

PART II

THE QUESTION PAPER

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

Numerical references are to Question Paper page numbers.

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

Appointment of Administrator

Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he inform the Assembly who will be the next Administrator of the Northern Territory and, if not, when does he expect to be in a position to inform the House of that situation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am not yet in a position to inform the Assembly who will be the next Administrator. I can assure all honourable members that, if this House is sitting when the federal government reaches a decision on who will be the new Administrator, then honourable members will be first to hear of the decision. I might say that the Northern Territory government has sought at all times to be a participant in that decision which to the best of my knowledge has not yet been taken.

I have put plainly to the Prime Minister and to the Minister for Home Affairs that I would expect the views of the Northern Territory government to be taken very much into account in arriving at a decision.

Accommodation at Old Darwin Hospital

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What is the current position concerning the future use of the old sisters' quarters and nurses' quarters and why has it taken so long to have these buildings occupied?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the government has been anxious to have the old accommodation quarters for nurses and sisters at the old Darwin Hospital used for accommodation for some time now. We have been working closely with a group which has been formed from the YWCA and YMCA in Darwin and we have been negotiating with that group to take over the facilities to provide relatively low rentals for people in Darwin and also to include an area for student accommodation and emergency accommodation.

The matter is fairly complex in that the buildings are part of a much larger complex and, therefore, some of the services that are provided to those buildings, such as steam and air-conditioning are part of a larger system. We have had some difficulty in establishing clearly the costs to apportion to these particular buildings. I have received word from the parties concerned that they would like to meet with me as early as possible to discuss the latest information that has been provided on the cost-apportioning question. I would hope that very shortly the buildings will be used for accommodation as indeed they should be.

Problems at Warrego School

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Could he advise the Assembly as to what is being done to alleviate the problems being suffered by the Warrego School?

ANSWER

The honourable gentleman refers to problems being suffered by the Warrego School. In accordance with an undertaking I made in the last sittings, I visited Warrego in the company of the local member, the Minister for Health. While there are some accommodation problems there, I certainly would not describe the situation as anything like suffering. Certainly, the principal never indicated that to me. Nonetheless, there were additional facilities required at that location - additional facilities which the honourable member may not have been aware of - which in fact have been made available to that school.

I certainly will be keeping in contact with my colleague and I dare say the parent body of that school will be keeping in contact with me to see how things pan out. However, there is no grave problem associated with the Warrego School, Mr Speaker. As a matter of fact, it is probably one of the most harmonious and well-run small schools that I have visited. I understand it has a very strong parental influence. The pre-school is one of the finest I have seen operating in the Northern Territory, largely through parent co-operation.

The problems which were evident late last year and probably very early this year have largely been overcome, to my knowledge, as a result of a personal inspection of the place and I will continue to keep an eye on it.

Differential Rating System in Berrimah

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Does the government intend introducing a differential rating system in the rural area in Berrimah?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, consideration is being given to the introduction into the Darwin Rates Act of a system of rating concessions for land which meets the criteria for urban farmland. The provision would be similar to that being proposed as an amendment to the Local Government Act in the bill which I foreshadow to be introduced in the House during this sittings. In short, the answer to the honourable member's question is yes.

Proposals for Darwin Power-Station

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

In view of his recent statements regarding a nuclear power-station for Darwin, can he inform the Assembly what has happened to the proposal to build a coal-fired power-station in Darwin, with an option to convert to gas, as announced by this government earlier this year as a statement of principle?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, for the honourable member's benefit I would just like to elaborate on the briefing that took place recently with the press relating to the possible utilisation of nuclear power generation in the Northern Territory. It comes about because of the consideration that has been given by the Department of Mines and Energy and by NTEC who are addressing themselves to the types of power generation schemes that we should be using. The facts of

the matter are that Stokes Hill Power-Station is subsidised to the tune of \$45m this year. That is expected to blow out to \$150m in 1985-86. Clearly, that situation cannot be allowed to continue and the federal government has made no bones about the fact that it would like to capitalise its subsidy and perhaps move to a more economic form of generation.

The first proposal put to us by the Commonwealth - it is a perfectly reasonable one given the technology in Australia today - is that we should move to coal. With coal-generating costs of \$2m a megawatt, we should be able to provide Darwin with the extra capacity that it will need by the middle of the decade. We should be able to reduce considerably the present generating costs of 14 cents to 16 cents a kilowatt hour. We should be able to provide an energy source that would enable industry to come here and compete on favourable terms with any other area in the country. That is the philosophy that we are working towards: to provide the cheapest possible form of energy source for the people of the Northern Territory and for industry.

The Department of Mines and Energy and NTEC have been working very hard on these proposals since the Commonwealth instituted its first move in the matter. It is becoming pretty obvious, because of changing circumstances that are outside our control, that we will not be able to build a station for less than \$300m or \$400m and that the works required on the waterfront for handling 0.5 million tonnes of coal a year could be considerably more than was originally anticipated. Only detailed studies will give us an opportunity to address ourselves to that problem.

The rise in coal prices in the last 6 months has indicated quite clearly that it is impossible to build a coal-fired station and hope to arrest or reduce the price of electricity. We may be able to hold it at 14 or 16 cents a unit but there is no way that we will be able to reduce it. If we want to have an energy base here for which people can afford to pay and industry can afford to use, 16 cents is not acceptable. The department and NTEC have been examining other possible options in view of the government's determination to provide 2 primary things: power that people can afford and power that industry is prepared to use at a reasonable cost.

The department's investigations indicate that, on today's figures, nuclear power is an option. One of the most important factors in this consideration is that, with nuclear power, we would be able to enter into a feedstock contract over a 20 or 30-year period. With coal, we will be locked into the increasing price of coal besetting the world today. The price of coal will always be relevant to the price of petrol and oil which is soaring beyond anybody's expectations.

Mr Speaker, for the benefit of the honourable member, I would say that the situation is under constant review. The government is not obliged to take a final decision until late next year, although it would be preferable if we could take one in June next year. There are some serious processes of elimination that we have to go through and, as the situation develops, I will do my best to keep honourable members and the people of the Northern Territory informed.

Dollar-for-Dollar Subsidy to Schools

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

When will the guidelines for the dollar-for-dollar subsidy to Northern Territory schools be released?

ANSWER

The guidelines were released 20 minutes ago.

Nuclear Power-Station for Darwin

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Has the minister had any discussions with the federal government concerning funding for a nuclear power-station for Darwin?

ANSWER

The short answer is no. Discussions on funding have so far been related to the concept of a coal-fired station. I would add that the Commonwealth has indicated quite clearly that it wishes to minimise the subsidy level and I can understand its position entirely.

Local Government Rates at Berrimah

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What does the Department of Community Development do with the rates extracted from the people in Berrimah as regards returning some services to the people?

ANSWER

The funds raised by rating in this particular area are paid to Consolidated Revenue. The rates collected in the outer Darwin area are related directly to the value of the land fixed by the Valuer-General under the Valuation of Land Act and are not intended to be related to the level of services provided to ratepayers in the area. Although the provision of services is not related to the payment of rates, the government is conscious of the need for various essential services in the area. It is currently providing such services as garbage collection and street lighting and is upgrading various streets in the area. Major capital works, valued in excess of \$2m, have been carried out in the area over the past 3 years; for example, the reconstruction of the Stuart Highway, Berrimah Road, Hidden Valley Road, Strath Road and Makagon Road. If I recall correctly, there are further roads in this area that are on the existing program for upgrading.

Nuclear Power-Station for Darwin

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he inform the Assembly whether approval from the Commonwealth has been sought to establish a nuclear power plant in Darwin and, if so, what has been the response?

ANSWER

The answer is no.

Control of Antibiotics in Stockfeed

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Given his answer of Thursday 21 August, is he yet able to indicate when

legislation to control the use of antibiotics in stockfeed will be introduced in the Assembly?

ANSWER

My understanding is that the instructions have gone to the draftsman and we hope to introduce legislation early next year.

Ross Park Primary School

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What action is intended to overcome the accommodation problem at the Ross Park Primary School for the 1981-82 period?

ANSWER

I understand that the difficulty will arise about mid-1981, certainly not before the end of the first term in 1981. As the honourable member would be aware - and I thank him for his attendance at the school council meeting conducted at Ross Park Primary School recently - a series of options were placed before parents ranging from transferring Year 7 at Ross Park Primary School to the Sadadeen High School to providing temporary demountables at various locations, including Ross Park itself, the high school site or at the Rona Glynn Pre-school or, alternatively, bussing the students temporarily to Traeger Park Primary School. All of this is brought about by the necessity for the government to have available to it a subdivision in which to place the new school for the Sadadeen area. That school will incorporate both a pre-school and a primary school. The problem will probably exist for about 18 months from about mid-1981.

I have examined all of these proposals in depth at the request of the parent body. The parents had been told that the departmental view - and this was a quite proper view in terms of economics and education - was to transfer the Year 7 children to the Sadadeen High School. The parents took the view - and I respect their view entirely - that children who progress through primary school would regard Year 7 as their opportunity to be the senior class in the school. If those children were denied the right to be top of the block for Year 7, then the opportunities to develop leadership and so on would be lost until such time as they reached Year 12. In the light of the expressions of concern by the parents, I have completely reviewed the options and will be taking them to Cabinet this Friday with a view to reaching the best possible decision in all of the circumstances.

Dhupuma College Staff

Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

How many of the Aboriginal house parents and social advisers from Dhupuma College are still employed by the Education Department?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

Block at Howard Springs

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Who owns the block of land next to the Howard Springs School and what is its future as a reserve? What plans are there to put a community hall on the block?

ANSWER

The land in question is Crown land at present. There has been an application for an oval next to the school to be vested in trustees. The government has considered this and is in the process of making a decision on the matter. There has also been an application for funding for a hall to be used by various groups. This would be associated with the oval itself. \$35,000 has been set aside in the budget to meet the operational expenses and to allow the trustees to establish a hall which can be used by various community groups. This is part of a move in rural Darwin generally. The population is growing to such a degree that there is now pressure for independent community facilities at Berry Springs, Humpty Doo and Howard Springs in addition to the very excellent facility at Fred's Pass Reserve which is funded by the government and run by voluntary staff. As the population increases in the rural area, the government will be moving towards providing additional services as the demand requires.

Dollar-for-Dollar Subsidy to Schools

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he indicate the guidelines for the dollar-for-dollar subsidy which he announced 20 minutes ago?

ANSWER

A circular will be sent to schools. I will indicate the major points. Subsidies will apply to fund-raising activities to fund educational projects. School fees will not be considered for the purpose of attracting a subsidy. Evidence must be produced to show that funds have been raised in the current financial year. Bodies which are eligible for subsidy are school councils, parent-teacher organisations and pre-school committees. The scheme is applicable to government and non-government pre-schools, primary schools and secondary schools. To allow immediate implementation of the scheme, each school will be eligible for a subsidy of up to \$5,000 in 1980-81. Applications may be submitted to the maximum limit at any time during the financial year but it would be in the best interests of all concerned if applications were submitted before 30 March 1981. Applications for projects beyond \$5,000 must be submitted by close of business on 20 February 1981. \$5,000 is only a notional figure and any school council which feels it can raise a higher sum for a specific project will be welcome to apply for approval. All normal school fund-raising activities are acceptable with the specific exception of school fees and the annual departmental allocation of funds to schools. Applications and any further inquiries should be directed through the appropriate regional office.

Performing Arts Centre in Darwin

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he able to inform me of the current status of the proposal to establish

a performing arts centre in Darwin?

ANSWER

The government is holding ongoing discussions with the Corporation of the City of Darwin on this very matter. We have received a report from consultants relating to the design of the centre. The corporation has land set aside on the Esplanade for the construction of the arts centre. We have been engaged in intensive discussions on how much should be spent on the construction of the building. We have received advice from the Department of Transport and Works on this matter. We are having further talks with the corporation, particularly on the subject of the corporation's contribution to the arts centre. I hope that this matter can be resolved within a reasonably short time. Honourable members will note that a figure of \$100,000 was set aside in the budget this year to provide for ongoing design of the arts centre for Darwin.

'Territorians Are Worth Saving' Campaign

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the cost of the current 'Territorians Are Worth Saving' road safety campaign and for what length of time will the campaign be run?

ANSWER

The total cost of the campaign is \$112,000. I believe it will last for 1 year.

Ratification of UN Convention

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I understand that there was a meeting of the Attorneys-General in Alice Springs on 6 November attended by the minister in his capacity as Acting Attorney-General. One of the topics for discussion was the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women resulting from the Copenhagen conference. Can he inform the Assembly whether the states and the Territory have agreed to ratify the terms of the convention?

ANSWER

I do not really know for a start whether it is proper for me to answer the question since I am no longer acting in the capacity of Acting Attorney-General. Nonetheless, I think the Leader of the Opposition would be aware of the convention of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General that matters discussed therein are not released to the public without the unanimous agreement of all attorneys. Through the Chief Minister as Attorney-General, I would suggest that be checked out with officers and other members of the standing committee and, if appropriate, the information could be made available.

Tiwi War Veterans

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware that there are some Tiwi people who have not yet received entitlements due to them for serving in the armed forces in World War II and there are even some who have not received their war medals?

ANSWER

I was aware that there were Tiwi war veterans who, until 12 to 18 months ago when I became aware of the matter, had not received veterans' pension entitlements and also decorations for war service. The matter is so old that I am a bit hazy in my recollection and I wish to make that clear. I think that I wrote to the Minister for Veterans Affairs on behalf of the Tiwi people and also that I referred the matter to Senator Kilgariff who happens to be sitting in the gallery today. I cannot give any further information but I will certainly follow the matter up.

Funding for NTCOSS

Mr PERKINS to TREASURER

I refer to the recent reports in the media in relation to the government's decision not to fund NTCOSS. Will he advise the Assembly the reasons why he has decided not to fund NTCOSS which is a worth-while organisation in this community?

ANSWER

There is nothing unusual about funds not being available to meet the needs of all applicants for government funding. Indeed, the government has a grants-in-aid program to organisations whom the government supports for their assistance in the welfare field. This has been very much expanded this year. However, the applications that were received total a much greater figure than funds available. That is not unusual. Decisions are made on the merits of each

application. The NTCOSS was one of those that missed out and it was not alone. NTCOSS has been particularly vocal of late and it appears that it requires some sort of a public statement of reasons in addition to the private letter that it received. In my statement of reasons, I touched on the fact that, apart from the availability of funds, my view was coloured by the fact that the organisation appeared to be using its extensive resources to counter government activities and to oppose the government at every move. If honourable members would like to refer to the types of things to which I allude, they should peruse the bimonthly publication that has been issued by NTCOSS over the last year. I think they will get some idea of what I call 'political bias'. That certainly affected my decision in this matter. However, I point out that there is nothing unusual about organisations - some of them quite worth while - not making the grade when one is allocating limited resources.

Private Hospital in Darwin

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Have any proposals been received for the establishment of a private hospital in Darwin?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do not know but I am aware that tenders close on 2 December for people who are interested in establishing a private hospital in the Northern Territory.

Performing Arts Centre in Darwin

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has a decision been made to determine the design of the proposed Darwin centre for the performing arts by an architectural competition or a design competition?

ANSWER

The government favours a design and construct type of contract for this particular building. It has been the subject of some debate between ourselves and the city corporation. That is the decision the government has taken. As I pointed out to the Assembly yesterday, there are a number of matters still to be resolved before proceeding further.

Funding of After-School Activities at Darwin Primary School

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Could he give me the reason for discontinuing the funding of after-school activities at the Darwin Primary School?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I suppose if one were to encapsulate that one would say that it was not the function of the Department of Education to run child-minding services. We are a department of education. The original after-school activities program at Darwin Primary School was introduced after the cyclone to solve the problems pertaining to the cyclone. I have often said that it is about time we started to get over the hangups of the cyclone period. That was what it was

designed to achieve and I think it achieved it. Nonetheless, we all recognise the tremendous value of that location for the purpose of minding children while parents are at work.

I think the parent body at Darwin Primary School accepts the view of the Department of Education that it is not its proper role to use taxpayers' money to involve itself in child-minding services. As a result, the parents have reached an agreement with the school council and, on my understanding, the school council will run the operation. It has the full blessing of the Department of Education and will use departmental facilities and resources. It will be funded as a normal community operation through the school council. Certainly, the facility will be maintained but not under the direct auspices of the Department of Education.

Location of Concrete Batching Plant

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is he aware that a concrete batching plant is being constructed on Irwin Road in the 17-mile area in the midst of what has become an established rural residential area? Why could not the plant have been constructed in the Coonawarra heavy industry area or at the 19-mile which already has heavy industry established there?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the truth of the matter is that there is no planning controls over the rural area. That is only one of many undesirable activities which have occurred there over the last couple of years - starting off with a sand-blasting plant which also caused grave concern in the rural area. The people who have moved to the rural area did so with a view to urban living and I completely sympathise with them when someone sets up a completely incompatible activity near to them. The people in the rural area know that the government, over a period in excess of 2 years, has tried to persuade the rural people that a town plan over the area to prevent this sort of activity is highly desirable. We were told to keep ourselves and our grubby bureaucratic hands off their area. They did not want to know about it because they considered it would be the thin end of the wedge for local government. The net result is that the whole program was put back by a number of years at the wish of rural people. Now they realise the logic in the government's argument for rural plans and that is proceeding. At the moment, I have the documentation on the rural plan in my office. The plan is markedly different, if not totally different, from that which was originally displayed. I would be quite happy to talk to the opposition spokesman on planning as to whether or not it should be redisplayed. I want honourable members to be fully conscious of what it will mean if we redisplay it. If we do, we are then locked into about another 12 months of objections, counter arguments and redrawing.

The plan is a very simple one, providing for 2 different systems of rural living. The idea that the authority has in mind, and I sympathise with its view, is to require all activities in the rural area to need specific approval. That probably is a very sensible way to go about it in all of the circumstances. However, can I both in conscience and indeed at law maintain that that plan is sufficiently similar to the one which was displayed to recommend its adoption to His Honour the Administrator? I am in quite a bind on the matter. I fully appreciate the wish of rural dwellers to maintain their lifestyles and not have these sorts of activities put next to them; for example, the Greek Tavern. No ethnic reflection is meant but, when someone wants to call the business

'The Greek Tavern', I suppose one is inclined to call it 'The Greek Tavern'. That is a matter for the Licensing Commission.

