is allocated to them. It will entrance the viability of that operation and its viability is important to the industry in Alice Springs for the domestic kill, for export and for the removal of stock from the area which is seriously overstocked at this stage.

2127 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

When will lawns and gardens be planted around Tea Tree School? Will the road between the school and the teacher's residence be gravelled and drainage provided?

ANSWER

I will seek the information.

2128 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Is he able to supply information on the future use of Essington House?

ANSWER

The future use of Essington House has been a controversial matter and has been under consideration by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission for some time. At the last meeting of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission, plans were submitted on the future use of this facility and how it could be modified for community use. I do have a copy of those preliminary plans and I would be happy to make them available to honourable members and make their comments known to the commission. A preliminary estimate in the order of $200,000 has been put against this project.

2129 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

Does he have available the report on the Kormilda, Dhupuma and Yirara Colleges? If so, will he make it available to members of this Assembly?

ANSWER

I have not received a copy of that report which I understood was in the final stages of preparation a couple of months ago. However, I will endeavour to obtain a copy from the Department of Education and advise the honourable member for Nhulunbuy.

2130 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he yet advise whether a ministerial decision has been made to build Dripstone High School?

ANSWER

The honourable for Nightcliff has phrased her question in a particularly difficult way. As she mentioned earlier in these sittings when she asked me this question in different words, tenders for the Dripstone High School were closing on 26 June. However, I cannot find out any date as to when the actual construction is to commence. I can only presume that there has been a decision that the project will proceed otherwise there would not be much point in calling tenders. I believe that the Dripstone School will be built and I believe that the minister has made that decision. However, I cannot advise her on the construction date.

2131 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

A statement in the NT News Spot On column indicated that Block 8 cafeteria known as "Big Al's" is to reopen in September. Is this true?

ANSWER

I admire the persistence of the honourable member in this matter. Unfortunately, I cannot give an answer to that question.

2132 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

Can he advise when a contract for the reconstruction of the Stuart Highway between Kekwick Avenue and Head Street in Alice Springs will be let?

ANSWER

The section of the highway is actually between Kekwick Street and Mount Nancy. It is expected that the contract will be let within a week.

2133 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

I refer to a question I asked last week about the beautification of the footpaths in some of the suburbs. Is he aware that the council, as part of this program, is providing leaseholders with a new concrete driveway? Included as a beneficiary in this commendable move is the Department of the Northern Territory; will the council receive reimbursement for the concrete driveways?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

2134 Mr STEELE to Mr TAMBLING

In recent times, we have not heard much about the HFT. Can he confirm that the ship is now on a good course?

ANSWER

A similar question was asked last week by the honourable member for Nightcliff relating specifically to the $15,000 loan scheme. I have been advised that the Home Finance Trustee has recently been successful in obtaining additional borrowings so that applications under the traditional $15,000 housing loan scheme can continue to be approved. From July 1976, the trustee has approved 213 loans under this scheme with a total commitment value of $3,189m. Actual expenditure during this time by way of progress payments has totalled $2,703m. That is a rather remarkable number of loans given that, in each of the 3 previous financial years, the trustee under that scheme approved less than 100 loans in each year. The trustee has entered into negotiations for long-term borrowings to service the 1977-78 programme but actual details of these borrowings are not yet available. The 1977 loan applications on hand at this time are all awaiting further documentation to be provided by the individual applicants. Each applicant has been advised of the remaining requirements and that the applications cannot proceed to the approval stage until this information is received.

For the information of honourable members, the current position with regard to the 6% concessional home loan scheme is that, from July 1976

to date, the Home Finance Trustee has approved 481 loans with a total commitment value of $14,985m, The value of progress payments paid since the inception of the scheme is $25,636m. There are at present 549 loan application on hand that all require additional information from the applicants before they can be approved. Currently, all progress payments against approved loans are being met on demand. Any delays in payments are minimal and consistent with the checking and inspection processes.

2135 Mr STEELE and Mr TAMBLING

I refer to a document that was placed on my desk this morning which says that funds have been commissioned by Grant Tambling, the Mayor, Marshall Perron and Ian Tuxworth for a survey on leisure patterns. Can he provide us with any information about these leisure patterns?

ANSWER

This matter was canvased by the honourable member for Nightcliff in the adjournment debate last night. Some people seem to throw names around willy-nilly. As I mentioned in the adjournment debate last evening, an officer of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has been give the opportunity to assist the Northern Territory Cabinet Members in certain areas and is looking at certain studies on our behalf, one of these relates to leisure.

2136 Mr VALE to Mr RYAN

It is my understanding from newspaper advertisements that tenders were called for reconstruction of the Stuart Highway in two sections, between Kekwick Avenue and Head Street and Head Street and Mount Nancy. Has the department in fact changed its mind and these 2 sections are now to be let as one contract?

ANSWER

I do not know if the department has changed its mind but the answer to the question was that the contract for the sealing between Kekwick Avenue and Mount Nancy would be let. Perhaps, they are going to let 2 contracts together, I do not know. However, that was the information that was given to me.

2137 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Are penalty rates of interest imposed on late payments of monthly instalments to the Home Finance Trustee? and if ledger postings are late, does this also attract a penalty?

ANSWER

The Home Finance Trustee may impose penalty interest where payments are made after the due date. A representation was made to me yesterday with regard to situation in which it was believed that someone had been charged penalty interest but had actually paid on or before the due date. Ihave been informed by officers for the Department of Northern Territory that, if any such situation should arise, there would certainly be a rebate of any interest penalty resulting from an administrative error.

2138 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he advise when nursing sisters will commence duty at Tea Tree and take up residence there?

ANSWER

I will find out and advise the member later in the day.

2139 Mr MANUELL to Mr TUXWORTH

Was a statement made in the media yesterday by Doctor Cutter from Alice Springs, who is also presently an endorsed candidate for the ALP for the forthcoming Northern Territory elections? Did he make reference to the number of cases of venereal disease being experienced in Alice Springs in other parts of the Northern Territory and suggested that the number of cases varied with the colour of the Federal Government in power at the time?

ANSWER

I am aware that Doctor Cutter did put out a report relating to the health of 2 communities, Papunya and Utopia. In his report, he suggested that every child under the age of 2 years spent its first 2 months in hospital and that every child on the properties or settlements concerned was suffering from some parasitic disease and that one third of the elderly, whoever they are, were suffering from blindness and that there was a very strong case for the Central Aboriginal Congress to take over the administration and provision of health services and care for Aboriginals throughout the Northern Territory.

In view of Doctor Cutter's political aspirations the statement was most timely because it does smack of opportunism which is an unfortunate thing. The continuing problem of Aboriginal health throughout the Northern Territory is one that is above politics. I do not believe that because a particular government is in power that infant mortality or malnutrition goes up or down; it is a problem that has been with us for 20 years and it is a problem we will spend the next 30 years combatting. We will have to do it as a total Northern Territory community and not as an individual group with political aspirations. In his reference to setting up an Aboriginal health service unit, he did not say whether this was to replace existing health units on Aboriginal services, or whether he was suggesting that he should be made the head of the new adminisration surrounded by people of his choice. He also suggested that the provision of health services by Aboriginals would be a better service than that provided by Europeans. From my experience in this field, I find it hard to believe that we would have sufficient numbers of qualified Aboriginals who could continue to extend to the Aboriginal communities throughout the Northern Territory the services they are now getting.

2140 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

I refer to his recent visit to Canberra to make representations to the Treasurer and the Minister for Minerals and Energy. Has he received any word from those departments about the establishment of the oil refinery in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

No. It is a matter which I intend to pursue so far as time allows.

2141 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

Has the Department of Education come back off holiday since Monday? When will a permanent power supply be connected to various government buildings in Tea Tree?

ANSWER

I will ignore the first part of the honourable member's question. Concerning the connection of services to Tea Tree School, I will have to press the Department a little further for this information.

2142 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Has any action been taken to ensure that owners of damaged properties in central Smith Street comply with building covenants?

