

CEREMONIAL SITTING TO MARK THE OCCASION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORFOLK ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER Honourable Members, please be seated. We await the arrival of His Honour the Administrator

Honourable Members, please receive His Honour the Administrator. Your Honour, welcome to this Chamber this afternoon. Please be seated. Thank you Honourable Members. We await the arrival of our distinguished guests this afternoon

Honourable Members, please receive our distinguished guests this afternoon. Honourable Members, and guests, whilst we all stand I invite the Reverend John Reed to lead us in prayers

PRAYER

REV REED Most Gracious God, creator and ruler of all, in your infinite wisdom you appoint the rulers of the nations of the world. We give you thanks for those you have appointed to guide and lead us. Especially we give thanks today for the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly. We give you thanks for those who have served this community in office here over the past twenty-five years. For that that has been achieved and the contributions made by many. Remembering also those who are no longer with us today. We pray for those who serve in office today and into the future. Grant to all who serve in public life, wisdom and skill, imagination and energy. Protect them from corruption and the temptation of self serving. Direct their work and influence their decisions to the advancement of Your Glory and to the safety and welfare of this Island so that peace and happiness, truth and justice, may be established among us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

I invite you all to join in the Legislative Assembly prayer
Almighty God we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe Thy blessing upon this House, direct and prosper our deliberations to the advancement of Thy glory and the true welfare of the people of Norfolk Island, Amen

SPEAKER Thank you Reverend John Reed. Honourable Members and guests, please be seated. Honourable Members and our guests this afternoon, we have the privilege today by God's Grace to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Inaugural Sitting of this the Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island. The commencement of self government for Norfolk Island 's people and to especially mark the occasion we have invited distinguished guests to be present with us. His Honour the Administrator, the Hon Grant Tambling who in this isle is both the resident representative of the Australian Government and the distinguished person who performs the traditional vice regal role of Governor, in that he assents to legislation as resolved by this Legislative Assembly and makes decisions on subsidiary legislation as advised by his Norfolk Island Minister and it is in this particular role that we offer a warm welcome in this Chamber at this ceremonial sitting and we equally welcome Mrs Tambling who accompanies and elegantly supports him in his duties. We are honoured to receive two guests on the floor of the House today. The Commonwealth Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, the Hon Jim Lloyd MP who is the current Minister who administers Commonwealth responsibilities in Norfolk Island and who has demonstrated an interest and a care in our affairs and a determination to encourage us in the handling of our own affairs. We do have a continuing and a warm relationship with the Australian Government and Minister your valued presence today reinforces and strengthens our relationship. We equally welcome Mrs Lloyd who accompanies you on this occasion, The Hon R J Ellicott QC is with us this afternoon

accompanied by Mrs Ellicott. Mr Ellicott was the Commonwealth Minister for Home Affairs when we commenced twenty-five years ago, but more than that, he was the architect of the model of self Government which we in Norfolk Island have enjoyed for this quarter of a century. His initiative, his guidance and authority, secured for us the capacity to govern ourselves. An acknowledgement of twenty-five years could not be held without his presence. The Clerk of the House of Representatives in Australia Mr Ian Harris, accompanied by Mrs Harris, is with us today. The Australian Parliament significantly assisted the introduction of parliamentary process to Norfolk Island. They provided our first clerk, his deputy and secretarial assistance. They drafted our first Standing Orders, their expertise in training and advice has strengthened our parliamentary processes here in Norfolk Island. The partners of Members have been invited today. The understanding and support given by wives, by husbands, by partners, is much underestimated and not always acknowledged and so today, we as Members wish to include thanks to those who support us in our representative role. Since inauguration in 1979 some forty-four Members have been elected to this legislature. All have played an essential role in the democratic processes which we enjoy. Former Members presently on the island have been asked to be with us on this day and we are delighted that so many have joined us. Mr Bill Blucher of the First Legislative Assembly has sent his congratulations and his best wishes. Honourable Members and our guests, the twenty-fifth anniversary is a significant achievement for Norfolk Island and its people. We Members of the island's parliament are delighted to honour the occasion with this ceremonial sitting and so to our guests this afternoon I warmly greet you all. You do add luster to these proceedings and you allow us the privilege of warmly acknowledging and thanking you for your part in this island's unique history. Chief Minister on this formal occasion of this ceremonial sitting I give you the first call

