

**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

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FROM 21 SEPTEMBER 1977

1 Mr ISAACS to Mr EVERINGHAM

Will he supply a breakdown of the Territory unemployment figures based on age groupings for the following classifications:

- (a) sex;
- (b) educational background;
- (c) racial origin;
- (d) marital status;
- (e) number of dependants; and
- (f) type of job sought (skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled)?

2 Mr ISAACS to Mr PERRON

1. What estimated expenditures in the Allocation of Funds (Supply) Ordinances 1977/78 were varied?
2. On what days were they varied?
3. Who authorised the variations?

3 Mrs O'NEIL to Mr PERRON

1. Is the Arafura Men's Hostel to be closed?

If so -

- (a) when;
- (b) what use will be made of the land and existing buildings?

4 Mrs O'NEIL to Mr ROBERTSON

1. Were those prisoners in Fannie Bay Gaol who were entitled to vote in the Legislative Assembly elections allowed to do so?
2. Was a request made on polling day to the Cabinet Member for Law to authorise travel of prisoners to a polling booth to enable them to vote?
3. If such a request was made, was it refused?

5 Mr ISAACS to Mr STEELE

1. How much of the \$20,000 for the Primary Producers Board mentioned on page 18 of "Explanations to the Allocation of Funds (Supply) Ordinance 1977/78" has been spent?
2. How many meetings of the Primary Producers Board have been held since June 30, 1977?
3. How much has been paid to the Chairman of the Primary Producers Board in -

QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED

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- (a) fees;
- (b) allowances; and
- (c) travel and subsistence

since June 30, 1977?

4. How much has been paid to each of the members (other than the Chairman) of the Primary Producers Board in -

- (a) fees;
- (b) allowances; and
- (c) travel and subsistence

since June 30, 1977?

5. How many meetings of the Primary Producers Board were held in the 1976/77 financial year?

6. How much was paid to the Chairman of the Primary Producers Board in the 1976/77 financial year for -

- (a) fees;
- (b) allowances; and
- (c) travel and subsistence?

7. How much was paid to each of the members (other than the Chairman) of the Primary Producers Board in the 1976/77 financial year for -

- (a) fees;
- (b) allowances; and
- (c) travel and subsistence?

6 Mr ISAACS to Mr EVERINGHAM

I refer to the Chief Secretary's announcement yesterday of Mr Creed Lovegrove's appointment. Is the Chief Secretary establishing a precedent of advising this Assembly of senior appointments during adjournment debates? Will he follow the convention and in future seek leave to make a statement concerning such appointments?

ANSWER

I do not consider that I was in any way setting a precedent. I was simply making an announcement which I understand has already been made by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in Canberra.

7 Mr VALE to Mr ROBERTSON

Is he aware of a reported statement by the Teachers Federation that they will not staff schools in uranium towns and what is the Cabinet Member's policy towards this?

ANSWER

My policy and certainly that of the Majority Party would be to provide the best education to all children of the Northern Territory regardless of where they may be. That policy will stand and will be enforced to the best of our ability. I must express some disappointment in the Teachers Federation's announcement. I would hasten to assure honourable members that my information is that it in no way reflects the views of the teachers at large in the Northern Territory. I believe that they can rightly claim to be called professional; they are trained as professional people and I believe that the majority of teachers in this Territory will behave in that professional manner. I think that perhaps the reasoning behind the Teachers Federation's decision stems more from a lack of understanding of the nature of mining uranium in that province. I can assure this House and I can assure the Teachers Federation ...

Mr ISAACS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! I would ask the manager of government business to answer the question. He is certainly dwelling at length. If he wishes to make a statement later on, he can seek leave and the Opposition will allow him to make a statement.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr ROBERTSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I will continue with my policy as asked, It is my policy, and again that of the Majority Party, to ensure that the safety of all workers in that area is maintained. Certainly where school children are involved our concern would be even greater. The Teachers Federation may leave the governing of this Northern Territory to the future Northern Territory government and I would suggest as to the governing of this country, to the government of the country.

8 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM

Can he advise as to when the trustees of the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund last met and when it is expected they will meet again?