ANSWER

This is a matter of some concern to quite a number of people. In the section of Smith Street between Knuckey Street and Bennett Street, there are number of blocks which are in a rather disgraceful state and, considering the length of time it has been since the cyclone, there seems to be very little excuse. I have sought information from the Department as to whether it is doing its job in policing the lease conditions for the blocks in the area. I referred in particular to 4 blocks. Lot 2310 in Smith Street is the site of the former Victoria Hotel and the Department advises me that, after some action was taken to prompt the owners into rebuilding, an application was made for extension of time and, as a result, the company has been allowed until 1 February 1978 to commence development and 12 months after that to complete development. In regard to Lot 2350 in Smith Street, again after some prompting, the owners applied for an extension of time to comply with covenants and they have been given until 31 January 1978 to commence and 12 months after that to complete. The 2 lots side by side in Smith 2356 and 2357 were not so much demolished after the cyclone as never having been developed after being sold at auction several years ago. There was an application by the owners for further time to commence construction to meet covenants and they have been given until 1 July 1977 to commence. They have until 1 January 1979 to complete the premises on those blocks.

2143 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

At what stage of development is the Casuarina Hospital? What is the total cost of the hospital?

ANSWER

Casuarina Hospital contract A relates to the main ward block. The top floor slab was poured on May 19 and the lift service tower has not yet been poured. Bricklaying, plastering and the installation of mechanical duct-work and electrical units is now in progress. Work is proceeding satisfactorily and it is expected that there will be a handover of this area in September 1979. Contract C, which relates to the laundry and

services block, is scheduled for completion on 15 December 1977 and this now has been set back to March 1978. Structural work on the services building is completed, the building work is 90% completed and machines are currently installed. In the laundry, structual work is completed, building work is 88% completed and the laundry and equipment is placed in place but services are not yet connected. In relation to the Nurses Training School and accommodation, the completion of building 4 is expected in August, for building 6 a certificate of practical completion has been issued in May and building 9 on the north side will be handed over for inspection within the next week. Building 9 on the south side has a certificate of completion issued in May.

2144 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr RYAN: The honourable member for Alice Springs asked concerning the Central Australian Railway and the location of the terminal in Alice Springs. I have a copy of a telex which was sent by the Department of Transport. On the first question, it says: "The review into the construction standards and costs of the Tarcoola Alice Springs Railway project was completed last year. The review indicated a number of areas where cost could be reduced while still providing a reliable, all-weather railway to Alice Springs. The Minister for Transport has directed that the recommendations of the review committee be implemented by the Australian National Railway Commission."

On the other question, the review committee recommended an I.D.C. comprising representatives of the ANR and Departments of Transport, Finance and Northern Territory report to the government on the least cost option for the rail terminal taking into account the overall town planning requirements of Alice Springs. The terms of reference for this IDC are currently being prepared.

2145 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: Question 2006 from the honourable member for Nightcliff asked whether it is a fact that aerial spraying to combat mosquitoes and sandflies was carried out at Nhulunbuy. The answer is no.

2146 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr PERRON: The honourable member for Alice Springs asked a question relating to plans for the Ross Park School in Alice Springs. He asked if I was aware that the Minister had made recommendations that plans for a major upgrading be shelved. He also brought to my attention the fact that there seemed to be a number of facilities missing from the school and this would be detrimental to the education of the students there. I am advised that the Minister has approved an expenditure on Ross Park School of some $400,000 for upgrading but, in actual fact, did shelve a proposal to virtually rebuild the school for something like $2,000,000. The $400,000 expenditure is for various improvements including a craft room and a library. The decision not to totally rebuild Ross Park was taken as it was felt that it would be better to carry on with the construction of a primary school at Sadadeen as this would be a more desirable option in the long term. No doubt, cost also had some bearing on the decision. The honourable member mentioned insufficient library facilities. As I have mentioned, the $400,000 upgrading will include provision of a library amongst other things. As to whether the Parents and Teachers Organisation was advised, I believe they were. There was a discussion as recently as last week with education planners and the Parent Teacher Organisation. The latter body has submitted a counter-

plan to that produced by the Department of Education and that has largely been adopted by the department in the expenditure of the $400,000.

2147 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TAMBLING: I would like to provide further information in answer to a question asked by the honourable member for Port Darwin concerning the controversial home in Kahlin to be constructed of silos. I did provide information yesterday that was given to me by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission which was in part incorrect. I believe that the owner submitted plans to the building section whereas I implied that they were still awaiting further plans. I am now further advised that a letter is being sent to the owner informing him of the building in question will exceed the maximum height permitted in an R2 zone and an engineer's certificate should be supplied in relation to the footing and the structure itself and that certain room sizes and details of egress require amendment.

Aboriginal Benefits Trust Fund, audit (Withnall) 2027
Aboriginal Colleges, report (Ballantyne) 2129
Aborigines, land claims expenses (Withnall) 2117
- local land councils (Tungutalum) 2188
Accommodation, single teachers (Lawrie) 2090
Alice Springs -
abattoirs (Manuell) 2010, 2068, 2126
dog baiting (Vale) 2123
burglary offences (Vale) 2038
Head Street subdivision (Vale) 2110
lake (Vale) 2099
municipal council assistance (Robertson) 2023
new post office (Manuell) 2101
railway yards (Manuell) 2021
refinery decision (Manuell) 2033, 2140
Areyonga water supply (Robertson) 2122
Arnhem Highway, Gove extension (Ballantyne) 2095
Art gallery, site (Ballantyne) 2058
Barramundi research (Ballantyne) 2093
- Church leases (Tungutalum) 2049
Bathurst and Melville Islands, land councils (Tungutalum) 2047
Bennell Constructions (Withnall) 2014
Berry Springs School (Kentish) 2084
Berrimah jail (Dondas) 2089
Block & cafeteria (Dondas) 2131
Breathalyser (Steele) 1722
Building & covenants (Dondas) 2124
Buffalo meat, exports (Everingham) 2012
Buffalo shooting, Cannon Hill (Lawrie) 2111
Cape Fourcray, discovery of body (Tungutalum) 2017
Carpentaria College, rehabilitation (Lawrie) 2031, 2061, 2076
Casuarina Fire Station, extinguishers (Dondas) 2052
Casuarina Hospital (Dondas) 2143
Ciguatera, research (Lawrie) 2007
Clean-up, charges (Steele) 2120
Consumer protection, Aboriginal needs (Tungutalum) 2053
Covenants, time extensions (Dondas) 2053
Cuttler Dr (Manuell) 2139
Daly Waters Hotel, electricity (Manuell) 2039
Darwin, electricity supply (Dondas) 1897
Darwin High School, cleaning contract (Dondas) 2067
"Darwin Stubby", manufacture (Dondas) 2082
Dripstone High School (Lawrie) 2086, 2130
Essington House (Dondas) 2128
Fannie Bay prisoners, artifacts (Tungutalum) 2026
Fingerprint slab, Hermannsburg (Vale) 2094
Fishing limits (Ballantyne) 2119
Fox Report, copies (Vale) 2051
- electricity connection (Dondas) 2098
Government housing -
likely surfeit (Lawrie) 2054
purchase payments (Steele) 2124
High School students, suspension (Lawrie) 1898
Highway repairs, Barrow Creek (Vale) 2113
Home Finance Trustee -
$15,000 loan (lawrie) 2009; (Steele) 2134
penalty interest (Dondas) 2137
Housing Commission -
damages, housing sales (Dondas) 2020
house allocation (Dondas) 2050
needy families (Lawrie) 2183
Howard Springs -
litter problem (Tungutalum) 2125
police patrols (Tungutalum) 2042
police station (Tungutalum) 2040
Industrial land, freeze (Dondas) 2011
Kahlin Bay, silo structures (Withnall) 2077
Katherine -
accommodation for outback students (Robertson) 2029
detoxification site (Robertson) 2056
Kirby, Mr Justice (Kentish) 2080
Land and Business Agents Ordinance, commencement (Everingham) 2018
Land Rights News, funds (Tungutalum) 2097
Leisure survey (Steele) 2135
Live Cattle, export (Manuell) 2112
Liquor licensing bill (Lawrie) 2016, 2055
Lottery and gaming, report (Dondas) 2030; (Lawrie) 2114
Luggage carrier, Darwin Airport (Steele) 2078
Market, local produce (Steele) 2081
Marijuana, Alawa Primary School (Dondas) 2092
Matriculation exams, student numbers (Lawrie) 1899