That is the present position. I intend discussing this whole matter with my Cabinet colleagues later this week and I would be quite happy to discuss the matter with the opposition spokesman on planning.

Alice Springs Recreational Lake

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is he in a position to report progress regarding the Alice Springs recreational lake?

ANSWER

Discussions are still continuing between the government and the Central Land Council. The environmental report has now been released for public scrutiny and comment and I believe the Snowy Mountains authority will be organising a model about the middle of next month.

Northumberland Insurance Company

Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

My question relates to the Northumberland Insurance Company. I have noted the advertisements in the paper requesting those affected by the collapse of the company to approach the Territory Insurance Office. Could the Chief Minister give some indication as to the relief likely to be offered to those people?

ANSWER

I wonder if the honourable member for Nightcliff would mind redirecting the question to my colleague, the Treasurer. He may be able to answer it in some detail. I have a recollection that we did approve a scheme for relief of Northumberland victims to the extent of 50% of their loss. I am not certain of that. Perhaps the best solution would be for the honourable member to put the question on notice.

Bali Cattle Experiments

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Are the experiments with Bali cattle, which have involved an extensive cross-breeding program since 1962, to be discontinued and, if so, why?

ANSWER

The program will be terminated after some 17 years of research requiring considerable resources. The results achieved are inconclusive. The scientific opinion, both inside and outside the department, is quite diverse about the commercial use of this particular cross-bred animal. I am advised that, while the department was successful in breeding 2 fertile Brahman-Bali-cross bulls, at the most optimistic estimate, a further 10 or 15 years of breeding and selecting from a large population would be required to enable the department to assess their commercial value.

Alice Springs Recreational Lake

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Has a site yet been chosen for the recreational lake in Alice Springs and, if so, where will it be located?

ANSWER

At the moment, no site has yet been chosen because discussions are taking place with the Central Land Council and government officials. The environmental report has just been made available for scrutiny. Once that particular information has been assessed, a decision will be made.

Heritage Program

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Recent comments made by the Leader of the Opposition would have us believe that this government has nothing done towards retaining our heritage. Does the government have a program of preserving our heritage and does the government have a register of historic buildings?

ANSWER

The government does have a comprehensive program of preserving the Territory's heritage in a number of areas. The Heritage Committee, which the government established recently in conjunction with the National Trust, has prepared a comprehensive list of sites proposed as a register of historical sites of some significance in the Northern Territory. It is intended to circulate this to interested bodies and government departments for them to take note of in relation to any particular works. The list will be presented to Cabinet shortly for its approval and, once that is done, such a Northern Territory list will be distributed.

In the meantime, however, the Australian Heritage Commission does have a list called the National Estate Register which is an Australia-wide list of sites of historical significance and sites which perhaps should be either preserved or taken into consideration in any developmental proposals. Sites that are to go on the National Estate Register are gazetted and objections or comments invited before they are finally adopted by the Australian Heritage Commission. The latest of those lists affecting the Northern Territory was actually gazetted on 31 October. That is a list of additions. Indeed, there are some hundreds of sites already in the National Estate Register which affect the Northern Territory. Whilst the Northern Territory government has not necessarily endorsed those sites, the register obviously has some significance even if it is not binding in law in any way. In association with the Commonwealth government, the government funds the National Trust in the Northern Territory to undertake certain works in relation to preserving our history and historical sites. In addition, individual organisations are also funded by this government for the preservation or restoration or survey work on existing buildings that private organisations may happen to own. This is an ongoing program and we certainly take the subject very seriously. I was rather alarmed at comments by the Leader of the Opposition reported in the press recently. These were just so far off key that I am sure that he did not really believe them at all.

Cattle used in Bali Hybridisation Program

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

What will happen to the cattle used in the Bali hybridisation program at the Coastal Plains Research Station if this program is stopped?

ANSWER

The government is approaching institutions like CSIRO, James Cook University and private landholders to see if they would care to take the project over. There are certainly no plans to slaughter animals or to put them on the open market. In fact, if the animals did go to a nature park or tourist institution of some sort, I would want to approve of the facilities personally.

Vanderlin Drive

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When is it proposed that Vanderlin Drive east of Lee Point Road will be reconstructed?

ANSWER

I believe that the design stage will take place in the 1980-81 financial year.

Dhupuma College Staff

Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Did he guarantee to continue employment of Aboriginal house parents formerly employed at Dhupuma College?

ANSWER

The short answer is no.

Darwin Public Library

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he able to inform me when the Darwin Public Library will be operating from its new position in Centrepoint?

ANSWER

Most of the Department of Community Development, including the library service, will be located in the new Centrepoint building. I understand that will be ready towards the end of December. At that time, the Darwin Public Library, which is operated at present from the old Esplanade site, will be moved to Centrepoint. We hope to have very fine facilities for the display of the extensive range of books that the library service has.

Fisheries' Vessels

Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

Are the fisheries' vessels or police vessels Salloo and Pobassoo

presently being used for research and monitoring of fish species and numbers and, if so, could he indicate the level of expertise on board to perform this task?

ANSWER

The question calls for some detail. I am unable to provide the fine detail as requested by the honourable member for Nightcliff in relation to the numbers of persons on board each vessel at present but I can say that, at the time of transfer of the fisheries enforcement function to the Police Commissioner, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Police Commissioner and the Department of Primary Production which allowed for the continued use of these vessels for research and monitoring of fish numbers, habits and so on. If the member for Nightcliff would like to place this question on notice, I will see that it is answered as promptly as possible.

Sand Mining at Flying Fox Creek

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

What kind of authority was granted to the Ranger contractors who are currently extracting sand from the banks of the Flying Fox Creek immediately adjacent to the Arnhem Highway? How long is this work likely to continue and will any attempt be made to rehabilitate the area when it is finished?

ANSWER

The honourable member would know that most of these activities are carried out with an authority under the environmental act that we have controlling the uranium industry. The things that he has referred to would be documented. I will take the question on notice and get him the information in writing.

Northern Territory Division of the National Trust

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has he yet seen audited statements for the Northern Territory Division of the National Trust and, if so, what is the position of future funding of this body?

ANSWER

I have not seen the final audited statements of the National Trust. I think that answers both parts of the question.

Berrimah Experimental Farm

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Has consideration been given to moving the Berrimah Experimental Farm to another area?

ANSWER

I am not aware of any proposals to shift the Berrimah Experimental Farm. It certainly would not be my decision alone; it would involve quite a few other Cabinet members.

Performing Arts Centre in Darwin

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Has a decision been made about the management of the proposed Darwin cultural centre and will the government establish by legislation a trust in accordance with the precedent set by the establishment of the Araluen foundation?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, the question of the organisation to administer the Darwin cultural centre when it is completed has not been addressed as yet. Obviously, the city council would play a very important role in the decision. Indeed, it will be funding portion of it and the government would as well. At this stage, I cannot answer the honourable member's question.

Water Reticulation Repair Service in Rural Area

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When will a proper emergency water reticulation repair service for a full 24-hour period be extended to people in the rural area in the same way as applies to people in the Darwin area?

ANSWER

Emergency services as applying to the Darwin area already apply in the rural area. However, the after-hours-service contractor is Wormald. It takes phone calls from people who have complaints and passes them on to the department for immediate action. In the last 3 months up to October this year, there have only been 6 calls registered by Wormald to the department and I am only too willing to investigate any complaint that the honourable member might have in regard to service to people out in that area. As I understand it, people in the rural area are given the same service as people who are living in the Darwin area.

Recreational Lake for Alice Springs

Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer to the answer he gave to the honourable member for Alice Springs in respect to the recreational lake for Alice Springs. On what site in the Alice Springs area is the model going to be prepared for by the Snowy Mountains authority in respect to the recreational lake?

ANSWER

To clear up any misapprehension that the Assembly may have, I do have a briefing here and I will take the time of the Assembly to read it. Following investigations into several possible sites for the recreational lake in the Alice Springs area, a report was produced which favoured a site on the Todd River near the old telegraph station. A public meeting was held in the town in January 1980 and public comment was overwhelmingly in favour of the project. An independent environmental impact review carried out by consultants, Dames and Moore revealed 2 main reservations concerning the Todd River site. An Aboriginal sacred site would be inundated and the use of the lake would be restricted by the rate of siltation. Early favourable advice on the sacred site was contradicted by a later advice from the Central Land Council. The

Chief Minister and the Council have been corresponding but, as yet, there is no final agreement. It is estimated that attention to soil conservation and sediment control will allow a useful life of 120 years for the reservoir. Discussions have been taking place between officers of my department, the Conservation Commission and the Alice Springs corporation and the final Dames and Moore environmental review has been released for public scrutiny and comment. The Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation model of a proposed dam site and its spillways is almost complete. The report and a film of the model in operation should be available in December. In answer to the honourable member's question, it looks like the site will be the Todd River site, near the old telegraph station.

Dhupuma College Facilities

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he inform the Assembly as to what will be done with facilities at Dhupuma College?

ANSWER

Subject to the goodwill of the Trades and Labour Council, they will be used for purposes for which they were acquired by the Northern Territory government; that is, for education purposes. I find that, because of the Teachers Federation affiliation with the TLC, the TLC must find itself in a dilemma. There are 3 houses and 2 demountables that we negotiated with Nabalco for occupation by teachers at the beginning of the year. I am not certain whether the black ban has been lifted but, if it has not, the Trades and Labour Council will deprive its own members of accommodation.

MOTION

Mr ROBERTSON (Lands and Housing): I move that Business of the Day be called on.

Motion agreed to.

Mr COLLINS (Arnhem): Mr Speaker, I would like to debate the motion, Sir.

Mr SPEAKER: My adviser assures me, honourable member, that the motion has been put and passed.

Mr COLLINS (Arnhem): Mr Speaker, I was on my feet, Sir.

Mr SPEAKER: I did not stop the question being put. You will have the opportunity to speak tomorrow should you so desire.

Mr ISAACS (Opposition Leader): A point of order, Mr Speaker! My point of order is that I certainly saw the member for Arnhem on his feet when you asked, 'those in favour'. I certainly do not recall you asking for those against. I certainly do not recall you saying that the motion was therefore carried. I do not recall you saying 'the noes'; you did not give an opportunity for a division. The member for Arnhem was on his feet. You did not see him. That is not your fault but, when he drew your attention to the fact that he was on his feet and wished to speak, I believe he ought to have been allowed to speak.

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has a point. I will certainly allow the member for Arnhem to speak tomorrow. The question is that the

motion be agreed to.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 11

Mr D. Collins
Mr Dondas
Mr Everingham
Mr Harris
Mr MacFarlane
Mrs Padgham-Purich
Mr Perron
Mr Robertson
Mr Steele
Mr Tuxworth
Mr Vale

Noes 8

Mr B. Collins
Mr Doolan
Ms D'Rozario
Mr Isaacs
Mrs Lawrie
Mr Leo
Mrs O'Neil
Mr Perkins

Sittings of the Assembly in 1981

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has a timetable for next year's parliamentary sittings been decided upon and, if so, is it true that the Legislative Assembly is scheduled to sit for 24 days in 1981?

ANSWER

As you would be aware, Sir, the arrangements for the sittings of the Assembly are normally arranged between the Chief Minister and yourself and notified through your office. I do not believe, Sir, that you have promulgated a proposed program for next year and therefore the question cannot be answered at this stage. Nonetheless, I dare say that you and the Chief Minister will arrive at a proposed program as soon as possible and every member will be informed.

Sittings of the Assembly in 1981

Mr ISAACS to MR SPEAKER

Mr Speaker, I redirect the question to you, Sir. Can you inform the Assembly whether a timetable for next year's parliamentary sittings has been decided upon and, if so, is it true that the Assembly is scheduled to sit for 24 days in 1981?

ANSWER

I will answer that question in due course.

Trachoma Program

Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Can he advise in view of recent publicity whether or not the Northern Territory government proposes to continue with the national trachoma program?

ANSWER

I propose to table a statement next week for discussion relating to the noise that has been occurring about the Northern Territory's involvement in the trachoma program. I would prefer to leave my remarks until that time.

Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Can he advise the Assembly of the current staffing and activities of the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority. Could he also advise the Assembly of the firm proposals for the activities of that organisation in 1981?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for his question. I do advise that recruiting is presently in progress as far as staffing the Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority is concerned. I understand that applications have been sought for key level positions and they are presently being examined.

In the Douglas-Daly land development area, at least 2 project farms will be established involving the acquisition of land, siting and construction of houses, provision of domestic water, electric generators, fencing and machinery sheds. In addition, in the order of 1,000 hectares of green timber will be cleared for each farm in accordance with existing soil surveys and incorporating appropriate soil conservation methods. Settlers for these farms will be selected and take up residence in 1981 in order to establish crops for the 1981-82 season. Planning for additional farms in the area will continue.

In the Adelaide River area, existing irrigation land is to be regraded with repairs being completed on drains and supply channels. The land in question is to be leased from present owners and a rice project farm established that will be fully operated by the authority. Soil surveys will continue to enable more of an accurate assessment to be made of factors that will determine the ultimate scale of rice growing in the region. This work will parallel Department of Primary Production projects aimed at increasing rice yield and aid in developing complementary enterprises for these farms.

The authority will be undertaking a number of market research projects to more accurately define the size and nature of the market for major commodities. This will include means of developing a greater level of demand for feed grains and export markets for formulated feeds. Feasibility studies relating to siting, capacity, managerial requirements of grain storage and processing facilities will be undertaken. Marketing services to horticultural growers will be developed in association with such producers.

The last point that I would like to raise this morning on this matter is the Commonwealth government relations with the Northern Territory. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics will submit to the Northern Territory government the outline of a cost-benefit study that will run over the stage 1 period of development. The study will incorporate input-output data, development costs and infrastructure costs obtained from the project farms. It will have a significant bearing on the Commonwealth's attitude towards financial assistance of agricultural development in the Territory.

Connector Road from Stott Terrace Bridge

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise me of the likely commencement and completion dates of the connector road from the Stott Terrace Bridge to Undoolya Road?

ANSWER

Tenders will close in March of next year and the project should be completed by the end of 1981.

Saturday Afternoon Trading

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Has the government given consideration to the possible harmful effects on small suburban supermarkets of Saturday afternoon trading by large interstate firms such as Coles? Will the government consider restricting trading hours of such large businesses in order to benefit the smaller local businesses?

ANSWER

The government has not considered the question raised by the honourable

member for Fannie Bay. I would indeed hope that this government does not get into the realm of controlling business hours. In states where they have legislation on how many hours a week certain businesses can remain open, they have an awful lot of industrial disputation in any situation where the status quo was required to be changed.

The only 2 areas of the Northern Territory where business hours are controlled are in the sale of liquor and the operation of the casino. I believe that it would be a disservice to the people of the Northern Territory if we ever get into the situation of deciding when people shall open their doors for business in any other kind of business at all.

Dhupuma College Equipment

Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is it a fact that various school supplies and stock from Dhupuma College were burnt or otherwise destroyed without any attempt being made to establish whether schools or community groups in Nhulunbuy could have made use of them?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the rumour the honourable member refers to is one that came to my attention through your own good offices and, of course, it was nothing more than a rumour. A number of old mattresses and pillows and other such items that were unsuitable for further use were disposed of. Most certainly, no items of any value to any students were destroyed so far as I know. I dare say a number of items in the Dhupuma College complex would have deteriorated as a result of the department's unwillingness to break through picket lines and black bans. Certainly, no action taken by the Department of Education would have had a detrimental effect on any useful material whatsoever.

Coastal Plains Research Station

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Is the Department of Primary Production going to permanently close down the Coastal Plains Research Station and, if so, what will be done with the land and facilities? If it is to be offered to a private individual or company, what are the particulars of the proposal?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the government is not closing down the CPRS. Obviously, there has been some reorganisation and direction changes in the department. I am advised that there are certain individuals and companies interested in either leasing the land or doing something with it. I am not too sure what. This is being discussed with divisional officers at this time. The department would prefer to change the emphasis in the utilisation of the station from animal breeding and grazing comparison trials to pasture introduction and horticultural and buffalo research.

NT Ombudsman

Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Did the Northern Territory Ombudsman recently apply to the government to attend an international conference of ombudsmen in Israel? If so, was the

application granted and, if not, why not?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory Ombudsman recently applied to the Overseas Visits Committee to attend a conference of ombudsmen in Israel. In my absence, the application was turned down eventually by the Acting Chief Minister. The Ombudsman applied to me for a review of the decision and, for obvious reasons of principle, there was no possibility of any review. How can the Chief Minister review the act of the person who was acting as the Chief Minister at the time? Therefore, the Ombudsman was unable to attend the international conference of ombudsmen. Invitations were extended to ombudsmen of all the Australian states. I am not aware how many Australian ombudsmen did attend the conference but I could certainly find out if the Leader of the Opposition wishes to know.

Protection for Local Egg Producers

Mr VALE to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Can he advise whether or not it is the government's intention to introduce in this session legislation to protect local egg producers against southern dumping?

ANSWER

This proposal has been the subject of much debate, particularly in the Central Australian area. It is my intention to get final approval from my party for the introduction of demand and supply of eggs legislation. The proposed legislation is regarded by the Council of Egg Marketing Authorities in Australia, which controls the hen levy, as fundamental to the avoidance of the hen levy in the Northern Territory. The government wishes to ensure that Territory producers do not exceed 90% of the Territory consumption. By remaining a net importer, Territory producers will be exempt from the Commonwealth hen levy which currently runs at \$1.95 per bird per year.

Department of Primary Production Offices

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

When will the Darwin offices of the Department of Primary Production be housed together in satisfactory accommodation at the Berrimah Experimental Farm?

ANSWER

There are proposals to establish further facilities at Berrimah but, like all proposals, they are subject to pretty tight scrutiny as far as expenditure is concerned. It is a matter of the priorities of the government at the time. Obviously, there is no way in the world that I could commit the government in advance of next year's budget.

Cape Don Lighthouse Buildings

Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

Following the Northern Territory Conservation Commission's approaches to the federal Department of Administrative Services regarding certain

buildings at Cape Don Lighthouse, can he indicate whether it has received any guarantees that their wishes will be considered by the federal department?

ANSWER

I cannot give any such indication to the honourable member because I am not au fait with this particular matter at present. If the honourable member would like to drop me a line, I will certainly obtain an answer for her pretty swiftly.

Dental Treatment of School Children

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is legislation being considered which will enable dental therapists to recommend and carry out treatment on secondary schoolchildren's teeth?