ANSWER

Without referring to notes, I think the date when the trustees last met was sometime in July. I spoke to the Minister for the Northern Territory

yesterday whilst he was here - as honourable members would know, Mr Speaker, he is the chairman of the trustees. I asked him whether it would be in order, as he was not able to call a meeting together himself, for the Mayor of Darwin, Dr Ella Stack, to convene the next meeting which is to be held at 4.30 pm next Tuesday.

9 Mrs O'NEIL to Mr EVERINGHAM

What was the total cost of rearrangement of members' fixed desks and the resultant electrical work necessary in this Chamber?

ANSWER

I do not have that information. I ask her to put the question on notice.

Mr SPEAKER: I have the information which the Majority Leader does not have. It was less than \$600.

10 Mr VALE to Mr STEELE

Can he advise where and when the next Rural Roads Conference will be held?

ANSWER

No,

11 Mr DONDAS to Mr EVERINGHAM

Does he propose to continue as the Assembly representative on the Darwin Cyclone Relief Trust Fund?

ANSWER

Yes.

12 Mr ISAACS to Mr STEELE

Is he satisfied that there is sufficient staff in the Commercial and Industrial Affairs Branch of the Department of Northern Territory to conduct regular inspection of machinery operating on building sites and in factories in the Northern Territory? Has he seen a report by a machinery inspector concerning the crane collapse on the AMP building site in Cavenagh Street Darwin last week? Will he table that report?

ANSWER

I cannot be satisfied that there is adequate staff in the CIA because I have not as yet accepted that function from the federal government and I have not looked at their staffing arrangements. When a report does come forward relating to safety conditions surrounding the crane failure in recent days, I will certainly table that report.

13 Mrs O'NEIL to Mr ROBERTSON

Is it a fact that the Northern Territory Public Library Service has over 50,000 new books in stock which cannot be made available to the public because low staff ceilings prevent their being catalogued?

ANSWER

Dealing with the second part of the question first, I am not aware precisely of the staffing arrangements. I am aware that there is a serious problem within the library services. I have already had discussion with officers of my department in relation to it and I have expressed to them my deep concern that these books remain uncatalogued and unavailable to the people of the Northern Territory. In the previous Legislative Assembly, the previous Executive Member with responsibility in this area also expressed concern. Large expenditure is now proposed on library services in the Casuarina region and I would assume that every effort will be made by the department, and certainly by me, to ensure that these books are brought on stream to the public.

14 Mr VALE to Mr TUXWORTH

Will he personally review the current shortage of dentists in Alice Springs and the present low staff ceilings with a view to relieving the present two-year wait for dental treatment?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to review the dental position in Alice Springs but I am certainly in a position to familiarise myself with the present staffing position in the dental laboratories and units in Alice Springs, and I will do that and report back to the House on the next sitting day.

15 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr PERRON

He will not be pleased to know he still carries responsibility for answering questions regarding Carpentaria College. Could he advise as to the present position of negotiations between the Commonwealth government and the Anglican Church as to the future of this college which is rapidly deteriorating?

ANSWER

I am just trying to clarify in my mind where this matter does reflect upon my responsibilities at the present time. I guess the honourable member is thinking of finances. I do not believe, Mr Speaker, that the state of the Carpentaria College or the land and the zone that exists out there at Nightcliff really has much of a bearing on town planning matters as such. Perhaps, if the honourable member places the question on notice, we can endeavour to have an answer for her question and clearly establish in which direction it should be made.

16 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to Mr PERRON

Considering the importance of his position and how it affects the lives of us who live permanently in the Northern Territory, has the Assistant Secretary for Urban Development and Town Planning returned yet to live permanently in Darwin since the cyclone and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

The gentleman referred to in the honourable member's question has not returned to Darwin, I will seek the further information she asks as to "why not". I do not have the answer at all - I do know that he is not back in Darwin - but I will advise the honourable member further during these sittings,

17 Mr COLLINS to Mr ROBERTSON

What action has been taken to improve the safety of the crossing across Gilruth Avenue to Darwin High School subsequent to the death of a child there earlier this year?

ANSWER

I understand that arrangements are being made through the Corporation of the City of Darwin for the construction of an overpass. I also understand that approximately \$80,000 has been allocated to provide this overpass. I will follow up the matter and give a more detailed answer privately to the honourable member.

