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February 13, 1999

Mr. Shane Stone MLA  
Member for Port Darwin  
PO Box 559  
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Shane,

I am writing to thank you for your letter informing me of your resignation as Chief Minister.

I am sorry you were not able to choose your time to step down and have great respect for the dignified way that you handled the situation.

My involvement in party politics covered over ten years and during that time you were Party President, Minister and Chief Minister. I admired your energy and commitment to the Territory and your skills as an articulate and passionate politician.

I hear your critics say "but" and I say that your endeavours to secure a strong, stable economic base for the Territory will long be recognized and remembered. Having lived here almost continuously since 1937 I thank you most sincerely, you have made a difference and not many of us can make that claim.

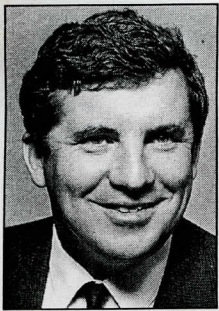
Politics is an all consuming and mostly thankless job but I hope you will pursue your political career in the the future and continue to make a difference.

In the meantime I am sure you, Josephine, Jack and Madeleine are going to have an interesting and enjoyable period adjusting to a different tempo of life. Best wishes to you all.

Best wishes to you for a challenging and fulfilling future.

Regards,





LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

**MEMBER FOR PORT DARWIN**

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30 April, 1999

Mr Earl James and Mrs Wendy James OAM  
16 Allen Street  
FANNIE BAY NT 0820

Dear Earl and Wendy

Thank you for your letter of February 13. I apologise for not responding earlier but I have been endeavouring to deal with an avalanche of mail that has been written to me by my Territorians in a very personal way, and which demands an equally personal response.

Thank you for the kind remarks contained in your letter. One has their highs and lows in politics, their rewards and disappointments. The failure of the Statehood Referendum was an obvious disappointment but it was far out-weighed by the economic framework that, I believe, was laid down during my term of government.

Thankless as the task might be, I always considered it a great privilege to serve as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, Minister and ultimately Head of Government. I will always be grateful to Territorians and the CLP for the opportunities that came my way.

You will have read in the media that there has been some speculation that I am being considered for the federal presidency of the Liberal Party. This is not approved of in some quarters and I am somewhat perplexed to understand some attitudes. I would have thought that it would have been very much in the interests of the Territory for a Territorian to achieve such a position.

In any event, I am confident that we will work our way through the current difficulties and a satisfactory outcome will be achieved.

You would also be aware from media reports that I have made it quite clear that we will be remaining in the Territory as a family. I am strongly of the view that remote and rural Australia will never grow, develop and prosper if those of us who have held leadership positions simply pack up and leave after we have had our ten minutes in the sun.

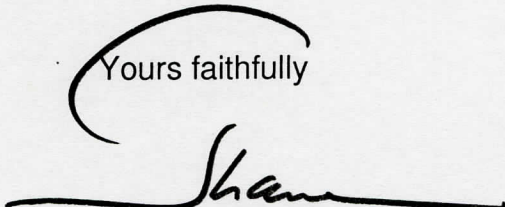
The Territory has been good to us as a family and I intend to reciprocate the compliment.

I was less than happy with what I saw as the shabby way I in which I was treated as I departed office. Unfortunately, it continued for some time and there is a limit to how much sand you will tolerate being kicked in your face. I am pleased to be able to say, however, that the situation has somewhat improved and I wish Denis Burke and his new team every success in the future.

Thank you both for your friendship, support and encouragement over the time that we have known each other. You have been with me all the way as President, Minister and Chief Minister. I am very proud to have served the Territory, albeit in a small way.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to me. Josephine sends her warm regards and best wishes.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shane', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shane L. Stone