

Good morning Honourable Members. We commence with the Prayer of the Legislative Assembly

### **Prayer**

Almighty God we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe Thy blessings upon this House, to direct and prosper our deliberations to the advancement of Thy glory and the true welfare of the people of Norfolk Island, Amen

Thank you Honourable Members. If you would like to remove your jackets gentlemen, please feel comfortable to do so, it is getting warm this morning

### **Condolences**

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Honourable Members I call on Condolences

MR BUFFETT Madam Deputy Speaker it is with regret that this House records the death of Shirley Victorene Christian who passed away in Sydney on Saturday the 16th December, the day she was to return home to Norfolk Island for Christmas. Shirley was born on Norfolk Island in May of 1946, the youngest daughter of Joyce and Alec Christian of Cascade. She had two brothers, Ron and Raymond, and a sister Eileen. She went to the Norfolk Island School and there completed her formal education. Shirley worked at the Kingfisher Airtel which was then at Anson Bay and at the Paradise Hotel then at Kingston, cooking, leaving there to join the workforce of the Norfolk Island Administration, where she was a much valued employee for some nineteen years. Shirley was well respected and much loved in the Administration particularly in the Philatelic Department and her diligence and cheerfulness saw her being promoted as the Philatelic Officer at the Burnt Pine Post Office, where her public relations skills were well known and appreciated. Shirley had a daughter Marlina and son Brendon. On the death of her sister in New Zealand and then later her brother-in-law she brought into her home their children, Debbie, Kerry, Shirleen and Claudine who she raised and loved as her own. Shirley delighted in her family and was overjoyed when it increased with the births of Debbie's two boys Cameron and Ryan, Shirleen's two boys Alastair and Christopher and Marlina's son Nicholas and daughter TeLarnii. Shirley was an example to others in her constant cheerfulness, her generosity, her good wishes to her fellow man whilst she herself experienced for most of her lifetime a debilitating illness. She had made trips to the mainland to combat a failing renal system and the final failure brought a great loss to all who have known and loved this generous woman. Shirley's last two and a half months saw her enjoying a quality of good health that she had been denied for some four years and being the person she was, this blessing was enjoyed to the maximum and a comment was made by her family that she had recently visited more places than the Leyland Brothers and her family have been delighted that this opportunity was given to her. Shirley will be sadly missed and we may care to pay our final respects at her funeral at 4.00 pm this afternoon. To her family Madam Deputy Speaker and to her relatives and friends this House extends its deepest sympathy

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Buffett. Honourable Members as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased, I would ask that all Members stand in silence. Thank you Honourable Members

### **Petitions**

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Honourable Members I call for Petitions. Are there any Petitions please?

### **Notices**

Thank you, I move to the giving of Notices, are there any Notices?

**Questions without Notice**

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER I move to Questions without Notice. Are there any Questions without Notice? Mr Bates

MR BATES Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. My first question is to Mrs Lozzi Cuthbertson, Minister for Education. Could the Minister inform this House how much on cost is paid each year for services provided by the New South Wales Education Department and what does this on cost cover?

MRS LOZZI CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. The Norfolk Island Government pays the Department of School Education a rate of 5% on costs on the figure that we actually pay for salaries so it is calculated on how much we pay teachers salaries and on top of that 5% on costs which cover such things as curriculum material, examination material, possibility of anybody doing courses by correspondence, library support, consultancies to the teachers who may want to deal with a complex problem in a different or better way. We also pay a leave loading of about \$11,000 on top of the salary component and a superannuation loading of 5% from the salary component and an extra superannuation component of 6% on salaries component

MR SPEAKER Further Questions Without Notice

MR BATES Thank you Mr Speaker. A supplementary question which I think the Minister has partly answered but I will ask it anyway and the question is. The invitation to attend the public meeting says "The Government is contemplating significant changes to our current system of education". Could the Minister inform us to what extent these significant changes are in as much as she hasn't already in her previous answer

MRS LOZZI CUTHBERTSON Thank you Mr Speaker. As I have outlined, the curriculum, the examination processes, the teaching manner will be the same, the only change that will come about if what I envisage is adopted, is that we will recruit teachers for the Norfolk Island School in a different manner. Teachers will apply of their own accord if they agree that the conditions that we will offer them are fair and acceptable and it is envisaged that a great many of the applicants will come from the Department of Education's own teaching staff. Right. It is all a matter that will have to be finalised after consultations with the community, a possible referendum and then this House will have to move on it

MR BATES A question for Mr King, Minister for Finance. Could the Minister explain how recent moves by the Australian Government to tighten control over re-importation to Australia of cigarettes have affected local business and also bona fide travel?

MR KING Madam Deputy Speaker thank you very much. I'm not sure if I can answer that in precise detail but let me say that it has not had an adverse effect on local investors, contrary to my earlier beliefs and contrary to what I expressed to Members in camera. In fact it would appear that it has had somewhat beneficial effects and good luck to that local entrepreneur in pursuing that business. I'm not quite sure but I do not believe that it was expected to have any adverse effect on the travelling public generally though I will certainly look into that

MR BATES Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. A question for Mr Christian, the Minister for the Environment. Has the Minister followed up procedures to tighten control over the smuggling of fruit onto the Island

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Not as yet Mr Bates but it will be high on the priority within the New Year and obviously there are budget implications that will be discussed during budget review

MRS SAMPSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. A question for Mr Christian. A question was asked at the June sitting of the House regarding the availability of rat poison from Administration sources. What has been done about it and has any public information been distributed?

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I can't recall the question and I don't know the actual process that has gone through but I suspect that rat poison is available from the Forestry Section of the Administration at cost. I'm not aware if the policy has been changed but I can certainly take it on board

MRS SAMPSON Madam Deputy Speaker if I may just help Mr Christian out on that. He was away at that meeting and the question was fielded by Mr Bennett so perhaps that might help his "I can't remember the question". And two for Mrs Cuthbertson. A question was asked in this House at the October sitting of the steps the Minister intended to take regarding the increase in break-ins. In light of the current spate of similar occurrences could the Minister please update her answer

MRS LOZZI CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Yes, I've had consultations with the new Sergeant of Police and the previous Sergeant of Police and the Constables. They have already approached a number of businesses with some advice for better security measures. They will also be approaching if they have not already done so, the Chamber of Commerce to make an offer for any business that wants some advice on better security measure that are available. There was an announcement or statement and an invitation by them in the Press last weekend inviting people who know about incidents and certainly some people in the community must know or must suspect who might be behind some of the incidents. Anyway, the Police have invited people in the community to come forward and take a step to making the Island security and good name a little safer. On top of that, they plan to stagger their finishing hours at night so that they will not be finishing duty at 1.00 am and that will be known generally so that people will not feel quite so safe after 1.00 am to think of break and enter and they will also be taking other steps and initiatives that seems advisable

MRS SAMPSON Just one other question for Mrs Cuthbertson. The Sydney Morning Herald of Monday 27th November had an article headed "Teachers Threat to Shut School". This had come about by the warning of the New South Wales Teachers Federation to change their policies dramatically. Has the Minister had any information from this school as to regards the teacher's thinking

MRS LOZZI CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. No, I've have not had any information following that article. I must add that on previous occasions when the teachers in New South Wales went on strike our teachers did not follow suit which I think was a very commendable initiative on their part. The cause of the disquiet in the schools of New South Wales is also coupled to the fact that they would like a significant increase in wages as well in the next financial year so it is not entirely related to the amendments and changes to the education system that Mr Carr is planning for that school system.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Cuthbertson. Further questions without notice Honourable Members.

MR BATES Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. My next question is for Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson, Minister for Immigration. During our consultations with the Chamber of Commerce regarding Immigration Policy, is there any truth in the rumour that some individual members of the Immigration Committee have been named as deliberately opposing applications for GEPs.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I have not had formal consultations with the Chamber of Commerce about Immigration. I was invited to a subcommittee meeting of that Chamber of Commerce that is looking at questions of immigration and population. I can't recall any person being named. The meeting went on for something like 3 hours and I really can't recall any individual being named as being opposed to application.

MR BATES A supplementary question to Mrs Cuthbertson. Can the Immigration Committee act outside policies approved by this House and is not the Minister able to override the recommendations in any case.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Yes, what you say is perfectly correct Mr Bates. The Committee only advises the Minister on applications. Applications are first submitted to the Committee. The Committee operates within policy and to the best of our knowledge the Committee operates very clearly within policy and the Minister retains some discretion for not following those recommendation if there are other reasons that the Minister considers irrelevant and perhaps more important but what you say is correct, yes.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Further questions without notice. Thank you Honourable Members questions without notice are concluded.

### **Questions on Notice**

We move now to Questions on Notice. Are there any Questions on Notice.

MR BATES Madam Deputy Speaker, question on notice to Mr Adams, Minister for Industry and Forests. How many male persons and female persons have registered on the Unemployed Register during the last 12 months and (2) how many are still registered as unemployed and (3) how many during the last 12 months have been placed in suitable employment as a result of being registered.

MR ADAMS Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. The answer to Brian's question is as follows. For part 1, there were 43 persons registered on the Employment Register since the 1st of January 1995. Of this number 16 were female and 27 were male. Part 2 and 3 of Brian's question is those registered since the 1st January 95, 21 are still registered as unemployed and 10 as under employed. One of the problems with the way the Employment Register works as far as accuracy is concerned is that detail as regards to the placing of registered persons in employment, are somewhat inaccurate and they are difficult to monitor perhaps as a yard stick because the relevant section of the Administration receives little feedback. So in other words the Administration section really only sees probably half of the process, the part of the process where people actually register their condition of employment whether it is under employed or unemployed and they receive very little information as regard part B as a process what happens to the people and to what level

the employment they receive, in other words they simply, generally don't take the time to call back. To the best of the knowledge of the Employment Liaison Section, 10 persons have been and continue to be employed by the Administration through the register on a casual basis. Two have been placed in employment on either a casual or a permanent basis and 4 have obtained employment on their own behalf. Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Adams. Further questions on notice Honourable Members.