18 Mr OLIVER to Mr STEELE

Is it a fact that the foot bridge over the Todd River is to be demolished and, if so, could representation be made to the appropriate department for a statement?

ANSWER

I will get some information and give it to the honourable member later in the day.

19 Mr HARRIS to Mr ROBERTSON

Is it a fact that children from the northern suburbs are being given preference of entry to the Larrakeyah Pre-school over children who live in the Larrakeyah area?

ANSWER

I do not have direct responsibility for education matters but rather a liaison role. Any information that I give is provided to me by the department. I have been advised that it is not the policy of the Education Department to zone in respect of schools. People from other areas are eligible to attend those pre-schools. The impression that northern suburbs children are given preference at that particular pre-school probably stems from the fact that there is a group of creches in the area and the children transfer from those in the morning to the pre-school in the afternoon. There is no definite policy of preference.

20 Mr DOOLAN to Mr EVERINGHAM

Has he seen the report of the Joint Select Committee on Aboriginal Land Rights in the Northern Territory? Does he agree that the report is highly critical of the complementary legislation introduced into the last Assembly? Will he give an undertaking that any future complementary legislation to the Aboriginal Land Rights NT Act 1976 will implement the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee's Report?

ANSWER

I would query that question being in order as it asks me for an expression of opinion.

Mr SPEAKER: The point of order is upheld. Would you like to phrase your question in a different way because you cannot ask for a matter of opinion.

Mr DOOLAN: I would like to ask permission to see the Clerk to re-phrase the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Would you repeat your question.

Mr DOOLAN: Has he seen the report of the Joint Select Committee on Aboriginal Land Rights in the Northern Territory? Does he agree that the report is highly critical of the complementary legislation introduced into the last Assembly? Will he give an undertaking that any future complementary legislation to the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 will implement the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee's Report?

Mr SPEAKER: The second question is a matter of opinion but the other two seem to be straight forward.

Mr EVERINGHAM: Could the questions be asked one at a time?

Mr DOOLAN: I am quite happy to put the question on notice.

21 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr TUXWORTH

Will the Darwin Dental Clinic be replacing the orthodontist who recently resigned and, if so, when? Will the service be extended as promised to Nhulunbuy?

ANSWER

I was advised some 2 to 3 weeks ago by the Department of Health that they were experiencing a great deal of difficulty in recruiting dentists and orthodontists to the Northern Territory. In fact, the squeeze has become so critical that they have now started advertising in Great Britain and America for orthodontists to come to work in the Northern Territory. The difficulty is not a financial one nor a question of positions available in the department but purely one of man power. The department has pointed out that orthodontists are generally very well paid in private enterprise and have no real desire to enter the public service. The department has agreed to keep me briefed on the filling of these positions and it will be doing everything it can to extend existing services to the other centres in the Territory by seconding staff from other areas.

22 Mr ISAACS to Mr EVERINGHAM

Is he aware of the news report attributed to the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service this morning that there has been a marked increase in complaints by Aboriginals concerning police bashing in the Alice Springs area and that a call has been made for the establishment of an independent tribunal to investigate complaints against the police? Will the Majority Party consider seriously the establishment of independent procedures in the Northern Territory to investigate such complaints in accordance with the recommendations of the Australian Law Reform Commission in 1975? Does the Majority Party endorse the statements attributed this morning to the Acting Superintendent of Police at Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I have heard the radio news report but that is about all I have heard on the subject. I intend asking my officer, the Commissioner of Police, for a report on the position. At that stage I think I could perhaps provide

the honourable Leader of the Opposition with more information. I have not seen the recommendation of the Law Reform Commission to which he refers. If perhaps he could provide me with the document I would be most interested to read it.

23 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr TUXWORTH

This is going to sound involved but really it is quite simple. Is he aware that when patients approach the Darwin Hospital and have to be admitted as in-patients, they are not being advised of their right to choose a private doctor to treat them? Is he aware that this is contrary to the rules of the hospital, and what action will he take to ensure that the rules are properly followed?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the case outlined by the honourable member for Night-cliff. However, I will endeavour to familiarise myself today with the present position and report back to the honourable member tomorrow.