ANSWER

There is a proposal in the pipeline at the moment for legislation to cover such activities. It has not been dealt with by the government formally and, when it is, there will be an appropriate announcement made.

Housing Commission Tenants in Nhulunbuy

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Given the Housing Commission attitude on the sale of Housing Commission houses to tenants throughout the Territory, what steps are being taken to provide the same facilities to Housing Commission tenants in Nhulunbuy?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for the question. It certainly is something that his predecessor and he are very concerned about. It is certainly something that has occupied my attention for some time. The honourable member would be well aware that the government has long stated its wish to offer for sale Housing Commission houses in his home area and quite properly so. The difficulty is to come up with the land tenure system which would allow that to happen. I can assure the honourable member that, if it is humanly possible, a solution to this dilemma will be found. Land in all other centres of the Northern Territory is owned by the Crown and, as such, it can issue leases in perpetuity or in fee simple to citizens of the Northern Territory. The title of land in the Nhulunbuy area is quite different and the best that can be arranged, in conjunction with the Aboriginal people and the mining company that is concerned, is some form of period tender - 30 years, 50 years or whatever the case may be. Perhaps some form of roll-over could also be negotiated. It is an extremely complex matter which I honestly believe will take quite a bit of time to solve. I would like to discuss with the honourable member whether or not he has any solutions from discussions he may have had as a local member over there, particularly with the traditional owners of the area who pose grave difficulties in this matter.

Water Tank East of Sadadeen Subdivision

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise what progress has been made in the construction of an

additional water tank east of the Sadadeen subdivision?

ANSWER

An item has been included in the 1980-81 program to construct the water storage tank at a cost of \$1.2m. The tender target date has been scheduled for 1980-81 and the work should therefore commence early in the next financial year.

Old Fannie Bay Golf Course Area

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has the government yet made a decision about the future use of the old Fannie Bay golf course area? Will the government incorporate the land in the East Point Reserve?

ANSWER

To the best of my knowledge, the answer to the first question is no and, therefore, the second question cannot apply. I certainly undertake to write to the honourable member with whatever information I can find out as to the current state of planning. As she will be well aware, it is not solely a matter for the Northern Territory government. The wishes of the city corporation must also be borne in mind. I will write to her with an up-to-date report as soon as possible.

Aboriginal Employment in Upgrading of Airstrips

Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

What steps have been taken to ensure that Aboriginal people have been employed in the upgrading of airstrips currently being undertaken as part of the works program for Aboriginal communities?

ANSWER

Perhaps this question could better have been directed to the Minister for Transport and Works since it apparently seeks specific details on these particular contracts. But I can outline again the policy of the government which is the same as the policy of the federal government and that is to seek the employment of Aboriginal people as much as possible in the carriage of works in Aboriginal areas. If any work can possibly be carried out by Aboriginal concerns, corporations, communities and so on, then at times attempts are made to give those bodies a preference when letting contracts. I am not aware of the exact monetary figure at the moment but I do recall reading a document some time before I went away that indicated that millions of dollars had gone to Aboriginal community organisations to carry out work for the Department of Transport and Works since self-government. I am sure that, within the limitations of airfield construction work which requires a fair degree of expertise and engineering supervision, as many Aboriginal people as possible will be employed.

Aboriginal Employment in Upgrading of Airstrips

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

With regard to the specific program of the upgrading of airstrips in

Aboriginal communities, what steps have been taken by his government and by the contractors to ensure that Aboriginal people have been employed in that program?

ANSWER

I am unable to provide the Leader of the Opposition with that information. However, I will provide it at a later hour in this sittings.

Mereenie Oil Field

Mr VALE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he advise the present status concerning the signing of the oil field lease between the Mereenie partners and the Northern Territory government? Can he further advise the present location of the rig purchased by the partners for that field and, if he knows where it is, can he tell us when drilling will start?

ANSWER

My understanding is that an offer of lease has been made to the partners. It is really a matter for them to take up the offer or come back to the government if they have problems with it. I would expect that matter to be finalised within weeks. The company advised me 2 or 3 weeks ago that it has purchased a rig in America to the tune of \$4.5m. It was expected to be in Adelaide at the end of November and it was planned to commence a drilling program in the Amadeus Basin in January. I assume that the schedule of the company is proceeding as expected.

Northern Territory Port Authority

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is the Northern Territory Port Authority to continue in its present role or is it his intention that it will be expanded to cover the operation of other Territory ports or be absorbed into the Department of Transport and Works?

ANSWER

The information is subject to a Cabinet paper that is being prepared and I am unable to provide her with that information.

Green Paper on Education

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will a redrafted Green Paper on education be tabled at this sittings to be used as a basis for a White Paper perhaps in the sittings next year?

ANSWER

I think the honourable member would be perfectly correct in saying that it would be leading towards a White Paper next year. That gives me another 12 months. I have received a final draft of the proposed Green Paper and it was my full intention to have that tabled at this time. Nonetheless, it is a document of great importance and the greatest possible thought must be given to it before it is tabled so that it truly reflects the current thinking for

the purposes of discussion by Northern Territory parents, students and teachers alike. For that reason, I doubt that I will be in a position to table it at this present sittings. This means that the February-March sittings would be the appropriate time at which I would be tabling that document. If I find that I am in a position to table it this sittings, I will do so.

Imprisonment of a Youth in Alice Springs

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is he aware that, in Alice Springs court on 28 May this year, a youth under the age of 14 was remanded to prison pending a second appearance before the court on 4 June? If this is the case, would he investigate why a youth under the age of 14 was placed in a prison?

ANSWER

I do not have specific details of this matter to hand at the moment but I will endeavour to obtain them. The normal procedure of the department is that I am advised forthwith every time a juvenile is taken into an institution in the Northern Territory under the control of my department. In all probability, I would have been advised but I do not remember the incident or the dates. I will clarify the matter and advise the Assembly.

Marina in Darwin

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What stage has the proposal to establish a marina in the Darwin area reached?

ANSWER

This topic has certainly come to light in the last couple of weeks. I will be able to provide information to honourable members later. The government has been waiting for a separate report, which is due any moment, regarding the establishment of a marina in Darwin.

Teaching Service Bill

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he advise why the Teaching Service Bill will not be proceeded with at this sittings? When will it be proceeded with? Could he also advise the current progress with the appointment of a Teaching Service Commissioner?

ANSWER

The reasons the bill will not be proceeded with at this sittings are identical to the reasons it could not be proceeded with in the April sittings. I would simply refer the honourable member to that debate. Nothing has changed. The Commonwealth simply has not introduced complementary legislation and therefore we are not, in my view, in a position properly to proceed. The timing, I would assume, would depend upon the passage of the legislation by the Commonwealth in the autumn sittings. There will be a special sittings of the federal parliament at the end of November or early in December. Whether or not the legislation will be introduced at that time will depend of course upon the legislative load of the Commonwealth. Certainly, I would anticipate

that, even if it were introduced in that sittings, the federal parliament would not be in a position to pass the bill until the autumn sittings.

As for the second part of the question, it is the government's intention to appoint an interim commissioner. As has been announced by the Public Service Commissioner, his office has received some 22 applications for the position and I am pleased to say many are of a high calibre. The Public Service Commissioner, in conjunction with officers of the Department of Education, will be providing Cabinet with a short list for consideration in due course.

Professor Harry Messel

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

When is Professor Harry Messel's occupation of the Coastal Plains Research Station to be terminated? Considering the time he has been there and the services offered him by the NT government, will any of his work in the NT be published?

ANSWER

I understand that discussions have taken place with Professor Messel regarding his tenancy at Beatrice Hill. I am advised that Professor Messel has indicated his desire to transfer his operations to Maningrida. Regarding the second part of the question, the decision to publish or not will be a matter for the professor.

Aerial Medical Aircraft

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is he aware that Northern Airlines have insufficient licensed aircraft maintenance engineers to adequately service the aerial medical Nomads and, as a result, 3 out of 4 of the aerial medical aircraft based in Darwin have been out of action at one time?

ANSWER

I am not sure that the grounding of the Nomads is entirely due to the number of aircraft maintenance engineers employed by Northern Airlines. One of the unfortunate facts of life about the Nomads is that, for every 2 we have in the air, we have to have 2 on the ground in pieces. I would not be too quick to point the bone at anybody on this particular matter.

MOTION

Mr ROBERTSON (Education): I move that Business of the Day be called on.

Mr COLLINS (Arnhem): I wish to debate this motion. I made some comment earlier in the sittings that, when both the Chief Minister and myself seemed to be slightly confused by a procedural matter, it was hardly surprising because it had been such a long time since any of us had been in here. We are all a bit rusty.

This poses a particular problem with question time. There is no doubt

that question time is one of the most important aspects of the parliament's functions. It certainly excites the most public interest. I do not think there is any doubt about that. It would also have been obvious to the Minister for Education that the Assembly has been packed every question time. It is clear that there are members on both sides of this Assembly who will not have their questions answered if the time is restricted to half an hour.

There does seem to be some confusion over the matter of Standing Orders. To assist in the proceedings of the Assembly, I will discuss that briefly. Some mention was made yesterday of Standing Order 62. Mr Speaker, I would be seeking to have a direction on this from you, Sir, at a later time but it is my belief that Standing Order 62, which mentions those questions which are not open to debate, refers specifically to the manner in which the Leader of the House adjourns question time; that is, by moving that the business of the day be called on. Standing Order 62 says in parentheses that you then have to refer to Standing Order 81. It clearly means that that particular part of the Standing Orders has to be read in conjunction with Standing Order 81. When you then turn to Standing Order 81, you find that it refers specifically to Matters of Public Importance. It is clear from the reading of the Standing Orders that the conclusion of question time is not affected by Standing Order 62 but that it refers specifically to that motion being made during a Matter of Public Importance. That is very clear from the reading of the Standing Orders.

Should any confusion arise in the interpretation of Standing Orders, we have a catch-all Standing Order: Standing Order 1. It states: 'Any question relating to procedure or the conduct of business of the Assembly not provided for in those Standing Orders shall be decided according to the practice in the House of Representatives in the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia'. Could I draw the attention of the Assembly to the practice of the House of Representatives in regard to question time? Since 1972 question time has been 45 minutes. From the time that the Speaker asks if there are any questions without notice, 45 minutes then elapses until the conclusion of question time. That has been the practice of the House of Representatives for very good reasons since 1972. It was initiated by Prime Minister Whitlam and has been continued by Prime Minister Fraser since that time. At the conclusion of question time in the House of Representatives, it is then the practice of the Prime Minister to stand and to say that all further questions will be placed on notice. I would commend that procedure to the Legislative Assembly.

I do feel, Mr Speaker, that the restriction that the government has placed on question time is a great imposition both to the Assembly and to the people who are vitally interested in question time. As I said before, it is certainly an extremely important area of the parliament's responsibilities. It is an opportunity for both government members and certainly for opposition members to place the activities of the government under close scrutiny.

That brings me to a further problem. There are twice as many people on this side of the Chamber as there are on that side, if you exclude the people answering the questions, which makes it even more difficult for us on this side - and we ask fewer Dorothy Dixers than members on the other side - to place the government's activities under any kind of scrutiny. The problem is further compounded by the infrequency of the sittings which is obvious from the great gap between the last sittings and this sittings.

I have a few questions to ask next week that will be impossible to ask if question time is restricted to half an hour. In fact, question time has

been less than half an hour. Yesterday, because of notices given by members opposite, question time did not start until 10.07am and finished promptly at 10.30am. I interpreted the message from the Minister for Education the other day to mean that question time would be restricted to half an hour. Yesterday, we had less than 25 minutes for question time. Now, at no time this week has question time not been filled right up until the last minute and ended on each day with half a dozen members still on their feet.

For the benefit of the public interested in keeping the activities of government under review and for the benefit of the procedures of this Assembly, could I suggest respectfully to the Minister for Education that he brings the practice of this Assembly into line with the practice of the federal parliament as laid out in Northern Territory Legislative Assembly Standing Order 1 so that question time be extended to 45 minutes and be concluded by saying that all further questions be placed on notice.

Mr ROBERTSON (Education): Mr Speaker, I have listened with a great deal of sympathy to what the honourable member for Arnhem has said and I accept the sincerity with which he has said it. I nominated that time in light of the experiences of the Assembly during the course of this year where you, Sir, would be looking around in total confusion as to whether anyone would get up and as to whether or not you should take it upon yourself to bring on the next item by your own motion. I simply thought that an appropriate course of action would be to fix a time, not a period, for question time.

The honourable member has rather cleverly used the provisions of Standing Order 1 to enhance his argument. I put it to him that there is nothing in our Standing Orders which relates to acts such as guillotining, gagging and ramming legislation through in the same manner as was perfected by Mr Daly when he was Leader of the House in the Commonwealth. If the honourable gentleman wants to apply the practice adopted in respect of a time for question time, then he would be happy for the government to accept some other practices invented and indeed maintained in those areas in the Commonwealth parliament.

I have given the reason why I decided on 10.30am; it is because on repeated occasions this Assembly has run out of questions. Nonetheless, I have listened with interest to what the honourable member had to say. I will discuss the matter with my colleagues and with him and I will arrive at a conclusion and announce that later.

Motion agreed to.

Length of Question Time

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Could he advise the Assembly as to how long question time will be this morning?

ANSWER

As I indicated on the last sitting day, I would give serious consideration to what the honourable member had to say about this matter. I do appreciate his concern. I indicated then that I rejected all his arguments for requesting a longer question time with the exception of course that the gallery is usually most occupied at question time by people interested in the proceedings of the parliament. It is quite an inaccurate analogy to draw a comparison between this Assembly's operations and that of the federal government. He has misinterpreted the intention of Standing Order 1 to imply the use of provisions of the Commonwealth parliament when our own Standing Orders do not provide those provisions. I do not think that that is the intention of Standing Order 1 at all. Every member has an opportunity at question time to ask multitudinous questions. I would anticipate that, in half an hour or thereabouts, everyone has an opportunity to ask 2 or 3 questions whereas, in the federal parliament members are lucky to get an opportunity to ask a question once a month. Nonetheless, I think that probably the best method that we can operate under is for myself, as Leader of the House, to have regard to the nature of questions being asked, the level of interest in them and the legislative program which the government wishes to get through. I propose to make a daily judgment on that matter. For instance, today we have a fairly extensive program before us. On Thursday we have to extend to His Honour the Administrator the courtesy of attending upon him for the presentation of the Address in Reply. The fact that we have, this morning, had sprung on us, even if it is under Standing Orders, a matter of public importance which will occupy the Assembly for some time, causes me to anticipate question time will terminate at 10.30am.

International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna

Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Did he visit Vienna during his recent overseas trip? Did he meet there with representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency whose headquarters is in Vienna? If so, can he inform the Assembly of the outcome of those discussions?

ANSWER

Unfortunately, although I did visit Vienna in the course of my recent overseas trip and attempts had been made to organise a program for us in Austria when we were in transit from France to Israel, it was impossible. Indeed, the Ambassador was absent from Vienna and the other officials of the embassy with whom we had contact indicated that they were unable to assist us in what I might term even the smallest degree at that time. The reason was that, unbeknownst to myself, All Saints Day and All Souls Day are holidays of considerable significance in Austria and it so happened that we were there at that time and the whole country had ground to a halt. I believe that was the reason for the absence from Vienna of the Ambassador. All government offices were closed and, indeed, even the museums were closed. The city was in effect dead.

Defence Establishment at Shoal Bay

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Why was it considered necessary, in the Commonwealth's occupation of section 407 at Shoal Bay as a defence establishment, that a further mile all round this section was necessary as a buffer zone?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I dare say the honourable member would have to write a letter seeking information from the Minister for Defence of the Commonwealth as to why it was needed. One would assume that that particular defence establishment, being of an electronic nature of radar and communications, would need a buffer to prevent interference to the electronic systems located on that site. Upon self-government, the Commonwealth reserved under the self-government act and acts consequent to it various areas of land in the Northern Territory for Commonwealth purposes. Of course, that area of land was so reserved at that time.

Withdrawal of Grumman Trackers

Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

He probably knows from press reports that the Grumman Trackers are to be withdrawn from Darwin. Has he made any approach to the Minister for Defence with a view to keeping that establishment in Darwin rather than having them withdrawn to defend the southern capitals I guess against those New Zealanders?

ANSWER

I received a telex from the Prime Minister or the Minister for Defence late last week in relation to the withdrawal of the Grumman Trackers. It was pointed out in this telex that these planes would be replaced by the Nomad Searchmasters to be operated by Northern Airlines. On that basis, it seemed to me that it was difficult to oppose the removal of the Grumman Trackers as such from the surveillance operations in the Northern Territory especially when this government continuously maintains that we should be conserving energy. These aircraft consume a terrific amount of fuel and I do not believe that we should needlessly duplicate surveillance functions. However, I have taken the opportunity, without telling the Minister for Defence what his business is or where he should redeploy these Grumman Trackers - I have consigned them to history - to ask him and the Prime Minister to in fact beef up the defence capability of the Australian government in Northern Australia. I believe that the Nomad Searchmasters, if not perhaps the best for the task, at least will be adequate for the surveillance task. We certainly must give them a chance to see how they perform before we criticise them. We will certainly be keeping an eye on their performance, but I have taken the opportunity to request the Australian government, in general terms, to increase its defence capabilities in this area.

Alice Springs Bus Service

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What progress has been made towards an Alice Springs bus service?

ANSWER

A survey questionnaire is with the Government Printing Office. It is hoped that the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics will carry out a survey in the Alice Springs area on the public transport needs in that area.

Nuclear Power-Station in Darwin

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Can he inform the Assembly which location the government is looking at as a potential site for its nuclear power-station?

ANSWER

At this stage, the government is not looking at particular sites.

Defence Establishment at Shoal Bay

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Does the Northern Territory government have any use for the mile of land around section 407 at Shoal Bay used by the Commonwealth for agrarian purposes?

ANSWER

I know of no such plans. I am certainly aware of a proposed use for the area that is of interest to the honourable member for Tiwi. That relates to a dump which is hardly agrarian purposes. I understand that arrangements for that have been entered into between this government and the Darwin city council. As for any other uses, perhaps the honourable member might make some suggestions to us and we will take those into account.

Crops in Adelaide River Area

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

What crops other than rice will be grown on the Adelaide River? Is there a market for them and would they be an economic proposition? When has he publicly stated that crops other than rice will be grown?

ANSWER

I ask that the question be placed on notice.