MRS SAMPSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism and Finance. (1) On what basis and with what authority was the site for the new Electricity Undertaking shed at the Airport changed after it was settled. (2) Is the Minister aware that the relocation of the shed has resulted in cost over-runs and by how much and with what authority were they incurred. (3) Who benefited from the cost over-runs. (4) Was the public tender process observed in this project and (5) On whose authority was the proposed access to the shed altered necessitating further expense.

MR KING Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. In order I respond as follows. The first part of the question, I am advised that the Minister for the Environment changed the site in consultation with the Health and Building Surveyor who was acting as project supervisor. I understand that the site was confirmed after the gazettal notice went to press but I emphasise prior to site inspection by interested contractors. I have been informed that the change of the site was made on the basis that the new site would require less excavation. Yes I am aware of cost over-runs. I am aware that the accepted contract was Stage I, that is the site levelling and preparation was \$1,397. I have since been informed that there are cost over-runs on Stage I works which total just short of \$2,000 representing in real terms an escalation in the cost of Stage I of some 158%. It's my understanding that the project supervisor, the Health and Building Surveyor is responsible under contract terms for authorisation of all cost variations and that the project supervisor did authorise all the additional work site in conjunction with the Electricity Manager. I should say it has been put to me that the additional works should not be regarded as being cost over-runs but I regret that I can only conclude that those costs are associated directly with that project. Third part of the question regarding who benefited from the cost over-runs. The cost over and up to Stage I is payable to the contractor, Trimark Industries, and I am informed that Trimark Industries sub-contracted the additional work associated with Stage I namely the removal of trees or substantially the removal of trees which caused the cost over-run. The fourth part of the question deals with the public tender process. Yes the public tender process was followed. The cost over-runs associated with Stage I of the project, however, are not being treated as a component of the tender contract price. A separate invoice for the additional works pertaining to Stage I has been submitted by Trimark Industries in the amount of \$1,975. I am advised that this is not yet been paid and I want to emphasise at this stage that there is no suggestion of any impropriety in the role of Trimark Industries in its work on Stage I of this project. The fifth part of the question refers to the authority and the additional expense caused by the re-siting of the shed. I am advised that the relocation of the site at the direction of the Minister for the Environment, again in conjunction with the Health and Building Surveyor as project supervisor and the Electricity Manager has necessitated the following additional works. An access road to the site and a turning and parking apron for Electricity and Telecom vehicles and plant. A quotation is currently being obtained for this extra work which again will be treated separately to the original three stage contract for erection of the shed. I cannot at this point in time inform Members on

what the final costs of the project would be. Just in a general sense I want to say that the project itself has been somewhat of a nightmare from day one and some things in the matter will never be particularly clear if we are to achieve anything at all from this apart from perhaps an Electricity shed eventually, perhaps. There will be a clear set of procedures put in place for projects such as this which will clearly delineate duties and responsibilities in lines of accountability and equally important I feel, some Members might now acknowledge that there is a need or why there is a need for Ministers to stay in their own patch rather than jump the fence into the areas of responsibility of their fellow Ministers. Thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr King.

MRS SAMPSON Madam Deputy Speaker, is it in order if I can ask a supplementary question to questions on notice.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Yes Mrs Sampson, please feel free.

MRS SAMPSON Thank you and I direct this to Mr King. By what means does the Minister for Tourism and Finance delegate his authority to the Minister for the Environment.

MR KING Madam Deputy Speaker, I think we all know that each of the Executive Members has the same level of authority and as a matter of law we are, of course, entitled to as it were jump the fence into our fellow Minister's patches. As a matter of convention that hasn't been practised and good reasons why that should be so. This perhaps the outcome on this project is perhaps one good solid reason. Mr Christian had a role in this matter as the Minister with responsibility for Building and it was in that capacity that it was first referred to him from the Building Board. I think it is also fair to say that from that point on there was a less amount of consultation between the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Finance than was sought desirable, at least by myself.

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I am just providing additional information for the benefit of Helen and probably for Mr King. There needs to be quite clear that there was no crossing the borders to an executive responsibility in areas of executive responsibility. I as Minister for the Environment have responsibility for all matters that appear before the Building Board. An application for the erection and site location for the Electricity shed was duly lodged with the Building Board and dealt with the Building Board and recommendations came to me. I approved the erection of the Electricity shed subject to an amended site plan which had overall cost savings to the Administration which is quite within my area of executive responsibility. I don't apologise to anybody for the actions I have taken.

MRS SAMPSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. My next questions are to the Minister for the Environment, Mr Christian. (1) Whether the project to reconstruct what is known as the Headstone Dam which was part of a programme of works agreed to by Members for this Financial Year. (2) What is the expected cost of the project and as funds were not specifically appropriated by the House for the project, where will the funds come from. (3) Who designed to the dam. (4) Was the public tendering process followed to hire the earth moving plant necessary for the project and if not, why not. (5) If the purpose of the project is to recharge the water table what is the rate of recharge having regard to factors such as soil ferocity and the proximity of the dam to the coast. (6) If the purpose of the project is to provide a source of water for the public, on what basis will this be done, given that the dam is partially situated

on private property. (7) Do the owners of the aforementioned property contribute to the construction of the dam and if so, how much and (8) Who will be responsible for the maintenance of the structure, also for any damage, deterioration or even total collapse.

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I'll respond to the 8 parts of that question in numerical order that they appear on the paper. The dam reconstruction did not form part of an agreed programme of works at the commencement of this Financial Year, however as the year progressed and the drought continued it was obvious that water conservation measures needed to be implemented urgently. I informed a number of Members of my intention and do not recall receiving any adverse comments. Madam Deputy Speaker, part 2 of the question, the project will cost \$9,546.

No funds were specifically appropriated for the project, however over the past two or so financial years significant capital works projects within the water assurance scheme have not been commenced or implemented. As water conservation is a related issue I consider that the reconstruction costs would be a legitimate charge to be borne by that enterprise. Third part to the question, the dam designed was determined by the Health and Building Inspector and the Forestry Officer in consultation with myself. The dam wall is a rock reinforced compacted earth structure with a trap of soil transfer cross section for strength. It is also my opinion that these two officers are amongst the most talented within the Administration and their expertise does not receive due credit. Part 4 of the question, the public tendering was not used. The majority of equipment used on the project was from within the Administration's pool. The equipment that was hired outside of the Administration was provided by Island Industries. This equipment was not available elsewhere. In keeping with Government policy the equipment was hired with operators there by maximising the benefit to the private sector. Section 5, I cannot yet determine the rate of ground water recharge and in fact may never be able to. What I can say though, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that the dam contains in excess of 2 million litres of water that would not be stored had it not been built. Part 6, the main purpose of the dam is to conserve water. In the event that sources of public water become significantly depleted and the dam has sufficient reserves. Access to the water would be achieved by an agreement between the Administration and the private land holders involved. Part 7 of the question, no that is not, part 8, most likely the Administration. Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker.

MRS SAMPSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. My last question is directed to Mr Adams, the Minister for Industry and Forests. Has there been any serious investigation into a desalination plant. If so could the House be provided with details and if not, why not.

MR ADAMS Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Yes there has been inquiry into the pros and cons of obtaining a desalination plant. The bare bones of the details Helen, you might recall, that such a plant has been mentioned in recent press release. I have sought more specific information that has been recently supplied with, detailed information regarding a sea water desalinators with a daily product capacity of around 20,000 litres per day or about 4 1/2 thousand gallons per day output. The information that I have been sent is around three pages long and is of a very technical nature so I shan't work through it now as an answer to your question Helen, but instead I shall table it. Essentially the system mentioned in there is composed of a reverse osmosis system, drawing water from the sea through a pontoon mounted pump or a sea well through filters to a storage tank and from this the through the reverse osmosis machine and into a product storage tank for use as and when it's required. The costing given for this particular system is slightly over \$59,000. I must say that not included in this price is such things as necessary storage tanks,

plumbing fittings etc. For comparison some firmer prices have been received for sea water desalinators as smaller and larger capacity. I have been sent figures for a 15,000 litre per day reverse osmosis machine is around (a) \$50,000 and a one million litre per day machine would be in the area of \$800,000 plus again with the costs mentioned previously that were not included. It is interesting to note, Madam Deputy Speaker, that there are other island situations using these similar machines. My intention for the next step, in further response to your question Helen, is to ascertain the feasibility of these machines, the exact running costs etc, site options and come back to the Assembly with a firm proposal on how to proceed with this matter.

As a matter of course I will also be following up other avenues of information on these types of machinery, however it seems the companies dealing with this sought of machinery are difficult to find and I will table the sent information. Thank you.

MR SMITH Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister for the Environment what result is your research showing into the rebroadcasting of radio 2 JJJ and what date do you intend transmission to commence.

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I will respond to the Honourable Members question in the following manner. Radio JJJ is distributed using a dedicated ABC satellite station. In order to receive and re-transmit radio JJJ a transmitter licence is required under the Commonwealth Radio Communications Act 1992 and there are certain licensing agreements which need to be entered into with the ABC which compels whoever is rebroadcasting the programme to rebroadcast it live and uninterrupted for the insertion of any local radio content. The Broadcasting Manager has sought technical advice which indicates that the equipment to receive, decode, equalize and re-transmit radio JJJ would entail expenditure of approximately \$9,300. Madam Deputy Speaker, this additional or this is additional to funds allocated for broadcasting this financial year and would have to be considered in the context of the budgetary process. I must also say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that as Minister whilst there have been probably three or four requests to me in person to re-transmit JJJ, I remain convinced that is appropriate to extend the funds required.

MR SMITH Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. A question here on notice to the Minister for Tourism and Finance, considering that this Assembly agreed to the introduction of Homestay accommodation earlier this year, when can those people who are interested in this type of accommodation reasonably expect to commence taking in the guests.

