Bill reported; report adopted.

Bill read a third time.

## SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr PERRON (Chief Minister): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that so much of standing orders be suspended as would prevent the Miscellaneous Acts Amendment (Aboriginal Community Living Areas) Bill (Serial 230) passing through all stages at these sittings.

Mr EDE (Stuart): Mr Speaker, we support the motion for urgency because of the memorandum that has been agreed to between the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister and the very legitimate needs of Aboriginal people to gain this land. The government has provided us with advance copies of the legislation. Even though there have been a substantial number of amendments, we have generally been kept up to date with the changes. I will be circulating copies of my amendments tomorrow morning. Although we have often opposed urgency, in this situation, we support the motion.

Motion agreed to.

## MISCELLANEOUS ACTS AMENDMENT (ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY LIVING AREAS) BILL (Serial 230)

Continued from 17 October 1989.

Mr EDE (Stuart): Mr Deputy Speaker, the people who will be the direct beneficiaries of this legislation have been referred to consistently in the press as the people that land rights forgot. Over the years, there have been times when they have thought that it was not only land rights that forgot them - that it was all of Australia. I would like to advise that the opposition supports this bill. We will be moving a number of amendments which are designed to attempt to make the legislation work more effectively in practice. These are intended in no way to thwart or to change the direction of the bill. They will attempt to provide what we believe is a more accurate interpretation of the memorandum that was signed between the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister.

We must admit that this has been a long time coming. Many years ago, the Gibb Report made some quite categorical statements regarding the need for Aboriginal people on pastoral properties to be given some land. The result of that was a very small number of excisions that are consistently referred to as Gibb communities. I suppose, in a way, that honours the fact that Gibb did at least attempt to obtain some action on this matter.

It is not always understood by people that land is not important only for Aboriginal people's sense of self and to provide security - although that is of fundamental importance - it is important also in a much more practical way. There is the problem of the government's ability to provide services on land which is not the property of the community but the property of a pastoralist. This presents problems which are difficult if not impossible for governments to come to grips with. These communities, which continued to exist without any title to their land, were generally the poorest of the poor. The people had very little in the way of basic services such as water, housing, education and sometimes even the most minimal of health services. They were a blight on a civilised nation like Australia that claims to rank among the civilised communities of the world.