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The Honourable Michael Ballantyne, Speaker

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Hon. Titus Allooloo, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Arngna'naaq, Hon. James Arvaluk, Hon. Michael Ballantyne, Mr. Bernhardt, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Mr. Gargan, Mr. Koe, Mr. Lewis, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Hon. Don Morin, Mr. Ningark, Hon. Dennis Patterson, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Todd, Hon. Tony Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Michael Ballantyne): Good afternoon. Orders of the day for Thursday, June 25, 1992. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Ms. Cournoyea.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Ministers' Statement 76-12(2): Minister's Absence From The House

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Stephen Kakfwi will be absent from the House today to attend a speaking engagement with the Chancellor's Club in Calgary. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

Ministers' Statement 77-12(2): Training Northerners In Construction Trades

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to report that cabinet has recently approved an outline for a training strategy for use with GNWT construction projects. A senior management committee, with membership from the NWT Housing Corporation, Public Works and Education, prepared the outline and will complete the development of the strategy by the end of the year. A series of pilot projects will be used to develop and test new approaches to construction trades training. The committee will recommend ways that strengthen the participation of NWT communities in the training initiatives and that rely on the expertise of NWT construction companies. The objective is to increase the opportunities for training in skilled and semi-skilled trades for GNWT construction projects. These efforts will result in increased certification of NWT construction workers and increase the number of NWT workers who can fill jobs in the construction industry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Mr. Whitford.

Ministers' Statement 78-12(2): Yellowknife Correctional Centre

HON. TONY WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for a number of years inmates have been producing crafts related to their cultural background while incarcerated in territorial correctional centres. In the lobby of the Legislative Assembly building you will have noticed a vast array of carvings, paintings and other craft items from the Yellowknife Correctional Centre. Yellowknife Correctional Centre has a crafts program where inmates from all cultural backgrounds learn from each other the skills associated with their talents.

For the first time, Yellowknife Correctional Centre has been asked to participate in a craft show, 'Festival of the Midnight Sun,' displaying crafts from all over the Northwest Territories at various locations around the city. Those crafts not committed will be moved back to the centre by Friday afternoon, June 26, where they may be purchased between the hours of 1:30 and 4:30 p.m. Proceeds from the carvings go into two areas: first, to the inmate welfare fund to assist with other inmate programs such as sports and recreational activities; and second, into their individual accounts which assist the inmates with personal financial responsibilities at home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Reassignment Of Ministerial Portfolios

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the ordinary Members' caucus has met and discussed the response of the Government Leader to address our previously expressed concerns. We were not surprised with the Government Leader not taking visible action to address our concerns.

Members strongly feel that in order to address our concerns the following must be done: the Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and the

NWT Power Corporation should be delegated to another cabinet Minister; the Department of Health be delegated to another cabinet Minister; the responsibilities for Social Services be reassigned to another cabinet Minister in order to allow the Departments of Health and Social Services to be amalgamated; the responsibilities of the Departments of Education and Culture and Communications be reassigned to another cabinet Minister.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be placing forth a motion reflecting the ordinary Members' request. Mr. Speaker, the ordinary Members feel that if and when these steps are taken, our concerns will be addressed accordingly. Thank you.

-Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Pudlat.

Member's Statement On Funding For Vessel, Sanikiluaq

MR. PUDLAT: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My fellow Members probably recall a time when I presented a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. The people of Sanikiluaq have been interested in obtaining a vessel, since they have a lot of work that is related to the bay in their area. They could also use it for hunting purposes. I wanted to further find out what will be happening because they will be submitting a proposal for funding in order to obtain a vessel, and I wanted to bring that to your attention, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Gargan.

Member's Statement On Traditional Knowledge Working Group And Aboriginal Languages Conference

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the traditional knowledge working group was established in October 1989. Elders worked with representatives from the government and aboriginal organizations for several months to find practical ways to preserve the traditional knowledge of aboriginal people and to use this knowledge in the planning and delivery of legislation and services for northern people. The working group prepared a report with 20 recommendations for the government. This

report was tabled in the House nearly one year ago in July 1991.

Mr. Speaker, this government has expressed its commitment to preserving and using the knowledge of aboriginal people. Surely this is basic to governing effectively in the Northwest Territories. Yet in all this time, there has been no strategy outlined as to how the government will use these recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned about the failure of the government to make use of the recommendations of another group. The aboriginal languages conference was held in Yellowknife March 25-27, 1991. Again, aboriginal delegates and organizations made comprehensive recommendations to the government to revitalize aboriginal languages and to involve communities with designing and providing services in this area.

The Minister of Culture and Communications said back in 1991 that he would give serious consideration to the recommendations from the aboriginal languages conference. Yet again, there has been no response or plan presented to this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister has received written concerns from myself and from the Dene Cultural Institute and the Inuit Cultural Institute about the lack of a formal response. Members of the Metis Heritage Association and the Inuvialuit social development program also feel that this is taking too long.