MR KING Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Certainly I regret that the introduction of Homestay accommodation has taken longer than anticipated. I am reliably informed that a draft Bill will be available, it is a draft Bill to amend the Tourist Accommodation Act will be available for introduction to this House at its next sitting, therefore the earliest possible commencement of the legislation would be March 1996. I would also like to reiterate at this point with this opportunity that it will not simply be a matter of interested people opening their doors to visitors. The key to the Homestay accommodation is that visitors will actually be staying with the hosts family and not simply accommodated in the vacant second house down the street. The legislation will also include a set of minimum standards and a system of licensing. So I wanted to add those additional words.

MR SMITH Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. A question for the same Minister. The sixth and seventh Assembly have agreed to expressions of interest in a first class hotel. How many expressions of interest were received, how many could be considered local, how in depth were the proposals and what steps have you taken to



Big Al, the Administrator and the Norfolk Island Government. Earlier this year I put a proposal before the ...

MR BUFFETT Point of Order Madam Deputy Speaker, the Office of the Administrator is to be respected in this House and I would ask that both Members and Ministers observe that.

MR CHRISTIAN The term was used affectionately but I shall withdraw it if it offends. Earlier this year I put a proposal before the KAVHA Management Board a significant upgrade of Flagstaff including a properly remade and sealed pathway using the bed of the historical access track. Such a measure would have also halted the significant erosion problem that is occurring in the area. The Administrator had added his support to this proposal as a viable option but the Australian Heritage Commission could not be convinced that the work should be allowed to go ahead. So at this time, Mr Smith, I do not intend banning people from walking up there, neither am I able to tell you categorically how I will be able to repair the track.

MR SMITH Mr King the Minister for Tourism and Finance, your question is in the development of the new Airport Terminal. When do you propose construction will commence on that project.

MR KING Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Mr Smith will recall that it was only at the last sitting that it was agreed to form a management group which is to consider various questions relating to the terminal project. Mr Smith also knows that in recent weeks the Administration has sought expressions of interests from persons or companies to supervise and oversee the project and that process will not be complete for a couple of weeks. In the meantime, Madam Deputy Speaker, the management group consistent with its initial brief will be submitting a package to 8 architectural firms, all of which have shown an interest in preparing and submitting design concepts. It is reasonably expected, given the intervening festive period and indeed professional requirements, that design concepts will be available early March for consideration by Members. Finally, Madam Deputy Speaker, as I have mentioned earlier on more than one occasion, the decisions relating to concept and commencement of construction will not be taken unilaterally by me but by all Members. Of course if it were my own personal project or my own personal money I can assure Members that it would move a lot quicker, however, as Members will appreciate public funds are involved and the processes of accountability will understandably be more time consuming and I'm sorry I can't be any more precise than that, but I'm sure that Mr Smith understands that I can't be more precise than that.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr King. That concludes questions on notice.

### **Papers**

We move now to presentation of Papers. Are there any Papers for presentation.

MR KING Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I table the financial indicators for the month of November 1995. I move that they be noted.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER The question is that the Paper be noted.

MR KING Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Just a few brief remarks. Members are aware that the mid-term budget review is to take place in January and at that time revenue and expenditure performance will come under much closer scrutiny than what we or me are going to follow just now. However it is fair to say that the

indicators at the 5 month mark suggests that there will be some pain in certain areas.

As at the end of November, the only area of revenue which is not within or above reasonable expectations is the area of other taxes which is run in at only 88% of budget. This appears to be as a result of some erroneous estimations, some down turn in taxable activity. Total revenue, however, total revenue is performing satisfactorily at 98%. On the expenditure side, Madam Deputy Speaker, areas of immediate concern are health and welfare, both of which are performing well in excess of anticipated expenditure and will likely require additional supply of some may be \$200, \$240 odd thousand for the year. Whilst this is a disappointment it is not to me of major concern as I am confident that with some belt tightening during the final 6 months we will achieve a balance situation and I should stress, Madam Deputy Speaker, that any belt tightening measures will not, certainly if I have my way, will not include any expenditure items which have a direct and favourable impact on the economy. Thank you, that's all I have to say.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you. Participation.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I would particularly like to refer to the increases in the welfare expenditure that are incurred in the first half of this financial year or to date. Expenditure on welfare services by the Norfolk Island Government has, over the last 10 years, increased remarkably. This increase is attributable to two main factors. Firstly the aging of the population which means that each year a greater percentage of the total population is in the age group that qualifies for pensions. Secondly persons who have reached a pensionable age group in the last 10 years have not had war service and do not qualify for a veteran affairs pensions. As this is a large proportion of the population covering a pensionable age in the 70's and 80's. Additionally the fall in interest rates paid by the Banks over the last few years has meant that less people are excluded from receiving a pension on the grounds of income. The Government is aware of the trend in population and we are seeking details to look at future demands and the kind of welfare services that will be required by the aging population. Further for the first 5 months of this year there has been an abnormally large expenditure on medical services for welfare recipients and it is probable that additional funds will have to be made available to cover that expenditure. However an analysis on medial and hospital expenditure incurred by pensioners for the first 5 months of this year indicate that there has been an unusually high number of referrals including some from major medical treatment but it is not expected that this trend will continue throughout the second half of the year. As already a decrease in the rate of referral has become evident but a clearer picture should emerge in due course. Unfortunately we cannot plan for such eventualities. People do get ill and they need care and it is the duty of the Government to help them if they can provide that care out of their own pocket. The other aspects that I wish to briefly comment about is the increases in health expenditure. A large proportion of the health expenditure is fixed, no matter how many people we have in the hospital, no matter how many people seek treatment and seek the assistance of our Doctors. There has been a very consistent decline in the number of people attending for medical treatment and the number of beds being utilised in terms of bed nights at the hospital has also decreased over the first half of this year which to a certain extent we should be grateful for, that our population is healthy but on the other hand we know that a great many of the people that had to be referred overseas for very expensive treatment but it is still part of our responsibilities to our society to take care of them and unfortunately this is reflected in the overall figures. Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson. Are there further Papers for presentation Honourable Members. Is there further debate on that Paper that is before

us at the moment. No, we move then to the next Paper Mrs Lozzi-Question.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I would like to table the annual review of the Employment Act 1988 as it ...

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER I apologise for the interruption Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson, we do have a motion before us which I have failed to see. The question before us is that the Paper be noted.

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

The ayes have it thank you. I apologise for that, would you please continue Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I refer to the annual review of the Employment 1988 as it refers to the application of the Workers Compensation provisions. I table that Paper and I move that it be noted.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson. The question before us is that the Paper be noted.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you. The annual review of the Workers Compensation provisions of the Employment Act 1988 show some interesting as well as some worrying trends. During 94/95 financial year there were 100 work injury incidents resulting in a 123 injuries in the workplace. Unfortunately this means that there were an increase of 35 incidents over the previous financial year and this is far too large an increase. We do have to take some action to try and reduce it. A total of 1,392,200 hours were worked and an average of \$17,000 was paid each month by employers to provide workers compensation to cover their employees. As a result of the 100 incidents, 17 people received weekly benefits for varying periods, totalling approximately \$30,500. Medical services provided for work place injuries came to some \$23,000. The accident reports filed with the Employment Liaison Officer indicate that the most common cause of injuries were the not wearing of safety equipment and I have asked the Health and Safety Inspector to visit those employers who have the highest number of injuries and where those kind of accidents tend to occur and advise both workers and employers of the need to protect themselves. The other common cause of injuries were the improper placement of equipment or loads and the improper lifting of items. Also in 60% of incidents the workers reported being struck by an object. In many of these situations the potential for permanent and more damaging injury was considerable. The effect of which experiences the highest rate of injuries are the building and engineering trades with 14.6% rate of incidents per 100,000 hours work. The total for the whole work force is less than half that figure as 7.2 per 100,000 hours work. The work indicated by the payment of the workers compensation contribution did this year show a small increase and this is the first financial year where that has happened. 6,110 extra hours were worked this year over last year and that's .44% above last year. It is good to see that this increase has occurred but I must say that we are not terribly confident that it reflects the real situation, not because the increase has occurred but because of great many people seem to be tending to underestimate the hours worked by the employers. Again we are trying to take some measures to encourage people to really declare their amount of hours worked by their employers and that is covered in some of the amendments to the Employment Act that Mr Adams is putting forward. Two long term workers compensation cases were settled in the court of the year with enormous total reimbursement of capital benefits paid to those two people by the insurer of the fund so that by phone measures the Norfolk

Island Fund is not being drained over the years by payments such as that. I would like to note that prior to the Employment Act 1988 there were no laws governing employment on Norfolk Island. Prior to September 1st 1991 when the minimum wages and conditions provisions came into effect an employee was paid at the employers discretion and prior to the 1st November 1991 if an accident took place in the work place there was no payment for loss of wages or medical expenses and common law recovery was the only option available and that was a very costly one. In referring to the coming of this provision and the introduction of the Employment Act I would like to pay tribute to Mrs Alice Buffett who worked so hard in the shaping of this Act and seeing that it was brought before this House. Unfortunately by the time it did come before this House it did not truly reflect what she had worked for. Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson. Debate Honourable Members. Mr King.

MR KING Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I have a particular interest in the Employment Act and I regret that I haven't had the opportunity to read that report in detail over the last day or two I think I have had it. At the appropriate time I would like to move the adjournment of the debate so I can take up the matter again in February if I have a need to. But before I do that just a few brief comments. I have to say that I am very, very surprised that the increased incidents of work place accidents and injuries. To my mind that is, to one part of my mind that is unacceptable, to another part of my mind is perhaps understandable that as environmental people, in an environment become accustomed to having a system in place. There is obviously a greater call or more people avail themselves of that system and I guess that is what it's there for. But nevertheless may be it does call out for completion of these outstanding codes of practice for the work place which I have been bleating about for many years but never seem to come to fruition and of course an increased inspectorate which appears to me to be an essential and often missing ingredient in our legislative process. We make these laws and we don't bother to properly administer them in terms of inspecting or follow up. I would agree that the .44% increase in the number of hours working to me suggests that there is gross misrepresentation of the hours, hours worked. That worries me a lot because that is the only income item for the scheme and I have noticed that over the past few years there has been a general tapering off which has been excess in the fall, excess to the rate of fall in economic activity. An increase of .44% increase during 95 is certainly not consistent with all the other economic indicators which suggests a much greater increase in economic activity in most of the segments that I am able to have a look at. So it's clear to me that there, it's not clear to me, it seems to me to be likely that there is a level of avoidance which is unsatisfactory. Again, Madam Deputy Speaker, at an appropriate time I would move adjournment.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr King. Further debate Honourable Members. Mr King would you then like to move the adjournment.