24 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to Mr STEELE

Has consideration been given by Australia Post to the installation of mail receivers in the Darwin rural area, as it is very inconvenient and annoying for people living at Howard Springs or Humpty Doo to be obliged to travel all the way into Berrimah to post a letter?

ANSWER

Australia Post is also a liaison responsibility. I have not yet established communications with the Australia Post people. As soon as I do, I will be able to provide the honourable member with some information.

25 Mr VALE to Mr STEELE

Will he make representation to the federal Transport Minister Mr Nixon to have more rail cattle trucks made available on the Alice Springs to Adelaide rail line?

ANSWER

It is pretty important that this proposition does get taken on board with the immense glut of cattle in the Northern Territory as a whole and I will certainly make some representations.

26 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr STEELE

Is it his intention early in the life of this Assembly to introduce legislation to enable certificates of roadworthiness for motor vehicles to be issued, specifically for second-hand vehicles, or any other form of control of the sale of second-hand cars which may not be roadworthy?

ANSWER

The Majority Party has not yet firmed up its policy in this area. We would certainly have a proposition to put before the honourable members at a later stage.

27 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr STEELE

What steps have been taken to reintroduce the sealing of Yirrkala Road onto the civil works program for next year?

ANSWER

There are many roads in the Northern Territory and the priorities have been set by people other than myself. If on inspection of the roads system in the Northern Territory and on advice from people in these areas, I can see that there is a need to re-arrange priorities, based on the requirements of members like the member for Nhulunbuy, I would be happy to do that.

28 Mr DONDAS to Mr ROBERTSON

Despite the recent assurances from the Darwin City Council that the Leanyar dump fires and odours are not a nuisance to Casuarina and Sanderson residents, the experience over the last few weeks has proved this not to be true. Would the Cabinet Member undertake to take the appropriate action to reduce this nuisance?

ANSWER

That, of course, is technically a matter purely for the local government; it is for the corporation. I understand that the council itself indeed was not happy with the smell and smoke that was emanating from that particular dump. In fact, it was my understanding they were so dissatisfied that, I believe, they have sacked the present contractor and have called tenders for a new one. I understand that those tenders will close in about 3 weeks.

29 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to Mr PERRON

What consideration has been given to the subject of bulk water rates to market gardeners and others whose livelihood depends on growing plants?

ANSWER

I have a query in with the Department of Northern Territory on this particular matter at the moment and I am obtaining their views on what research they have done, concerning bulk supply of water to market gardeners and the like in the vicinity of Darwin. This is another one of the subjects which will be reviewed in a review of revenue potentiality for the Northern Territory which was alluded to by myself and the Majority Leader yesterday. The whole area of tariffs will have to be looked at with a view to restructuring, if and where it is felt necessary, after such a complete review of the Territory's financial resources is undertaken and completed.

30 Mrs O'NEIL to Mr PERRON

How much longer will residents of Fannie Bay be inconvenienced by excavation relating to sewerage works in the area?

ANSWER

The only answer I would have is until such time as the contract is completed.

31 Mr COLLINS to Mr TUXWORTH

Is it true that Pancontinental Mining Company have begun bulldozing in the Jabiluka area? If it is true, who gave permission for this to begin? Has Pancontinental completed an environmental impact statement and, if so, has the statement been subjected to a public inquiry?

ANSWER

I cannot answer the first part of the question. However, I will endeavour to find out and answer the honourable member at a later hour. I would ask that the second part of the question be placed on notice because I would prefer to provide the honourable member with a detailed reply.

32 Mr ISAACS to Mr STEELE

What action has he taken to ensure that a walkover is constructed at Trower Road near the Rapid Creek shopping centre to ensure that residents in the Millner electorate can cross the newly widened road in safety?

ANSWER

I have received representations about this matter in recent days. I was unaware that it was a real problem until recently. I have since made representations to the Department of Northern Territory to see if they can come up with some rearrangement of their funds which might facilitate the construction of this particular overpass.

36 Mr VALE to Mr STEELE

Is he aware that Noogoora Burr was found on horses last week on the Barkly Tablelands? Can he advise what the danger of Noogoora Burr being introduced in the Northern Territory is and are any amendments proposed to existing legislation to allow for more stringent controls?