MR GARDNER

Mr Speaker thank you. Mr Speaker, Your Honour, Honourable Members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. The Preamble to the Norfolk Island Act 1979 clearly establishes the historical time frame for the provision of Government for Norfolk Island over a period of a century and a half, leading up to the passage of that Act in 1979 and the establishment of the Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island. Today we are gathered to celebrate a tremendous achievement. Not only to reflect on the achievement of that inaugural meeting of the First Legislative Assembly on the 10th August 1979 but also the achievement in the face, often of adversity and at times unfair and unfounded of a little over twenty-five years of self Government for Norfolk Island. Today Mr Speaker we pay tribute to those that have gone before us as MLA's and to the many others that have supported the self Government process over the years including the membership of the Public Service, the Members of this community that have played an ever important role on the boards, committees and statutory authorities established by our legislation and the community as a whole. Mr Speaker I pay tribute to those who are seated around this table today and I would like to make special mention if I could of yourself Mr Speaker who has been a Member of this Legislative Assembly for the full twenty-five years of self Government on Norfolk Island and held many and varying roles both in Government and as a Member of the non executive. Mr Speaker I would also like to pay tribute to my colleague Mr John Brown who has been a member of eight of the ten Legislative Assembly's of Norfolk Island. a tremendous achievement John and congratulations on that. And if I could Mr speaker, speak of some of the officers who support this parliament, namely Madam Clerk, the mother of this House who has been the Clerk to this Legislative Assembly for nigh on twenty years which is probably some sort of record in this part of the world if not, certainly in the whole Commonwealth parliamentary field. Mr Speaker that in itself is a significant achievement and Mr Speaker, it is important today that I pay tribute to a very dear friend who is unable to be with us today because of the tragic incidence of last month. Mr Ivens Buffett, the Hon Ivens Buffett MLA who in various roles has contributed significantly to the development of Norfolk Island since before self Government, since self Government, and

spent almost three years on the Government benches making a significant contribution in the area of waste management, the land initiatives, planning and the like. Mr Speaker it is important though that we must pay tribute to those that since 1856 were passionate in their endeavours to ensure that the future of Norfolk Island and her people would one day firmly nestle in the hands of their own elected representatives. Those souls would be I am sure elated to see that the struggles that they encountered were not in vain and that they could rejoice knowing that the legislation enacted in 1979 would present their descendants, their friends, their colleagues with a wonderful and unique opportunity. Mr Speaker there are of course a great number of individuals, groups and politicians, who have had in some way, contributed to the outcomes of 1979 and continue to do so. Had the Nimmo Royal Commission of 1976 not enquired into the future constitutional status of Norfolk Island one must wonder whether we would find ourselves in the position that we do today. From Nimmo came a response from the Federal Government with obviously a generous serve of encouragement from persons on Norfolk Island which instead of adopting the Nimmo recommendations in their entirety chose to implement a form a self Government on the proviso that Norfolk Island was able to demonstrate that it could sustain that system of Government from its own resources. Mr Speaker the conveyor of that Federal Government response and the person remembered best as the architect of self Government for Norfolk Island was the then Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon R J Ellicott QC, MP. Mr Speaker as you have already said we are honoured to receive the Hon R J Ellicott QC, who has dropped the MP, as our guest of honour on this occasion to celebrate twenty-five years of self Government in Norfolk Island. I am sure that he is as proud today as we are of the achievements that have been made in these twenty-five years and I wish to extend to him our most grateful thanks for his efforts and continuing support, not only in the lead up to 1979 but for his continued support and his desire to want to share our twenty-fifth anniversary of the culmination of those events in 1979 with us here today. A very warm welcome to you and Mrs Ellicott. Mr Speaker in twenty-five years there have been a number of Federal Minister's with various degrees of responsibility for Norfolk Island and a number of those with various degrees of interest in matters pertaining to Norfolk Island. I am pleased to welcome into this House today the Hon Jim Lloyd MP, Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads on his second visit to Norfolk Island in a little over one month of holding such office. Today joined by his wife Kerry. The Minister is here to represent the Federal Government in this our twenty-five year celebration and has in such a short time demonstrated a keen desire to assist Norfolk Island to continue on the journey begun in 1979. Welcome to you both today. Before moving on Mr Speaker I would also wish to acknowledge the participation and contribution made by the Office of the Clerk to the Australian parliament's House of Representatives during the early months of the term of the First Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island. On secondment from the House of Reps the Clerk and his staff as you alluded to earlier Mr Speaker, provided immeasurable support to the then fledgling Legislative Assembly and ensured that best practice was introduced early into the parliamentary processes on Norfolk Island. Mr Speaker I'm pleased to join you in welcoming here today the current clerk of the House of Representatives, Mr Ian Harris and his wife who are joining with us to celebrate this twenty-five year anniversary. Mr Speaker on the 10th august 1979 aside from the then Governor General Sir Zelman Cowan, the Minister for Home Affairs and the then Administrator for Norfolk Island Mr Des O'Leary there were seated around this table the elected Members of the first Legislative Assembly of Norfolk Island. At that time Mr Speaker as you are well aware, there were no sworn executive Members. That came at a subsequent sitting. To those gentlemen we pay tribute for their willingness to serve, for their guidance and direction as they began the journey along a very uncertain path. Present at that time were yourself Mr David Buffett, Mr Bill Blucher, Mr Ed Howard, Mr Gilbert Jackson, Mr Kevin Williams, Mr Duncan McIntyre, Mr Bruce MacKenzie, Mr Brian Nunn and Mr John Ryves. They Mr Speaker were the founding fathers of this our Norfolk Island parliament. In the twenty-five years that have elapsed since that historic moment a further thirty-five Members of the Legislative Assembly, a total