Meat and Livestock Corporation (Manuell) 2121
Nakara Primary School (Dondas) 2943, 2085
Nhulunbuy -
communications (Ballantyne) 2048
permit system (Ballantyne) 2087
Nightcliff Fire Station (Lawrie) 2025, 2070
N.T. electricity supply, report (Dondas) 2028
N.T. mining legislation (Ballantyne) 2015
Papunya court, representation for Aboriginal boy (Robertson) 2045
Packard Street, house reconstruction (Withnall) 2074
Police, identification numbers (Lawrie) 2013
Powerhouse, union membership (Dondas) 2096
Public land auctions (Everingham) 2041
Rapid Creek, lighting (Everingham) 2102
Railway, used line (Kentish) 2069
Regional councils, financial arrangements (Everingham) 2022; (Dondas) 2075
Rent control report, policy (Withnall) 2019
Ross Park Primary School upgrading (Manuell) 2072
Rural Road Conference, venue (Vale) 2036
Ryan Constable, suspension (Lawrie) 2079
Sex education (Ballantyne) 2071
South Road, condition (Manuell) 2032
Succession Duties ordinance, assent (Withnall) 2024
Suburban sidewalk beautification (Steele) 2073, 2133
Single teachers -
accommodation (Lawrie) 2090, 2116
pay rates (Lawrie) 2091
Stuart Highway, repairs (Vale) 2132, 2136
Tarcoola -
Alice Springs rail link (Manuell) 2037
electricity (Vale) 2141
Tea Tree -
fence (Vale) 2115
gardens (Vale) 2127
nurses (Vale) 2138
Tiwi underground electricity, contractor (Dondas) 2035
Todd River, bridge (Manuell) 1896; (Vale) 2044
Tourist promotion, Darwin 1978 (Dondas) 2057
Tracy Village (Dondas) 2100
Trower Road, pedestrian crossing (Everingham) 2059
Vacant blocks, burn off (Dondas) 2060
V.D, Arnhem electorate (Kentish) 2008
Yirara College, repairs (Vale) 2088

# PART II

## THE QUESTION PAPER

Questions are printed in numerical order

An index to questions appears at the end of Part II

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED BY 13 July 1977

FROM 21 DECEMBER 1976

1628 Mr VALE to Mr POLLOCK

Could he please advise the following in respect of -

(1) Central Australian Aboriginal Medical Service;

(2) Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service;

(3) Central Australian Aborigines Congress;

(4) Aboriginal Hostels Ltd, Alice Springs -

(a) The number of persons employed?

(b) Titles and remuneration received, and other employment benefits?

(c) Who is responsible for the hiring and firing of their employees?

(d) Are the organisations' financial records and expenditure subject to any audit requirements, if so what?

(e) Are vehicle records and logbooks kept?

FROM 3 MAY 1977

1895 Mr WITHNALL to Dr LETTS

Would the Honourable Member arrange for the tabling in this Assembly of an audited set of accounts for the Aborigines Benefit Trust Fund, established under the Northern Territory (Administration) Act, for the years from year ended June 1973 to June 1977, or such of these accounts as are available at the time of tabling?

2005 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

What is the current market value in the Valuer-General's estimation of the land and improvements at Lot 2904 Trower Road, Alawa?

ANSWER

Lot 2904 is not situated at Trower Road, Alawa. There is a Lot 2094 in Trower Road, Alawa. This is a government residence in respect of which there has been no offer to purchase nor a request for Valuer-General's valuation.

2006 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is it a fact that aerial spraying to combat mosquitoes and sand flies is carried out at Nhulunbuy, and if so -

(a) What spray is used and under whose supervision is the work carried out?

(b) What areas are actually sprayed and for how long has spraying on Gove Peninsula been practised?

ANSWER

"Spraying from a motor vehicle fogging unit is carried out on a regular basis at Nhulunbuy:

(a) The spray used is Malathion 118, and the work is supervised by the Department of Health.

(b) All housing areas in Nhulunbuy township and at Wallaby Beach are covered in the spraying program which has been carried out since 1969."

2065 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

I refer to demountable housing units under the control of the Department of the Northern Territory -

(1) How many demountable units are vacant and for how long have they been vacant?

(2) What is the expected vacation rate of demountable units?

(3) Has the Department yet reached a decision on the use of these units when vacated by married officers?

(4) Would the Department consider housing single officers in the demountable units, and if so, how soon?

ANSWER

(1) As at 11 July 1977, a total of 42 demountables under the control of the Department of the Northern Territory were vacant. Of these, 6 demountables were about to be offered to officers on the waiting list for temporary accommodation while another 5 units were undergoing post-vacation inspections preparatory to their being reallocated to other officers on the waiting list. The remaining 31 demountables were awaiting cleaning, or repairs or maintenance. Sixteen of the units had been vacant for periods of up to a few days only, while the units awaiting cleaning or repairs or main-

tenance had been vacant for periods ranging from a few days to two weeks.

(2) As the rate at which Departmental demountables are vacated is subject to considerable variation, it is not possible to give a precise answer. However, as an indication, some 40 units had been vacated during the two weeks ended 11 July 1977.

(3) The final decision on the disposal of demountable units, when the units become available for disposal, will be made by the Minister for the Northern Territory. Pending the Minister's decision, the Department is unable to provide details.

(4) The Minister has already indicated that consideration will be given to the allocation of demountables on a share basis to single officers on the single officers housing list when the units become surplus to the requirements of families. Although it is difficult to be precise, it is anticipated that some demountables might become available for allocation to single officers by about mid-August 1977. The situation is being monitored continuously.

2066 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

I refer to flats under the control of the Department of the Northern Territory -

(1) How many flats are vacant and for how long have they been vacant?

(2) What is the expected vacation rate of flats?

(3) If flats are not required for housing married officers would the Department consider housing single officers in them, and if so, how soon?

ANSWER

(1) Ten flats (all of two-bedrooms) under the control of the Department of the Northern Territory in Darwin were vacant as at 11 July 1977. Of these, 8 new flats had been vacant for about 5 weeks and were awaiting allocation to tennants, while the remaining 2 flats were awaiting repairs and maintenance and had been vacant for approximately two months.

(2) As the vacation rate of flats is subject to considerable variation, it is not possible to give a precise answer, No flats had been vacated during the two weeks ended 11 July 1977. The position regarding flats is complicated to some extent by the fact that married tenants of departmental flats may apply to transfer to houses, subject to houses being available, after having resided in flats for twelve months.

(3) The Department owns 87 single officer flats (bedsitter/single bedroom type) in Darwin and another 36 are under construction. There has been no lessening in the need for two-bedroom flats from married officer accommodation. The question is for married officer accommodation. The question is therefore largely an academic one. However, if a marked decline in the need for two-bedroom flats from married officers was to occur, the Department would consider alternative uses for the flats, including the question of housing single officers in them.

2148 Mr BALLANTYNE to Dr LETTS

Were there any recent changes to the "Permit System" for Nhulunbuy residents travelling from Gove to Katherine?

Is it true that the issuing of permits may now be held up for 3 months?

ANSWER

There have been no changes in the procedures involved in the issue of these authorities and the Director of Aboriginal Affairs has no evidence to suggest that delays of up to three months may occur before the authorities are given. For those people who wish to travel from Nhulunbuy to Katherine through Mainoru, it is necessary to contact the Yirrkala Council and Doyindji community, and to arrange for the Katherine office of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to check with the Bulman community. Procedures for doing this are well established and the necessary approvals are usually received within three weeks.

Nhulunbuy residents who wish to travel to Darwin or Katherine along the north (coastal) track must first have the consent of the communities at Yirrkala, Doyindji, Galiwinku, Gapuwiyak, Milingimbi, Ramangining, Maningrida, and Oenpelli. The number of centres to be contacted is greater and the time involved is obviously longer, It may take up to six weeks before the Department's Nhulunbuy office has contacted and received a response from all centres, and can then issue the necessary authority.

2149 Mr STEELE to Mr PERRON

1. Was a contract let by the Department of Construction on 30 June 1977 to DULMISON CABLES Pty Ltd of Auburn, NSW, for $383,283 for installation of power pilot cables from Snell Street zone substation to Casuarina zone substation?

2. Does the contract price cover completion of the work as per specifications?

3. Does the contract price include provision of -

   (a) a safety fence on both sides and for the full length of the trench;

   (b) washed sand for the cable bed;

   (c) a bridge over Rapid Creek as per specifications;

   (d) copper earth wire in the trench;

   (e) copper earth wire under the Stuart Highway; and

   (f) three sets of plans by a licensed surveyor as requested in the specifications?