ANSWER

Noogoora Burr is one of Australia's worst weed pests and I remember it well from the Barkly back in the early 1950s. It is known to exist in the Territory although at this stage the infestations are scattered and rather small. The weed has been declared a class B noxious weed under the Noxious Weeds Ordinance which means that its spread is to be controlled. I understand that, under existing provisions of the ordinance, there are no specific powers to prevent the movement into the Territory of stock infested with declared weeds. I believe that stock inspectors employed by the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory generally are well aware of the dangers posed by the chance introduction of such weed pests and, with the cooperation of stock owners, they do attempt to ensure that such stock are clean when entering the Northern Territory, particularly when moved from areas of known infestation. In the recent case mentioned by the honourable member, the manes and tails of horses found to be carrying the burr were clipped before further movement proceeded. The ordinance is currently being reviewed by the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch to suggest amendments that will strengthen and add to its provisions. The honourable member will be pleased to know that one aspect under consideration relates specifically to the matter he has raised.

37 Mr HARRIS to Mr TUXWORTH

In the light of the spreading cholera epidemics in the near East and the incidence of the disease in the South-east Asian countries, what consideration is being given by the government to the possible health risks associated with the steadily increasing frequency of refugees from South-east Asia arriving in Australia in small fishing boats?

ANSWER

I would advise the House that I had forewarning of this question because it involves the activities of a federal department. The answer I have received is that a special watch is being kept for people in small boats who might be refugees from Vietnam or other South-east Asian countries. Reported landings by crews of foreign fishing vessels and the arrival of several parties of refugees had caused concern about all aspects of quarantine, both human, plant and animal. The implications of the landings had been considered by the Standing Committee on Australian Coastal Surveillance which co-ordinates off-shore activities. Quarantine authorities in Western Australia and the Northern Territory are directly participating in the program together with appropriate state officials. The new surveillance program together with plans for prompt follow-up action where necessary will provide adequate quarantine protection in the north and north-west as far as currently known risks are concerned.

38 Mr VALE to Mr STEELE

In this year's federal budget, funds were allocated for reticulation of both water and sewerage at Yuendumu. Will he approach the Department of

Construction with a request that both of these projects be carried out at the same time so that disruption to the Yuendumu community will be kept to a minimum?

ANSWER

Yes.

39 Mr ISAACS to Mr EVERINGHAM

In view of the censure motion of which I gave notice today, does he intend to follow accepted practice and call the censure motion on immediately after question time today, especially in view of the fact that we are not anticipating a further meeting until November?

ANSWER

I wish to examine the motion and I do not intend to call it on after question time today.

40 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM

My question follows a statement he made in his adjournment speech last night relating to the Cyclone Tracy Relief Trust Fund. He indicated that Mr Barker QC is giving an opinion to the trustees. On what section of the operation of the Trust Fund has his opinion been sought and how is he being paid?

ANSWER

The matter is too complex for me to give an answer here. I ask that the question be placed on notice.

41 Mr OLIVER to Mr STEELE

Should an apprentice training in the Northern Territory be obliged to move to another state for family reasons or whatever, is it possible for him to continue training under the Northern Territory Apprentices Board without disruption to his training?

ANSWER

There is no provisions for apprentices to transfer from the Northern Territory to interstate apprenticeships. They have to re-establish a new connection interstate.

42 Ms D'ROZARIO to Mr PERRON

Is it a fact that tenants of houses in the suburbs of Anula and Wulagi are not permitted by the Department of Northern Territory to erect fences where none exist, even at their own expense? And if the answer to that question is yes, can he state the reasons for this policy?

ANSWER

I do not have specific information to answer the honourable member's question. However, I will undertake to obtain that information from the Department of Northern Territory and provide it to her separately from these sittings.

43 Mr VALE to Mr STEELE

Can he advise if the Australian National Railways and the federal government have yet reached a decision concerning the location of the rail complex in Alice Springs? If a decision has not yet been made, will he undertake to arrange public hearings in Alice Springs so that the wishes of residents, community organisations and industries are made known?

ANSWER

On the first part of the question, I am not so aware. On the second part, I will do my best.