of forty-four in all have been elected to this House to continue the pursuit of self Government for Norfolk Island. Each has contributed in their own way to the business of this place. Obviously with varying degrees of success however, prepared to give it a go to try and make a difference and it is thanks to them all, a tribute to all their efforts Mr Speaker that we sit here today to reflect on arguably twenty-five year of the most important years in the history of Norfolk Island. On reflection I will explore with you the achievements of twenty-five years. In 1979 some forty-two powers listed under Schedule 2 to the Norfolk Island Act and four Schedule 3 powers were transferred to the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly. That empowered the Legislative Assembly to legislate for a total of forty-six scheduled matters. Following a flurry of transfer activities in the mid '80's and the early '90's that list of transferred powers has increased to ninety-three schedule three matters and at least ten schedule 3 matters. What is significant is not so much the more than doubling of powers transferred but more so that Norfolk Island has been able to absorb, fund and administer almost the entire gambit of responsibilities, more appropriately befitting an independent sovereign nation. That in itself Mr Speaker is a tremendous achievement, one that the other states and territories of the Commonwealth of Australia have and will never experience. A fact that in itself sets us apart and underpins our unique identity. Mr Speaker further evidence of the Legislative Assembly's achievements, the island's achievements are well documented. I draw on your words from debate in this Chamber when recognizing twenty years of self Government and I quote "in the sixty five years prior to 1979 whilst the Commonwealth had full responsibility for Norfolk Island's well being there were no statutory social service benefits, no workers compensation legislation, no socialized health insurance scheme, no meaningfully planned environmental protection legislation, no adequate health or immigration legislation, no proper statutory revenue base in some areas, there was no employment protection legislation". Today I am pleased to say those matters and many others since have been tackled and funded from Norfolk Island resources and much of what is in place is the envy of many of our neighbors. I refer you again to the Preamble of the Norfolk Island Act and particularly to the passages that recognize the uniqueness of Norfolk Island and her people and it says "And Whereas the residents of Norfolk Island include descendants of the settlers from Pitcairn Island, and whereas the parliament recognizes the special relationship of the said descendants with Norfolk Island and their desire to preserve their traditions and culture, Mr Speaker that uniqueness and the recognition of same was given added emphasis by His Excellency the Governor General Sir Zelman Cowan in his speech during the proceedings of the inauguration of the Legislative Assembly in 1979. the Governor General quoted from the Commonwealth Government's policy statement on Norfolk Island delivered by the Minister for Home Affairs the Hon R J Ellicott QC which read as follows and I quote "the Government recognizes the special situation of Norfolk Island including the special relationship of the Pitcairn descendants with the island, its traditions and culture. It is prepared over a period to move towards a substantial measure of self Government for the island. It is also of the view that although Norfolk Island is part of Australia and will remain so, this does not require Norfolk Island to be regulated by the same laws as regulate other parts of Australia. Unfortunately Mr Speaker from time to time, that message has failed to be heard only many occasions and by a large number of persons. There has and continues to be a move to create a one-ness to have Norfolk Island regulated by exactly the same laws as regulate other parts of Australia. I recognize the differences of opinion that exist within this community as they did in 1979. some favour a full move in that direction, to be regulated by the same laws as the rest of Australia, others a move to full independence. I venture to propose that the mainstream are committed to retaining the status quo and to a strengthening and a recomittal by the Commonwealth to the full intent and provisions of the Norfolk Island Act 1979. Mr Speaker we have traveled a long way and we've accomplished a great deal. The task is however far from finished and efforts must and will continue to be made to improve what we do. We pride ourselves on our achievements at the international level whether through our participation in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association or our representation in the sporting arena at the

