MEDIA RELEASE

HON MARSHALL PERRON, MLA
CHIEF MINISTER

Ref: P-0192-93 Date: 12th March 1993

Chief Minister Marshall Perron said today that Senator Bob Collins was still trying to distance himself from AN's report on the viability of the Adelaide-Darwin railway.

"Senator Collins wrote to me today that the report 'was not commissioned by the Federal Government. It is in fact an internal Australian National document'.

"Yet his colleague, the influential South Australian Labor Senator Chris Schacht told the ABC in Darwin only two days that the reason the railway was back on the agenda was because Bob Collins had given AN the okay to prepare a report," Mr Perron said.

Then yesterday on the ABC in South Australia, Senator Schacht said: "It was Bob Collins who commissioned the AN report in December last year that starts the show that the Alice Springs-Darwin railway line is looking a better proposition."

He continued: "Now that was commissioned by a Labor Government to start to put the rail link as a viable commercial proposition out to the private sector."

Mr Perron said the conflicting statements begged the question if Senator Collins did not commission the report just what exactly has he been doing to get the railway for the Territory and the nation.

"On the other hand if we believe Senator Schacht, then obviously Senator Collins is trying to disown his own report because it vindicates the stance of the Northern Territory Government."

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[Transcripts available of Schacht interview on 8DDD Drivetime program and 5CK Simon Royal program]