MR KING I so move thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you. The question before us Honourable Members is that debate be adjourned and resumption of the debate made an Order of the Day for the next sitting.

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

Thank you, the debate is adjourned. Presentation of further Papers. Mr King.

MR KING Madam Deputy Speaker in accordance with section 19 of the Norfolk Island Government Tourist Bureau Act I table the financial accounts for the year ending 30th June 1995.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Debate Honourable Members. Mr King are you moving that the Paper be noted.

MR KING I put no question Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Are there any further Papers Honourable Members. Mr King.

MR KING Thank you. I table the Inbound Passenger statistics for November 1995 and move that - That Paper be noted.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr King. The question before us is that Paper be noted. Mr King.

MR KING A few brief comments, very brief. I tend to keep them brief when the figures are not favourable Madam Deputy Speaker but I can't avoid mentioning that the figures are comparable to November 1995, comparative to November 1994 I'm sorry. A 10.9% down. That is not a good figure in the build up to Christmas. I would have liked to have offered more cheer but I have to say that I am not concerned with that, it is not part of a sustained pattern, downward pattern. It could, I guess, be called a somewhat of an aberration. I would be concerned if that sought of pattern continued over a period of 2 or 3 months but I don't anticipate that happening at all. The figures for November, the total figures for November are consistent with a five year average. You'll note that they are also down some 11% on 94. They are up about 23% on 93. So there are good signs there and I am not trying to, well I guess I am trying to highlight, Madam Deputy Speaker, that there are bright spots in those figures and they are not all dark spots but they certainly don't seem to cause for alarm at this point in time.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr King. Debate Honourable Members. There being no further debate I put the question that the motion be agreed to.

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

Thank you. We move on to further Papers. Are there further Papers for presentation Honourable Members. There being no further Papers we move then to Statements.

### **Statements**

Are there any Statements of an official nature. Mr Christian.

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I wish to make a short Statement with regard to the results of a recent archeological work that has been carried out in the Kingston area. Madam Deputy Speaker, archeological excavations that have just concluded have disclosed the existence of the prehistoric settlement site on Norfolk Island. Some tools have been found in various places ever since first settlement days but no occupation sites were recorded up until now. The site lies below recent sand dunes under a pine plantation in Emily Bay. A small excavation shows that it consists of a single layer of charcoal blackened sand associated with

several fire pits or ovens of characteristic oceanic type. Around these are found many bones of fish, including snapper and of birds including the extinct booby and extinct pigeons. They are layered amongst numerous remains of petrels. The Pacific rat and dog are also represented. Large basalt flakes from the manufacturer abscess were recovered. The form of these suggest that the site has been occupied by prehistoric Polynesians. They are probably 800 to 1,500 years and will be radio carbon dated to obtain a more precise age. The discovery of a prehistoric occupation site on Norfolk Island adds an important piece of the puzzle of ancient Pacific colonisation and it brings new heritage responsibility to the western Pacific. Much remains to be done in regards to the Emily Bay site. It is known to extend to westward to the stream but whether it is the same side as that from which has eroded into Slaughter Bay has now yet been established. Similarly whether the site is a diffuse and occupation or the locality of an ancient village perhaps occupied for hundreds of years is yet to be determined. The material recovered during a recent investigation will be analysed at the Australian National University during 1996 and it is hoped that further field work will occur later in the year. Norfolk Island prehistory project is directed by Professor Athol Anderson who himself is a Polynesian descent and he is at the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies within the Australian National University. The project has been funded jointly by the ANU and the Australian Heritage Commission and is managed and facilitated by the Norfolk Island Government through KAVHA. Thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Christian. Are there further Statements Honourable Members. Mr Christian.

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I have one further short Statement. Madam Deputy Speaker, this Statement is in regard to the upcoming Norfolk Island Airshow. The event will be held over a two day period the 21st and 26th of April 1996 to coincide with the Anzac week celebrations. The Airshow Director is a Mr Alan Taylor. The Airshows commentator will be a Mr Dave Prosser. Madam Deputy Speaker, the participants in the Airshow at this time will be the Royal Australian Airforce and the form of their participation will be the Roulettes Aerobatic team. They will have a of hot air balloons. The Blue Eagles Formation Parachute team will be here and they will have static aircraft on display and at this stage I think they will be the C-130 Hercules and the HS-748. The Royal Australian Navy will be represented and they will have on display a HS-748 Electronic Warfare Aircraft and the Royal Australian Navy Command Band will also be present. The Royal New Zealand Airforce will be represented by the Airforce Band, a C-130 Hercules which will perform static and flying displays, an Andover Aircraft which will also perform static and flying displays and the Kiwi Blue Formation Parachute team. The New Zealanders will also have a P3K Orion and put on a flying and hopefully static display on Norfolk during a routine oceanic patrol. There will also be some private participants from Australia and New Zealand, Hemples Aviation from Queensland have indicated that they will be able to come along with AN2 Bi Plane. This is the largest radial Bi Plane in the world. They will have a Lang-care aircraft which will be of interest to kit builders. It's a home built aircraft and they will have a Sucoy-29 which currently rates amongst the top aerobatic aeroplanes in the world. It's of Russian design and they will also have a Formation Parachute team and lastly Rural Aviation from New Zealand have made their Hawker Sea Fury available and Members may recall that Grant Beil is one of the pilots who have been through Norfolk on two previous occasions I believe to attend the sky racing that is held down in Tasmania and in addition to the aircraft that I have just mentioned, at this stage there are indications that up to 40 light aircraft are expected to attend the Airshow in a spectator capacity. So all in all it looks pretty brightly, the Anzac week Airshow week in 1996.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Christian.

MR CHRISTIAN That's the updates from me Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you. Are there further Statements. No further Statements. Honourable Members we move to a matter of public importance. Honourable Members Mr Buffett has proposed a matter of public importance namely that the Legislative Assembly discuss the Press Reports and attitudes of recent times in the Australian, New Zealand and Norfolk Island media which portray Norfolk Island being directed to travel in a direction contrary to the aims expressed in the Norfolk Island Act and not in accord with the expressed views of Norfolk Island residents. Standing Orders provide that before discussion may take place on this statement that three Members of this House, including the proposer of the statement, Mr Buffett, indicate their approval by rising in their places. I seek that support from Members. Thank you Honourable Members. Mr Buffett you have the call to speak.

MR BUFFETT Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I am raising this matter of public importance, Madam Deputy Speaker, I explained that it is not a motion. There isn't a no vote or a yes vote. It's a matter of identifying a subject of importance and bringing it forward for discussion. What is this matter, Madam Deputy Speaker, well it's a matter of a series of related articles that have appeared in the press in New Zealand, in Australia and republished in the Norfolk Islander on the 16th December 1995. There are basically 4 areas of interest covered by these articles. These articles are basically the same articles but reproduced in different newspapers. Four areas of interest covered. (1) The republican issue as it may eventually relate to Norfolk Island. Secondly the independence from Australia or on the other end of the spectrum, integration with Australia is the second area that is generally talked about. The self government for Norfolk Island issue is in the article and finally there is the assertion that Norfolk Island is a simmering hot bed of political rivalry. They are the 4 general areas that are addressed by this article. The question is then why is it important to raise the articles. Well mainly, Madam Deputy Speaker, because it misrepresents Norfolk Island's situation. I am particularly concerned because it promotes the thought that Norfolk Island is no longer giving emphasis to its' internal self government aim. For example the article says, in part, I think, I quote, I think that we should find that in 10 years we, that means we in Norfolk Island, will be treated more like one of the internal Territories or like another State. Continuing another part, we may find that we will surrender some of the Commonwealth type functions that we have now like Immigration, Social Services. That just gives you one brief quotation. I have got to say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I have no way of knowing whether this is an accurate quotation and I have no way of knowing whether it is properly attributed but that aside, the damage is that the talk of surrendering areas of Norfolk Island authority is not advancing the self governmental process of doing our own thing in our own back yard. May I remind Honourable Members that the Norfolk Island Act of 1979 which in very brief terms one can recognise as Norfolk Island's constitution as we are presently situated sets out in its preamble that it is desirable and the wish of the people of Norfolk Island to achieve internal self government. Immigration and Social Welfare, just to pick up two of those headings mentioned in the article, are matters that we have substantially had transferred to Norfolk Island's authority over a period of time and we should we start to negotiate to surrender authority, we are not advancing but reversing our capacity to manage our own affairs. Clearly if the story is going around that Norfolk Island is changing its constitutional course from self government to integration, whether that be partial or otherwise, then this wild assumption must be corrected and the Island's elected representatives must play a key role in making this correction and therefore this matter of public importance gives opportunity to Honourable Members