4. What grade of PVC conduit ducts are to be used?

5. Is rock excavation included in the contract price?

6. What insurance company is to be used and are the premium rates Northern Territory rates or southern rates?

7. Is the contract subject to further negotiations? If so, what items and what prices are to be negotiated?

8. Is Dulmison Cables Pty Ltd registered as a foreign company in the Northern Territory?

9. What is the issued capital of the company; and if it is nominal only, what safeguards has the Tender Board taken to ensure that the company can pay for any breaches of the contract?

ANSWER

1. Yes.

2. Yes.

3. (a) Yes.

   (b) Yes.

   (c) No. The contract price allows for the provision of a duct under Rapid Creek; and alternative offered by the Contractor as part of his tender.

   (d) Yes.

   (e) Yes.

   (f) No. The contract price allows for the Contractor to provide three sets of plans; there is no requirement in the specification that these be by a licensed surveyor.

4. Sewer pipe grade.

5. Yes.

6. The terms and conditions of the contract do not require the Contractor to provide this information

7. No.

8. Yes.

9. In accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract, a form of Bank Guarantee has been lodged by the Contractor as a Security Deposit against the due and proper completion of the contract. The issued capital of the company is listed as 2 shares of $1 each.

2150 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Is it the intention of the Darwin city council to assist northern suburbs residents with topsoil for nature strips now that their intention is to abolish footpaths.

ANSWER

My department has discussed this matter with the Corporation of the City of Darwin and I am informed that the program at present is aimed particularly at those older suburbs where footpaths were affected by the cyclone and the cleanup program or where the affluxion of time has rendered the footpaths unserviceable. After residents have been asked if they will plant grass and maintain the area, the footpaths are torn up and the nature strip brought to profile. This would include the provision of topsoil where necessary and the construction of concrete driveways. The corporation would like to see grass verges and concrete driveways throughout the whole Darwin area but, at this stage, the areas mentioned above are programmed for this work.

2151 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he advise at what stage is the planning for a proposed recreation lake at Alice Springs? Where it it proposed to site the lake, how big will it be and for what purpose will it be used?

ANSWER

I have been given a guarantee that I will have the information later this morning.

2152 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Several suburbs within the electorate of Casuarina have been without street name signs since the cyclone. Is he able to advise me when the missing or damaged street name signs will be replaced?

ANSWER

I am aware that there are a number of areas where the street signs do need attention and this does not only apply to Casuarina but also to Sanderson. I am advised by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that the subdivisions of Tiwi, Wulagi and parts of Anula have not yet been handed over to the Corporation of the City of Darwin. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission through its agent, the Department of Construction, is currently erecting new street signs as they become available. This program will be completed by December 1977 when the subdivisions are handed over to the corporation.

2153 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

I address my question to the Cabinet Member with liaison responsibilities for education and planning but he may wish the Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Government to reply to part of it because of his position on the Darwin Reconstruction Commission. Is he aware that, in the rehabilitation of government homes in Rapid Creek, Nightcliff and other areas, no provision was made by the DRC for the replacement sewer lines or for testing sewer lines which are known to be defective? Although private people had to replace lines, the Government has taken no action. In the coming wet season, there will once again be sewage overflows down the streets of Rapid Creek. What action is being taken to test the government properties and upgrade the sewer lines?

ANSWER

I was not aware that the Government had not paid attention to its own properties and the services to those properties. I believe that the question should rightly be taken up with the Darwin Reconstruction Commission because I have no information as to whether such a program of testing and rehabilitation may actually be planned. If the Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Government has some specific information on this perhaps he can convey it through the House.

2154 Mr VALE to Dr LETTS

My question concerns the ABC program this morning which discussed the possibility of burying uranium waste in Central Australia. Has the Majority Leader had any discussions on this with the geologist who was interviewed this morning, or the Federal Government?

ANSWER

I have had no contact with the geologist or with the Federal Government on this matter, but I do not believe the Government has any intention of burying uranium waste in Central Australia or anywhere else in Australia. I did hear the ABC segment to which the honourable member referred and it was the number one item on that session which has a fairly wide coverage throughout Australia. I think it is a simple case of a relatively unknown academic geologist from the Australian National University playing politics. Fairly obviously, it was a not so subtle attempt by a member of the anti-uranium lobby of which he admitted being a member, to put unreasonable fear into the minds of Australians and Northern Territorians in particular. Any politically motivated geologist could do the same by wandering into the Nullabor or Wilson's Promontory and pronouncing them as sites which would lend themselves better than some others to the disposal of nuclear waste. Then, all he has to do is get hold of a reporter or a cooperative avenue in the media and Bob's your auntie. There are certain elements in the southern area of the Australian Broadcasting Commission that I believe are running an anti-uranium campaign through that medium. I have evidence of that from seeing TDT programs, Four Corners programs and Broadband radio programs. I see the undue prominence given to this item as just another part of that campaign.

2155 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON

Has the Further Education Council made a decision on the future of the Alice Springs community college as yet? If so, will the decision be made public?

ANSWER

When the Further Education Council for the Northern Territory was established by the Minister for Education, one of the specific tasks which was given to the council was to report on the needs and structure of further education in the Central Australian region. The council, has taken evidence in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek recently and the research staff attached to the council are currently collating this information so that a decision can be made on the future of the Alice Springs community college. There is actually no such thing as the Alice Springs community college at the moment; it is a branch of the Darwin Community College. However, these matters are being examined by the Further Education Council to see what degree, if any, of autonomy should prevail in Alice Springs in these matters. The decision on whe-

ther the report will be made public is entirely up to the Minister for Education as the Further Education Council will be making its report to him.

2156 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Is it a fact that the Home Planning Advisory Service staffed by a qualified architect which was run under the auspices of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has now been terminated? If so, what is the reason for this?

ANSWER

That particular service has been terminated. I am not sure of the particular reason but it is generally to do with the winding-down of the DRC. However, the building section of my department which has recently moved out to Goyder Road does now have people available to carry on this service. Thus, that service is still available through the Building Section of the Department of Transport and Industry.

2157 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

Does his department have a qualified architect available to supervise or conduct the Home Advisory Service?

ANSWER

Yes.

2158 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH

Is there a qualified anaesthetist available at all times at the Gove District Hospital? Is there any provision at the hospital for an infectious diseases ward?

ANSWER

Gove is a small community of 4,000 or 5,000 people and it has a 30-40 bed hospital. There is not sufficient workload in this hospital to maintain an anaesthetist full time on the premises. However, the department is well aware of the need for an anaesthetist from time to time and it has an arrangement that an anaesthetist will visit from Darwin regularly so that elective surgery can be carried out. In the event of emergency work needing to be done, the patient can be conveyed to Darwin or the government doctors and the private doctors can work together on the problem. There is no infectious diseases ward as such in the Gove Hospital. However, the department is very conscious of the need to have a section set aside for such diseases and is currently planning and programming funds for the next year to convert a section of the children's ward into a ward that can be used for these diseases.

2159 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

I assume that he is aware that Leanyer Sewage Treatment Plant is creating quite a nuisance in the northern suburbs because of the unbearable stench that is emanating from it. Can he advise what the problem is and what action has been taken to remedy it?

ANSWER

I will undertake to obtain this information and supply it to her during these sittings.

2160 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

Is it a fact that service personnel are not permitted to apply for a Housing Commission dwelling until such time that they are demobilised from the armed forces? Apparently, they then have an 18 months waiting period to receive a dwelling in normal circumstances.

ANSWER

The matter has been brought to my attention and I am currently looking at the policy on eligibility criteria for people to place their names on waiting lists. One of the areas relates to service men who are electing to be demobilised in Darwin. I am looking at the administrative system that would be necessary for those persons to notify the commission that they are intending to actually be demobilised in Darwin. When I have more information on this, I will certainly make it available.

2161 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Has any money been allocated to the Northern Territory Housing Commission from either the DRC or any other source to enable them to carry out the testing and upgrading of drains on their properties in the Nightcliff and Rapid Creek areas and, if not, what steps is the Housing Commission taking to enable this work to be done?

ANSWER

I am aware that problems arose during the last wet season with regard to a number of properties owned by the Northern Territory Housing Commission. I am aware that the commission itself has been looking at these specific problems. I feel that they would be able to do this from within their own financial resources. I will seek specific details with regard to the action that is being taken and make it available.

2162 Mr DONDAS to Mr POLLOCK

The Australian Labor Party leader in Darwin made a statement in yesterday's NT News that this Assembly has lost a valuable meat market. Can the Cabinet Member advise me if the Chairman of the Balkan and Black Sea Fishing Company, Mr Kostav, contacted him regarding an export of beef from the Territory.

