Question Date: 01/03/84

Question: Alice Springs to Darwin Railway

Member: Mr FIRMIN
To: CHIEF MINISTER

Status: Questions

Information:
Since the so-called Hill Report has recommended against the completion of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway line, can he inform the Assembly of the work so far completed on the line and the future of such work?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth cooperated on a great deal of work to establish the infrastructure necessary for the construction of the Alice Springs to Darwin rail link and that work was commenced some 2 or 3 years ago under the Fraser government. From memory, $10m was allocated for that purpose. This has been expended over the last couple of years. Nothing has been completed although 1000 km of the 1450 km alignment of the line has been finalised: Alice Springs northwards for 770 km to pretty close to Newcastle Waters; from Katherine northwards to Burrundie, about 130 km; Adelaide River through to the outskirts of Darwin, a further 100 km; and about 190 km of this alignment has yet to be pegged. Of the remaining 450 km, trial surveys have been undertaken for the Burrundie-Adelaide River stretch and the greater Darwin area for which 3 trial routes have been surveyed, including 2 involving a crossing of the Elizabeth River. Only the Newcastle Waters-Katherine section has yet to be surveyed. Detailed designs for the first 200 km north of Alice Springs have been completed and ballast sites have also been selected. The final environmental impact statement is being compiled and it is expected that it will be completed within the next few weeks. Expenditure to 31 December last totalled $7,337,463, the majority of which was expended on surveys and associated works.