

## **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.

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

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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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**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE—Thursday 21 November 1974**

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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.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE—Thursday 21 November 1974**

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**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 unspecified 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 24-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 he 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.

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