end we came up with a solution that we thought was very suitable to the island. I think it's as well to mention the people who were concerned. Some of them are no longer with us but some of them are. Bill Blucher, you Mr Speaker, Greg Quintal, Bruce MacKenzie, who is now deceased, Lisle Snell, Duncan McIntyre, Geoff Bennett and Brian Nunn who I understand is now deceased. They were all people who were committed and it was immensely important the contribution they made. I thought it might be a moment to reflect on the basic principles of self Government to as it were go back to the beginning and set down what those basic tenets were because they are pretty important. At the very threshold was this proposition that under the Commonwealth Constitution the Commonwealth Parliament has Plenary power for the Government of this Territory and that means not only that it regards this Territory as part of Australia but it has not only the power but it has the responsibility of the welfare of Norfolk Island. If there was some massive cyclone that descended on this island you would find the Australian Government and the rest of the Australian people here. That is a basic proposition in self Government. The second one has already been mentioned and that is that the Pitcairners and their descendents have a very special relationship with this island. Now that special relationship with the land of Australia is shared by only a minor number of Australians. The Aboriginal people, the Torres Strait Islanders, the people of Cocos Island, they all have special relationships with the land where they live. That is not so of all Australians. On the 24th June 1856 this place was set aside as a separate and distinct settlement and the laws and customs of the Pitcairners were to be preserved and maintained in this place and that's basic to an understanding of self Government on Norfolk Island and your Chief Minister has just mentioned it. A third proposition that lay behind it was that over a long period successive Governments had allowed other people to come and live on this island and treat it as their home and they not only came from Australia but they came from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and other parts and they were allowed to stay here, invest here and live here and bring up their families here. That was an important part of self Government and they shared the island with those of Pitcairn descent. The next principle that I think you readily recognize is that the Pitcairn heritage and culture has to be preserved. It is part of this island's history, it is part of you and its obviously being done but it's a basic plank of self Government. I went the other day to see cyclorama. It was an amazing experience to go back to the beginning and go through it and see what had happened. I come onto another principle which is a little bit controversial I suspect and that is that all the people of responsible age who are committed to reside here whether of Pitcairn descent or not, they be entitled to vote and be elected to the Legislative Assembly. The Minister won't mind me mentioning what is a jarring note but I think we have to acknowledge it. I have to say that was a basic plank of self Government in 1979. the recently applied Australian citizen requirements for voting and election to this Legislative Assembly are antipathetic to the fundamentals of Norfolk Island's self Government. I can't call something what it isn't what it is or vice versa! That seems to me to be clear. It may have been that in Roman times Quis Romanus sum, or I am a Roman citizen, was a complete solution to being a free person in the Roman empire because the only alternative seemed to be slavery but Quis Australianus sum is not a complete answer to Norfolk Island's self Government and there is a jarring note and we need to recognize it. I think that that's enough said but I wanted to make the point and I couldn't adequately describe all those things without referring to that. Something very important I wanted to mention is that you would notice that when self Government came you had proportional voting and the purpose of that was to underlie one fact and that was that this island can only operate by consensus. Now I understand Mr Brown Chief Minister, calls himself the leader of the Opposition and there's a sense of humour in that I'm sure because he probably knows and you probably know that at the end of the day you have to reach agreement around this table and I suspect that's the basis upon which you all face the task. There can be no room for personal animosities or attitudes that are diverse except in so far as they relate to the best interest Norfolk Island. Unless they do well they have no part in what a small number of people are trying to do for a relatively small number of constituents out there and so far as

that's concerned whatever electoral system you choose, whether it's first past the post or the present system you've got that comes from Illinois or where-ever it came from or whether you choose the Hare Clark system from Tasmania I say to you it doesn't matter which, at the end of the day whoever sits around this table has to get to a decision by consensus and that was a basic platform of self Government. It's also true to say that self Government was a process and the Chief Minister has described that and it's a great testimony to the willingness of the Australian parliament to evince confidence in the people of Norfolk Island and in this Legislative Assembly. They are very constant and great enquirers into what people do. There are many Members and many senators who are interested in what is happening around the country and that includes Norfolk Island and they subjected you to considerable scrutiny. You will not always agree with them. They too think they are acting in the interests of Norfolk Island but they have in their wisdom in my view, increased your power and that power has been very significant. One thing that you might have thought was a right or a privilege, certainly you didn't want it, we've got it, the Minister and I have it, we have to live with it and that's Commonwealth taxation. You've not been subjected to it and nor have you been subjected, if you see it as a subjection, nor have you the rights to social service or the requirements of deductions of superannuation and all the rest of it which are either shared or inflicted on other Australians but that came at a price and that price was to recognize something out of the Pitcairn heritage and that is that you would look after anybody in need and that was basic to self Government. It wasn't just a throw away line with a sense of emotion but that anybody who was in need in this place you would look after them. Not in some patronizing sort of way but through some system would enable people to come with dignity and obtain benefits if they fell into need and that was an essential part of it. We sand the Pitcairn anthem this morning and I've no need to read to you that centre verse, I was enhungered and you gave me meat, but it lies at the basis of that plank and it is one of the most important. Mr Speaker thank you for inviting us. Thank you for allowing us to share this moment. It's a great moment for Norfolk Island. It's a great moment for me and I'm sure it's a great moment for the Minister

SPEAKER

Mr Ellicott, thank you warmly for addressing us this morning. I would rather like to rise and lead Members [applause]. Honourable Members, I invite the Hon Jim Lloyd