to do so. My position, very briefly, is this. Norfolk Island's path to internal self government must continue. We have had a generation, generations (plural), of being ruled by others. We have been dissatisfied with that system. We have complained against it. It hasn't really worked for us in the long term to our advantage. We have said we can do better than those days. Well really now we have the opportunity and we have had this opportunity since 1979, that is for the past 16 years. Self government isn't an easy child to rear. Indeed it may not survive with mere luke warm attention. It requires encouragement and commitment and be sustained by a vision that it will mature and blossom and provide our Island family with security and sustenance for our on-going well being and happiness. Without vision, without commitment it may shrink, it may wither and it may fade away and if we allow this to happen we will have lost our chance because it won't come again to us in our life time, Madam Deputy Speaker. Our generation will be found wanting when called to measure and contribute to maintaining and protecting that which makes Norfolk Island what it is. We will have thrown away the work of our forebears and we will leave no Norfolk Island legacy for those who follow us in this place. Some of recent times, and this is especially during the last couple years of financial constraints, may have formed the view that things are a bit too tough here both financially and otherwise and they would want to seek a better life elsewhere. The first thing to be said, Madam Deputy Speaker is that self government is expected to deliver paradise to us all. Perfect though we would like it to be, no such perfect system or place exists on this earth. Self government, however, allows us to determine our own destiny, not have it determined for us by others. Limitations it may have but it will be our own, it will be our own and that's important. However, having said that, it must be said that we need to work harder to ensure that this place remains the better place to live when compared with other places. In both the long and short term our economic future requires mature attention. Now we do need to widen our financial base and some aspects are presently being examined for example Brian Bates, with a group of Members and commercial sector representatives, are looking to see whether a GST can replace and perform better than some of our existing levies, duties and imposts. Now if acceptable, I underline the if at this moment because it's early days, but if acceptable it may provide a broader revenue base and give greater incentives for visitors and residents in what may genuinely be a duty free Island. Now this may or may not turn out to be satisfactory an idea, only further research will tell that, but it is a genuine effort to look to the economic future and to examine prospects not looked at before in the Island. In the industry of Tourism, we should and I understand we are although I've got to say that there are no signs of success at this time exhibited, we should be advertising and encouraging visitors with a greater disposable income to visit here. Now we value the visitors we already have but our additional efforts should be directed to greater yield in the market place, because in our industry sense we are in the business of really importing dollars into the Norfolk Island community so that it can turn over, although that may sound blunt, it is in fact part of the processes that we are on about in an industry sense in Norfolk Island and we should be marketing the Norfolk Island product to people who may achieve the yield that we desire and of course we have all talked about that when they get here they shouldn't be cocooned to the extent where they have no free time to explore the Island and spend those funds that we would encourage them to bring to this Island. Now I have only mentioned those matters, Madam Deputy Speaker, relating to the Island's economy as examples, examples of effort to maintain and improve the Island's economic capacity which in turn to come back to my principle point are examples of how self government can be supported by our own efforts and by our own achievements. You see our vision is not mythical. It can be maintained and that is the point I am endeavouring to strike home and we need to be able to demonstrate so and demonstrate so regularly. To the Norfolk Island community, Madam Deputy Speaker, we can promote emotional pride in this Island and we must do this and we must do it consistently and regularly. Norfolk Island pride is essential

and coupled with Norfolk Island pride must be the financial substance to be comfortable and secure at work and at play here in our homeland. Now this two can be delivered with this clear vision and the right effort. So that is my view about this matter, Madam Deputy Speaker, but let me say that it's not only my view because I know the majority of the Norfolk Island community are equally of this view and how do I know that, well I will tell you and you will know this already but it deserves emphasis in this context. We have had two recent referendums. In February 1991 we had a referendum on the question, which I quote with respect to matters discussed by the legal regimes inquiry including the question of federal representation, should the constitutional position, I'll just underline that, should the constitutional position of Norfolk Island be changed bearing in mind my earlier identification that the constitutional position of Norfolk Island enshrined in the Norfolk Island Act is to achieve internal self government. Well in respect of that question do you want to change, what did the voters say. Well the voters said this. 162 said they did want to change but 788 wanted to maintain the present course. Really that's an overwhelming percentage of wanting to continue to pursue the course that we are on about. In December 1991, the same year, we had a specific issue at referendum and I'll just quote that question, the Commonwealth proposes to pass a law to make Norfolk Island part of Canberra for federal elected purposes are you in favour of this proposal. There was a lot of debate about this and this was seen in some areas as a measure of integration and canvassed at such at that referendum. What did the voters say in response to that question. 178 said that they were in favour of that but 801 said no hence my conclusion, Madam Deputy Speaker, that a substantial majority of Norfolk Island residents want to continue the path of internal self government upon which we are presently embarked. No change is contemplated. Now there were other things of concern in the article but I have obviously considered that the self government issue is of the first importance and I have given my views about it and I have explained why and my further view that this is what the majority of Norfolk Island residents want. Now in conclusion with the New Year of 1996 approaching it might be a good idea to let the community know that we, as Members of this Legislative Assembly, will indeed carry out their wishes during 1996 and indeed in subsequent years. If Members want to travel another course, of course let them know that too because there will be another election in about a year and a bit and that is what I have to say on the matter.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Buffett. Further participation Honourable Members. Mr Christian.

MR CHRISTIAN Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I too was concerned about the articles that appeared in various newspapers and I'm not sure whether Mr King has been misquoted, misinterpreted or whatever. In the articles he has stated that, in his opinion, his policy of moving close to Australia has majority support within Norfolk Island. Madam Deputy Speaker, I wish to distance myself from those comments. Madam Deputy Speaker, it is doubtful that Mr King has, or ever will have, a mandate to express such an opinion and in any attempts to portray them as government policy is totally wrong. Madam Deputy Speaker, as far as I am aware, the majority of Members who constitute this House continues to strive for full internal self government with no intention to moving closer to, or being integrated, into Australia. That is certainly my position, Madam Deputy Speaker. Canberra is simply a burden we can't afford, in fact Madam Deputy Speaker, Canberra may turn out to be a burden that Australia cannot afford. Madam Deputy Speaker, the significance of recent archeological discoveries in the Emily Bay area should not be underestimated. It re-establishes, beyond doubt, that we are an indigenous race and that therefore we are culturally distinct and separate from Australia. Madam Deputy Speaker, further research within this area will demonstrate beyond doubt that the Polynesian

inhabitation of the Emily Bay area were the ancestors of the polynesians that welcomed the Bounty mutineers into their society. Madam Deputy Speaker, it also demonstrates the incredible knowledge Queen Victoria had of polynesian history. For you see, Madam Deputy Speaker, when she allowed the Pitcairn community to relocate to Norfolk Island in 1856, she was in fact allowing to return home, she was righting a wrong, she was returning a land to its rightful people, a land that did not belong to the Crown. Madam Deputy Speaker, this is the home of the indigenous people of Norfolk Island and we are home to stay. Madam Deputy Speaker, you and all Members of this House can rest assured that I will not sit idly by and let the likes of Mr King displace us yet again. Thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Christian. Mr Adams.

MR ADAMS Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I would like to, at this time, put my position on this matter. I think it is fair to say this matter has come about from statements in the press attributed to Mr King. Madam Deputy Speaker, the comments made by Mr King in the press along the line of having a policy of moving closer to Australia are not an indication of my point of view and I don't support it.

I read in those press comments and Mr King's comments in the past that indicative in his year that integration is desirable. I do not support integration with Australia at all or any policy explicit or implied that will lead us in that direction to any degree. I believe, Madam Deputy Speaker, the negatives far out weigh the positives when one considers, for instance, such things as income tax, immigration barriers dropped that as Mr Buffett stated one of the points mentioned in the press reports that immigration would be one area where there would be a substantial weakening. That would have the effect then, Madam Deputy Speaker, of allowing anybody who is an Australian citizen to move at random to Norfolk Island, it would also incur a general loss of identity of our status and would also mean, I believe, a substantial watering down of Norfolk's self government. It would in effect become a clayton self determination, the one you have got when you don't have it. Madam Deputy Speaker, because Mr King made his comments as Head of Government it implies that the move closer 6699 comments are made on behalf of the Norfolk Island Government and the Assembly. Madam Deputy Speaker, this is certainly not the case and it is somewhat annoying to have the Head of Government making such inappropriate comments. Madam Deputy Speaker, it begs the question of whether or not the Head of Government adequately passes onto membership views, adequately passes on their views or whether he simply pushes his own views, whether or not they happen to be at odds with the various views and policies held by the Assembly and the community. Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to say again I distance myself from these comments made by Mr King and to reiterate that they are not made on my behalf and I don't support them. Thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you. Further participation. Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. First of all I would like to say that I find some of the reaction to the comments attributed to Mr King incredibly exaggerated having worked with him now for the last year and a half. I have certainly not heard him say that he is against self government. In fact he seems to have fought for it and advanced it in every opportunity he has had. I think we should also remember that we are independent Members and although he happens to be the Head of Government he is entitled to his opinion, may be he might explain in a little while he will tell us how he formed this opinion that he thinks the Island is moving closer or might move closer to Canberra. I would like to state my position, I'm in favour of self government. I think it is an essential aspect of the character of Norfolk Island. I think it is very beneficial to the Island. There may be difficulties ahead for example where a situation of an aging population we may not be able to meet the

bills as easily as we might but we will certainly have to look at that in the future and make provisions accordingly. There are a great many advantages to being independent, to dealing with problems at the local situation, dealing with them directly and in a manner that is more appropriate than would be if they were handled from a distance but of all the comments that were made in that statement, those newspaper articles which are also similar it seems to me that the thing that stood out as the most inappropriate was the misrepresentation of the turmoil that Norfolk Island is supposed to be undergoing about the question of a potential republic being declared in Australia. May be I am completely out of touch but I certainly haven't noticed any great turmoil about it. It's one of the things we will have to face when it comes closer. It's one of the debates that should be encouraged to canvass what people really feel about it but to feel that this is a hot bed of controversy about things like that well it certainly seems to be exaggerated to me. Once again I would like to hear from Mr King to exactly why he formed the opinion that we are moving closer in the way he suggested and if in fact the article represented his opinions in the correct manner. I would like to finally say that I am in favour of self government and I would rather that, in future, Norfolk Island maintained that position and I'm fairly certain that most people on Norfolk Island, as they indicated in the two referendums quoted by Mr Buffett, very much support self government and would like us to continue in that direction. Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson. Mr King.