Darwin Hospital

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

There are still a number of people arriving at the old Darwin Hospital for treatment on weekends and public holidays. Is he aware of this fact? If so, what is being done about it? If not, will he please have his department investigate the matter?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am aware of it because the honourable member for Port Darwin brought it to my notice earlier last week. I have taken the matter up with

the department. The department embarked on quite an extensive publicity campaign earlier this year, when the operations of the Darwin Hospital were transferred to Casuarina, to explain to people what services would be available at Casuarina and what services would be available at the Darwin Hospital. In view of the honourable member's representation - and I appreciate that it is a very worthy one - the department will have a look at another program to refresh people's memories about the services they will or will not receive at the Darwin Hospital.

Public Transport to Old Darwin Hospital

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the reason for buses which previously services the old Darwin Hospital being rerouted to bypass the hospital?

ANSWER

I will provide the information to the honourable member at a later hour in this sittings.

Cemetery and Animal Pound

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Where will the proposed cemetery and a large-animal pound be situated in the Berrimah area?

ANSWER

My briefing notes on that particular matter are missing. I will have to provide the honourable member with the answer to her question later.

Photocopying Service for Community Groups

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Since he has offered community groups in Alice Springs a free photocopying service if they provide their own paper, will he make the same offer to community groups in Darwin.

ANSWER

The answer is no. The operations of the access centre in Alice Springs and Darwin are quite different to each other. When I learned of the system that had prevailed in Alice Springs before the time I issued directives about changing the formula for costing for photocopying services through access centres, I agreed to allow the Alice Springs situation to remain as it is while talks proceed with the local government with a view to its taking over the operation from the Department of Community Development. The situation in Alice Springs was quite different to Darwin. The community-based groups themselves provided photocopying paper to the access centre and were charged a small fee for using the paper on the photocopying machine. As a result of this system, the access centre had considerable stocks of other people's photocopying paper on hand at the time of my direction and I therefore undertook to allow that situation to continue.

Northumberland Insurance Company

Mrs LAWRIE to TREASURER

Can he now indicate the level of assistance to be given to people affected by the collapse of the Northumberland Insurance Company?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I do have information relating to the subject, but not an exact answer. However, I advise that approximately \$250,000 in motor accident insurance claims was left unsatisfied by the defaulting Northumberland Insurance Company in 1974. Following reponse to an advertising campaign, the Northern Territory government is compiling a full register of those claims and the closing date for submission of details is 21 January 1981. Although it will not be possible to make a proper assessment until after that date, it is my belief that, between the Commonwealth and the Territory, at least the damage element of the claims will be substantially met for surviving victims. That is all the information I have at this stage.

Humpty Doo High School

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

When will construction commence on the Humpty Doo High School?

ANSWER

I am unable to answer the question because there are many things which may vary the actual commencement of construction. Nonetheless, as indicated prior to the elections, the government will be proceeding with a composite high school for Humpty Doo. It will range from year 8 to year 12. For the benefit of those who seem to be doubtful that this is the case, I reaffirm that commitment. There is absolutely no doubt years 11 and 12 will be taught there. What is necessary is to identify with the parents of the area exactly what type of years 11 and 12 they want. Any examination of the results around Australia in matriculation or in tertiary entrance examinations will indicate that a very substantial student body is necessary to run a composite high school from years 8 through to 12. I think the parents in the Humpty Doo area should bear very firmly in mind the consequences of them insisting upon a composite high school through to year 12.

It is my understanding, having spoken with the executive of the high school steering committee recently, that indeed they are fully aware of this and ongoing discussions will take place between those people and my department. It is hoped to have the first stage of the school committed and opened by the beginning of the 1983 school year. That is subject to tendering and all of the normal things which can have an influence upon the commencement date of building and thereby have a serious influence on the completion date. That is the intention of the government and we hope to be able to keep to that timetable.

Construction of New TIO Building

Mr HARRIS to TREASURER

When is work to commence on construction of the new TIO building which will house the Tourist Commission's office in the mall and when is this building due to be completed?

ANSWER

The tenders for the job the honourable member mentioned have closed and they are currently under consideration. I am advised that the construction period of the building will be about 35 weeks and it is hoped that it would be completed in August 1981.

Upgrading of Alcohol Dependence Treatment Unit

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for HEALTH

What steps are being taken to upgrade the number of personnel and facilities at the Alcohol Dependence Treatment Unit operating at the Darwin Hospital?

ANSWER

Honourable members would be aware that the government committed itself earlier this year to the establishment of a Drug and Alcohol Authority. One of the functions of this authority would be to take over the care of people who are severely affected by alcohol. At the moment I have before me a proposal by the department to beef up the operation of the rehabilitation unit that is currently being operated in a de facto way by the Health Department in the old Darwin Hospital. There is a Cabinet paper in the system now. Given that the matter is before Cabinet, I would prefer to advise the honourable member later in writing of the exact steps that the government will take.

Howard Springs Reserve

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Does the Northern Territory government or the Conservation Commission have any thoughts of increasing the area of the Howard Springs Reserve and, if so, when?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Tiwi very thoughtfully gave me some warning that she was intending to ask this question, so I have been able to get a response for her. The situation is that the owners of the land, some of which is required to enlarge the reserve which presently comprises an area of 2,000-odd hectares, have recently indicated that they are willing to consider a government proposal to acquire their land adjacent to the reserve. The additional area being sought is 611 hectares. The Department of Lands is now considering how to best implement the proposal to acquire the land.

Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Have any farmers pulled out of the ADMA scheme yet, and which farmers will be growing rice on the Adelaide River this year?

ANSWER

The answer is yes. One farmer who was intending to participate in rice growing over the wet season has decided to pull out. The ADMA will now proceed with share farmers or hired farmers and it will also utilise some of

the area on the upper Adelaide River Experimental Station.

Public Transport to Old Darwin Hospital

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will the minister take steps to ensure that persons who still have a requirement to visit the old Darwin Hospital can still get there by public transport?

ANSWER

There could be several reasons why the routing has been changed around the Darwin Hospital. First of all, there has been construction at Gilruth Avenue where most of the area has been closed to normal traffic flow. With the advent of the opening of the Casuarina Hospital, there may not be enough demand apart from the people living in that area. However, I will obtain information from the department and provide it to the honourable member. If it is possible to maintain some kind of bus service for those people going to the hospital, we will do so.

Northern Territory Government's Computer

Mr HARRIS to TREASURER

Is the Northern Territory government's computer being used to capacity?

ANSWER

The Northern Territory government's main computer is being used almost to full capacity at the present time. It is somewhat of a fluid situation. Very large computers these days are able to be built onto with various additions of equipment. This has been the case with the government's computer. It was inherited at self-government from the Commonwealth and since that time we have been adding sections to it to cope with needs as they emerged. The government is currently considering an application by the ADP centre to further enlarge the existing computer to meet with the requirements of various government departments and a decision will be made on that matter in due course. For the time being, the machine is being used to its maximum potential.

Unibeef Project at Mataranka

Mrs O'NEIL to CHIEF MINISTER

What environmental controls are being exercised over the Unibeef project to ensure that coffee bush will not spread uncontrolled from the project area at Mataranka?

ANSWER

I have been advised by my colleague, the Treasurer, that it is not coffee bush but leucaena of some type. I can assure honourable members that I have certainly seen coffee bush in many tropical areas of the world and, if it is a problem, then it is certainly not confined to Darwin. I can assure the honourable member for Fannie Bay that the Conservation Commission in the person of its Director and certainly the Environmental Unit is taking a keen interest in the proposals by the Israeli-American consortium for the establishment of ethanol production from this particular tree in the Mataranka area. The

project will be a huge one if it continues in its present form. Obviously, it will be a very good thing for the Northern Territory. Its employment potential is immense. As it is an agricultural project, lands that have never before been put to the plough will come under cultivation. Obviously, there is every incentive to the Northern Territory to support and further the project. I undertake, and I know that the Director of Conservation is behind me on this, to ensure that all conceivable environmental safeguards are maintained.

Uranium Discovery at Ewaninga

Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is it a fact that a German consortium has made a uranium discovery in the vicinity of the Ewaninga conservation reserve which is to the south of Alice Springs? If so, is he aware of any plan to mine or to process this uranium?

ANSWER

I can think of 3 groups which are exploring in the area south of Alice Springs. There are 3 different German companies which all have an interest with Australian partners in an exploration program. If the honourable member would like to put his question in writing, I will see that he receives a reply.

Gap Road Flats

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What is the likely starting date for construction of the Housing Commission single-officer flats on Gap Road?

ANSWER

From memory, I understand that the Housing Commission's proposed flat development on Gap Road is subject to a hearing of the Town Planning Authority at this time. The commencement date would be contingent upon the success of that rezoning. I will seek further details on the matter and advise the honourable member later.

Upgrading of Roads in Nhulumbuy

Mr LEO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Could he give a commencement date for the upgrading of the roads in the area known as contractors village at Nhulumbuy?

ANSWER

I am unable to give a precise date. However, the project is included in this year's capital works program.

Henbury Avenue Special School

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is it true that the opening of the Henbury Avenue Special School for handicapped children, which has already been delayed 12 months, will now not occur until 1982?

ANSWER

Again I will seek the information and provide it to the honourable member later. The honourable member would be aware that we have hundreds of schools in the Northern Territory of one kind or another and it is impossible to remember the status of all of them at any one time.

Bagot Road Lights

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Why are the Bagot Road lights so out of synchronisation that the people travelling on Bagot Road get a longer go at the green light than the people travelling in from the rural area on the Stuart Highway?

ANSWER

The honourable member may have noticed some lack of synchronisation at that particular location. I believe that the construction of the overpass will cause some problems with traffic flow. I give the honourable member an undertaking to have the matter investigated and I will report to her at a later hour.

Fireworks

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is it the intention in 1981 to have 2 fireworks days and allow fireworks to be sold to celebrate 1 July and 5 November?

ANSWER

I have not addressed myself to the matter. I will advise the honourable member later.

Off-Peak Power Supply

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Have any investigations been undertaken within the Northern Territory Electricity Commission or the Department of Mines and Energy on the feasibility of providing cheap power to off-peak industrial users?

ANSWER

The honourable member raises the issue of cheap power to industrial users. I am at a loss to know what cheap power is and where it comes from. All the power we seem to deal with is pretty expensive. If the honourable member is referring to the principle of giving concessions to some people in industry or to householders for using power at certain times, we are not in a position to do that because we have an agreement with the Commonwealth, relating to the recovery of money, that is fixed to the electricity prices in north Queensland. If we wish to continue our relationship with the Commonwealth so far as our subsidy is concerned, it would be in our best interests to observe that part of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Ross Park Primary School

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What proposal has been adopted to solve the Ross Park Primary School housing problem?

ANSWER

As I indicated last week, the government has been addressing itself to this very serious matter. I indicated that Cabinet would be considering the matter last Friday. Indeed, it resolved the matter finally yesterday. It will be necessary for the government to provide demountables at Ross Park in order to cater for the short-term difficulties of a very rapidly growing population in that area.

The government will be calling for expressions of interest from builders for a design-and-construct proposal for a completely new preschool, primary school and special school to be located in the new Sadadeen subdivision. The letting of tenders for that private subdivision were recently announced. It is anticipated that it will take about a month from now to draw up the design brief specifications, about 2 months to receive responses from builders for the project and about a further month for the tenders to go out. The tender documents will call for the establishment in the first instance of a core school to accommodate about 150 students, which should be ready by the commencement of the 1983 school year. The remainder of the school will follow very shortly thereafter.

I am afraid that the people at Ross Park will have the minor inconvenience of perhaps 3 demountables placed at Ross Park for the beginning of the second term of next year at which time the problem is due to arise. There will be no problem for approximately the first half of next year. That is the solution which the government has found: a short-term demountable program on the existing Ross Park School where all these children presently attend and the immediate commencement of a multi-purpose primary educational facility at Sadadeen.

Nhulunbuy Water Rates

Mr LEO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

How long will it be before Nhulunbuy residents will pay water rates on a par with the rest of the Northern Territory centres?

ANSWER

The subject of water at Nhulunbuy poses a very difficult question. It is a company town and I thought I alluded to that in the budget debate the other day. Whilst we introduced concessions for Darwin residents on 1 July this year, we are unable to do so in Nhulunbuy because Nhulunbuy is controlled by Nabalco which controls the water supply. However, in light of a press release from the honourable member, I have asked my department to make some inquiries and to report back to me.

Completion Date of Mindil Beach Casino

Mr HARRIS to TREASURER

Is he able to give the completion date of the Mindil Beach casino?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thought that I could have. In the absence of specific information, I believe that the completion date of the casino, now that the contract has been let, will be December 1982. I will endeavour to confirm that for the honourable member.

Outpatients Clinic at Casuarina Hospital

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Is he aware that large numbers of people are travelling a considerable distance to Casuarina Hospital to find when they get there that they cannot get medical attention? Is it true that medical practitioners are not available at the outpatients clinic until 1pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays?

ANSWER

The honourable member made a statement at the beginning of his question which I am not sure is true and I will ask the department to investigate and report on it. So far as the matter of practitioners not being available in Outpatients until 1pm is concerned, I will also ask for a report on that and advise the honourable member.

Alcohol Dependence Treatment Unit

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Does he give a high priority to the rehabilitation of alcoholics in the Northern Territory? If he does, will he give an assurance that the Cabinet paper that he referred to yesterday on the Alcohol Dependence Treatment Unit will get a priority listing for a Cabinet decision to ensure an early upgrading of this important unit?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I certainly give a priority to the rehabilitation of alcoholics in the Northern Territory and the establishment of the unit. The rest of the question relates to matters of Cabinet consideration and I will leave it at that.

Consolidation of Legislation

Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

Could he inform me how the legislative draftsmen are proceeding with consolidating Northern Territory legislation?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I am happy to be able to provide the answer to the honourable member for Port Darwin's question because a great deal of progress has been made in this area. The program for consolidation and revision of Northern Territory statutes is running well ahead of schedule and indeed below cost estimates - I am sure all honourable members will be pleased to hear - with the reprints. I believe that, at the present time, the Legislative Draftsman is within 20 acts of completing what had been planned for the reprint of the acts and that they will shortly be starting on the regulations. I am told that a fair estimate of when it will be all finished is within 12 months of starting and that is by about May 1981.

It was anticipated that this would be an enormous task and indeed it is a big task. But, using modern methods and with the assistance of the amending legislation which we passed last year to provide for changes in the procedures - for instance, with side notes - the task has been able to be accelerated. I would certainly like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Legislative Draftsman and his staff and the Government Printer. I am sure that all honourable members and indeed the community itself will be pleased to have these reprints.

Outpatients Clinic at Casuarina Hospital

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Does he have an answer for me this morning to the question I asked him yesterday about Outpatients services at Casuarina Hospital?

ANSWER

It is my intention to answer the honourable member for Arnhem and the points of the honourable member for Nightcliff tomorrow.

Italian Earthquake

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise what action the Northern Territory government will take to assist victims of the recent Italian earthquake?

ANSWER

I am sure that all honourable members and everyone in the Northern Territory community has been shocked by the recent disaster in the south of Italy which has resulted in very grave loss of life. The timing of a disaster such as this could not have been worse with the onset of winter. I understand that an Australian appeal has been established by the leader of the Italian community here and the Prime Minister has agreed to be patron of the appeal. The Commonwealth government has also announced that it will make an immediate allocation of \$500,000 to the appeal. In addition, it has agreed to match dollar-for-dollar funds contributed by the states and the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory government will subscribe \$5,000 to assist the victims of the earthquake disaster. I would ask that all citizens of the Northern Territory support the government by adding their own contributions to the appeal.

When one goes around the Territory, the contributions that have been made to this place by the hard work of the many Italian citizens who come to Australia and become good Australian citizens is obvious. They have brought their culture to us and some of their way of life which I think has added very greatly to our way of life since immigration commenced in a serious way after the second world war. In order to make arrangements for the proper collection of contributions, I have contacted the Lord Mayor of Darwin and the Mayors of Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs and the Chairman of the Nhulunbuy Corporation. All have agreed to support the appeal and to act as collection centres for donations. They will also provide receipts for donations received and the Commonwealth government has agreed that donations to the appeal will be treated as deductible for taxation purposes. I urge all Territorians to give generously.

Supreme Court Building

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise as to the status of the proposed extensions to the Supreme Court building in Darwin and at what stage is the design or construction at present?

ANSWER

I have asked my department to provide me with that information. When I receive it, I will provide it to the honourable member.

Sattler Airstrip

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Why are the marshalling yards being established at the southern end of the Sattler airstrip at the 22-mile and will they be used for public or private purposes for industrial material transshipment or primary production transshipment?

ANSWER

Investigations are being made to provide some trucking and storage facilities south of Berrimah. At this stage, it is only an investigation. When I have more information, I will provide it to the honourable member.

NT Ombudsman

Mr ISAACS to TREASURER

Will the Treasurer advise why he refused permission, while he was Acting Chief Minister, to the Northern Territory Ombudsman to attend the International Conference of Ombudsmen in Israel earlier this year?

ANSWER

As Acting Chief Minister, I received recommendations on this question from the Overseas Visits Committee which recommended that the trip not be approved. I endorsed that recommendation.

Health Department Finance for Patients Transferred Interstate

Mr VALE to MINISTER for HEALTH

Does the Department of Health pick up the entire medical bill for Northern Territory patients transferred interstate on the recommendations of the Northern Territory health authorities and, if not, what figure is set as the upper limit of these costs?

ANSWER

I believe that the department does pay all the medical expenses. However, in relation to transport costs, there has been traditionally and there will continue to be a contribution of \$40 from the patient flying interstate. In some circumstances, it is necessary for patients to have someone accompany them from the department and, in that event, there is a \$40 contribution also. The practice was established back in the days when it was 20 pounds. I distinctly remember this from the time my family flew out of Tennant Creek. The \$40 is a contribution towards offsetting the airfares which cost \$300 or \$400 for a return fare. I think that it is very reasonable.

Land-backed Wharf

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it a fact that the design of the new land-backed wharf is being reviewed because the wharf has been found to be too small? If so, will the redesign delay the completion of the project and by how long?

ANSWER

To my knowledge, there are always reviews being carried out to upgrade facilities. However, I am unaware of any review being carried out regarding that particular construction.

Inquiry into Performing Arts

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In October 1979 an inquiry was announced into the performing arts in the Northern Territory and appointments were subsequently made of members to that committee. Why have they never met?