MINISTER LLOYD

Thank you Mr Speaker. Your Honour the Administrator, Mr Speaker, Chief Minister, Ministers of the Norfolk Island Government, Members of the Legislative Assembly, to the Hon R J Ellicott, ladies and gentlemen, I am truly honoured to be here to acknowledge the twenty-five years of self Government for Norfolk Island. It needs to be reconsider that the level of self Government provided to Norfolk Island is unique, in the range of powers and functions entrusted to the Legislative Assembly. Not only were the local Government and state functions given to the Legislative Assembly to manage, but also other matters normally associated with the Commonwealth and it is a credit to all of you who have been involved in or with the Legislative Assembly over the last twenty-five years, many of you whom are gathered here today either in this room or in another place today, that it has been able to develop a significant body of law and deal with the breadth of issues over which it has carriage. I'm sure that Members would also agree with me that without the goodwill, co-operation and exertions of the Norfolk Island community the development and not just the political development of the island during the last twenty-five years of self Government would not have been as significant as it has been. It is appropriate on this occasion to acknowledge the role of the Hon Bob Ellicott who as the responsible Commonwealth Minister at the time of self Government can be considered as the architect of self Government, a significant achievement in itself. The model that he put in place, apart from a few minor changes is still functioning today. It's quite remarkable. twenty-

five years ago Mr Ellicott ended his speech with words that are as relevant today as they were then so I quote some of them “.. the Commonwealth Parliament and the Australian Government and people fully recognize and appreciate the special features of Norfolk Island , it's people, its history, its culture and its association with Pitcairn people. They share with the people of the island their desire and determination to keep those traditional values intact. Norfolk Island is an honoured part of the Australian nation and community and although it has its own identity it shares fully in our common national life and destiny. May it ever remain so”. I'm sure you will agree those words are as relevant today as they were when you said them twenty-five years ago. I would also like to pay tribute to the people who have undertaken the role of Administrator on Norfolk Island since self Government was granted. This is sometimes a difficult role to play as the person is required to wear several hats. Not only is the Administrator the head of the Norfolk Island Government in his governor role, but they are also the senior Commonwealth representative on the Island and under the Norfolk Island Act and some Norfolk Island laws they have statutory roles requiring decisions and determinations that have ramifications in and on the Norfolk Island community. Norfolk Island has been fortunate in the caliber of the Administrators it has had in the last twenty-five years. I would like to thank all the Administrators for their hard work and dedication to the office of Administrator. From what I have read and have been told since my recent appointment as a Territories Minister, it is obvious to me that over the last quarter of a century the relationship between the Commonwealth and the Norfolk Island Government and Legislative Assembly has matured. This is not to say that there are no differences of opinion however it is a sign of the maturity of the relationship that even with these differences and sometimes frustrations, significant progress has been made on a number of fronts and that there is co-operation between us on many matters. I look forward to the continued development of this relationship. The Commonwealth has provided support for the Legislative Assembly since its establishment in 1979. Mr Ian Harris the Clerk of the House of Representatives is here today in recognition of the assistance provided by the Clerks office to the first Legislative Assembly in the establishment of its procedures and functionality. I think it is fair to say that Commonwealth assistance in recent times has been significant. I'm not just talking about providing access to funds, some of the loans were significant, undertakings like the Cascade Cliff, the upgrade of the airstrip, the repairs to the Kingston pier, I also include the provision to access of Commonwealth experts to provide advise on specific matters and Norfolk's representation on various Ministerial Councils such as the Standing Committee of Attorney Generals and the Tourism Ministers Council. Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like today to announce the Australian Government is to establish a Trust fund in the memory of the Hon Ivens Buffett. It is proposed that the funds generated from the transfer of Crown Land to freehold will form the funding of this Trust. Toon was enthusiastic for these funds to be utilized for the benefit of the Norfolk Island community and while final details of the trust are still being determined I envisage the Trust Fund will be utilized to further enhance the land management and heritage preservation practices on the island of which he was so very proud I took the liberty of speaking and advising Shelley Buffett of the Australian Government's decision to establish this Trust about one hour ago and she was very delighted and I think a little overwhelmed by the recognition of the work that Toon had done and I personally are very gratified that the Prime Minister and the Government has suggested my suggestion and I believe it will be a great tribute to the work that Toon has done for this island over so many years. I am immensely proud and honoured to be here representing the Australian Government to mark this moment in history. Mr Speaker in conclusion I congratulate the Norfolk Island Government and the people of Norfolk Island on their achievements including the maintenance of strong cultural traditions and unique heritage. I trust that together we look forward confidently to the future and that the next twenty-five years will be even more fruitful than the last, thank you Mr Speaker

SPEAKER

Honourable Members, we have been delighted to hear from our principal guests this afternoon. May I now turn to each Member of the

Legislative Assembly and offer them the call so they might make a contribution to this ceremonial sitting