MR KING Thank you. I wanted to wait until someone had some kind words to say to me, Madam Deputy Speaker, before I join the debate and I join now, not anticipating that there won't be any further kind words said about me. I certainly hope there are later on in this debate but I'll make contribution now and contribution a little bit later on. I have to say that I am somewhat surprised that the articles in the paper have been elevated to the importance or to the level where they sent warrant be thrown into the House as a matter of public importance. Remarks that I have made are remarks that I have made for along time, along time. If one can say nothing else about me, you are free to say that I am very, very consistent in what I say and nothing that I have said in that article or which is attributed to me, some of which is wrong and misquoted of course but journalists do that, most of it is quite accurate. Remarks that I have made outside the political arena on the edge of politics and I continue to make them in this forum. I certainly have made the same comments during the term of the sixth Assembly. I was re-elected. I must suggest too it was a 35% swing in my favour in the seventh Assembly and I have repeated those remarks in the seventh Assembly. So I don't resolve from it. I am a little bit disappointed that some people see them, my role as Head of Government as one which suggests that I should refrain from expressing my opinions. I shouldn't have the facility to express my personal opinions. That is not what western democracy is all about. I am indeed an individual. I know that often I am controversial. Sometimes I do that deliberately and I do that to provoke and stimulate debate on matters and that is precisely what I have done on this occasion. I have been trying to get this debate going for months and months and months and no one has taken the bite. I am glad to have this opportunity now to talk about these matters. I think it is important that we talk about them. Important for me to make sure that people understand what the blazes I'm talking about when I open up my mouth and where I actually stand in the scheme of things. So I guess if I have achieved any objectives in recent times, I have achieved the objective of getting this into public forum for debate. But there are some things that need to be explicitly underlined about my comments to that particular AAP Journalist. They are the worst kind of course because they just don't write for one paper, they fire it off all over the place. Sometimes they can be very good in terms of lifting Norfolk's profile and getting an opinion out

into the press and print media but this particular person was a freelance AAP. So the first of these things that I wanted to explicitly underline is that I emphasise when I was giving my interview to that reporter that my comments are my personal views on the future of Norfolk Island. Now again don't expect me because I am Head of Government to refrain from uttering my personal views because I will not. I made it clear that my views were not views of the Norfolk Island Government. The second point that I emphasise and I'm perhaps sorry that this particular part wasn't reported in the local press was that if there was a referendum in the Island on their republican issue, the monarchy question, that I have expressed everywhere I possibly can. I have expressed no doubt whatsoever that the community of Norfolk Island would overwhelmingly support the status quo and that is the continuation of the constitutional monarchy. It doesn't matter. I'm sure to you people that I'm a republican and I put my hands up about that too. I mean I don't hide from these things. I mean that is not what I am about but I understand fully the position relating the question of the monarchy in Norfolk Island and I appreciate that. The third thing I must emphasise is that my view which was described in the article as a policy of moving closer to the Island is really an unremarkable stance which benefits the Island and enhances the part of internal self government. Let me explain why (when a plane load of tourists passes over which are sustaining our economy so we can pursue self government) I mean I didn't use the word my policy. We in Norfolk Island have had the best of both worlds.

We have been given an opportunity in 1979 to perform in the arena of self government knowing full well that the back up situation was the Commonwealth of Australia and the good old Australian tax payer in a lot of cases. That was of considerable comfort to most people in Norfolk Island and it remains of considerable comfort to them now. I can assure you all. Those of you who know wish to hear that and go conveniently deaf when people start stating those opinions can hear me now. They draw considerable comfort from that. So we have had the best of both worlds. We have had is opportunity to perform in self government knowing full well that if we fail that the Commonwealth of Australia is there to prop us up. Unfortunately some people have chosen to cloud the reality of history with a bit of magic and wishful marzipan thinking. The reality is that in 1914 Norfolk Island became a Territory under the Commonwealth of Australia. It's form of Government supported by the act of the previous year, Norfolk Island Act 1913. The structure was revised by the Norfolk Island Act of 1957 and by the Norfolk Island Act of 1979 which I'm sure all of us regard as being our constitution. An Act of the Commonwealth of Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. That is the basis for us sitting here, the basis for our authority. The 1979 Act came about after the royal commission report made in 76 by Sir John Nimmo and that had the direct result of the support of the then Minister for Home Affairs in the Commonwealth Government, the Honourable Bob Ellicot who all regard as being a great friend of Norfolk Island. That 1979 Act established this Assembly as I pointed out previously. The ability for us to elect Executive Members, Ministers who would constitute a responsible Government and it changed the role of the Administrator of the Island on certain matters as someone who could only act on the advice of elected Norfolk Island parliaments rather than benevolent autocrat that the position holder formally was. Who wants to go back to the old days of the autocracy of the Administrator, certainly not me. I have a great many out in the community who do, in fact, want to go back to the old days but I have emphasised time and time again that there is no going back to the old days. The old autocrat on the hill is never going to be seen again. The mover of this particular matter of public importance today is uniquely placed to know exactly how the Government of Norfolk Island evolved in the lead up to 79 and since. It was Mr Buffett who was selected as the Chief Minister of the first Assembly who represented our Government and Assembly when the Australian Governor-General, Sir Zelman Cowan opened this Chamber for the first time. My view is that our links with Australia are historically cleared, not only because of the dry pieces of legislation which make up our constitutional history and to which

I have just referred, but also the tangible things as well. When we came here today we all drove through the arch way out the front there, flying above our heads in equal prominence with the Norfolk Island flag was the flag of the Commonwealth of Australia.

It's not there by accident. I didn't sneak down last night and slip it up the pole.

That, of course, is an outward sign of our constitutional reality that Norfolk Island is a part of Australia but it is a part which retains a separate and distinct identity which is unique to this place and which should be preserved at all costs. We sit in the Chamber with the Australian flag flying with the Norfolk Island flag up there behind the Speaker's chair and indeed it is a justly proud distinction of the mover of this motion that he has been appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his civic services in the Island. Of course along the end of Quality Row we have the cenotaph over which flies the Australian flag. The Australian flag under which Norfolk Island has gallantly fought and died. In the 1979 Norfolk Island Act preamble, Members will know that a review was planned to take place after 5 years. I referred to it the other day in camera discussions of that self government. It never formally took place though the success of self government over the last 16 years can be gauged as we have spoken about before by the number of new powers and responsibilities which have been transferred to Norfolk Island in that time. Some may think, with the exception of Mrs Lozzi-Cuthbertson, that I have played no part in the advancement of self government. I object to that quite frankly. I felt that I have played a prominent and strong part in pursuing self government and continue to do so.

There are certain matters that we spoke about again in camera earlier on this week and some people might think I'm just pretending putting up a camouflage. Since I have been a Member of the Assembly, in particularly as an Executive Member, I believe that I have made that contribution to the advancement and evolution of self government and that is a vital point. Norfolk Island has been able to support the infrastructure to shoulder new responsibilities and of course I referred from time to time with the steps that are presently being taken under the present Government and Assembly in the matter of land and the significance of that is that it is one of the last sought of remnants of major Commonwealth type activity here in the Island and that transfer will come about because of the extensive work at officer level and this is fundamental important because of the good relations which I have established and I have played the major part in. A good relations that we have with the Commonwealth of Australia. I can assure you it wasn't Mr Bennett and it wasn't Mr Brown and it wasn't Mr Robinson and I can assure you that the process for transfer of the land probably would not be as far down the track had it not been for my efforts which were objective and planned towards pursuit of self government. It's because the sixth and seventh Assemblies and their Ministers, Executive Members they have selected, have consistently pursued a policy of cooperation that I believe it is unarguable that self government has advanced more effectively in these last three or four years than in any other single period in the history of self government since 1979. I said earlier that we have had the best of both worlds. Having said all that, Madam Deputy Speaker, we must also think of the future. We have to consider realities of the situation where a public account has shrunk in real terms since 1979 and the dollar figures are being propped by progressive taxation regimes. Now these are inescapable facts. We can't get away from it. I can throw figures at you until the cows come home to support my arguments about the incompetency and the unreasonableness of Governments and authority in Norfolk Island since 1979. The proportion of tax revenue paid to the public revenue account fallen from 78% to 58% in the last 14 or 15 years. I can talk to you until the cows come home about the progressive deterioration in the reserve funds. Whether we held early in the days of self government, 62% of budget in our reserves. In our savings account, in our rainy days savings account, 7% it is now. Progressive, progressive banditry. Now those are inescapable facts and I don't believe that they are the outcomes of reasonable Government actions and I have said before that we have to take a long hard look at things and there needs to be a significant shift in policy



MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Christian. Mr King do you wish to proceed.

MR KING No I'll await your ruling, Madam Deputy Speaker. Mr Christian might be referring to a particular Point of Order if you ask him.

MR CHRISTIAN I shall await your decision Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Christian. Mr King I would ask you not to refer to identifiable Members of the Assembly or the public in your debate.

MR KING Do you rule any statement Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER...

MR KING I would descent from that ruling Madam Deputy Speaker but I'll proceed. In the article I suggested that Norfolk Island may in 10 years find itself treated more like a State. I think and I earnestly hope that this is the case because if there is a situation of fall back, if we are in a position where we fall over then I hope that that is the fall back situation. That we become an authority, a Government consistent with the types of Governments that exist in the State and Territories in Australia and what's wrong with that, I think it is a marvellous fall back situation quite frankly, absolutely marvellous and I wouldn't agree that I am not falling back any further than that. Certainly we would be better heard and we would be treated more like a proper Government than perhaps we are now or have been in recent years. Of course Members I thought that as Tourism Minister and a long time member of this community that I have been very serious and earnest in the past when I have referred to the Island's special and distinct identity and the need to protect that. I really find it a little offensive that people have suggested that I should cast that aside given, of course, that I am married to a Norfolk Islander of Pitcairn descent and my children are, as I am, Australian citizens but more than that proud Norfolk Islanders. I am disappointed that Mr Buffett finds there is no evidence of success in the pursuit of Tourism Policies under my regime. I thought that perhaps he was a little bit more astute than that, that he might have been able to interpret and analyse things a little bit better and if he does that he would see that I entered into this thing after a six or seven year progressive decline in tourism industry. That it levelled out in 1994 and rose in 1995 and that rise is sustained. Now I never stand up on soap boxes and wave and puff my chest out and say that I have played a great part in that.