ANSWER

There was no attempt by Mr Kostav to contact me or, as far as I know, any other member of this Assembly in relation to the matter, nor has Mr Kostav contacted the Australian Meat Board or the Northern Territory Cattle Producers Council on the matter. In general, the Government does not know anything about his visit. I am advised that it is normal for meat negotiations with Bulgaria and other Iron Curtain countries to be conducted at a government to government level. The Department of Northern Territory Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch, the Meat Board and the Assembly members have had no contact from this gentlemen whatsoever. The accusations and statements made by Mr Isaacs are quite groundless and quite false. Apparently, he and his Iron Curtain friends perhaps have had closer liaison than this side of the House.

2163 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr RYAN

Is the Minister for Transport holding an inquiry into airline services and scheduling in Australia and, if so, could he obtain the terms of reference.

ANSWER

I believe the Minister for Transport has instigated an inquiry and I will attempt to get the terms of reference from him.

2164 Mr LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he yet advise us as to the future of Carpentaria College?

ANSWER

There have been a number of people raising this matter with me. I sought a full report on the subject from the Department of the Northern Territory at least a fortnight ago but I have not received a reply. I will undertake to see if such a reply can be made during these sittings.

2165 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

My question is asked on behalf of the member for Elsey. Can he advise when the Katherine Rural College will be set up to teach practical education.

ANSWER

The subject of a rural college in Katherine has also been referred to the Further Education Council by the Minister for Education. The council discussed this matter at a recent meeting and has sought further information on the subject other than what is contained in the report of the committee drawn up to report on the proposal to establish a rural college in Katherine. I would hope that a decision by the Further Education Council can be referred to the Minister for Education at an early date and hopefully some action will be taken on that report.

2166 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

Since the last sittings, has he had any further consideration on the proposal for a 200 mile fishing zone?

ANSWER

Since the last sitting of the Assembly the Queensland Minister for Fisheries has taken this matter up with me and I have taken it up with the Cabinet. We have advised the Minister for Primary Industry that we believe it is time to implement the 200 mile fishing zone without any further dithering. The matter is becoming more urgent day by day. We saw a string of Taiwanese Fishing Boats in the Darwin Harbour the other week and no doubt there are a lot more. I am advised of the concern being expressed about the number that are in the Gulf of Carpentaria. The implementation of this 200 mile zone would effectively close the Gulf of Carpentaria to those fishing vessels and protect the resource for Australian use or at least control. Admittedly, the policing of that may cause some difficulty but we should implement the 200 mile zone without further delay. That information and our concern has been expressed to the Minister.

2167 Mr DONDAS to Mr RYAN

What assistance will the Northern Territory Tourist Board give the promoters of the beer can boat Cantiki which will go to Singapore from Darwin with Mr Clem Jones, the Chairman of the DRC, and Mr Lutz Frankenfield, a local business man, to promote tourism in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

We have not formulated exactly what help we can give. There has been a committee formed called the Cantiki club of which I have been elected president because of my association with the Tourist Board. There are 3 other subcommittees: the finance subcommittee, the expedition subcommittee and the publicity subcommittee. And we have had tremendous response from people associated with business and tourism in Darwin. The beer can expedition idea started off initially by Lutz Frankenfield and Clem Jones getting together. It is now an operation involving activity by business people in Darwin. We believe it is an event which will create world-wide interest and focus the attention of people from other countries on Darwin. With proper promotion and publicity, we hope to be able to get people coming to Darwin as a starting point for a trip around Australia. To this end, I will be asking the Tourist Board to assist as much as possible in promoting this expedition.

2168 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Has the Alice Springs Abattoirs yet been granted an export licence and, if so, at what standard?

ANSWER

My information is that the Alice Springs Abattoirs has not yet been granted an export licence although it has applied for one. The licence which will be granted will conform with Form 8 standard. There is a sole standard for export abattoirs in Australia and that is the requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture for meat to be exported to that country. The Alice Springs Abattoirs would have to meet those requirements if it is to be licensed.

2169 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

Is he aware of the considerable volume of traffic which passes along Lee Point Road adjacent to Moil and Wagaman. When will the street lighting on Lee Point Road be made operational again?

ANSWER

The street lighting along Lee Point Road has been inoperative for some time now to facilitate the relocation of a substation which was giving some trouble. The Electrical Supply Division has managed to undertake the operation without disrupting electricity supply to consumers in the area but the street lights and the electrical controls on the nature strip have had to be turned off while the job was being completed. I understand that has been done now and the lights should have come on again last night.

2170 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Is he able to provide any information on negotiations between the Department of the Northern Territory and Hooker Developments concerning the development of the Brinkin Subdivision.

ANSWER

This is another of the long sagas that we hear in this House. Negotiations between the Department of Northern Territory and Hooker Developments to resolve various questions over the Brinkin project are still continuing. They have been continuing for over 12 months now. I checked up on the matter this morning but they told me that nothing has changed - negotiations are still continuing, It is about time that somebody made a decision in this matter rather than just continuing to procrastinate.

2171 Mr VALE to Miss ANDREW

When will proper winter uniforms be supplied to the Alice Springs police officers, particularly those posted to the Traffic Section and what type of uniform will be supplied?

ANSWER

I understand that approval for 5 members of the Traffic Section to have the winter uniform, a leather jacket with gauntlets, has already been given and these will be arriving in the near future.

2172 Mr DONDAS to Mr TUXWORTH

Will facilities be made available for the training of nursing aides at the Darwin Hospital?

ANSWER

I will answer that question later.

2173 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr RYAN

In view of the fact that Trower Road is about to be widened between Rapid Creek Road and Nightcliff Road, will the opportunity be taken to install traffic lights at the pedestrian crossing across Trower Road in the vicinity of its intersection with Francis Street.

ANSWER

I am hoping that that action will be taken. I intend to raise the matter of pedestrian crossings through the Road Safety Council. That particular crossing, which is now right in the middle of my electorate, will receive particular attention.

2174 Mr MANUELL to Mr SPEAKER

I notice on looking around the chamber that the honourable member for Tiwi and myself, apart from the honourable member for Port Darwin, are the only 2 members without flasks. In order to avoid suspicion that either the honourable member for Tiwi or myself may be souvenir hunters, I ask if we may be supplied with these before the end of the day.

ANSWER

I will look into this matter but I understand that the honourable member for Port Darwin does not require water.

2175 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Can he confirm recent press reports that the Nakara Primary School will be opening as a school in the first school term of 1978?

ANSWER

I can only go on the information that has been supplied by the Department of Education. It was a departmental press release to which the honourable member has referred. I was very pleased to receive a copy of the press release which indicated that the school would be used solely for educational purposes and not for administrative purposes as was rumoured some time back. I can do no more than suggest that the press release is accurate because it is a departmental press release.

2176 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

My question concerns the proposed $1m road which was to replace the ill-fated Palmerston arterial road giving access to the city from the northern suburbs. Following the opposition to this proposal by the Darwin corporation, can he advise on the status of that proposal? Is design work proceeding or has it been abandoned.

ANSWER

The matter of a bypass road that could link Fannie Bay with Ludmilla and the northern suburbs was discussed at the Darwin Reconstruction Commission meeting last week in light of the report that the Corporation of the City of Darwin had highlighted a number of problems on which it wanted further consideration and expressed some opposition to the project as planned. The Mayor of Darwin indicated that the corporation stance had been influenced largely by the paucity of information given to it. The Reconstruction Commission will have further discussions with the Corporation with regard to the details of that proposal and I hope it will be discussed before the final determination of the works program for the coming financial year. I do appreciate the needs of people in Nightcliff and other northern suburbs to have improved road access to the city and I think this will be the attitude taken by the Reconstruction Commission.

2177 Mr MANUELL to Mr PERRON

In what calendar year is the proposed $400,000 upgrading of Ross Park Primary School planned to commence and is the upgrading to be undertaken as one contract?

ANSWER

The Education Department confidently expects to have the upgrading project included in its 1978/79 capital works program and, depending on priorities, will be making every endeavour to have a contract let during the latter half of 1978. It is planned to have the upgrading undertaken in one contract.

2178 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

When is it proposed to construct a new public library in Darwin?