ANSWER

I will have to seek information on this particular matter and provide it to the honourable member during the course of this sittings.

Upgrading of Housing Commission Houses

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has the program to upgrade Housing Commission houses to cyclone standard been completed?

ANSWER

The program to upgrade all Housing Commission rental and sale accommodation-houses and flats-up to cyclone standard has been concluded. Nonetheless, in light of new engineering information, certain weaknesses have been discovered. An engineering review is now taking place in respect of the pre-cyclone design of Housing Commission houses which are viewed to be satisfactory but, nonetheless, if a cyclone of the intensity of Tracy occurred again, there may be some risk in respect of some of the older Housing Commission houses. It is an on-going process. The commission is anxious to complete the upgrading of these houses to the highest affordable standards. It is one of those programs which one could say has no time limit.

Crocodile Attacks in Nhulunbuy

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

What is being done to protect Nhulunbuy residents from crocodile attacks beyond providing signs which are rapidly being souvenired?

ANSWER

It is a matter of regret to hear that these signs are being souvenired because any person who removes a sign of that type which gives warning to people who might be proposing to enter water which may be inhabited by crocodiles is really doing a very grave disservice to his neighbours in what is a fairly small community. I am sorry to hear that. If the honourable member for Nhulunbuy can advise me urgently, I will see that the signs are replaced by the Conservation Commission without delay.

Aside from that, the honourable member for Nhulunbuy would be aware - I think I have written to him - that Australia is party to an international treaty in relation to the protection of certain endangered species. It was certainly argued correctly at the time when Australia adhered to this treaty that the salt water crocodile was an endangered species. It now appears that the salt water crocodile may have regenerated to a stage in the Northern Territory where the position should reconsidered. In any event, the Northern Territory has taken steps through the Council of Nature Conservation Ministers

to have the situation reconsidered in respect of the salt water crocodile in the Northern Territory. We certainly do not go so far as to have it declared open season on salt water crocodiles or even to get to the stage where they may be hunted. But we are endeavouring to get them from one schedule which prohibits any dealings with them at all onto another schedule which will enable us to trap them and keep them in captivity. In anticipation of our success in this area, which we must anticipate because it is becoming obvious that action must be taken in certain areas, we have authorised the trapping of crocodiles in the Nhulunbuy area where we receive reports that they could present a danger to human beings. If the member for Nhulunbuy receives reports that crocodiles are menacing popular bathing areas, the Director of Conservation would be happy to hear from him and attempts will be made to trap those crocodiles.

Department of Primary Production

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Is it a deliberate policy of the Northern Territory government to run down the activities of the Department of Primary Production especially in areas of research and experimentation in favour of pilot farms on private properties and, if so, will he explain the thinking behind this policy?

ANSWER

I thought the policy was quite clearly outlined last week. It is not the government's intention to run down the research stations in favour of establishing project farms on private land.

Width of Assembly Tables

Mr HARRIS to SPEAKER

I am continually buffeted from post to table during sittings by staff of the Assembly and also by members. Would you please examine the possibility of having the width of my table reduced?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

Architectural Consultants to Department of Transport and Works

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What was the criterion for the selection of 2 private architects in Darwin to act as consultants to his department in preparing design work for the extension to the Supreme Court building? Is it a fact that one of those architects is not registered as an architect in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

It is true that officers on contract to the department did travel to a number of Australian cities in 1979 in relation to the Supreme Court building project. However, these officers were not contracted as architects but as draftsmen. They visited Perth, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Townsville. These cities were selected because court houses had either been recently constructed or were being constructed there. The purpose of the travel was to collate information on court houses to be used in developing the designing.

brief. Such visits are very common in the design stage of major one-off buildings. Indeed, their travel was exactly the same as that undertaken by the local architects in conjunction with the design of the museum and art gallery. It is true that one of the officers at that stage was not registered as an architect in the Northern Territory for the simple reason he was engaged as a draftsman.

Guidelines for Subsidy to Youth Centres

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Are the guidelines for the 3-to-1 subsidy for youth centres available and, if so, what are they in outline?

ANSWER

Guidelines for the government's announced policy of providing 3-to-1 subsidies for youth centres in the Northern Territory have not yet reached me. I understand that I will receive them this week. We have not made any grants in this field to date. However, there are sums available under this scheme and they will be used this year. As soon as guidelines are approved, I will ensure that the honourable member for Alice Springs receives a copy.

Aboriginal Essential Services Program

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Does he agree with the Secretary of the Department of Health that the priority given to the upgrading of the airstrips to Metroliner standard has been detrimental to the main thrust of the Aboriginal essential services program?

ANSWER

I ask him to place the question on notice and I shall write to him about it.

Arts Advisory Council

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Some time ago his predecessor announced the establishment of an arts advisory council in the Northern Territory and applications for membership were invited. When will he announce to the public the functions of that council and the persons who have been appointed to it?

ANSWER

This matter has now been with me for some time along with a raft of others which have yet to be considered in some detail. I will make announcements in due course.

TIO Building Alice Springs

Mr VALE to TREASURER

Can he advise the estimated completion date for the TIO building in Alice Springs? Can he also advise me whether the TIO proposes to sublet part of that building to other tenants?

ANSWER

The Territory Insurance Office is building an office block in Alice Springs as part of its investment of funds within the Territory. The Alice Springs building will be completed about March 1981. In line with TIO's investment policy, it will rent about 75% of that building to other parties in order to make the TIO more attractive and viable and build up the assets required for backing insurance policies in the Territory.

Architectural Consultants to Department of Transport and Works

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What was the criterion upon which the 2 architects were appointed as consultants, albeit as draftsmen, to his department for design work on the Supreme Court building?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

Able Transport Pty Ltd

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the relationship between a company called Able Transport Pty Ltd which operates in Alice Springs and the Department of Transport and Works in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

Flagstaff House Site

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Has a decision been made yet on the future use of the area of land previously occupied by Flagstaff House at the end of Myilly Terrace?

ANSWER

I understand the land is currently held by the Conservation Commission. I also believe that the Conservation Commission has approached the Darwin City Corporation which is interested in taking over maintenance of the land. I am not sure whether that has taken place yet but I can certainly find out.

Douglas-Daly Development Project

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

In the case of the Douglas-Daly development project, who owns the land which will be acquired to start the project farms and for how much is the land being purchased? How will the Douglas-Daly farm project settlers be selected?

ANSWER

Some of the Douglas-Daly project land is on Douglas Station. Other parts

of the land that we are currently looking at are on Ooloo Station. I understand that the chairman of the authority has approached the owners of the land as to their requirements, the exact boundaries and the negotiable price. Valuations are being conducted on both sides - on the part of the private owners and on our part through the government valuers. Prices have not been established. I do not believe the specifications for settlers have finally been established. I do believe that very attractive specifications will have to be drawn to get the right sorts of farmers into the project farms. That will be distinct from stage 2 where different criteria will be used. But, in the first stage, if you are to attract people who are commercially successful in farming, the conditions would have to be very attractive indeed.

Site of the Old Hartley Street School

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Have titles to the blocks in Alice Springs numbers 68 and 69 Hartley Street, which is the site of the old Hartley Street School, been vested in the Alice Springs town council?

ANSWER

The short answer to the question is not yet. The land in question has been applied for by the Alice Springs town council for the purpose of car parking and the National Trust has also applied for the old Hartley Street School which was the first school built in that region and is of quite significant historical value. The Alice Springs town council has been authorised by myself to proceed with the construction of the car-park in order to save time and money. The actual method of tenure in the land is being worked out between the National Trust, the Alice Springs town council and the Department of Community Development which has responsibilities in each of those matters. Immediately the best form of tenure is arrived at, I would anticipate issuing an appropriate lease.

Education Advisory Council

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has he met yet with his education advisory council? Could he advise the Assembly what matters are currently under consideration by the council?

ANSWER

I certainly would not be in a position to advise the honourable member of the details of agenda items which are before the council. The answer to the first part of the question is next week. I am quite happy to send a copy of the agenda to the honourable member so that he will be informed as to exactly what they are considering.

Location of Proposed Rice Farms

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Will the proposed rice farms be located solely on the Adelaide River or will they occupy the whole or part of the Marrakai Plains?

ANSWER

The rice farming part of the first stage is experimental. Initially, it

will be confined in the areas surrounding the upper Adelaide River. I do not know that it will ever get to the Marrakai Plains but it could at a later time.

Architectural Consultants to Department of Transport and Works

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Regarding the design work produced by the 2 consultants in his department, is it a fact that all designs produced have been scrapped?

ANSWER

I would ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

Policy on National Testing Program

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

In view of public statements and some recent controversy on the question of national testing for school children, could he advise the Assembly what his policy is on the national testing program?

ANSWER

I believe the program which was launched by the Australian Council of Research and Education and which is under the auspices of the Australian Education Council was a very worthwhile program. Quite frankly, I fully support it. I always have and I believe I always will. Further, I believe in a mix of external and internal testing of our students within our own school system. As the honourable member for Nightcliff has pointed out, we are all accountable to the consuming public for our educational services. Unless we monitor ourselves and unless we are willing to come clean with the public which pays the money to provide a very expensive educational system, then I think we are failing in our duty. To my mind, there are only 2 ways of doing it. Firstly, you let schools know exactly what is required of them within the core subject areas and then you vet the product. You examine what you have done and what you have achieved. I am a firm believer in testing as a vehicle of finding out how we are getting on, where we are failing and what socio-economic areas in relation to schools are having difficulties so that we can take corrective action on behalf of the taxpayer, the parents and the employers who are so vitally concerned that the delivery of education is of the highest possible standard. I would say that this information, nonetheless, must be very carefully used. It is very easy to draw the wrong comparisons between school and school and district and district. The information should be used for the guidance of the educational system to improve itself. Provided it does not discriminate between socio-economic areas and geographic areas such as to cast the wrong reflections upon individual schools, then this information in my view ought to be made available to the public with that very firm proviso. The other thing is that we simply must get ourselves out of this position where employers are themselves examining students when they are coming out of our schools. It is rampant. The fact of the matter is that employers do not trust us. It is about time we did something about regaining that trust.

Bilingual Education Program

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Can he advise the Assembly of the current status of the department's

investigation into the effectiveness of the bilingual education program?

ANSWER

I am not exactly certain when the report of the task force which is examining the success or otherwise of the bilingual program will be made available to me. At the risk of being proven wrong later, all the indications are that it is a highly worthwhile program.

Crops in Adelaide River Area

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

When has he publicly stated that crops other than rice will be grown on the upper Adelaide River?

ANSWER

I am not so sure that I as minister have publicly made that statement. I do believe that that statement was made on page 80 of the interim Lapidge Report.

Solar Units in Reserves

Mr HARRIS to CHIEF MINISTER

The Conservation Commission has set up solar power units in some southern parks and reserves in the Northern Territory. Will this program be extended to include parks and reserves in the northern parts of the Territory as well?

ANSWER

The policy of the Conservation Commission - and this policy is borne out in practice unlike that of some other instrumentalities - is to avail itself as far as possible of natural sources of energy and to use construction methods which avail themselves of the surrounding environment. The Conservation Commission has built a number of low-energy houses. I understand that the hot water systems at the Katherine Gorge National Park are solar systems. I cannot be sure of that. Certainly, it is the policy of the commission to conserve energy as much as possible. I am certain that I can give an undertaking that, when maintenance is undertaken and any systems are capable of being replaced by low-energy systems, that will be done.

Nhulunbuy Hospital

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for HEALTH

Why was no allocation made in the budget to convert the accommodation blocks at Nhulunbuy Hospital to bedsitters and self-contained flats as has happened and is continuing to happen in other hospitals in the Northern Territory.

ANSWER

I believe there was an allocation of \$500,000 to convert the old nurses quarters in Alice Springs to 2 and 3 bedroom units for the staff by knocking the walls out of the old nurses quarters and generally redesigning the building. This will be done because, in their present state, they are not acceptable quarters for nurses or anybody else. If the department presents such

conditions to people, they take the option of living off campus which is not always in the interest of the staff or the department.

So far as Nhulunbuy is concerned, a proposal has been considered to turn the accommodation into larger units by knocking out walls to make them 2 and 3 bedroom units. I understand that money is not the problem. The design of the building precludes simply knocking a wall out to make the building bigger because plumbing and electrical reticulation has to be considered. I will give a detailed paper to the honourable member on the reasons why this particular exercise was not continued at Gove Hospital.

ATEC Courses at Batchelor

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Has a decision been taken by the minister as to the admission numbers at the ATEC courses in Batchelor for next year?

ANSWER

The number of students would be subject to budgetary considerations. As I said yesterday in the budget debate, the government is anxious to expand the activities of Aboriginal teacher education to the maximum extent possible given the resources available to it. There is also the limiting factor of space until such time as Batchelor stage 2 is completed. The honourable member is quite at liberty to phone the appropriate people in the Department of Education about a simple matter like this. I cannot give a definitive answer. If he wishes me to track down the information, I am more than happy to do so.

Energy and Industrial Crops

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Are any officers of the Department of Primary Production currently working on energy crops and other industrial crops in a research capacity and, if so, what crops are they?

ANSWER

The answer is no.

Animal Pound at Berrimah

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Can he yet indicate the site of the animal pound which is to be situated in the Berrimah area?

ANSWER

As I indicated to the member for Tiwi yesterday, the location of the rubbish dump has been resolved. I am not certain about the exact location of any proposed pound. I will undertake to obtain the information and personally advise both honourable members during the course of the day.

Central Australian Community College Hospitality Course

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Could he advise the Assembly of the current status of the hospitality courses in Alice Springs?

ANSWER

The Director of TAFE and my ministerial officer will be in Alice Springs talking to the people who are currently housed in Gillen House on Monday next. In conjunction with the Community College of Central Australia Council, they will make final decisions, hopefully, during the course of that day.

Stott Terrace Intersection

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise whether or not the government will construct an underpass or an overpass either under or over the railway line at the Stott Terrace Railway Terrace intersection and, if so, when will construction commence?

ANSWER

I ask the member to put the question on notice.

Trachoma Program

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

In view of his statement the other day about prophylactic measures that are being taken in regard to child trachoma sufferers, could he advise the Assembly what is being done for adult sufferers?

ANSWER

I shall take that as a question on notice and write to the honourable member about it because a fair amount of detail is involved.

Closed Season on Ducks and Geese

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Is he considering making any recommendations to Cabinet regarding the timing of the closed season on ducks and geese given the fact that the harvesting of the proposed rice crop will coincide with the closed season for magpie geese?

ANSWER

I was not proposing to make any such recommendation at this stage. Perhaps a working group consisting of the honourable members for Arnhem, Nightcliff and Victoria River could come up with a solution to this problem.

Air Services to Aboriginal Communities

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Will he give a guarantee that Northern Airlines services to Snake Bay, Garden Point, Croker Island and Goulburn Island will be continued after March 1981?

ANSWER

I cannot give a firm guarantee. All I can do is to ensure that Northern Airlines will carry out the services provided that the routes are economical. I cannot give a guarantee to the honourable member if the routes are not economical.

Air Services to Aboriginal Communities

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What arrangements will be made to ensure the maintenance of air services to Snake Bay, Croker Island, Garden Point and Goulburn Island?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable member to place the question on notice.

Criminal Code

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

What is the present position of the criminal code?

ANSWER

I am pleased the the honourable member for Tiwi asked me this question because I did want to say something on this before the Assembly rose today. I have said in this Assembly previously that I had hoped that we would be in a position to table for discussion a criminal code during the course of these sittings. I think it has been made available at least to the Leader of the Opposition. A substantial portion of the code itself has been prepared but it is still a long way from being in a state of preparation to enable it to be tabled at this sittings. This has been caused unfortunately by a draftsman's illness and by draftsmen leaving the service. Additional draftsmen have to be recruited. Only last week the draftsman actually having charge of the preparation of the code unfortunately contracted a serious illness, meningitis. Therefore, I will not be in a position to table the criminal code at this sittings. I certainly hope to be able to table the code at the first sittings next year.

Government Hostels

Ms O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What arrangements have been made for the long-term management of the hostels now owned by the Northern Territory government, formerly the Commonwealth Hostels, and for which the interim 12-months management period by Commonwealth Accommodation and Catering Services will soon expire?

ANSWER

The existing contract has been extended for 12 months with only marginal variations. The exception to that will be the arrangements in relation to Gillen House in Alice Springs which will become a school of hospitality and catering. If this answer is not completely accurate, I will write to the honourable member.

Stuart Highway Reconstruction Alice Springs

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise when this government proposes to start reconstruction of the Stuart Highway along the old Railway Terrace to the Smith Street intersection?

ANSWER

This project has no status. However it is included in Transport and Works 1981-82 draft works proposals. It is the present intention to call tenders towards the middle of 1982.

Tenders for New Primary Schools

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

How does he propose to call tenders for the construction of the 3 new primary schools, Karama, Leanyer and Humpty Doo? Will it be design and construct or the more normal method of tendering?

ANSWER

This is subject to discussions between the Chief Minister, myself and the permanent head of the Department of Transport and Works. When I am in a position to provide her with that information, I will do so.

Casuarina Hospital Ophthalmologist

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for HEALTH

Why weren't all the applicants for the position of specialist ophthalmologist at Casuarina Hospital interviewed after applications were called for last May? I understand a decision has been taken on this position.

ANSWER

I would have to take advice from the secretary of the department on that particular matter because the appointment of people to positions like that is his prerogative. I do not think that it is the rule that every applicant is interviewed. As a rule, the departments select a short list and interview from that. I will obtain the information and write to the honourable member.

Rapid Creek Pre-school

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is he aware that a drain connected to the sand pit at the Rapid Creek

Pre-school is unserviceable and is presenting a possible health hazard? Could he ask his officers to investigate the matter to ensure the speedy rectification of the blockage?

ANSWER

I am not aware of the matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition. If what he says is true, it shall be fixed forthwith.

Metroliners

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

My question relates to a statement made on 5 November by the General Manager of Northern Airlines referring to the withdrawal of Metroliners from gravel strips for safety reasons. Is it true that those aircraft are to be returned to the Top End to be re-operated on gravel strips?

ANSWER

I have not had an application from Northern Airlines regarding the re-introduction of the Metroliners in the Top End. It was indicated by the Northern Territory government in the budget debate that there would be major upgrading of remote area strips. However, because of the withdrawal of Northern Airlines Metroliners, the Treasury and my department are carrying out further investigations into which airstrips will be upgraded. Northern Airlines have brought back the Heron which is more suitable to the Top End operation than the Metroliner.