MR BUFFETT Don't you.

MR KING No, no I don't. However let me do so on this occasion, Madam Deputy Speaker and invite Mr Buffett to relook at the tourism statistics. Apart from the commercial reality that our uniqueness has a place of very different from any other part of Australia is one of our best attributes and what draws our visitors here year by year. Why would any others want the big brother bureaucracy and the red tape of mainland Australia or Canberra. I wouldn't wish that on any one for heavens sake.

I hope that, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I never see the day either as a Member of the Legislative Assembly or as a member of the community where an individual cannot raise questions of public interest or express personal views such as my own about the republic and yet have this contribution criticised or vilified. I don't apologise for being perhaps controversial. Many of the remarks I have made have been made with very clear focus in mind, very clear objectives. Some of those objectives I have achieved.

I believe that I have played a major part in bringing Norfolk Island a degree of publicity that is hasn't had for many, many years during my term as Tourism Minister.

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I did that deliberately with the objective of assisting to lift the profile of Norfolk Island at our tourism market places and I think I have been reasonably successful in doing that. We are moving down the track to self government, internal self government Madam Deputy Speaker and the track may indeed end with Norfolk Island being somewhat closer in its constitutional make up to an Australian State but still retaining its separate identity. I think that is quite achievable. What we must do at some stage in the future, sooner rather than later as I have sought to emphasise, is wake up from our Rip van Winkle sleep and look at the economic realities of our balance sheet. We have a responsibility and duty to the community and individually to our constituents. I believe I live up to my responsibilities to my constituents. I don't do that by keeping my mouth shut and not offering my opinions but to live up to those responsibilities we must, Madam Deputy Speaker, in order to provide adequate Government and the essential services for the people of Norfolk Island. I don't believe we should that responsibility. Thank you very much. That's my contribution.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr King. Participation. Mrs Sampson.

MRS SAMPSON Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Just very briefly here, unlike Mr King I am not, and nor do I seek to be a professional politician bent on self congratulations so I'll keep my remarks brief. I and my family moved here 20 years ago because amongst other reasons it was different from any place on the Australian mainland. Since becoming a member of the community, the fourth and subsequently the seventh Assembly, I have always supported this difference and I will continue to do so. This may seem in contrast to the fact that I will be moving back to the mainland after the term of this Assembly but I have always believed it is the right of the individual have supported self help by either an individual, a community or in this case a Legislative Assembly. Self government here on the Island has my full support and will continue to do so wherever I may be. Thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Sampson. Mr Bates.

MR BATES Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I am not too sure whether I have heard speeches of independence here, speakers of self praise or political campaigning but I would like to bring the debate back to perhaps the real issue before us. I know that the opinions of individuals, journalists and pressure groups unfortunately are often taken out of context or formed with little regard to the real facts and sometimes they are more emotional than factual and often they come across as though they have wide support. I am unaware of any significant moves in the community to move away from the direction towards internal self government. It expresses the Norfolk Island Act. I hear the anti Australian rumblings, the independence rumblings and the integration rumblings and some are louder than others. I have stated on several occasions that I do not believe it is up to elected Members to try to change our course but to use their energies to progress the system under which they were elected. Any moves away from that course must come from a majority of the people. If we react every time we read or hear something that goes on that does not fit exactly with our own views, we will be so busy chasing our tails we will have no time to do what we are really supposed to be doing. It is a fact that Governments take a long time to bring about changes and this is a necessary part of the checks and balances of democracy as opposed to what might happen in a dictatorship for example. To bring about a change from our present course would take a lot of consultation and debate and work and public support. So lets not over act at this stage but just simply to be aware. It seems to me to be only a couple of meetings ago that we had discussions similar to this, that is the progression of internal self government. I don't know how many more times we will discuss it during the life of this Assembly but for my

part I intend to get on with the real job. We can spend our time debating the issue, we can spend our time playing politics as some seem to be doing but it is our efforts that will have the most effect on the future. Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Bates. Further participation. Mr Smith.

MR SMITH Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Well initially I agree with everything that David said, what Mr Buffett said, in his speech. I agree with things that other Members have said. I agree with some of the things that Mr King has said too. I think most people get elected to the Norfolk Island Assembly because there is a view in the community that everybody is on that same track towards self government. I don't think there has been many candidates that stand up at an election and say well I don't favour that. I do get disappointed when, just a couple of months ago as Brian said, we sat around here talking and we had a motion about self government, preserving self government which we all agreed to in debate but there is another issue that comes out of us which really annoys me and that is just recently a member of the community was interviewed by the paper stating his personal views and he is gone. Now here we have a Minister who supported the removal of that person for speaking his personal views, going to the mainland press, expressing a view of the Government, which means the Assembly, which I don't agree with and other Members around here don't agree with. I think that takes some thinking about. Michael says that he is consistent. Well I don't think he is in this particular case. Michael was a strong supporter of the person being removed recently. I don't think I can mention the persons name but he is not consistent now with the same sought of action being taken in this particular case. As Michael said, as Mr King said, his personal views have been expressed in the media on the mainland. I think that is fair enough if a Member is just a Member of the Assembly and they can you know, but as Head of the government or as an Executive I don't think they should be being quoted those sought of things that were quoted. I mean it does give people a different view of what we really down here for. Now if we all agree with what the Minister has said well that means we agree that we are not on the path to self government. Other things have been quoted, other figures. The Minister has quoted that others have briefly touched on it about what we are all here for. I came in here 3 or 4 months ago and as Michael said at the time huffing and puffing about planning all that stuff. But I will tell you what there is only Minister in this lot here, this Assembly that we have got has taken any interest in what I was talking about. Nobody else has picked it up. It is one of the most important things towards self government and I would certainly like to see that over the next couple of months when I'll progress this myself and I would certainly like to see any Members who have the time and the inclination to ask me what it is all about and perhaps give me some support and I would probably even go to suggesting if some Executives aren't interested in that they may need, their positions may need to be reviews. It's on the path to self government that is planning is one of the most important things. It's no good anybody sitting here and saying well we have done this and we have done that for the last 16 years cause we're not, we haven't, we are still not. I mean we can quote tourist figures as the Minister has. That hasn't changed in 5, 6, 7, 8 years. We are still running around the same number of tourist numbers and there are reasons for that but we don't ask ourselves why. The Minister did talk about hundreds of ours of work he has put into figures. That's fine. Minister I have done the same thing and I won't go into them in this debate but it shows that everything is dead flat and has been for some years. The Minister has been here for 3 or 4 years and that hasn't changed. If we are really serious about self government ... That's my view about the overall thing, about Ministers of the Government being quoted in the mainland press as having a different view to what generally I believe the Assembly believes and that is the road to full internal self government. Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER...

MR CHRISTIAN                    Just a short comment, Madam Deputy Speaker. In Mr King's debate or his participation in the debate he quoted some figures in percentage terms and I think from memory that he said that cash reserves at time of self government was 60% of the annual budget and he compares that today and he says we are up the creek. Some people out there in the community could rightfully, since they believe those figures, be horrified. What I would hope that Mr King at a future meeting of this House is come forward with a factual patrol of the situation. As all Members are sitting around the Table here realise the Revenue Fund there is only one aspect of the Administration of Norfolk Island. We have a significant number of business enterprises that have been separated from the Revenue Fund over the year or new ones that didn't exist then and have been created since and there are vast amounts of cash in a number of those enterprises so Madam Deputy Speaker what we need to do is look at a balance sheet at 1979 and look at a balance sheet for 1995 and you will find that the assets of the Administration or the Norfolk Island community have significantly increased. We are not broke by a long shot. We have substantial amounts of cash. They are not sitting in the reserve fund as some people like to call it but the cash is placed through out the business activities of the Administration and available if required for any specific or special purpose. Now I acknowledge that there are problems facing us in the future and I acknowledge that there are things that we haven't planned for but goodness sake that is what we are here for and we need to get off our backsides and come up with some entrepreneurial schemes that will ensure the financial viability of Norfolk in the future, not sit here and cry doom and gloom and goodness me we will fall over and you know rely on Australia to bail us out. That is not my intention. If there is a problem deal with it and if we are not capable of dealing with it, step aside and let someone who is capable get on with it because that is where Norfolk will go forward. That is will how Norfolk will prosper and that's what we need to do now and not sit here and give idle lip service to it and quite frankly, Madam Deputy Speaker, the seventh Assembly is rapidly running out of time in office to bring about any meaningful change. We talked about capital projects like Airport Terminals and things like that, that are three years behind schedule and we say aah yes that'll be a good boost for the economy but it's a short term fix. What we need to do is put something in place for the long term underlying benefit of the economy and I have seen no initiative in coming forward in the last year and a half and we need to do with it now. Mr Buffett has rightly said before that Mr Bates is well on the way with his GST review but I have grave doubts that if the Committee and the Assembly accept that a goods and services levy or a goods and services tax, whatever you want to call it, is the way to go, that it will ever be implemented in the life of the this Assembly and if it is not the initiative will be lost. So you know I think that we have to actively get on with the job of securing Norfolk's future and in doing that ensure that self government does survive. Thank you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Christian. Further participation Honourable Members. Mr Buffett do you wish to resume.