MR DONALDSON

Mr Speaker thank you for the opportunity to say a few words. First of all I would like to reiterate with thanks warm welcome given by yourself and the Chief Minister to all our guests here today and I would like to extend a special warm welcome to two special people here today, one being the Hon Jim Lloyd Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads and also to the Hon R J Ellicott QC. I thank both of them for attending this sitting held in celebration of the twenty-fifth Inaugural meeting of the House of the Legislative Assembly. Moving on from there, there is no doubt in my mind that the success of the last twenty-five years of self Government is in no small way due to the sound basis for Government established by the Norfolk Island Act 1979. The Hon R J Ellicott in his capacity as Minister for Home Affairs was instrumental in designing and implementing the Norfolk Island Act. The Act has serviced Norfolk Island admirably for the last twenty-five years and I personally thank Mr Ellicott for his genuine and continuing interest in the well being of the Norfolk Island people, thank you. The Hon Jim Lloyd, the current Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, at a meeting this morning indicated his support for the continuation of self Government for Norfolk Island and that is self Government envisaged by the Norfolk Island Act. He complimented us on the current Assembly and previous Assembly's achievements in exercising responsible Government over the years. I thank the Minister for his kind words. Mr Speaker in summing up what I've said, Norfolk Island's success in development of self Government over twenty-five years can be in the main be attributed to two factors. One is the sound foundation for self Government set out in the Norfolk Island Act 1979 and I know words have been said about that this morning and I know a lot of thought was put into it and it is a very good model for self Government. The second one is the co-operation between the Commonwealth Government and the Norfolk Island Government in acknowledging and pursuing the intentions of the Norfolk Island Act. I think that has been admirably demonstrated over the last twenty-five years. Big achievements have been made in that area and big achievements can be made when co-operation exists. The rest of the success story of self Government has been up to the people of Norfolk Island. In this regard I acknowledge the work done by all previous Legislative Assemblies, the work done by the Public Service and last but by no means least, the work done by the people of Norfolk Island in creating and maintaining a viable private sector without such self Government could not be achieved. Mr Speaker it is with confidence and enthusiasm that I look forward to a prosperous and successful second twenty-five years of self Government on Norfolk Island

MRS JACK

Mr Speaker, thank you. I will quote from a speech given during the inaugural sitting of this House by the then Minister for Home Affairs the Hon R J Ellicott QC MP. And it states..."in conclusion may I make one thing entirely clear. The Commonwealth Parliament and the Australian Government and people fully recognize and appreciate the special features of Norfolk Island, its people, its history, its culture and its association with the Pitcairn tradition". Mr Speaker perhaps one could say that this is a recognition of its uniqueness so twenty-five years on, is this very recognition of our uniqueness, a point so important that it forms part of the Preamble to the Norfolk Island Act of 1979, is this under threat. I ask this because during my time as a Member of this tenth Legislative Assembly a few papers and reports have come from Federal Officers using the word "normalize". If any point needs to be stressed Mr Speaker, it must be that we keep our uniqueness, celebrate it and encourage it, for in this day of blurred edges, of catering to and for the masses, it becomes more important than ever to keep our identity as a community intact, of who we are and where we are going at the front of our thinking and not to be normalized out of existence. Also at the inaugural sitting was the then Governor General, Sir

Zelman Cowan and during his speech he spoke of the new Norfolk Island Act and in particular the Preamble to it and if I may quote some of it, he said the Preamble to the Act is long and it recites a good deal of history. It specifically recognizes that the Parliament considers it to be desirable and to be the wish of the people of Norfolk Island that the island should achieve over a period of time internal self Government as a territory under the authority of the Commonwealth. Twenty-five years on Mr Speaker those words are just as important now as then, and important not just to those on the Legislative Assembly but to the community as a whole. The Preamble sets us apart and is descriptive of who we are and where we are going to that when people who can have considerable impact on Norfolk Island issues arrive, namely people from the Joint Standing Committee of the National Capital and External Territories, when certain Members of that committee arrive and admit to not having read the Preamble I must ask just how they begin to know about us, about how we arrived at this point. Do they in fact even realize that the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly effectively deals with the three level of Government. Looking back over twenty-five years with hindsight it can be a marvelous thing. I will however use my closing remarks on looking to the future, to the next twenty-five years. By my precious comments and at the top of my wish list I would ask for improved dialogue, communication, education and understanding on both sides of the political fence. A recognition of our differences so that a better understanding of them in order that the working relationship we have can be maintained, hopefully strengthened through changes of either Governments and or Ministers on either side. Finally Mr Speaker it cannot be emphasised enough the great achievements that various Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly's have achieved to this date so congratulations and let's get on with the next twenty-five years, thank you