44 Mr ISAACS to Mr PERRON

Is it true that the government is hiring tools and equipment for work on the No. 4 generator at the Stokes Hill Power Station due to cuts in capital expenditure? Is this resulting in more cost than if the tools were purchased?

ANSWER

I ask him to place that question on notice.

45 Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to Mr PERRON

In view of the more and more concentrated use of land in city areas and having regard to the most economical use of public utilities, has consideration been given to the setting up of a crematorium in Darwin and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

That question should be redirected to the Executive Member for Community and Social Development or placed on notice.

46 Mr VALE to Mr EVERINGHAM

Can he advise if new cars are on order for the traffic section of the Northern Territory Police and, if so, how many are on order? Of these, how many are intended for Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine?

ANSWER

I ask him to place this question on notice.

47 Mr ISAACS to Mr SPEAKER

Can you estimate how much it would have cost to have included in Hansard the copy of "Uranium - Australia's Decision"?

ANSWER

The estimate given to me by the Acting Clerk is approximately \$4,000.

48 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr STEELE

What was the cost of the Ludmilla overpass and what would its estimated cost be, if built today?

ANSWER

The approximate cost of the Ludmilla walk-across was around \$50,000 and the figures that I have for any future overpasses of that nature would be around \$110,000. If you will just bear with me, just looking at the needs for overpasses and the fact that we had one question from the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, we are very concerned about overpasses and their construction and we are looking at all aspects of our own budget and the Commonwealth budget to see if we can extract funds out of those budgets to permit the further constructions of overpasses.

49 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr STEELE

Has a departmental inquiry into airline scheduling operations commenced? If so, will the inquiry extend to the Northern Territory services and will the public be invited to submit their ideas?

ANSWER

The domestic airline policy inquiry will extend to the Northern Territory services, down to the commuters. The general public have been invited to make submissions. This followed the announcement by the Minister for Transport in the federal parliament. Also my department will be making a submission in this aspect. On the recent interstate airfare changes: no, there has been no attempt to look at the airfares from here. Submissions closed on 19 August but if the honourable member wants to provide another submission, we would be happy to try and see if it could be included.

50 Ms D'ROZARIO to Mr PERRON

Can he say how many applications have been lodged to date for the purchase of houses, constructed pursuant to tenders let by the Darwin Reconstruction Commission?

ANSWER

I cannot provide the answer to that question. I suggest that she place the question on notice.

51 Mr VALE to Mr EVERINGHAM

During the last Assembly sittings I was advised that winter uniforms were on order for officers attached to the traffic section in Alice Springs. Can the Majority Leader advise details of the uniforms and if all officers from the traffic section will receive the uniforms or just those on motor bikes?

ANSWER

I do not have that information readily to hand and I ask him to place the question on notice.

52 Mr DOOLAN to Mr EVERINGHAM

Is he aware that many members of the Northern Territory police, particularly in country areas, habitually refer to people of Aboriginal extraction as "coocs"? Does he know that Aboriginals consider this word to be particularly offensive, and will he ask the Commissioner of Police to instruct members of the police force to refrain forthwith from using this derogatory term?

ANSWER

I would take a point of order on this question, pursuant to standing order 92. Once again I am asked for an expression of opinion.

Mr SPEAKER: Which part of the question do you object to?

Mr EVERINGHAM: Mr Speaker, I have not got it noted down but I am certain at one stage the honourable member for Victoria River did ask me to express an opinion. Could he perhaps repeat his question or could I be given a copy of it?

Mr DOOLAN: The questions were firstly, is he aware that many members of the Northern Territory police, particularly in country areas, habitually refer to people of Aboriginal extraction as "coons"? Does he know that Aboriginals consider this word to be particularly offensive?

Mr EVERINGHAM: There is the opinion, Mr Speaker.

Mr DOOLAN: Do you "know"? Thirdly, will he ask the Commissioner of Police to instruct members of the police force to refrain forthwith from using this derogatory term?

Mr SPEAKER: I do not think there is a point of order there, but if you do not wish to answer the question, that is your right.

Mr EVERINGHAM: In answer to the first question, I am not aware that police officers in the Northern Territory do refer to Aboriginal persons as "coons". I certainly have never heard of it.