MR BUFFETT                    Yes, if we are at that stage Madam Deputy Speaker. Thank you. This debate, Madam Deputy Speaker, has been very helpful. When the mainland press in its bits that we have just quoted from and referred whilst it may have cast doubts that self government was alive and well in Norfolk Island we have confirmed by discussing it amongst ourselves today that we do support that Norfolk Island's path to self government wants to be continued amongst the Members here and that needs to be said. It needs to balance other things when it is said in other quarters and that is what we have done today. Obviously we have varying views about how some of it should

progress and we have to and fro'd about that and thrown a few barbs at each other about that. Well may be there is some healthiness about that too. That will always happen amongst a reasonably diverse group of people. As long as the main thrust remains that we do get along and want to travel in this direction. Let me do say, however, that I am a little concerned about the negative components that have been in the debate. Some considerable talk about falling over, fall back situations. Without a doubt and in a true planning sense, one has got to look to your fall back situation but your principle effort should be given to the direction in which you want to travel and I would have liked to have seen that we would have given more emphasis to the forward movement when we talk about these things. It has been also mentioned that we have talked about this a little bit before just recently. That's so, very true but I was disturbed by one particular interpretation of that and that was that we should may be put it aside and get on with the real issues. I want to emphasis to Honourable Members that achieving internal self government is the real focus in getting on with all of these other things. It is the things that will give us sustenance and it must go hand in hand. You just can't put it aside and run off on another track. It needs to be the continuous focus and all of the other things need to tie into it. So I would ask Members to not just think that this a matter that occasionally we bring up and have a chat about. It needs to be our continual vision and I would ask Members to give some thought to that and indeed I hope that they would be the principle proponents of ensuring that that vision is up there and continues and all of those things that we do elsewhere and else why in this community is focused upon achieving that. I will move Madam Deputy Speaker, using the correct words if I can find the Standing Orders this debate be concluded.

MR KING

...

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Mr Buffett are you prepared to ...

MR BUFFETT

I'm quite happy too. I am not trying to conclude debate if debate is not yet finished. I had assumed when you asked if anyone else wanted to speak and no one did so that you were inviting the debate to be wound up.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER I was under the impression that no one wished to speak further but Mr King has signalled that he does so I give you the floor Mr King.

MR KING

Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. I won't take too long. I am like Brian, may be we over do it a little bit talking about this sought of thing. It is helpful, I agree with Mr Buffett it is helpful to talk about these things from time to time and to question your Ministers indeed. I have no difficulty with that whatsoever. A firm believer in the parliamentary process, a firm believer and people know precisely what I mean when I say that. Mr Buffett can conclude from the debate that has occurred, that his vision is reaffirmed, those are the words which Mr Buffett uses and he has every right to use those words. The negatives ought to concern us. My view is Mr Christian has put a remarkable analysis of the public account forward in the last few minutes. I think that is quite extraordinary given that the decisions which were taken during his time as the Finance Minister and I refer there, of course, to the time when FIL was put up to the level that it is at now and we know quite clearly the social affects that that has had and I think the doubling of the Departure Fee tax. Those were the decisions which were taken on the last occasion when falling over was imminent and we have to ask ourselves whether they were responsible decisions that were taken and whether that is the quality of decision that we want to continue taking in the future. So we need to know where we have been as Mr Smith points out from time to time. We need to know where we have been to know where we are going to head. We need to know where and if we have made decisions that which were wrong,

unreasonable, may be irresponsible. I reiterate my views, Madam Deputy Speaker, my view that I support self government. I do that loudly and Mr Buffett has that perhaps most of all. I do not want to dismantle self government. It has never been my intention. It has always been my intention that self government work better than it has and work better for the average person. Self government will sustain us but at the end of the day you can't serve up to your kids for breakfast a vision. You can't tell them when they leave school what job am I going to do that you can go and have a job out there maintaining the vision. It needs to be more tangible than that and I believe that some of the areas that we have not acted in or Government has not acted in has added to the of your own tradition and culture in the person that is our own kids. But thank you Madam Deputy Speaker I have nothing more to say.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you. Further debate Honourable Members.

MR BUFFETT Do you want me to wind up again Madam Deputy Speaker do you.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Mr Buffett are you moving that the discussion be now concluded.

MR BUFFETT Well I just wanted to conclude on this note. You are quite right, we can't exist totally just on vision. If anyone thought that that was the thrust of my mentioning it than they didn't listen to what I said because my thoughts were also coupled with endeavouring to encourage that accompanying the vision was the sustenance, both financial, economic. That our physical well being needs to be cared for as well and I endeavoured to example some areas that were being moved ahead to provide it. So we are talking about a vision, yes. I exhort you to maintain it. It will be accounted if we do our things right by sustenance and values in this community that people will want to maintain and love. I do now move that we conclude this discussion.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER Thank you Mr Buffett. The question before us is that the discussion be now concluded.

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

Thank you.

### **Messages**

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER We move now to messages from the Office of the Administrator. I have received the following message No. 87. On the 16th November 1995 pursuant to subsection 22(1) of the Norfolk Island Act 1979 His Excellency the Governor General declared his assent to the Dangerous Drugs Amendment Act 1995, Act No. 17 of 1995 and the Poisonous and Dangerous Substances Amendment Act 1995 which is Act No. 18 of 1995 dated the 20th November 1995 signed Alan Kerr, Administrator.

MR SPEAKER Honourable Members are there any reports from Standing and Select Committees this morning. Mr Adams.

MR ADAMS Thank you Mr Speaker. On behalf of the Select Committee into Youth Employment Opportunities a brief report. Mr Speaker, the Select Committee is at the stage of working through the collated information consisting of submissions both written and oral detailed information received from Education Institutions off-shore, immigration material etc on the way to recommendations. Mr Speaker, I had hoped to finalise the Select Committee's report on Youth Employment Opportunities by this







The Bill as amended is agreed Members. We have concluded the substantial business for the day Honourable Members we move the fixing of the next sitting.

**FIXING OF THE NEXT DAY OF SITTING**

MR CHRISTIAN Mr Speaker, I move that this House at is rising adjourn until Wednesday 14th February 1996 at 10.00am.

MR SPEAKER Thank you. Honourable Members will recognise that this will give us a Christmas and New Year break and it will be the first meeting of the new year of 1996. Any discussion in respect of this. I put the question. The question is that that motion be agreed.

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

The ayes have it, that is agreed thank you.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MR KING Mr Speaker I move that the House do now adjourn.

MR SPEAKER The question is that the House do now adjourn. Mr King.

MR KING It's an appropriate time of the year to extend the greetings of the season to my constituents and my friends who aren't my constituents, my constituents which aren't my friends and any other conversations of those people. In the charitable climate of Christmas I forgive those who have said horrible things about me during the course of the year. I have certainly enjoyed working with my colleagues. I thank the Clerk for her time and efforts and I extend a happy and prosperous new year to everyone in the community. I am sure there are good signs on the horizon. Mr Jerimiah may not agree with me but I can see good signs on the horizon and I'm sure that 1996 will be a prosperous year for us all.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mr King. Further participation in the adjournment debate. Mr Bates.

MR BATES Thank you Mr Speaker. The task force investigating whether a goods and services tax in lieu of certain other imposts would be a benefit to the community as well as a meeting weekly has met with the Minister for Finance, MLAs and senior public servants. The task force has basically formulated an opinion on how such a tax could apply and the rate that it considers would be necessary to cover the revenue if surrendered. The task force's next stage is to investigate how such a tax would affect the various sections of the community and we will be seeking assistance from the community in this regard. Initially in the new year it will be approaching various organisations and individuals and the members of the task force will be pleased to talk to anyone who approaches them. The task force is interested in both positive and negative views so that they can take them into consideration. Members of the task force are Kevin Pereira, Norm (Slick) Buffett, Ian Anderson and myself and finally, Mr Speaker, I too would like to wish all Members of this Assembly and everyone on Norfolk a happy Christmas and all the best for 1996.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mr Bates. Mrs Cuthbertson.

MRS CUTHBERTSON Thank you Mr Speaker. I think it is appropriate for this House to note the great honour bestowed upon an ex Member of this House, Mrs Alice Buffett by organisations overseas. It is pretty remarkable that her work is being given this recognition and I would like to extend my congratulations and I'm sure my colleagues would like to do the same. Miss Alice Buffett in her tenure in this House initiated a great many reforms for the welfare of the people of Norfolk Island that are having long term benefits for the people she cared about, those people who were disadvantaged or at risk and who were not being cared for properly by the rest of society at that time and I do hope that her spirit and her direction will continue to guide this House in the years to come and I would like to congratulate her and I'd like to give my best wishes to everyone on the Island, visitors and residents and TEPs alike for the coming festive season. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Cuthbertson. Mrs Anderson.

MRS ANDERSON Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd like to wish the compliments of the season to my colleagues, to everyone on Norfolk Island and I would like to take the opportunity to recognise the contribution made by the people who are on the various voluntary committees who help us to do our job and to those people of the community who have made submissions and assisted these committees. Without them our task would be a lot more difficult and we certainly wouldn't be able to get such a wide spread opinion as we can through these committees. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER Thank you Mrs Anderson. Further contribution to the adjournment debate Honourable Members. Have we concluded. Yes. If I then may equally enter with some concluding words Honourable Members. It is our concluding sitting in 1995, 5 days before Christmas and so from Margaret and from me and from Campbell I do wish a very Merry Christmas to everyone in Norfolk Island, our own residents, families that have returned to be here, home, at Christmas, our visitors really the strangers that are within our gates who will share this Christmas tide with us and those of our Norfolk Island community, of course, who may this year be spending Christmas overseas. I particularly would like to wish Christmas cheer to officers of this Assembly and officers of our service. I particularly note that in the gallery this morning is the new Chief Administrative Officer, Mr Rankin, and in offering cheer to him and the service and I also extend to related services and groups that resource our needs as Members and Executives within this forum. Finally to you each one, Honourable Members, I hope that you and your families will spend a joyful and a happy Christmas together and to everyone may 1996 be fruitful, successful and filled with good will. I put the question Honourable Members that this House do now adjourn.

QUESTION PUT  
AGREED

The ayes have it. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday the 14th February in 1996 at 10.00 o'clock in the morning.

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