MR NOBBS

Thank you Mr Speaker. I just warmly welcome all our official guests and also those with us just for this afternoon's sitting. Mr Speaker I'm honoured at being part of the form of self Government the island currently enjoys but above all I'm extremely humbled as I salute those who put so much into the opportunities that we have today. The past twenty-five years has seen the establishment and evolution of self Government however the real struggle was in the conception. It was achieved following considerable struggle, a struggle waged mostly against overwhelming odds. When the struggle actually commenced is questionable. Some say it was on the bounty, others claim it commenced in 1856 with a difference of opinion on promises made at the time, the real struggle appears documented best from the removal of existing basic self Governing rights in the 1890's. Mr Speaker my memory politically extends from the late 1940's. it covers over twenty-five years prior to self Government in 1979. in that period the struggle became quite confrontational. I recall vividly the community's beliefs and passion, the community binding together as a very tight unit, the vivid and colourful debates and the successes no matter how small. As a consequence I am humbled by such memories. The struggle has always related to the need for greater local autonomy. The island running its own affairs. At the time life was not easy and in truth, the island operated under a form of dictatorship headed by Australia's Minister for Territories and the Administrator of the day. Some holders of those positions are memorable, others are not. I'm loath to mention names but my memory prompts me to acknowledge two who may be called good guys from the other side and there'll be a third one later. Paul Hasluck, later Sir Paul, a Minister extraordinaire who in the 1950's actually offered a form of limited self Government to Norfolk Island which was rejected and following that period there was a lull in confrontation until a guy by the name of Roger Nott who I call a people's Administrator arrived on Norfolk Island and the wheels were set in motion very firmly from that period onwards. Mr Speaker I am humbled by and indebted to those on the island who carried the real fight leading to self Government. Most for a considerable number of years. Some are with us today but unfortunately the majority are not. I salute them all and say a very sincere thank you. There

is one other factor which if not present, would not have seen the breaking of the mold in which the island had been cast. I refer to the attitude, decisions and courage of another good guy from offshore, he is with us today and I personally salute and thank you Sir, the Hon R J Ellicott responsible Australian Minister at the time. I wish also to recognize the efforts of former and current Legislative Assembly Members, support staff from the Legislative Assembly, support staff to Government and also Members of the Public Service. Self Government has been evolving over the past twenty-five years. This would be expected to continue however I'm particularly concerned at the motives and actions of external influences in the past two years. I'm confident that the present island community will maintain the challenge by understanding the long journey traveled today. By understanding particularly the pre self Government period, by ensuring self Government progresses positively for the island, by ensuring that the community retains ownership of the process, by establishing appropriate objectives and by binding together to progress those objectives. Thank you Mr Speaker

MS NICHOLAS Thank you Mr Speaker, I cannot share with you and Mr Brown the honour of sitting on the First Assembly of this House but perhaps I may on this occasion share my recollection of the first sitting of the Second Assembly. In his address to the second Assembly sitting on the 10th February 1982 the Administrator, His Honour Ray Trebilco DFC AO advised that during the previous year 80 pieces of legislation had been introduced with 67 of them having been passed into law. Busy times indeed. The revenue fund stood at around \$1.3m as at the 30th June 1981 and the revenue for that year had exceeded \$3m for the first time. The 200 mile economic zone was under joint discussion with the Commonwealth; research into the domestic fishery; upgrading of the airport; a new quarry site; water and sewerage and the KAVHA plan were issues of the day. A restructuring of the Public Service had been undertaken led by then Chief Administrative Officer Malcolm Bains, and a consumer price index was about to be established. The elected Members were yourself David Buffett, Gilbert Jackson, Ed Howard, John Brown, Alice Buffett, Bill Sanders, Greg Quintal, Bernie Christian-Bailey and myself, Chloe Gray as I was then. You may also recall that the sitting was a robust and spirited one to say the least. Perhaps it needs to be said that the Second Legislative Assembly elected to Government, what we called the triumvirate, three executive Members who held equal power, there had in the first Assembly been a very clearly defined role for a Chief Minister. The majority of the Second Assembly abandoned that somewhat upsetting the apple cart, hence the robust debate during the first sitting. You were elected President, Mr Bill Sanders was elected deputy, and the three executive Members decided were yourself, Mr Ed Howard and Mr John Brown. Mr Speaker it was on that day during adjournment debate that I made my maiden speech in this place and I began by saying that I did not believe the occasion should pass without a female having at least part of the final say. With wit which we've come to expect from you Mr Speaker, you said "In my house they always have the final say, whether it happens in this House is another matter to be decided". There have been eight women elected over the years to this Legislative Assembly and you have ruled over a number of them. No doubt they continue to seek the final say. In the course of debate I said ..."Members of the Legislative Assembly were elected after expressing their wishes and their hopes for Norfolk Island. The wish to see shared responsibility was common to a number of candidates. What has evolved is a new system within the existing framework. We have a body of nine, the Legislative Assembly. We have an executive of three, equal to share the load, to share the responsibility equally, there are differences within the nine. These can be put to use affording representation to all sectors of the community. The Assembly needs the support of the people. There is provision for thoughts and ideas to be expressed and discussed. For Members of the community to

participate in the process of Government. This process is called democracy. Government by the people. There's not much I would change today. Perhaps it's a matter of the more things changes the more they are the same. Mr Speaker I take this opportunity to congratulate you and Mr Brown for maintaining your commitment to this community and your service in this House over the past twenty-five years

MR ROBINSON Thank you Mr Speaker. My main points have been all eloquently expressed by the Hon Bob Ellicott QC and others around this table so I won't go in and repeat what has already been said, thank you

