the Northern Territory as a tourist destination and I endorse the minister's statement.

Debate adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr SETTER (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, I move that the Assembly at its rising adjourn until 10 am on Tuesday 13 August 1991 or such other time and or date as may be set by Mr Speaker pursuant to sessional order.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, I move that so much of standing orders be suspended as would prevent 2 bills, the Justices of the Peace Bill (Serial 65) and the Oaths Amendment Bill (Serial 66): (a) being presented and read a first time together and 1 motion being put in regard to, respectively, the second readings, the committee's report stage and the third readings; and (b) the consideration of the bills separately in the committee of the whole.

Motion agreed to.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL (Serial 65)
OATHS AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 66)

Bills presented and read a first time.

Mr MANZIE (Attorney-General): Mr Speaker, I move that the bills be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Justices of the Peace Bill is to remove from the Justices Act those provisions dealing with the office of Justice of the Peace and to consolidate them in one act to be called the Justices of the Peace Act. The origin of the office of Justice of the Peace is found in an English statute of the year 1344. This statute empowered officers known as Keepers or Conservators of the Peace to hear and determine felonies and trespasses. Their task was also to prevent the commission of offences. Gradually, the office of Justice of the Peace was given wide judicial powers in relation to certain statutory offences. From the 16th century onwards, the main jurisdiction of justices became known in England as the Court of Petty Sessions. These courts still exist and are now commonly known as Courts of Summary Jurisdiction.

When the colony of New South Wales was first settled, the continent inherited the offices of Justices of the Peace as they then existed in England. Since that time, the functions and duties of Justices of the Peace in Australia have developed along with Australian law. Today, the Northern Territory Justices Act governs the power of Justices of the Peace in dealing with less serious criminal matters and ordains the procedure in the Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Many other acts of parliament are also relevant to the functions of Justices of the Peace. The duties of today's Justices of the Peace are largely administrative. However, Justices of the Peace in the