53 Mr VALE to Mr STEELE

The federal government last night announced plans to assist the Australian cattle industry. Can the honourable member advise details of the scheme and how it will assist the Northern Territory cattleman?

ANSWER

At a quarter past 10 last night I received a telex about 4 foot long and it would take me about all day to go through it. But having studied it for about half an hour or so, the time I had available to me, I have prepared a press release - plus having the advantage of some knowledge of the industry prior to coming into this position. With your graces, Mr Speaker, I will read this press release out; it is a short one.

*The Cabinet Member for Industry, Mr Roger Steele, said today he was prepared to make special submissions to the federal government to increase the benefits to Territory beef producers from the new rural relief measures announced yesterday. Mr Steele said the subsidies would be of most benefit to smaller ...*

Mr ISAACS: A point of order, Mr Speaker! The Executive Member can answer the question asked by the honourable member for Stuart but if he wishes to make a statement, as he clearly does, surely he can make that statement at the end of question time, rather than take up time during question time.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I gave the honourable member permission to read the press release.

*Mr Steele said the subsidies would be of most benefit to smaller producers in the eastern states but would provide little help to Territory producers. (I want to emphasise the "little".)*

*The government had promised to examine the needs of producers living in isolated areas such as the Northern Territory and this would enable more assistance to be given to Territory cattlemen. Mr Steele said he would support submissions through the NT Primary Producers Board on behalf of any producer who believed he was entitled to additional assistance under the new schemes. He believed that additional relief could be provided by easing the burden of such local impositions as pastoral lease rents and covenant positions. The Cabinet Member said applications by producers in dire financial difficulties would be handled quickly by the Primary Producers Board. If more funds were needed, he would seek a further allocation urgently.*

54 Mrs LAWRIE to Mr EVERINGHAM

As he now has responsibility for police and this is one of the questions I asked the former Executive Member at every sittings - is it his intention that police shall resume the practice of being identified either by name or number on their uniforms?

ANSWER

It is not my intention that the police should be directed to wear numbers.

55 Mr ISAACS to Mr EVERINGHAM

When does he anticipate that the Northern Territory will have a differential cost of living index?

ANSWER

I am not in a position to answer that question I would ask that it be put on notice.

56 Mr BALLANTYNE to Mr STEELE

Can he advise me what is the next step to ensure that remote localities will continue to have a regular air service, in the event of Connair limiting or ceasing their services?

ANSWER

A day has not gone by without some sort of discussion or press activity concerning Connair. Almost daily I have been talking to different people about Connair. The head of my department, Mr John Cameron, has been chairman and attended both of the meetings between Eddie Connellan and the consumers in the northern areas. In addition to that, the Majority Leader and myself have discussed the matter with Peter Nixon in Canberra last Thursday. I understand that a submission is to be made - I do not know whether it is to increase the subsidy or not, at this stage, but there is a submission coming forward that might satisfy Mr Connellan and the consumers.

What I would like to do at this stage is to disclose to the House that I have a personal interest in the Connair company. This probably happened about 30 years ago, my father-in-law - I am sorry for making a statement about this, but I think it is fairly important that I include it now in my answer to the honourable member - about 30 years ago, my father-in-law bought some shares in Connellan's airline company for his two daughters. Of course, I only married one of them, so I only got half the shares. But I thought a disclosure should be made; although it is a very insignificant interest, I would not like to think that people would take it the wrong way.

57 Mr PERKINS to Mr EVERINGHAM

Will he inform the House when the Majority Party proposes to introduce complementary legislation on Aboriginal Land Rights and also what is the timetable proposed, and will the recommendations of the Bonner Committee on Aboriginal Land Rights in the Northern Territory be accepted and incorporated into the complementary legislation?

ANSWER

I think I might have given this information to the House before. But in any event, I will repeat it for the benefit of the honourable member for MacDonnell whose question was, when would the complementary legislation be introduced into this House? Obviously, I cannot give a firm date but it will be at the earliest convenient opportunity. The second part of the question was, I think, whether the recommendations of the Bonner Committee would be accepted by the Majority Party. I have indicated to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the two Land Councils that the Majority Party accepts in principle the recommendations of the Bonner Report. I think that answers his question.

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