Means Test for Housing Commission Accommodation

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

The minister has indicated on previous occasions that no means test will be required to obtain Housing Commission accommodation for some time. Is he able to indicate a period of time before means testing for this purpose is likely to be introduced.

ANSWER

There are no plans whatsoever to introduce a means testing system for Housing Commission accommodation. I do not intend to address myself to that question at all. I must qualify that with a reminder to the honourable member that, in order to obtain the low-interest money from the Commonwealth, we are somewhat bound by the conditions of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and the presence of the Northern Territory at the Conference of Housing Ministers is essential in order that we make sure that the Commonwealth and the states are fully aware of our view. I know of no move within the Commonwealth-State Housing Minister forum to introduce mandatory means testing nor do I know of any such initiative on behalf of the Commonwealth. It is not really a definitive answer to the question but certainly we are not contemplating it.

Qantas Flights from Darwin

Ms D'ROZARIO to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In view of the announcement this morning by the honourable federal Minister for Transport that Qantas will be seeking to operate on long-haul

domestic routes, will the minister renew his representations to the federal minister that Northern Territory passengers ought to be carried on international flight segments between Darwin and Melbourne and Darwin and Sydney?

ANSWER

Yes.

Game Meat for Export

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the Conservation Commission any plans to cooperate with private operators in harvesting game meat for export to European countries?

ANSWER

I do not know of any plans in the abstract of the Conservation Commission for cooperation with private operators in the taking of game meat for export to European countries. It is my recollection that the Conservation Commission has done this in the past and I assume that it would, where necessary, do it in the future.

Freeze on Unalienated Crown Land

Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Did he write to the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs around November 1978 saying inter alia with regard to the development of unalienated Crown land: 'The continuation of the freeze on the development of unalienated Crown land for a period of 2 years from 29 August 1978 will apply only to traditional land claims when they have been lodged with and accepted by the Aboriginal Land Commissioner?' Is the freeze still applicable and, if so, how long is it intended to maintain the freeze?

ANSWER

I could not answer the first part of the honourable Leader of the Opposition's question. If I may say so, I think it is a little unfair to ask me without any notice whatsoever whether I did on such and such a day 2 years ago write such and such a letter in those precise terms. Therefore, if the honourable Leader of the Opposition wants an answer to that question I would ask that he place the question on notice. In answer to the second part of his question as to whether the land freeze is still in operation, it is not so far as I am aware because I think it expired some time in August.

Stott Terrace Intersection

Mr VALE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he advise whether the government proposes to construct an overpass or an underpass at the Stott Terrace and Railway Terrace intersection.

ANSWER

The government intends to construct an AT grade signalised intersection at Stott Terrace and Railway Terrace intersection. An overpass is considered

to be a future possibility. An alternative case for significant change to the criteria for the government's decision to proceed with flat bed crossing includes current and proposed railway movements as indicated by the Australian National Railway and the results of traffic monitoring in the affected areas.

Dhupuma College Demountables

Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will the Education Department make available to community groups and sporting organisations demountables left over at Dhupuma College in much the same way as the Health Department made available demountables at the Darwin Hospital?

ANSWER

The honourable member for Arnhem raised this matter with me very briefly last night and he pointed out the types of community groups, in his view, that could benefit from such an arrangement. I will have inquiries made as to the suitability of any existing buildings for community purposes on whatever arrangements can be entered into. I would point out that one is more likely to fall through the floor of most of the buildings over there rather than to get any use out of them.

Berrimah Experimental Farm

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

Has the minister or the Northern Territory government called for or carried out any investigations into land at Berrimah Experimental Farm for other than its present use and, if so, what other possible uses for the land are envisaged?

ANSWER

I ask the gentleman to place the question on notice.

Subdivisions by Private Developers

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What moneys are saved by the government in getting land subdivided by private developers?

ANSWER

In order to do justice to the question, one would have to have a complete set of figures. It runs into quite significant amounts of money. We are not only looking at savings to the government but we are also looking at a far more expeditious method of producing land. I think anyone who has seen what is happening out in the northern suburbs - and doubtless will see in Alice Springs - will realise that private enterprise, being of the nature it is, is able to perform clearly far better than governments can - and that is governments plural. It is not just a matter of saving money. I do not have the actual figures on me. As I say, you would have to take subdivisions one by one. Taking Sadadeen stage 1, for example, the saving from memory is around \$2.4m. I think the honourable member could scale his thinking across similar subdivisions around the Territory and get a picture accordingly.

Sale of Fireworks

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is he yet in a position to indicate whether fireworks will be sold on 1 July and 5 November next year? I indicate to the honourable gentleman that shopkeepers stocking these fireworks have to order them 6 months in advance?

ANSWER

I advised the Assembly the other day that I had not addressed myself to the question and I certainly will not be doing so for at least a couple more weeks. I advise the honourable member that we will take a decision before Christmas on the matter and that would be ample time for shopkeepers to be able to order their stocks. Since I have spent some time in business, I am aware that there is a lead time but I think the honourable member is going a bit far to say that there is a 6-month lead time involved in the purchase of this material.

Aerial Medical Services at Gove

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Has there been any downgrading of the Aerial Medical Services at Gove as a result of the transfer of the operations from TAA to Northern Airlines?

ANSWER

I do not accept that there has been any downgrading in the operation of Aerial Medical Services since the transfer from TAA to Northern Airlines. This is particularly so in Gove where we have been able to place a second Nomad on a full time basis for the region. The difficulties of keeping the Nomad in the air are immense and the capacity to have a second one on the ground as a back-up is most helpful to the people working in the field. I cannot accept the honourable member's proposition.

Sittings of the Assembly in 1981

Mr HARRIS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Is the minister able to give the Assembly information on the sitting dates for next year?

ANSWER

The date for next year's sittings have been cleared by Mr Speaker in accordance with the usual arrangement. These dates, of course are subject to the usual sessional order which we have for variation and also to the exigencies of workload which may be presented to this place. The first sittings next year will be on 24, 25 and 26 February and 3, 4 and 5 March; then 26, 27 and 28 May and 2, 3 and 4 June; 11, 12, 13, 18, 19 and 20 August; and then 10, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 19 November.

Crops in Adelaide River Area

Mr DOOLAN to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

What staff is currently available for research and development of crops

which will be complementary to the rice production scheme on the Adelaide River?

ANSWER

I ask the honourable gentleman to place his question on notice.

Home Building Societies

Mrs O'NEIL to TREASURER

I understand that existing home building societies do not lend money for homes outside town boundaries in the Northern Territory. Perhaps they cannot. In negotiations with other organisations now seeking to be registered as building societies in the Northern Territory, will the government attempt to ensure that they can provide finance to Territorians for homes outside town boundaries?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the operations of the existing and any proposed new building societies in the Northern Territory are limited by legislation. Unfortunately, we are operating under an old South Australian act. It is a most unacceptable situation and the government has in the pipeline a new building societies act which will be prepared as soon as resources permit. In the meantime, the companies which may seek to register under the act can only be bound by those requirements. However, in any other areas of general influence that we may have on new building societies in the Northern Territory, we will certainly be putting the government's general views about the treatment of Territorians and the flow of funds.

Yulara Tourist Village

Mr VALE to CHIEF MINISTER

Can he advise what stage the development of the Yulara Village has reached?

ANSWER

Yulara Village is quite well advanced in terms of planning and there is indeed a considerable amount of work being done on the ground. Three and a half million dollars is allocated this year towards infrastructure at Yulara Tourist Village. I am aware that a contract has been let for the construction of a new airport terminal at the new airstrip which is already in service at Yulara and is capable of taking jet aircraft. Roads are being constructed and water supply is being arranged. I understand the provision of electricity for the village is in hand with the Northern Territory Electricity Commission. The planning of the village and the implementation of planning decisions is in the hands of an ad hoc committee, the Yulara Tourist Village Planning Committee. This is chaired by Mr Stolz and members of the committee are from interested departments such as Transport and Works, the Tourist Commission, NTEC and so on. The committee answers to the Director of Conservation. The Conservation Commission has the ultimate responsibility for the satisfactory construction of the village. At the same time, honourable members would be aware that advertisements were placed world wide for expressions of interest in erecting hotels and providing other amenities for visitors to the village. I understand that a considerable number of expressions of interest were received and these have been reviewed by the committee. No

recommendations have come to me at this stage from the Director of Conservation or the committee. I do believe, however, that some finality in that respect is expected at least within the next 4 to 6 weeks.

Casuarina Hospital

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Will he be making a statement to the Assembly today on the services available to the public at Casuarina Hospital and the other health centres in Darwin? If so, will he be ensuring that the detail of that statement is prominently published?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is my intention to deal with this particular issue during the adjournment debate this afternoon. I will cover the aspects raised by several members in the Assembly the other day.

Campbell Committee of Inquiry into Finance

Ms D'ROZARIO to TREASURER

Did the Treasury make a submission to the Campbell Committee of Inquiry into the Banking and Finance Industry?

ANSWER

I did have some discussions with officers of the Treasury department on the very nature of the inquiry and what it sought to establish. I cannot advise the honourable member whether Treasury actually forwarded a written submission to the Campbell inquiry. We did not have people appear there. I am sure of that.

Water Pressure at Howard Springs

Mrs PADGHAM-PURICH to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What is the reason for the extremely low water pressure out of the taps at Howard Springs which resulted in one case of very muddy water yesterday?

ANSWER

I do not know. However, I believe the reconstruction and the upgrading of the water mains between the 19-mile and the Darwin area could have some bearing on the problem. I will undertake to provide the honourable member with that information at a later hour.

Registration of Territory Seamen

Mrs LAWRIE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it the government's intention to take over from the Commonwealth the examination and issue of tickets of competency for Territorial seamen engaged in the coastal trade?

ANSWER

At this stage of the development, no.

Complaint of Police Harassment

Mr LEO to CHIEF MINISTER

My question relates to a letter to the editor, the Star newspaper reported on 26 November on a complaint of complete police harassment of a lady who was being detained. Is he aware of this supposed incident and, if there is any substance to the allegations, will he instigate an investigation?

ANSWER

This is one of those situations one finds oneself in all too frequently. In answering this question, I will turn to a document I received in the mail not so long ago. I think it was called 'Wimmen Behind Bars' - 'women' spelt in a phonetic sort of way. In that document there were very grave allegations made against police officers and yet no complaint had been received by the police. To the best of my recollection, no complaint had been received by the Ombudsman. This is exactly similar to the case the honourable member for Nhulunbuy has raised. When I noticed this letter in the Star newspaper yesterday, I caused inquiries to be made. It transpires that neither the police nor the Ombudsman have any record of any complaint being received in respect of this matter. The first contact that I have had is a phone call this morning from a person purporting to represent the Australian Marijuana Party who wished to see me today. All I can say is that, were I to see this person, I would simply refer him to the Ombudsman. I would suggest that the complainant go to see the Ombudsman herself. Quite frankly, I think it is one of those sorts of harassments that our police force is having to put up with all the time. These people go to the press, they try to create a sensation and they have not even availed themselves of the avenues that are already open to provide for the investigation of such complaints.

Alice Springs Casino

Mr D.W. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Could he please advise on the opening date of the Alice Springs casino?

ANSWER

The hotel-casino complex in Alice Springs which is being built by Federal Hotels is currently scheduled to be completed about July next year. I understand the company is making every endeavour to try to open in June if it possibly can.

Taxation of Subsidised Housing

Mr B. COLLINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the Chief Minister received any response from the federal government to his communications on the question of taxation of subsidised housing in the Northern Territory and, if so, what were the details?

ANSWER

I cannot provide any answer for the honourable member for Arnhem at the present time. You will appreciate that I am still becoming acquainted with up-to-date details of various problems that are on my desk. I will look into this matter and I will certainly provide the honourable member for Arnhem with details as soon as I possibly can.

Walker Report on NT University

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Will he make available copies of the Walker report on the proposed Northern Territory university to the members of this Assembly?

ANSWER

Yes.

Council Bylaws on Litter Legislation

Mr VALE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Do councils outside of Darwin which do not have bylaws need such laws to appoint officers or inspectors under the litter legislation passed by this Assembly?

ANSWER

Yes, councils do have to have bylaws before inspectors of those councils automatically become litter inspectors under the Litter Act. However, there are other ways that councils without bylaws can have their inspectors enforce the provisions of the Litter Act. One of them is to ask the minister responsible for the Litter Act to appoint persons to be inspectors under the Litter Act. Other than that, councils or council inspectors have a right under section 6 of the Litter Act to institute action under the Litter Act against an offender. Indeed, any citizen in the Northern Territory has the right to institute action under that section. Any corporation which professes that its hands are tied in implementing the Litter Act because it does not have bylaws has 2 options open to it: adopt some bylaws or take another course of action.

Child Welfare Bill

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Will the new Child Welfare Bill be ready for introduction into the Assembly at its next sittings in February 1981?

ANSWER

I cannot guarantee that it will be introduced during the next sittings but it will certainly be introduced as soon as it can be prepared and approved.

Loveridge Report

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION

Has he yet received the final section of the Loveridge Report? If not, when does he expect to receive it?

ANSWER

I do not believe that the final section is with us just yet. I would have to ascertain progress. I understand that Des Loveridge has been ill for

some time and I will try and let the honourable member know later.

Furnace at Waste Water Treatment Plant

Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Can he explain to the Assembly why the furnace at the Darwin waste water treatment plant has operated for only 3,000 hours in the last 3 years?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I anticipated a question from the honourable member for Fannie Bay in light of a press release that she issued a couple of weeks ago. To allay any fears that the honourable member may have, I will give her information from a briefing note that I received regarding the problem. There was an overtime ban imposed a couple of weeks ago and that was withdrawn within a couple of days. The unions and the department are discussing that particular problem now. Overtime bans in themselves do not automatically lead to sewage bypassing the plants. This only occurs when a ban coincides with a heavy through-put. It is a fact of life that, during the wet season, an amount of sewage does bypass the plant as rainwater penetrates the sewerage system.

The honourable member had been reported as alleging that the furnace at the plant is not being used. This furnace was designed to decarbonise sludge which is treated sewage. Instead of burning sludge, the department has been experimenting in using it and effluent for other purposes in line with the recycling approach. For instance, the department is presently placing sludge near the treatment plant and using it as fill. In fact, we have had approaches from various sources who have indicated that they would like to use treated sludge and effluent as some form of fertiliser or conditioner. There is still work to be done in this area before the effluent can be readily used but I believe that search for these alternative uses is commendable. There are no mechanical problems with the furnace. The critical point that I wish to make is that the effluent and sludge are already treated and are chemically safe. They are not harmful. The treatment plant was inherited from the Commonwealth. The concept is not a good one and definitely treatment plants are inferior to sewage ponds. One inherent problem is that the outlet pipe is exposed during low tide. While this is an undesirable feature, the effluent is chemically safe and the cost to extend the outlet would be quite significant.

Nhulunbuy Library

Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Could he advise the details of the proposed operation of the combined Nhulunbuy High School Community Library? I would like such details as whether it is intended to operate the library for the community during school hours.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it was intended to do so. It would seem to me to be a rather poor sort of public library function if it was only available to the public during other than school hours. I would have to check the information with the two departments responsible. Either my colleague or myself will write to the honourable member with details.

Darwin Speedway

Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What discussions have been held between the government, the Corporation of the City of Darwin and NTRDA regarding the moving of the speedway as quickly as possible to its right and proper locality?

ANSWER

It is almost impossible to answer the question because the proposal to move the speedway from Bagot Park, where it has been causing some annoyance, has been on and off since cyclone Tracy. I was involved in those days when we attempted to get on committees of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and have some involvement. I have discussed this matter with members of the city council and certainly members of the Motor Sports Council which has been formed to hold the head lease at Hidden Valley.

The actual question of the period of time that the speedway is allowed to operate at Bagot Park is entirely in the hands of local government. Recently, they met with members of the NTRDA and decided to extend the period for another year. I understand that those decisions were taken without any consultation with the Northern Territory government. Of course, they do not have any obligation to consult with us on that question.

Gove House

Mr LEO to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is there any progress on the proposed upgrading of the Housing Commission single persons accommodation in Gove House?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have received some advice quite recently setting out a number of options. Those options are currently under examination by the government and any decision will have to await that consideration.

Notice given on 18 November 1980

Collia Tin Mine

6 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

As a number of people have lost their savings in the Collia tin mine affair,

- (a) what detailed action has been taken by the Department of Mines to settle the matter;
- (b) how much money has been lost by people involved;
- (c) how much did Mr Ken Day receive for the tin he mined from Collia;
- (d) why has he not explained in the Legislative Assembly what action the government has taken;
- (e) did the Department of Law recommend that anybody be charged over the affair and, if so, why was not that recommended action proceeded with;
- (f) was the government's lack of action coloured by the fact that Mr Day was once the head of the Progress Party, whose votes had helped the Country Liberal Party;
- (g) what is now being done about the matter; and
- (h) are police trying to contact the previous leaseholder who disappeared and, if so, do they know in which state he is residing?

Public Housing - Out-of-Turn Allocations

9 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

From August 1, 1979 to August 1980 -

1. How many applications for out-of-turn allocation of public housing have been (a) received, (b) accepted, and (c) rejected?
2. How many applicants whose applications were (a) accepted, or (b) rejected were in receipt of (i) supporting parent's benefit, (ii) unemployment benefit, (iii) other pensions, (iv) one-income families?
3. How many applicants for out-of-turn accommodation were living in (a) caravans, (b) tents, (c) share accommodation, (d) hostels, or were (e) homeless?
4. What steps have been taken by the Housing Commission to assist those in need of accommodation who were rejected for out-of-turn accommodation?
5. If applicants were referred to other community organizations, to whom were they referred?
6. How many applicants were found accommodation directly by efforts of the Housing Commission?

Dhupuma College - Government Expenditure

17 Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. What was the total capital expenditure for Dhupuma College in the financial year 1979-80?
2. What (a) capital items, and (b) their individual costs were purchased for Dhupuma College in the financial year 1979-80?

Dhupuma College - Transfer of Staff

18 Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

What costs were incurred in the transfer of (a) students, (b) staff from Dhupuma College to alternative institutions?

Loans to North Australian Baptist Homes Trust

19 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What were the amounts of the 3 loans made to the North Australian Baptist Homes Trust in relation to hostels in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs?
2. How much has been repaid?
3. Under what terms were these loans "extinguished"?