MR BROWN Thank you Mr Speaker. Your Honour and Mrs Tambling, the Hon Jim Lloyd and Mrs Lloyd, Hon Bob Ellicott QC and Mrs Ellicott, Ian Harris and Mrs Harris, colleagues and friends. twenty-five years Mr Speaker is a long time in any environment. We've not had a perfect twenty-five years and I think that we would all acknowledge that. There has been the odd mistake but Mr Speaker the important thing is, those mistakes have been our mistakes and we must continue to make our own mistakes. Self Government is a very important thing for Norfolk Island. As we look around this table there is a very interesting mix of Members. There are three Norfolk Islanders, there are three to whom one could refer as pedigree mainlanders and there are two of us, Mr Donaldson and myself who proudly are married to Norfolk Islanders and that's a wonderful mix because it provides many differing points of view and if we look back at some of our Members of those pedigree mainlanders, two of them have come from countries other than Australia and that's to be encouraged despite our recent legislative changes because it provides a breadth of different views. It provides a breadth of different experience and that can only be to the benefit of us all. Mr Ellicott mentioned to us the importance of consensus and I think most Assembly's has strived to achieve consensus but it's very important that we not stumble at that point. If we look at some of our friends through the Pacific in my view they have stumbled. In particular by not being prepared to make decisions in the absence of consensus. It is important that at times the golden rule if that's how we regard it, needs to be tempered by the need to make a wise decision, and if I need to be part of making what I regard as a wise decision, notwithstanding that it might not have consensus of all of our Members then I regard that as my duty. Mr Ellicott mentioned the fact that from time to time I refer to myself as Her Majesty's loyal opposition and I do that with great pride. I do that because I believe it is extremely important that there be a balance of views within this place. It is not good Government for us to simply accept a piece of paper from the Public Service and say let's have consensus on this. What is important is that as many views as possible be heard. That they be weighed and that eventual decisions take regard of all of them. I've not had the contacts to arrange a fly past in the way that my colleague Mr Nobbs did earlier in this meeting so what I say I guess will not be disturbed in that way, but Mr Speaker there are great challenges ahead of us. I believe we've done very well in the last twenty-five years but there are great challenges ahead. We do need to complete the reform of our Public Service before we find that the cost of our Public Service is a burden that is simply too great for us to sustain. We need to recognize the need to spend our funds wisely. Not by simply in an unquestioning way, paying more and more towards wages and less and less towards the maintenance of roads, the maintenance of our infrastructure, the training of our Public Service and so forth. We need to show that we are capable of making the decisions that are necessary in order to spend our funds wisely and it is only at that stage that we are justified in going to the community and saying well look, our needs have grown. Our needs in terms of health, education, social welfare, maintenance of our infrastructure and so forth have grown, and we need to ask you to pay a few more taxes. I have no trouble in doing that, but I will only agree to doing that at the state of which we have shown that all of our existing funds are being spent wisely and that not one single cent is being wasted. Mr Speaker today we are paying tribute to a number of people. The Hon Bob Ellicott QC is one of them. He could be regarded at the mainland end as one of the fathers of self Government

in Norfolk Island. We are paying tribute to those Members of the final Advisory Council who sat down together with Bob Ellicott and worked through the terms of self Government. We are paying tribute to the various persons who have served on the various Legislative Assembly's since 1979 and we are saying thank you to Ian Harris and his colleagues in the Australian Parliament. Members who were here at the time will recall that a week before each of the early meetings of the Legislative Assembly Allan Browning or perhaps on occasions one of his assistants would arrive and would help the first Assembly to prepare for its meetings. There was a tremendous degree of assistance from the Australian Parliament at the time. In more recent times we've all got to know Ian. Ian is a great supporter of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and those of us who have been fortunate enough to attend various of the CPA conferences have frequently met Ian and enjoyed Ian's friendship and the friendship of all of his colleagues at those conferences and Ian would like to particularly say thank you to you and to say how great it is that you are with us today. With us today are various of our previous Members and I'm sure that each of us would like to say welcome to all of those previous Members whether we agreed or not on the day, I don't think there is one of us that didn't enjoy sharing a drink afterwards and Mr Speaker that has been one of the very important things about this place, that we have been able to disagree if disagreement has been necessary, but we have been able to finish the meeting and go and share friendship afterwards and I sincerely hope that, that is a characteristic of this place that will continue forever into the future. Mr Speaker thank you for the opportunity of saying these few words. I look forward to meeting with our previous colleagues and Members of the community later today, and in particular, whether I am part of it or not, I look forward to the next twenty-five years of self Government in Norfolk Island , thank you

SPEAKER Thank you indeed Mr Brown. Honourable Members, I think we've all had an opportunity to participate this afternoon and I thank you for that participation and so Honourable Members, and our guests, we are at a stage now of concluding our ceremonial activities for this afternoon. We will all move further to enjoy some hospitality and some socializing at another place, but at this stage our distinguished guests will be accompanied from the Chamber and move to the courthouse to meet and greet with former Members of the Legislative Assembly and so on that note Honourable Members, I say that this House is now adjourned until tomorrow, that is Thursday 19th August at 2 O'clock in the afternoon

