

CORPORATIONS (NORTHERN TERRITORY) AMENDMENT BILL  
(Serial 187)  
CULLEN BAY MARINA BILL  
(Serial 179)

Continued from 1 October 1992.

**Mr BELL (MacDonnell):** Mr Speaker, the Cullen Bay development is a matter of serious concern to the opposition at this stage. We are concerned not only about some aspects of the bill itself, but also about the project in toto. It is a matter of serious concern to me that this bill is coming on for debate at a time when the environmental impact statement is still being considered by the Minister for Conservation.

**Mr Reed:** Not 'the EIS'. A new EIS.

**Mr BELL:** I pick up the interjection. I am well aware that this is a second EIS that has been occasioned because of the difficulties that have been experienced in respect of the building of the retaining walls and the revetment thereon.

I would have serious doubts about this legislation on that ground alone. However, the fact that this bill will enshrine also a secret agreement between this government and Darwin Marina Estates Pty Ltd should be a matter of grave concern to every Territorian, as it is to every member of the opposition. I appreciate the briefings that have been provided by the Minister for Lands and Housing, but he cannot escape from the fact that there have been gaping holes in the information that he has been prepared to provide in respect of this bill.

I believe that the Territory has had enough of secret agreements. Already in these sittings we have had a bill passed through this parliament where an agreement between the government and a private company was set out fulsomely for the parliament and for the people of the Northern Territory. One can only wonder at the distinction that is drawn in this case. Only yesterday, we had the comprehensive agreement between this government and Mount Isa Mines in respect of the McArthur River development ...

**Mr Reed:** You all supported it.

**Mr BELL:** Absolutely, we supported it. We supported it because all the cards were laid on the table. For the benefit of the member for Katherine, my point is that half of the cards are under the table in this case. People do not know what will come next. I do not want to predict doom, but we have seen it so often with these matters. We saw it with the Yulara project where the government made every effort to make it as difficult as possible to find out what its exposure was in that particular project. Here we have another example. The question that I ask, and it must be answered by the government, is what are we in for? What obligations has the government contracted?

**Mr Finch:** You have been told.

**Mr BELL:** The Minister for Transport and Works is wrong. We have not been told. I suggest to him that he actually reads the bill.

**Mr FINCH:** A point of order, Mr Speaker! The commercial arrangements between the government and the developer, in terms of what the government is