Loans to Church of England Carpentaria College Inc.

20 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What were the amounts of the 3 loans made to the Church of England, Carpentaria College Inc.?
2. How much was repaid?
3. Under what terms were these loans "extinguished"?

Grants-in-Aid 1980-81

21 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Which community organisations applied for grants-in-aid for 1980-81?
2. Which organisations will receive grants-in-aid in 1980-81?
3. How much will each organisation receive?

Register of Uranium Workers

24 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

Is a register of uranium workers employed in the uranium province being retained by the Northern Territory government for the purpose of subsequent health checks?

Local Government Elections

25 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Is it the intention of the Northern Territory government to require the local government elections during 1981 to be conducted by the Northern Territory Electoral Office?

Nurses Quarters at Darwin Hospital

26 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for HEALTH

1. How many applications have been received for the utilisation of the vacant nurses quarters at the Darwin Hospital?
2. What use is being proposed for the accommodation units there?

Mandorah Road

27 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Can he inform me what timetable is planned for the upgrading and or sealing of the Mandorah Road from Darwin River Dam?
2. What route is the upgraded road going to take?
3. What discussions have been held with traditional Aboriginal owners in the area regarding the siting of the road?

Alice Springs Recreation Lake Site

29 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Further to question No. 23, does the location being considered for a recreation lake in Alice Springs, north of the town in the Todd River, conflict with an Aboriginal sacred site?

Katherine - Appointment of Resident Magistrate

30 Mr MacFARLANE to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

What steps are being taken to appoint a resident magistrate for Katherine?

Library Facilities in Nhulunbuy

31 Mr LEO to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What is his present attitude to Nhulunbuy public library facilities, given recent representations to him by (a) a petition opposing library facility amalgamation signed by more than 600 residents, and (b) a public meeting attended by representatives from the Community Development and Education Departments?

Library Service - Purchase of Books

32 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. What is the total value of books purchased by the Northern Territory Library Service from 1 February to 20 October 1980?
2. Who were the library suppliers or booksellers who supplied the books?
3. Did the Northern Territory Library Service call for tenders for the supply of books?

Allocation of Vehicles to Schools

33 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. On what basis are vehicles allocated to remote schools?
2. Which schools in the Northern Territory have been allocated vehicles for the 1979-80 financial year?
3. Which schools have been allocated but not yet received vehicles?

Teachers in Remote Areas

34 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

Are teachers who have served long periods at remote centres such as

Bamyili and Groote Eylandt given any preference when they wish to return to more favoured centres, or are they simply treated as though they had had a vacation away from Darwin or Alice Springs?

Membership of Planning Authority and Planning Appeals Committee

35 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Who are the members of the Northern Territory Planning Authority and on what dates were they appointed?
2. Who are the members of the Northern Territory Planning Appeals Committee and on what dates were they appointed?

Department of Transport and Works and Telecom Depots in Katherine

36 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Does the government plan to convert to residential use land in Katherine presently used as Department of Transport and Works and Telecom depots?

Housing Commission - Unused Blocks in Katherine

37 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

How many unused blocks of residential land are held by the Northern Territory Housing Commission in Katherine?

ABC Repeater Station in Katherine

38 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Is he aware that the Australian Broadcasting Commission repeater station 8KN occupies prime residential land in Katherine?
2. Has any proposal been put to the Commission to find a suitable alternative site on which to erect its 70 ft high transmission towers?
3. Will the government provide a suitable site away from residential land for the Commission's transmission towers?

Government Assistance to NT Cattlemen

39 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

1. Is it a fact that Top End cattlemen lose more cattle each year through seasonal and pastoral conditions inherent in the area than the Centralian cattlemen lose in droughts?
2. If so, what steps is the government taking to assist Top End cattlemen to overcome these losses?
3. Have Centralian cattlemen presented a case to the government for drought relief and, if so, with what result?
4. Is it a fact that Centralian cattlemen have had 10 good seasons and have received record prices for their cattle during the past 3 years?
5. What steps is the government taking to assist Top End cattlemen to overcome their regional problems caused by low cattle prices and annual nutrition failure?

Prosecutions under Bushfires Act

40 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. How many prosecutions have been instituted under the Bushfires Act during the past 5 years for lighting fires that got out of control and caused damage to pastoral leases or inconvenienced pastoral lessees?
2. In the same period, how many fires were (a) reported, (b) deliberately lit, (c) lit by careless people, and (e) lit by the pastoral lessee inconvenienced by the fire?

Katherine - Prosecutions for Littering

41 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

How many persons have been prosecuted for littering in Katherine during the year ended 31 October 1980?

Airconditioning in Schools

42 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Does his department plan to modify school buildings to enable fans to be used and larger window areas to be opened when airconditioning is not warranted or when airconditioning plants are out of order?
2. Are airconditioners in schools turned off after school each day or over weekends to reduce electricity costs and conserve fuel?

Radio Telephone Communications

43 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Has his attention been drawn to the communication difficulties experienced by the Numbulwar community of 600 Aboriginals, which has to share one radio telephone channel with 9 other subscribers?
2. If so, will he make representations to Telecom and the Federal Minister for Communications in an effort to upgrade radio telephone communications for these people and for the Groote Eylandt, Gove and Katherine people?

Government Assistance for Tradesmen to Visit Remote Areas

44 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What assistance will the government provide to enable electrical, plumbing and building tradesmen and inspectors to visit remote centres such as Borroloola to assist home owners?

Flood Insurance Cover in Katherine

45 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is it a fact that neither the Territory Insurance Office nor other insurers operating in the Territory will provide cover against flood in Katherine?
2. If so, will the government ensure that the Territory Insurance Office provides flood cover at reasonable rates in Katherine until a dam is built above Katherine Gorge to reduce the danger of flooding?

Membership of NTEC

46 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. Who are the members of the Northern Territory Electricity Commission and on what dates were they appointed?
2. If there are any vacancies on the Electricity Commission, when is it proposed that they be filled?

Expenditure by Ministers on Charter Aircraft

47 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

How much has been spent on behalf of each minister for air charter travel within the Northern Territory for the financial year 1979-80?

Public Buildings - Modifications for Handicapped Persons

48 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Given that 1981 is to be the Year of the Disabled Person, what action is the government taking to ensure that all public buildings are modified to provide access for handicapped persons?

Roper Highway

49 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

What steps are being taken to upgrade the Roper Highway to the 4-mile landing to enable barges to use the Roper River for supply purposes?

Borroloola-Roper Bar Road

50 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Does the government plan to upgrade the road between Roper Bar and Borroloola to cater for tourists and travellers?

Insurance Cover for Schoolchildren

51 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Are pupils of Northern Territory schools covered by insurance when engaged in school activities, such as swimming lessons, excursions and sports, outside school grounds?
2. Are parents required to sign indemnity forms before their children engage in such school activities?

Loitering in Public Places

52 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Do police officers in Katherine have power to deal with persons who loiter or sleep in and around public facilities?

Meteorological Bureau Services in Katherine

53 Mr MacFARLANE to CHIEF MINISTER

Is he aware of plans to establish a weather office at Katherine to provide local weather forecasts as an aid to bushfire control, crop planting and aircraft movements?

Meat Processing Companies

54 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Are there any precautions which the government can take to ensure that companies engaging in meat processing in the Territory are financially stable?

Notice given on 25 November 1980

Aerial Spraying of Insecticides

55 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

1. Has his attention been drawn to ultra low volume techniques for aerial spraying of insecticides?
2. Can he state whether the government has published advice that light breeze conditions may give better control of the spread of aerial sprays than the calm air conditions often applying about dawn, currently favoured by crop dusters and local authorities using herbicides?
3. What steps has his department taken to enforce the conditions for aerial spraying recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council, which has advised that herbicides are harmless if used as recommended?

Blocks 534 and 536 Katherine

56 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

What is delaying the issuing of titles for blocks 534 and 536, Katherine?

Land Sales in Katherine

57 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

When will residential land be available for sale over the counter at a one-stop shop in Katherine?

Animal Nutrition Research

58 Mr MacFARLANE to MINISTER for PRIMARY PRODUCTION and TOURISM

What research is the government undertaking on animal nutrition in the Top End of the Territory?

Offences Against Commonwealth Laws

59 Mr ISAACS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Is the Northern Territory to compile statistics concerning offenders and offences against Commonwealth laws in the Territory as recommended by the Law Reform Commission of Australia?

Utopia Land Claim

60 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

What was the cost to the Territory of proceedings commenced by the

Attorney-General by way of prerogative writ in the High Court of Australia to challenge the Aboriginal Land Commissioner's findings on jurisdiction in the Utopia Aboriginal land claim case?

Alice Springs - Alcohol-Related Offences

61 Mr PERKINS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Is it a fact that in October 1979 some 227 people appeared on more than 600 charges in the Alice Springs Court?
2. Is it a fact that some 90-95% of these charges were alcohol-related?
3. If so, what action does he propose to take to reduce the high incidence of alcohol-related crimes in the Territory?
4. Will the government undertake an analysis of the residential status-background and the educational and cultural background of the majority of offenders before the courts in the Territory in order to construct a profile of the typical offender and to make available such data to interested community organisations and, if not, why not?

Alice Springs - TAFE Positions

62 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many TAFE positions exist in Alice Springs?
2. What are (a) the levels of these positions, and (b) who are the incumbents?
3. Are these positions sufficient for the government to implement the training component of the 'Five Year Plan' for the improvement of Aboriginal communities as outlined in the Legislative Assembly by the Chief Minister?
4. If not, how many new positions and at what levels will be created?
5. When will these positions be filled?
6. Will he supply details of his department's involvement in the 'Five Year Plan', including (a) the number of educators involved, (b) the support services to be provided, (c) the resources to be allocated, (d) the budgets, and (e) the goals?
7. If not, why not?

Education Department Document - 'Single Officers Housing Review'

63 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Is there a Department of Education document entitled 'Single Officers Housing Review'?
2. If so, will he supply me with a copy of this document?
3. If not, why not?

Schools Commission Innovations Committee Grants

64 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Is it a fact that an organisation or incorporated body must first obtain the approval of the Department of Education in order to be eligible for a grant from the Schools Commission Innovations Committee?
2. If so, why?

3. What criteria are used by his department in assessing an organisation's performance or goals in respect of approvals from the Schools Commission Innovations Committee?
4. Is it a fact that his department has refused to approve the activities of the Yipirinya School in Alice Springs in conjunction with 2 applications for a grant from the Schools Commission Innovations Committee made in 1978 and 1979 and, if so, why?
5. Does an 'independent school' within the terms of the Education Act require approval from the department in order to be eligible for a grant from the Schools Commission Innovations Committee?
6. What is the government's intention in regard to Aboriginal self-management in education?
7. Is it a fact that the Principal Education Adviser for the Alice Springs region recently informed the Yipirinya Council that the best solution for the Council is to become a part of the Department of Education and, if so, why?
8. Does he plan to support other education proposals similar to those of the Yipirinya School?

Alice Springs - Transport for Schoolchildren

65 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Which company has the contract to transport schoolchildren in Alice Springs?
2. How many companies tendered for the job?
3. What were the tender prices submitted?
4. What is the cost per kilometre of transporting schoolchildren to school in (a) Alice Springs, and (b) Darwin?

Central Australian Community College Hospitality Course

66 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. Why did the person charged with setting up the hospitality course at the Central Australian Community College resign?
2. What steps are being taken to find a replacement?
3. When is it anticipated the hospitality course will start?
4. Does the government feel there is any urgency for such a course to be started in the centre?

Kormilda and Yirara Colleges - Graduates

67 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many students graduated from all courses last year at Kormilda College and Yirara College respectively?
2. What proportion of last year's graduates from Kormilda College and Yirara College respectively are now (a) employed, and (b) unemployed?

Conference of Council Presidents and Aboriginal Community Advisers

68 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

I refer to the Conference of Council Presidents and Aboriginal Community Advisers held at Kormilda College in January 1980, and ask-

1. Did the government agree at that conference that a minimum of 40 adult educators were required to properly staff all major centres in the Territory and, if so, what action has been taken to recruit staff for these positions?
2. Will he supply a list of (a) the names of adult educators employed, (b) the locations where they are employed, and (c) their major skills and qualifications?

Housing Commission - Questionnaire on Sale of Flats

69 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to a notice sent to some tenants of the Housing Commission in Alice Springs recently in which inquiries were made regarding interest in the possible purchase of flats and townhouses, and ask-

1. How many responses to the questionnaire have been received?
2. How many of the respondents showed strong, positive interest in purchasing flats or townhouses?
3. Will the Housing Commission proceed with any sales?
4. If so, when will the sales be completed?
5. In which particular block or blocks of flats and townhouses will sales be made?
6. How did the Commission arrive at the price of \$42,000 to \$43,000 per unit?
7. Has he received a letter dated 22 October from the South Court Residents' Association of Alice Springs which raises some concern about tenants' security and, if so, what reply has he made to the letter?

Housing Commission - Document on Aboriginal Housing

70 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to a document tabled in the Assembly by the Chief Minister and issued by the NT Housing Commission in March 1980. The document is titled 'Proposal for Achieving Improved Housing Conditions for Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory', and is part of what is commonly known as the 'Five Year Plan', and ask -

1. What is the status of the document?
2. Have the recommendations in the document been considered by Cabinet?
3. If so, have the recommendations been accepted?
4. Has the Territory government had discussions with the federal government regarding the proposal to disband 'the advisory teams of architects and other technical staff engaged on Aboriginal housing within the Department of Construction in the NT' and, if so, what has resulted from these discussions?
5. What discussions have been held between officers of the Housing Commission and the leaders of Aboriginal communities regarding the government's proposals as outlined in the 'Five Year Plan'?
6. What has been the result of these discussions?
7. Does the Housing Commission expect to employ more staff to explain the proposals to Aboriginal communities?
8. Did the former Chairman of the Housing Commission, Mr G. Stoltz,

and officers of the Commission visit a number of Aboriginal communities just before the last Legislative Assembly election with proposals for housing which had to be accepted or rejected before the end of June?

9. If so, when was it decided to make these visits, and what was the reason for the haste?

Housing Commission - Advertisement in Weekend Australian

71 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to an advertisement in the 'Weekend Australian' of 2-3 August 1980 by P.A. Consulting Services Pty Ltd of North Sydney for a Director of Finance and Loans in the NT Housing Commission, and ask -

1. Is it the policy of the Commission to use management consultants to select staff?
2. If so, does this indicate a lack of confidence by the government in the recruitment skills of senior Commission staff and personnel staff from other areas of government?
3. What were the total costs involved in hiring management consultants to select staff in this instance?
4. What does the term 'operate on a commercial basis' mean in the same advertisement?

Mereenie Aquifer

72 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for MINES and ENERGY

1. How many oil wells have been drilled in the Amadeus Basin in Central Australia?
2. How many of these wells have (a) intersected the Mereenie sandstone aquifer, (b) been plugged, (c) been capped, and (d) what is the current status of these wells?
3. What precautions have been taken to ensure that the Mereenie aquifer has not been contaminated by hydrocarbons and salt water from the oil-bearing formation?
4. Is there any danger of the Mereenie aquifer being polluted as a result of past, present or future oil well drilling operations in Central Australia?

Services to Aboriginal Communities

73 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Who is responsible for the maintenance of internal service roads in Aboriginal communities?
2. Who is responsible for the maintenance of main access roads to Aboriginal communities?
3. Is the planning of main roads to Aboriginal communities and internal service roads undertaken as a correlated construction exercise?
4. Who is responsible for the construction and maintenance of access roads to Aboriginal outstations?
5. Does the government offer on-site technical assistance to Aboriginal communities in respect of building?
6. Is there Aboriginal representation on the Rural Roads Board?

Emergency Accommodation

77 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

I refer to the announcement of the Treasurer in May this year of the government's commitment to providing emergency accommodation for people in certain hostels in need of housing, and ask -

1. When does he expect the scheme to begin?
2. How many people are at present on the waiting list for (a) public, and (b) private housing?
3. In the 3 months to 31 October 1980, how many people have (a) applied for out-of-turn housing allocations, (b) have been accepted?
4. What is the breakdown of the successful and unsuccessful applicants in terms of whether they are unemployed, single parent families and so on?

Social Security Payments and Funding to Organisations

78 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. How many people have (a) applied for hardship payments on referral from the Department of Social Security and (b) have received assistance in the 3 months to 31 October 1980?
2. How do these figures compare with the same period in 1979?
3. What steps is he taking to ensure that organisations in receipt of grants and subsidies know well in advance of the end of the financial year if their submissions have been successful and to what extent?

Operational Grant Subsidies Scheme

79 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Which organisations are funded under the Operational Grant Subsidies Scheme?
2. Does he intend to increase the number of organisations able to receive funding on a 3 years basis, to allow more effective functioning?
3. How much has been allocated to the Government Concession Scheme for 1980-81, and in which financial allocation is it included?
4. Will he provide a complete itemisation of the financial allocation for 1980-81 of \$1,071,558 in the grants and subsidies section?

Dhupuma College Staff

80 Mr LEO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

How many Aboriginal house parents and social advisers from Dhupuma College are still employed in the Department of Education?

Sadadeen Subdivision

81 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. To what extent has the government developed Sadadeen lots to the turn-off stage?
2. Since private developers were originally invited to register an interest in Sadadeen development only 3 months ago, and since the

7. What safeguards exist to ensure the preservation of Aboriginal sacred sites which may be affected by road construction?

Alice Springs - Traffic and Railway

74 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. How many vehicles use the level crossing daily at the Larapinta Drive-Telegraph Terrace intersection in Alice Springs?
2. Is it true that a set of traffic lights will be installed at the intersection and crossing?
3. In the matter of arrangements being made for the Alice Springs to Darwin standard gauge railway planning, what decision-making powers are held by (a) the NT government, (b) the Alice Springs municipality, and (c) the Australian National Railways Commission?
4. In the event of a dispute over the location of the railway line, is it true that the Alice Springs municipality can be overruled by the ANR?
5. Will he supply a list, including (a) dates, (b) names of participants, and (c) the agenda of meetings which have been held between the ANR and his department during the past 2 years and, if not, why not?

