

MEETING WITH MINISTER FOR TERRITORIES HON WENDY FATIN AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN NORFOLK ISLAND ON SUNDAY 7 JUNE 1992

MR PRESIDENT: Minister on behalf of my colleagues, in this 6th Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly, I like to say a very warm welcome to Norfolk Island, and that to say how much we appreciate the fact that you have joined us not only to meet with us today but, to celebrate Anniversary Day with us tomorrow. We know that you have been travelling around much Australia in recent times, and it is a long way to come to Norfolk Island and we certainly are grateful that you've put yourself out to do so. And we're very pleased of course to welcome both your party that has come with you today, and the officers of your department who have been with us for several days. The main purpose of our meeting today is for you to meet our members, some of us have been in the Legislative Assembly before, some of us are new to the Assembly. As you know we don't have political parties as such in Norfolk Island

WENDY FATIN: What a good idea

MR PRESIDENT: And as a result of that from time to time you will find all kinds of strange combinations in the voting cause each and every of our votes is conscience vote as it were and we all try to do what we believe is the best. We thought that today we would mention to you some of our plans and priorities, and that we would talk briefly to you although we do see it as a information giving exercise not one where we expect you to be able to provide answers or solutions for us. We thought we would speak briefly with you as to a few of the elements of our portfolios in particular as to the discussions which have been going on about a possible port facility as to the question of transfer of powers, as to the question of the inter Governmental agreement on the environment, I thought we might say a few words to you in relation to our local finance. As to the question of plans, and priorities we have 4 ministries in this Assembly. Mike King is our Minister for Community Services, Geoff Bennett is our Minister for Finance, Bill Sanders is our Minister for Immigration and Tourism, and I hold the responsibilities for Education and Health.

In the area of Community Services there are a number of areas that we do want to address. I think I can say that the overwhelming majority of the members of this Assembly believe that it is time that we looked at and did something about the question of compulsory third party motor vehicle insurance. And the question of compensation generally. We do believe that Social Welfare is something that must be dignified and adequate and we certainly will be looking at the long term requirements the long term trends and the long term costs and working out how we're going to met those costs, for providing both an adequate and dignified Social Welfare System. We have difficulties at the moment in questions of quarrying and relation to sand extraction, and those are areas which come within Mike's responsibilities, and one of his big tasks at the moment is to assess the question of the Port Facility, and I know that Mike's going to say a few words to you about that.

In the area of finance, we are in this Assembly attempting to involve ourselves in forward financial planning. Geoff Bennett has already started work on a five year plan, and we believe that it is only if we look at things over that kind of a time frame that we can properly plan for the future. There is consideration being given to new financial management legislation. And consideration will need to be given to a recently completed report on our F.I.L. or Financial Institutions Levy. That is a small levy on bank deposits which has grown to be a fairly significant contributor to our economy but being a new impost it does have some problems which we need to look at.

In the areas of in my own areas which we call Health and Education but which stretches across the Public Service and into some other areas, one of our early tasks will be the question of Public Sector Reform. We realise that we are probably a little behind much of the remainder of the world in looking at the reform of our public sector, both from the point of view of ensuring that we are providing an adequate career path for our officers and from the point of view of ensuring that the public not only receives but can be seen to receive the best value for its dollar. You will this afternoon see our hospital, you will see that we certainly do need to make some plans in the very near future to either significantly upgrade or to replace the hospital and you will be aware that we have

introduced a local healthcare scheme which is aimed at ensuring that subject to one meeting the first \$2000 per year of one's healthcare expenses any catastrophic type medical expenses are met from out scheme. It's particularly important, we believe