ANSWER

The Majority Party has supported in this year's estimates the establishment of a new library at Casuarina to be commenced early in 1978. Unfortunately, as I do not have access to budget papers, I would not be able to confirm whether this program will go ahead or not. It is hoped that it will. The value of the project is estimated to be $1.5m and will take 12 to 14 months to complete. I would also like to add that purchasing books for a library of this size is quite a large job and in fact the library staff have already begun the ordering of books for this library. They will arrive in the next 12 to 18 months and be ready for the library when it is finished.

2179 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING

Is he able to advise the Assembly of the full extent of Department of Construction contracts actually current or completed during the financial year 1976/1977?

ANSWER

I did have some forewarning of this question. I have been supplied with information from the Department of Construction that relates to all contracts currently let in the Alice Springs region. It comprises some 7 pages and I will make it available to the honourable member. It is very interesting to note that the total authorised value of current contracts in the Alice Springs region is of the order of $76.6 million of which to 30 June 1977 some $52.2 million has been expended. Therefore, the residual value on all these current contracts in the Alice Springs region carrying over into the next financial year is of the order of $20.3 million. I will make the full details available to the honourable member.

2180 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

I am asking this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. Can he advise when a detoxification centre will be set up in Katherine?

ANSWER

I cannot give a definite date when a detoxification centre will be set up in Katherine. There is already a centre being operated in Katherine by the Regional Council for Social Development which has found itself

inundated with work and is looking to extend its operation by obtaining bigger premises. The regional council is interested in taking over the railway sheds for this purposeand I would give them my wholehearted support.

2181 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

I have indicated to the Cabinet Member the desirability of having these questions answered at this sittings so I have given him forewarning of them. Who constitute the membership of the committee reviewing the construction standards and costs of the Tarcoola Alice Springs rail link and what were their findings following their review? Were the findings of that review tabled in the Federal House by the Minister for Transport? Are the findings of that committee available to this Assembly?

ANSWER

The first section the review was conducted by the Australian National Railways and the Department of Transport with the assistance of the Bureau of Transport Economics. The review indicated a number of areas where costs could be reduced while still providing a reliable all-weather railway to Alice Springs. The Minister for Transport has directed that these recommendations be implemented by the Australian National Railways Commission. It also recommended the establishment of an IDC comprising representatives of the ANR and Departments of Transport, Finance and Northern Territory to report to the Government on the lease cost option for the rail terminal taking into account the overall town planning requirements of Alice Springs. The answer to the third part of the question is no. As for the fourth part of the question, only the information already given in response to the second part of the question is available.

2182 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr PERRON

When is it expected that sunshades will be fitted to the rear of the Jingili and Moil or Wagaman Pre-schools to reduce heat and glare on the children particularly during the afternoon?

ANSWER

The provision of sunshades for the Jingili and Moil Pre-schools has been listed on the proposals for the past 2 years but, due to financial restrictions and projects of higher priority, work on these projects has been deferred until this financial year. The provision of sunshades for both schools has been listed on the 1977-78 minor new works program. Subject to funding being available following a budget announcement, requisitions for the work will be issued and it is anticipated that the sunshades will be fitted by the end of the 1977 school year.

2183 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Can he yet advise what steps the Darwin Reconstruction Commission has taken to upgrade domestic drains in the Nightcliff-Rapid Creek area on properties which are either Housing Commission or under the control of the Northern Territory Administration?

ANSWER

I have obtained details as a result of the question asked yesterday. I am advised by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission that there are 2 problems with domestic sewer outlets. The first relates to a continuing maintenance area of ensuring the rubber seals in earthenware pipes are intact and not corroded by bacteria or $H_2S$ gas. The current practice is to replace this old type of piping with PVC where the deterioration is detected. The second problem arises where an earthenware or PVC pipe has been damaged either through soil subsidence during the cyclone or through cleanup activities following the cyclone. The DRC has generally adopted the practice that, where the sewer operates satisfactorily, no upgrading or replacement works are carried out. However, where it can be demonstrated by either the mirror test or the hydrostatic test that there is a fault on the line caused in the broad sense by Cyclone Tracy, then the repairs or a new line are carried out. The Darwin Reconstruction Commission is not responsible for the maintenance for domestic sewer lines. The commission would be happy to make available a technical expert to explain in detail what is being done to prevent the escape of sewage from domestic lines between a dwelling and the main sewer trunk line.

With regard to the information sought from the Northern Territory Housing Commission, I am advised that the testing of all existing sewers is carried out by the Department of Construction which then orders the owners of the properties to have the drains repaired where faults are detected. The Department of Construction has advised the commission that hydrostatic testing of sewer mains in the Rapid Creek area will be recommended shortly; 76 commission properties in the area will be tested and, if found to be faulty, will be repaired to the Department of Construction's specifications. Additionally, tenders will shortly be called by the commission for a contract involving the major repair to the sewer drains of 14 houses in the Rapid Creek area. Work on these commenced in September 1974 but was disrupted by the cyclone.

2184 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Has the Darwin Reconstruction Commission made any decision on the further development of the Casuarina commercial area? I ask this question because of the recent refusal of the Department of the Northern Territory to allow a Woolworths development within that area.

ANSWER

Apart from in principle agreements to development proposals in April 1976, the Commission has not made any decision on further development in the Casuarina area.

2185 Mr WITHNALL to Mr PERRON

Can he give any explanation for the inordinate delay in the building of the Larrakeyah Pre-School.

ANSWER

The Larrakeyah Pre-school project was originally due to be completed for the start of the second school term in 1977 but the project is behind time and the Department of Construction has advised that the contract is on liquidated damages. The project is now 75% completed and building works are expected to be finished in approximately 2 weeks. The total project is not expected to be completed for approximately 4 weeks as most of the Larrakeyah area has a rock base and the provision of

sewerage services through the rock is expected to cause the additional 2 weeks delay.

2186 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

My question is asked on behalf of the member for Elsey. Can the Commonwealth Hostel in Katherine be used to accommodate outback children desirous of attending primary or secondary schools in Katherine?

ANSWER

This question was asked of me at the last sitting and I have endeavoured to get an answer. However, the answer is not sufficient and I am afraid there has to be some negotiation carried out before a final answer can be given. The Northern Territory division of the Department of Education understands that the only sections of the Commonwealth Hostel in Katherine at present unoccupied are the older sections and no details of their condition are known by the Department, If hostel accommodation in any form is to be provided for school children, consideration will have to be given to the adequate and appropriate supervision of the students while in residence. A preliminary survey carried out earlier this year in Katherine indicated that a considerable number of parents would wish to avail themselves of such residential facilities. The division believes, however, that further research would be necessary before proceeding with this proposal and talks would have to be held with the Commonwealth Hostels. The Education Department feels that hostel accommodation would be a great benefit to school children, attending primary and secondary schools in Katherine and outback children could also be housed in the hostel accommodation for short periods of time to supplement the tuition they currently receive from the School of the Air and other forms of correspondence education. It would be envisaged that, if such an arrangement could be made, these children would come to Katherine for periods of a few weeks to receive additional tuition which would no doubt assist them considerably in their studies.

2187 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

Can he tell me the terms of reference of the interdepartmental committee established to inquire into the lease cost option of the new railway terminal in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The terms of reference for the IDC committee have not been set as yet. I will endeavour to get hold of them as soon as they are available and pass them on to the honourable member.

2188 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr TAMBLING

Is he able to advise the Assembly of the value and nature of Housing Commission capital expenditure during the financial year 1976/77 in the Alice Springs region and whether or not all contracts called during that year have been let?

ANSWER

I am sure the honourable member for Gillen will find my information just as pleasing as the previous answer. There is a program for the construction of 70 houses to the value of $1,333,965, Additionally, there are site works for flat complexes, for car park reconstruction and the building of garbage compounds at a value of $103,586. The contract for

the construction of 49 medium density units, which are being called the South Court Flats, has recently been concluded at a price of $1,614,550. I am very pleased to advise that all Housing Commission contracts included in the 1976/77 appropriation have been called or let.

2189 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr PERRON

As an interim measure to avoid overcrowding in the Nhulunbuy Area School will a double demountable classroom be installed at that school for the 1978 school year and what is the current proposal for the new Nhulunbuy High School?