Alice Springs - Environmental Damage by Roadworks

75 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

I refer to the reply by the former Minister for Transport and Works to a question asked in February 1980 by the Member for Stuart concerning rehabilitation of the roadside and other areas through the hills north of Alice Springs, in which he said that his department had 'spent in excess of \$100,000 on repairs to some of the areas that have been damaged', and ask -

1. Can he confirm the statement reported in the Centralian Advocate on 27 March 1980, that '\$100,000 had been allocated to reclaim environmental degradation in the area'?
2. Has there been one or two allocations of \$100,000 for this work?
3. Does his department regard the words 'reclaiming', 'repairing', 'regeneration' and 'rehabilitation' as synonymous with the term 'cleaning up after the contractor'?
4. Was the sum of \$73,384 expended on the hire of a loader and dump truck for rehabilitation, reclamation, repair or regeneration?
5. Does his department normally allocate large sums of money to clean up after a contractor has completed a job, or is it normal practice for contractors to carry out such cleaning up work themselves and for the cost of this work to be taken into consideration when the tender is lodged?
6. Does further work need to be carried out to repair the damage caused and, if so, what is (a) the nature of the work, (b) how much will it cost, and (c) when will it be completed?

Women's Refuges

76 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for HEALTH

How much was allocated to the Northern Territory by the Commonwealth government for women's refuges in (a) 1979-80, and (b) 1980-81?

successful tenderer was named only this month, when does the developer expect to have all lots to the turn-off stage?

3. At what price will the government buy the developed blocks?
4. Was an undertaking to use local labour and materials a factor in the successful tender by the company chosen by the government to develop Sadadeen?
5. Has the government studied the cost-effectiveness of maintaining the role of departments such as the Department of Transport and Works in developing residential subdivisions?

Department of Community Development - Advertisement in NT News

82 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I refer to an advertisement in the 4 November edition of the NT News placed by the Department of Community Development calling for a person to carry out a program entitled 'Survey of Aboriginal Communal Camping and Residential Facilities in Urban Areas', and ask -

1. How many people applied for the position?
2. Has the position been filled and, if so, (a) who has filled the position, (b) has the successful applicant commenced work on the program, and (c) what is the nature of the work currently being undertaken?

Fisheries Vessels

83 Mrs LAWRIE to CHIEF MINISTER

1. Are the fisheries or police vessels 'Salloo' and 'Pobassoo' presently being used for research and monitoring of fish species, numbers and distribution?
2. If so, what is the level of expertise on board these vessels to conduct such research?

Permanent Part-Time Employment

1 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

1. What is the program of the Public Service Commissioner for investigating the possible introduction of permanent part-time employment?
2. Has a decision been made to introduce permanent part-time employment and, if so, when will it be introduced?

ANSWER

1. Permanent part-time employment has been the subject of NTPS Consultative Council consideration for some time. The Public Service Commissioner's program for investigation for the possible introduction is to have the full Consultative Council consider its sub-committee's final recommendation at its meeting in Alice Springs on 30 and 31 October 1980 with a view to recommending to the Commissioner an agreed package of terms and conditions for permanent part-time employment. The Commissioner expects to be able to make definitive decisions on the recommendations before the end of the year.
2. My government has made a commitment to introduce permanent part-time employment and our objective was to introduce a scheme on 1 January 1981, however, because one of the most important conditions applying to permanent part-time employment is the right to superannuation, difficulties could arise in having the Commonwealth authorities develop the necessary changes to the Commonwealth scheme by that date to enable NTPS employees to be covered for superannuation purposes.

The government's Canberra representative has had detailed discussions with the Commonwealth Department of Finance and the Commonwealth Public Service Board, but the federal officials are not optimistic concerning an early resolution of the problems to enable the necessary changes to be effected to Commonwealth legislation.

Permanent part-time employment without superannuation cover would not provide the flexibility necessary to enable full-time employees to take advantage of this progressive form of employment.

3. It appears that the government's program to introduce permanent part-time employment could lead to industrial problems as the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union has advised the Public Service Commissioner's office that it is totally opposed to the introduction of permanent part-time employment. This will have to be borne in mind and efforts at consultation undertaken.

Criminal Code Proposals

2 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Have the judges of the Supreme Court commented on the first draft of the proposed new criminal code prepared by Mr Connolly? If so, has the bill been circulated to legal practitioners, criminologists and the community?

ANSWER

The preliminary first draft prepared by Mr F.G. Connolly of Counsel is in substantially similar terms to the Queensland Criminal Code, although certain innovative provisions have been drawn from other jurisdictions (notably the theft provisions).

The preliminary first draft has been sent to the judges of the Supreme Court and one of the judges has met with an officer of the Department of Law to comment on the draft.

The Parliamentary Draftsman, together with another officer of the Department of Law, are now preparing a draft Criminal Code Act which has some changes from the preliminary first draft, and this draft act will be widely circulated once it has been tabled in Parliament.

The preliminary first draft (which was intended to be no more than a first step towards a criminal code and not a bill as such) has not been circulated to lawyers or the community although lengthy discussions were held by Mr Connolly with interested parties.

Alice Springs Recreational Lake Site

3 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has the site for a recreational lake in the Alice Springs area been chosen and, if so, does it coincide with any Aboriginal sacred sites registered with the Sacred Sites Authority?

ANSWER

No.

Mindil Beach Casino

4 Mr ISAACS to TREASURER

1. What is the anticipated date for the opening of the Mindil Beach casino?
2. Is the government concerned about the amount of work that has been done on the site?
3. Has Federal Hotels informed the government that it wants to reduce the size of the originally proposed project at Mindil Beach and, if so, what are the full details of any new proposal?
4. Is the government satisfied that Federal Hotels has put sufficient effort into promoting package tours to bring tourists to the casino?
5. Does the government agree that the bulk of the people using the present interim casino are local gamblers, and if so, does the government agree that this is contrary to the view that the casino would, in the main, cater for tourists?
6. What comment has the government to make about the casino's adverse economic impact on the central business area?
7. Does the government believe that the casino has had any adverse impact on the community generally?

ANSWER

1. The project is expected to be completed during December 1982.
2. The government has already expressed its concern in the House, about the delays with the development.
3. Under the agreement the minister may agree to modifications to the

approved plans.

When the lowest tender for the building construction was found to be \$16.9m, some \$5.0m over the early estimate, the minister agreed to a request from Federals, to deferments and modifications without detriment to the original plans, they being:

- 3.1 substitution of concrete framework for steel framework;
- 3.2 minor modifications to finishes; and
- 3.3 deferment of minor facilities such as:
 - 3.3.1 a second small swimming pool;
 - 3.3.2 a public change room and toilet annexe;
 - 3.3.3 a small external bar;
 - 3.3.4 a basement preparation kitchen;
 - 3.3.5 a gym and sauna area; and
 - 3.3.6 fitting out of level 4 of the main building complex which will eventually become the main function area of the complex.
4. Yes, considering that the main thrust of their packaging is being geared to the openings of Alice Springs and Mindil.
5. Patronage at the Don Hotel-Casino indicates that the Territory residents fully support the complex which has added a new dimension to Darwin's nightlife. Patrons are not requested to provide information on their residential status, however it is obvious that numerous tourists as well as residents visit the complex. The casino is an added attraction for tourists.
6. No evidence has been put forward to indicate adverse economic impact in the central business district. New restaurants, shops and office developments in the CBD indicate the reverse.
7. No evidence has been received which indicates that the casino has had an adverse effect generally.

Regional Committees for the Handicapped

5 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the 1980 election the former minister stated that 2 regional committees for the handicapped would be established, one for the north and one for the south. Have these committees been established and, if so, (a) whom do they comprise, and (b) which organisations do they represent?

ANSWER

The Chief Minister in his ministerial statement to the Legislative Assembly in May 1980, announced the government's intent to develop an optimum level of services which reflect the needs of Territorians who are handicapped. To accomplish this end, the Chief Minister asked that regional committees be established comprised of people with the requisite experience, expertise and interest to recommend the services required by disabled people.

In accordance with this, I have recently announced the membership of

these committees. In the north, the Regional Committee is comprised of:

Dr Alan Walker	-	Chairperson
Mr Ian Overell	-	NT Spastic Association
Mr James Berry	-	Handicapped Persons' Association
Mr Alasdair McGregor	-	Deaf Children's Association
Mr Keith Amos	-	Somerville Homes
Mrs Veronica Elsegood	-	Aboriginal Women's Resource Centre
Mrs Doreen Baker	-	Disabled person
Mrs Gina Zammit	-	Parent of a handicapped child
Mrs Georgina Edwards	-	Disabled person

The southern Regional Committee membership includes:

Mrs Barbera Vaiana	-	Chairperson - and a disabled person
Mrs Jenny Carpenter	-	Alice Springs Spastic Council
Mrs Peggy Campbell	-	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
Mr George Lamb	-	NT Council on the Ageing
Mr R. Gaff	-	St Mary's Children's Homes
Miss Miranda Parkes	-	Bindi Centre
Mr Chris Turner	-	Disabled person
Ms Michele Castagna	-	Disabled person
Mrs Carol Frost	-	Parent of a handicapped child

In addition, the Departments of Health, Education, Community Development and Social Security will be represented on each group bringing the total membership to 13 persons for each regional committee.

Ethnic Health Workers

7 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Are there any plans to increase the number of ethnic health workers to cover more ethnic communities in the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

There is no specific plan to increase the number of ethnic health workers at the present time, although the matter is currently under review.

Multi-Cultural Education Program

8 Mr B. COLLINS to MINISTER for EDUCATION

1. How many part-time instructors are employed by the Department of Education under the multi-cultural education program?
2. What (a) languages do they teach, and in (b) which schools, (c) for how many hours, and (d) at what levels?

ANSWER

1. Fourteen were employed up to the end of second term 1980.
2. (a) Greek, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Indonesian and Modern Greek.
(b) St John's, Parap Primary, Secondary Intensive English Unit (Dripstone High), Jingili Primary, Nightcliff Primary, Stuart Park, Darwin Primary, Larrakeyah Primary, Ludmilla Primary, Wagaman Primary, Millner Primary and Casuarina High School.
(c) Number of hours approved varies between 2 and 320.

(d) Levels range from year 3 to secondary.

MULTI-CULTURAL PROGRAMS

Language	Days	No. of Hours Approved	Period of Approval	Level	Schools
Greek	-	44	1. 7.80 - 30.12.80	Year 12	St John's
Mandarin	Mon-Wed	30	1. 7.80 - 30.11.80	Year 4-7	Parap Primary
Vietnamese	Mon-Fri	320	1. 7.80 - 30.11.80	Year 8-12	S.I.E.U. (Dripstone High)
Indonesian	Tue	63	1. 7.80 - 30.12.80	Year 3-4	Jingili Primary
Mandarin	Mon-Wed	7½	26. 5.80 - 30. 6.80	Year 4-7	Parap Primary
Modern Greek	-	75	3. 7.80 - 4.12.80	Year 8	St John's
Mandarin	Monday	2	23. 6.80 - 30. 6.80	Year 6-7	Nightcliff Primary
Mandarin	Mon-Wed	50	1. 7.80 - 30.11.80	Year 4-7	Stuart Park
Mandarin	Mon-Wed-Fri	40	1. 7.80 - 30.11.80	Year 4-7	Darwin Primary
Greek	Varying	120	31. 3.80 - 30. 6.80	Pre-school	Nightcliff Primary Larrakeyah Primary Ludmilla
Modern Greek	Mon-Wed	40	28. 7.80 - 5. 8.80	Year 4-7 Year 6-7	Wagaman Primary Nightcliff Primary

Special Aboriginal Housing Scheme

10 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

In regard to the 1978 agreement between the Commonwealth and the Territory for the provision of housing for Aboriginal people in the Territory, and which is commonly known as the Special Aboriginal Housing Scheme -

1. What amount has been (a) allocated by the Commonwealth to the Territory, and (b) expended on this scheme to 20 August 1980?
2. How many houses have been built and in which locations throughout the Territory?
3. How many houses and in which locations will be built (a) this financial year, and (b) next financial year?
4. Did the Territory government alter the agreement or its implementation to prevent homes being built under this scheme to be located adjacent to or opposite privately-owned homes?
5. If so, does such a restriction still apply?

ANSWER

1. (a) \$809,000.

- (b) \$785,000 (Balance being held to pay for land when valuations are received).
2. Twenty-one - 10 in Alice Springs;
5 in Tennant Creek; and
6 in Katherine.
 3. Five in Katherine subject to land availability.
 4. No, the agreement does not make reference to the location of houses built under the agreement. A decision was taken by the former Minister for Lands and Housing that houses constructed under the scheme would not be built adjacent to or opposite privately owned homes.
 5. The decision referred to above has never been rescinded.

Emergency Housing

11 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Has his attention been drawn to the newsheet of July 1980 "NT ACTION", published by the NT Council of Social Service, which claimed that a register opened in the Darwin mall for 2 days had shown that 82 adults and 6 children were living on the beach or in cars, and that 177 adults and 101 children were living in unsatisfactory conditions?
2. If so, does he have evidence to show that these figures are accurate?
3. Has he or the NT Housing Commission received submissions from NTCOSS seeking support for the establishment of an emergency housing committee and, if so, what action has been taken by the government?

ANSWER

1. While I have seen the newsheet mentioned, I have also seen reports in the media referring generally to the claim made in the newsheet, which is published by the NT Council of Social Service.
2. I have no evidence whether the figures included in the newsheet are accurate or not.
3. I have received submissions from NTCOSS seeking support for the establishment of an emergency housing committee. I have already replied to the Council's submission of 2 July 1980 and the Council's further submission of 5 August 1980 is being examined. My earlier reply to NTCOSS indicated that I did not favour their suggestions.

Purchase of Residence at 28 Tasman Circuit Wagaman

12 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

1. Has the government arranged through the Housing Commission the purchase of the residence at 28 Tasman Circuit, Wagaman?
2. If so, what price was paid for the property, who is occupying or is intended to occupy this residence, and what expenditure has been necessary to (a) upgrade, or (b) improve the property since purchase?

ANSWER

The Public Service Commissioner on 17 July 1980 instructed the Northern Territory Housing Commission to purchase the above property for housing the new Solicitor-General.

The property has been purchased for \$92,000. According to the Valuer-General, the market value of the property is \$96,000.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE - ANSWERS RECEIVED

The purchase is not yet finalised. No expenditure has been necessary to upgrade or improve the property. It is expected that an expenditure of \$500 may be needed to replace the stove.

Driving Licence Examiners

13 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. How many (a) men, and (b) women are employed as examiners for driving licences?
2. Does the Department of Transport and Works have a policy regarding employment of women as driving licence examiners and, if so, what is the policy?

ANSWER

1. (a) Five men.
(b) Four women.
2. The department does not have a policy for or against either male or female licence testers. We look for efficiency, pleasant personality and ability to deal with the general public in a friendly, but responsible manner. A proven knowledge of the Motor Vehicles Act and Traffic Act are required. Testers must hold "A", "C" and "E" class licences and preferably a driving instructors licence.

Motor Vehicle Registry in Alice Springs

14 Mr PERKINS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

In regard to the Alice Springs branch of the Motor Vehicle Registry -

1. How many employees are (a) currently employed, (b) have (i) transferred, or (ii) resigned, and (iii) at what levels since 1 July 1978?
2. Has his attention been drawn to complaints published in the Alice Springs press alleging that some employees of the branch may perform their duties with excessive zeal?
3. Has he or his department received complaints about the branch and, if so, (a) how many, (b) to what specific issues did they relate, (c) how many have been investigated, and (d) what has been the result of any such investigations?

ANSWER

1. (a) Eight employed.
(b) (i) Four transferred - 3 x A1; 1 x A3.
(ii) Twelve resignations - 11 x A1; 1 x A3.
2. Yes.
3. (a) Four.
(b) (i) A refusal to register a damaged vehicle.
(ii) Suspension of use of traders plates.
(iii) Dissatisfaction with vehicle inspection procedures.
(iv) Interim inspection of substandard private hire cars.
(c) All have been investigated.

(d) The first 2 complaints listed were referred to the Ombudsman, who, after investigations, ruled in favour of the department's decision.

Investigation of the third complaint showed that action had been taken in accordance with the Motor Vehicles Act.

In the final complaint, the member of the public elected not to avail himself of options open to resolve the complaint.

Lots 4631 and 4632 East Side Subdivision Alice Springs

15 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for LANDS and HOUSING

Is it proposed that lots 4631 and 4632, East Side Subdivision, Alice Springs, will be used for a small shopping area and, if so, will he inform me when he approves their use for such purpose and when the blocks will be offered for sale at auction?

ANSWER

The proposed zoning change to facilitate release of the lots has been on exhibition with no objections being received. The Planning Authority will consider the matter on 12 September and a report and recommendation will then be prepared for my consideration. Assuming my approval, Executive Council will then consider the matter.

A date for the next land auction in Alice Springs has not been fixed, but will probably be in late October or November.

It is expected that these blocks would be available for this auction.

Arnhem Highway

16 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

Is it planned to widen the Arnhem Highway and, if so, what is the program to be undertaken?

ANSWER

No. There are no proposals at this stage to widen the Arnhem Highway.

Aerial Spraying of Insecticides

22 Mrs O'NEIL to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

1. Has his attention been drawn to ultra low volume techniques for aerial spraying of insecticides?
2. Can he state whether the government has published advice that light breeze conditions may give better control of the spread of aerial sprays than the calm air conditions often applying about dawn, currently favoured by crop dusters and local authorities using herbicides?
3. What steps has his department taken to enforce the conditions for aerial spraying recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council, which has advised that herbicides are harmless if used as recommended?

ANSWER

The matters raised in these questions are more the preserve of the Minister for Primary Production. I suggest the honourable member

redirect her questions.

Alice Springs Recreation Lake - Environmental Impact Study

23 Mr ISAACS to CHIEF MINISTER

Has an environmental impact statement on the Alice Springs recreation lake been completed and, if so, will he make the document public?

ANSWER

There is an environmental report on one of the locations being considered for a recreation lake for Alice Springs. This is the location north of Alice Springs in the Todd River. There are a limited number of copies of the report, but it is available for perusal by the public at the office of the Department of Transport and Works, Alice Springs. A copy of the report is available in the Legislative Assembly library.

Delissaville Health Centre - Installation of Airconditioners

28 Mr ISAACS to MINISTER for TRANSPORT and WORKS

When will airconditioners be installed at the Delissaville Health Centre?

ANSWER

Work was carried out by Department of Transport and Works Essential Services Group. The airconditioners were installed on 9 October 1980 and are operative.

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