Question Date: 27/10/87

Question: Darwin to Alice Springs Railway

Member: Mr SMITH
To: CHIEF MINISTER

Status: Questions

Information:

The story in the Japan National Economic Day purported to represent the Northern Territory government and its position in places. Can he provide this House with a categorical assurance that the story was not planted by either the Northern Territory government directly or by any agent of the Northern Territory government who has been involved in these talks, particularly Dr Ishizaki or Dr Sugawara?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have advised the House already that we do not know the source of this story. We have been trying to check it. We have spoken with Dr Ishizaki who was equally surprised at the story and denies any knowledge of having fired the story. Equally, I can assure the honourable member that I certainly did not plant the story and I know the Treasurer did not. It came as a surprise to us. We have not yet been able to make direct contact with Dr Sugawara but I must say that we would be very surprised to hear that he had any involvement. It has been confirmed today that one of the companies named in that report, EIE Pty Ltd, with which Dr Ishizaki is associated, has subsequently denied the report and is confirming what I have said in this House today: that there is no fixed agreement. I am genuinely confounded as to where that story came from, as is our government. We have been trying to source it down ourselves.