ANSWER

The principal education advisers in the Northern Territory in consultation with school principals have until 17 July this year to submit to the Department of Education their requirements for 1978, The requirements for demountables at Nhulunbuy Area School willbbe considered in August after the requests from elsewhere in the Territory have been received. In relation to the Nhulunbuy High School, the proposed school has been placed on the 1978/79 works proposals. The design of the school is currently being developed and an architect and an officer from the Department of Education are expected to visit Nhulunbuy this week in connection with this project.

2190 Mr MANUELL to Mr RYAN

If the terms of reference of the interdepartmental committee to inquire into the cost options of the railway terminal in Alice Springs have not been set, will he undertake to ensure that the terms of reference of that committee include inquiries into costs other than lease costs, including cultural and community costs for the resiting of the railway terminal? Will he also undertake to have the committee sit in Alice Springs and advertise the dates upon which it will sit?

ANSWER

I will attempt to pass that information on and see if it can be included in the terms of reference.

2191 Mr KENTISH to Mr POLLOCK

Has any decision been made on the recommendation from the Cattle Industry Conference held in Alice Springs recently for the Government to reintroduce a cattle freight subsidy?

ANSWER

As recently as this morning, I was told that no firm decision has been made by the Government even though it is considering a proposal on the matter at the moment. A submission has been made to Cabinet and it is hoped that this matter will be discussed in the current Cabinet sittings in Canberra which are programmed for this week and next. I am hoping for a favourable decision from it. In fact, I am reasonably confident that Cabinet will decide on some form of freight assistance to the industry because it did give assistance last year for some 9 months. However, I am unable to advise what that decision will be.

2192 Mr WITHNALL to Mr RYAN

Can he confirm that the poor reception on the ABC Television is due to a poor micro wave channel which in turn is due to the Australian Broadcasting Commission's refusal to pay Telecom a higher price for a better channel? Will he make representations to the Australian Broadcasting Commission with a view to their providing a better channel and improved reception?

ANSWER

I cannot confirm whether that is correct. However, I will make inquiries and take the matter up with the ABC.

2193 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he advise when the development of Darwin East will commence?

ANSWER

I cannot give a specific date when the development of Darwin East will commence. It is one of those matters which relate to population projections. It will be seen later on this morning, when the report on the electricity supply is discussed, that population projection estimates range from somewhere between 50,000 people and 400,000 people in Darwin by the year 2000. Until we can get a bit more rationale than that into the system, I certainly will not be able to suggest a time when Darwin East should be commenced.

2194 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TUXWORTH

When will a wider range of books be made available to the public using the present temporary Darwin Public Library?

ANSWER

We have been conscious of this problem for some time. Unfortunately, my department has been hampered by the lack of floor space. This is a flow-on from the aftermath of the cyclone; you cannot increase the contents of a library that is shifted every 5 or 6 months. My department is currently looking at the provision of additional library space and the provision of extra staff to catalogue and make ready for the shelves the books that we have in stock. When this backlog is out of the way, the honourable member's desire to see additional books on the shelves will be well met.

2195 Mr VALE to Mr PERRON

I ask this question on behalf of the member for Elsey. What is to be done with the service station and caravan park sites at Borroloola?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

2196 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

I am totally dissatisfied with the answer supplied by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission so I ask a more specific question. Is it a fact that private contractors working for the Department of Construction under the auspices of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission are not re-

quired to test drains of government homes in the Rapid Creek and Nightcliff area unless there is obvious external damage which they believe could have been caused by Cyclone Tracy? In other words, they are not testing the drains.

ANSWER

If she has information on how the contractors are doing their job, I will have it looked at by the Department of Construction.

2197 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr POLLOCK

I ask this question on behalf of the honourable member for Elsey. Has any restriction been placed on the licensing of commercial fishermen now resident in the Northern Territory, in particular Queensland fishermen? What controls on the export of barramundi from the Gulf area are being implemented?

ANSWER

At the moment, no commercial fishing licences are being issued to persons who are non-residents of the Northern Territory. Persons who are resident solely in Queensland are not getting a Northern Territory commercial fishing licence. Some Queenslanders who have operated in the Territory in the past and have fulfilled all requirements of the ordinance have had their licences renewed but it is being considered whether that practice will continue. Northern Territory fishing is for Northern Territory residents.

In relation to the control of the amount of fish going out of the Territory waters, an inspector of fisheries has in the last 3 weeks taken up residence at Barroloola. A difficulty exists in relation to the other part of the Gulf, particularly around the Roper, because no residence is available there for an officer. At the moment, he would need to be in Katherine and to control fishing on the Roper and the Gulf area from Katherine is a physical impossibility. These matters are receiving the attention of the Fisheries Branch.

2198 Mr KENTISH to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he advise me why all Asians evacuated from Groote Eylandt by the authority of a doctor or sister had to be taken first to Nhulunbuy Hospital before proceeding to Darwin even when the Groote Eylandt health officers know that they must ultimately and urgently go to Darwin Hospital, and the result has sometimes assured that?

ANSWER

The Health Department has very recently formed new guidelines for the removal of patients from one area to another and the responsibility of the Commonwealth for transporting them. I find it rather extraordinary to believe that Groote Eylandt patients would be forced to be admitted to the Gove Hospital and later transmitted to Darwin. That seems to be incredible. If it is a fact, I will have it investigated and taken up by the Director of Health.

2199 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

How many estates on which return of probate and succession duty have been lodged with the Registrar of Probates are awaiting an assessment of duty at the present time? To what period do these relate?

ANSWER

The member for Jingili did give me some forewarning of this question. At the end of June 1977, I am advised that the position is as follows: on the 1977 files, there are 12 outstanding estates; on the 1976 files, there are 8 outstanding estates; and on the older files, there are 39 outstanding estates; a total of 59.

2200 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr PERRON

Why has the number of persons registered for work in the Territory climbed to such an apparently high figure and does that figure accurately reflect the true position of employment in the Northern Territory as compared with the states?

ANSWER

The figures that are used to indicate unemployed persons in Australia are to a large degree estimations. It is very difficult to get specific figures on exactly how many people are unemployed because many do not register. It is difficult to get figures on how many people are unemployed and have never worked compared to people who are unemployed because they have been put out of work. The figures are a guide to the situation generally on an Australia-wide basis more than a local basis. The Northern Territory traditionally has a run of itinerant people coming north to our very good weather in the dry season and this will probably continue. Of late, this has been aggravated somewhat by the lack of job opportunities elsewhere in Australia. There have also been rumours apparently circulating amongst itinerant people that Darwin is a good spot to come to because there is quite a lot of work here. This is the result of the very large building programs we have had in Darwin over the last couple of years but that situation does not exist today. The building program has wound down yet itinerants who are still coming to the Commonwealth Employment Office in Darwin do indicate that people are led to believe on the grapevines within their community that Darwin is a good spot. Perhaps we will have to wait a little while for the message to flow back down the grapevine.

In the Northern Territory, we have an unemployment figure of 3,692 persons. That is an increase over many of the previous years' figures and is related largely to this traditional migration to the north which has been accentuated somewhat by lack of opportunities elsewhere and a feeling that, if there is work anywhere, it will be in Darwin. Of the 3,692 people unemployed in the Territory, 1, 293 are Aboriginals. I do not have any indications of how many of those people are Territory people as compared to people who have come from interstate in recent times. What we must bear in mind when looking at these figures is that the Northern Territory has a very small workforce, somewhere in the 25,000 mark, and small numbers of people make fairly significant percentage changes to those figures. If we get 50 to 100 people coming into the Territory in a month seeking work that can drive our figure up considerably and give a fairly false reading as to the state of the economy in the Northern Territory.

2201 Mr MANUELL to Mr POLLOCK

Has he had time to pursue the matter of the establishment of the oil refinery in Alice Springs with Treasury and National Resources officials.

ANSWER

Since the last sitting, I have had some time to be able to devote to pursuing that matter and, as recently as this morning, I had information from the Department of Northern Territory officer who is assisting me considerably in the matter. The delay at the moment is that the Department of National Resources has come to no conclusions. They are reviewing all aspects of the matter but have not yet decided on anything specific. However, constant pressure is being applied to that particular department and hopefully something firm will come from them in the near future. I will continue to pursue the matter with the Department of National Resources through my contact with the Department of Northern Territory and Treasury.

2202 Mr EVERINGHAM to Miss ANDREW

Has the Master of the Supreme Court, who is also the Registrar of Probates, been able to devote any substantial amount of time over the last 3 months to the work on assessment of estate duty.

ANSWER

I am advised that, until three months ago, the Registrar was able to devote a reasonable proportion of his time to the performance of his duties and the Succession Duties Act. However, due to other demands on his time and limitations on staff, he has been able to devote very little time to these duties in the last 3 months.

2203 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

Can he yet supply any information concerning a recreational lake in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The answer that I have been given by the department is that the Water Resources Branch are currently investigating 2 sites in the Alice Springs area that would be most suitable for the construction of a dam for a recreation lake. One site is on the Hugh River and the other is on Jay Creek. At this stage Mr Speaker, there is quite an amount of geological assessment to be made on the two sites to see which is the most likely site to retain the water. The Department of the Northern Territory is currently awaiting funds to enable the geologists to get on with this study.

2204 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

What happened to the 200 concrete and steel cyclone shelters ordered by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission last year? Are they still available to the public?

ANSWER

All of the concrete type shelters were disposed of either by sale to the public or for use on various projects.

2205 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

Can he yet advise as to the fate of Carpentaria College?

ANSWER

No.

2206 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

What is the position in relation to service personnel seeking to apply for a Housing Commission dwelling?

ANSWER

I have had further work done on this matter and I am pleased to advise that members of the armed services are permitted to apply for commission homes sufficiently in advance of their discharge to allow allocation immediately following their demobilisation. The commission tenancy section will allocate once it has sighted the interim discharge certificate and receives an assurance that the serviceman does not have any current application for housing in centres outside of Darwin.

2207 Mr ROBERTSON to Mr PERRON

Is it a fact that unemployed from the Northwest Aboriginal Reserve in South Australia are put on the Alice Springs roll of unemployed? In other words, we are getting Don Dunstan's unemployed on the Alice Springs register.

ANSWER

I will have the matter looked at and taken note of.

2208 Mr DONDAS to Mr TAMBLING

Will the Northern Territory Housing Commission rebuild the concrete houses situated on Trower Road between Ellengowan Drive and Bradshaw Terrace? I am aware that, in the past, there have been some contractor complications. Have these contract problems been solved?

ANSWER

The concrete houses on Trower Road near the intersection with Henry Avenue will be completed in the 1977 financial year. Engineering consultants engaged by the commission have advised that the buildings can be economically repaired and it is expected that tenders will be called for their repair within the next few weeks. It is of interest that the buildings were under construction but not occupied at the time of the cyclone and these concrete houses were virtually the only ones left standing in the new northern suburbs. The original contractors for construction of these houses, prefabricated homes, were based on a partnership, the principals of which did not wish to complete the work. Also, the Darwin Reconstruction Commission's town planning proposals immediately following the cyclone were instrumental in preventing recommencement of the work for a considerable time. This latter difficulty has since been resolved and the commission will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the successful contractor for the repair of these houses is competent to complete the works involved.

2209 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TAMBLING

Is he aware that, following the decision to underground power in the far northern suburbs, substations are now being built on government land on which people have taken up residence not knowing that such a substation

is going to be built. Will he make approaches to the Department of the Northern Territory to enable those tenants so affected to move to another departmental residence?

ANSWER

I appreciate the unsightliness of any substation or even the units that appear on the top of poles; I have one of the latter right outside the front of my house and it blocks one of the most beautiful views in Darwin. However, I will certainly take up with the Department of the Northern Territory the issue of tenancy. I presume the honourable member is referring to public servant housing as it would be logical that these are the properties on which these substations are to be located. I am aware that, as a result of the undergrounding, it will be necessary to make provision for a number of these substations units. I was told that the number was rather small and they can usually be camouflaged with appropriate landscaping.

2210 Mr DONDAS to Mr PERRON

Does the Education Department provide facilities for special classes for children who have special learning difficulties and, if so, where?

ANSWER

I had some forewarning of this question. Most children described as having special learning difficulties in the Northern Territory are catered for under the provisions provided by the Northern Territory division of the Department of Education for remedial reading groups. Currently, the division has 25 remedial reading teachers and 4 reading diognosticians in schools. In addition, the division provides a range of services catering for children who are handicapped in other ways - children who are deaf, visually handicapped,mentally or physically retarded. Some of these services are extended to Aboriginal communities. The work of the bilingual and migrant section is also helping to meet the needs of children who have special learning difficulties in the Northern Territory. The prepared answer does not specifically say where these facilities are, however, it would indicate that such facilities for helping children with special learning difficulties do exist throughout Northern Territory schools.

2211 Mr EVERINGHAM to Mr TAMBLING

When will work start on the second stage of the Trower Road widening project?

ANSWER

It is expected that tenders will be called in October of this year.

2212 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: Yesterday the honourable member for Casuarina asked when facilities would be provided for training nursing aides at Darwin Hospital. It is proposed to provide facilities for nursing aide training at Darwin Hospital after the Casuarina Hospital is opened. This will be in addition to the one already operating in Alice Springs.

2213 ANSWER TO QUESTION

Mr TUXWORTH: The honourable member for Stuart asked when nursing sisters will commence duty at Tea Tree and take up residence there. The Health Centre and associated accommodations at Tea Tree have not yet been taken over by the Department of Health. However, only minor work remains to be done and the take-over should take place shortly. In the meantime, action is being taken to recruit staff for the Tea Tree facility. At present, a service is provided to Tea Tree by a visiting sister from Warrabri.

INDEX TO QUESTIONS

12 and 13 July 1977


ABC program, uranium waste (Vale) 2154
ABC, micro wave channel (Withnall) 2192
Airline schedules (Ballantyne) 2163
Alice Springs -
  abattoir licence (Manuell) 2168
  Community College (Manuell) 2155
  Housing Commission expenditure 1976-77 (Robertson) 2188
  lake (Vale) 2151, 2203
  oil refinery (Manuell) 2201
  police, winter uniforms (Vale) 2171
  rail terminal (Manuell) 2187, 2190
  Tarcoola rail link (Manuell) 2181
Brinkin Subdivision (Dondas) 2170
Borroloola, service station and caravan park sites (Vale) 2195
Bypass road to city (Lawrie) 2176
Cantiki boat, Tourist Board assistance (Dondas) 2167
Carpentaria College, future (Lawrie) 2164, 2205
Casuarina commercial area (Dondas) 2184
Casuarina street signs (Dondas) 2152
Cattle freight subsidy (Kentish) 2191
Corporation of City of Darwin, topsoil for nature strips (Dondas) 2150
Cyclone shelters (Dondas) 2204
Darwin East, development (Lawrie) 2193
Darwin Hospital, nursing aides (Dondas) 2172, 2212
Darwin Public Library (Everingham) 2178, 2194
Demountable housing (Lawrie) 2065
Department of Construction, 1976-77 contracts value (Robertson) 2179
Dulmison Cables, contract (Steele) 2149
Electricity substations on government residential land (Lawrie) 2209
Fishing zone (Ballantyne) 2166
Government flats (Lawrie) 2066
Groote Eylandt, evacuation of patients (Kentish) 2198
Home Planning Service, termination (Everingham) 2156, 2157
Housing Commission -
  concrete houses in Bradshaw Tce (Dondas) 2208
  servicemen, eligibility (Everingham) 2160, 2206
  sewerage testing (Lawrie) 2161
Katherine -
  detoxification centre (Vale) 2180
  outback children, accommodation (Vale) 2186
Larrakeyah Pre-school (Withnall) 2185
Leanyer Sewage Plant, stench (Lawrie) 2159
Lee Point Road, lighting (Everingham) 2169
Licensing of barramundi fishermen (Ballantyne) 2197
Lot 2904, valuation (Dondas) 2005
Meat market, Mr Kostav (Dondas) 2162
Nakara Primary School (Dondas) 2175
Nhulunbuy -
  demountable classroom (Ballantyne) 2189
  Hospital, anaesthetist (Ballantyne) 2158
  mosquito spraying (Lawrie) 2006
  permit system (Ballantyne) 2148
Northwest Aboriginal Reserve, unemployment figures (Robertson) 2207
Probate, assessment time (Everingham) 2199, 2202
Rapid Creek sewerage lines testing (Lawrie) 2153, 2183, 2196
Remedial reading facilities (Dondas) 2210
Ross Park Primary School, upgrading (Manuell) 2177
Sunshades, Jingili and Moil Preschools (Everingham) 2182
Tea Tree, nursing sisters (Vale) 2213
Trower Road -
  pedestrian lights (Everingham) 2173
  widening (Everingham) 2211
Unemployment figures (Robertson) 2200