I will say that I have received a written response from the Minister saying that his department is reviewing the reports and outlining programs that are being conducted by his department related to traditional knowledge and culture. But Mr. Speaker, the response I received concerns me. The department is doing a little...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gargan, you have exceeded the time limit.

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Members. The department is doing a little here and a little there for aboriginal language and culture. But it seems to be ad hoc with no comprehensive plan or strategy. The government needs to develop a

strategy, and there must be greater community control in this area. This is where the traditional knowledge working group and the aboriginal languages conference recommendations are invaluable.

In light of the constitutional developments and the now direction throughout the country to recognize the aboriginal inherent right to self-government, this government should move toward devolving Dene and Inuit cultural programs to the proper recognized aboriginal authority. It is time that this government too, recognized and supported the right to self-government. The plan of this government to reshape northern government should include a strong commitment to further the self-government of aboriginal people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Mr. Lewis.

Member's Statement On Decentralization Of NWT Science Institute

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have looked very carefully at the New Directions paper tabled by the Government Leader, and I have one concern which I have shared with the chairman of the standing committee on finance and also with the Minister of Finance. It concerns the decentralization of the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories. About six years ago, the federal government commissioned a study on the establishment of a Polar Commission which would provide Canada, as a major polar country, with a science institute or commission that would coordinate all northern science. Three years ago the federal government passed an act creating this commission which provided for a northern office. When people in Yellowknife met with the commissioner who came to examine this issue in the NWT, we told him that he should have a northern office when this legislation is put together. That is exactly what happened, and that commission is now in place. Mr. Whit Fraser was appointed to head it up.

Now the possibility of establishing a northern office, combined with the Science Institute of the NWT, seems to have been lost because you decided to get rid of it. I think that was bad planning; it was not thought through very carefully. I would urge the government to rethink that one issue because I believe that science is of interest to us all, and it has to play a co-ordinating role in one location. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Mr. Zoe.

Member's Statement On Telephone Services, Snare Lake

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a statement regarding telephone services for Snare Lake. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of an intolerable situation that currently exists in several of our smaller communities. Many people in these communities do not have access to basic service that most of us take for granted - the use of a telephone, a fax machine, or a phone line for computers.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday my colleague, the honourable Member for Nahendeh, spoke about the need for the extension of further telephone lines into several communities in the Deh Cho region. In my region, the people of Snare Lake have access to just one telephone. This telephone services over 120 people in this community and, as can be expected, there is a constant line-up for its use. Currently, there is not time for this line to be used for fax machines or for computer hookups.

Mr. Speaker, the principal of the Dechi Laot'i Entike Ko School has written several letters to NorthwTel informing them of the need for access to telephone lines at the school. This would allow the school to access outside information sources through the use of fax or computer modem. Mr. Speaker, we are living in the electronic age where essential information is now being transmitted by fax or computer modem. Yet, Mr. Speaker, it is sadly ironic that the people who could most benefit from these mediums, the residents and students in our smaller communities, do not have access to this source of information.

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the Minister of Government Services will give this matter his urgent attention so that we can have a satisfactory resolution to this problem.

As an elder in Snare Lake pointed out to me, Mr. Speaker, and I quote: "We can put people on the moon who can..."

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MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Zoe, your time limit has been exceeded.

MR. ZOE: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you. As an elder in Snare Lake pointed out to me, and I quote: 'We can put people on the moon who can speak to people on earth, yet we cannot even give adequate telephone services to people who just live 120 air miles from our capital city.' Mr. Speaker, I think Members in this House can see what I mean by the comment that elder has made. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: If I could remind Members again. It seems that probably at least half of Members' statements now are exceeding the two and one-half minutes. This Legislative Assembly has increased the time allotment from two minutes to two and one-half minutes. I would ask Members to try and live within the rules that they set for themselves. Thank you.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome a former colleague, former Government Leader, Minister, and MLA, Mr. Nick Sibbeston.

--Applause

Members' statements. Mr. Todd.

Member's Statement On Social Problems In The North

MR. TODD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Cultural disaffiliation, substance dependency, family violence, neglected and abused children, sexual victimization, feelings of youth hopelessness and depression have been dark and unwanted features of our northern homeland for too long. There is no denying, Mr. Speaker, that these are symptoms of a deeper underlying need in our society. As we find new ways to address the shortcomings in economic development, housing, employment and retention of traditional values, the social pressures which boil inside northern communities and households will become progressively more manageable. I believe we have already begun to make some progress in resolving the root causes of our social problems.

However, we simply cannot overlook the fact, while we are doing this, that people are hurting. We can see in every community throughout the North, children wandering around and turning to solvents, alcohol and, perhaps more dangerously, drugs. Youths, who feel separated from their culture and from their grandparents, are unprepared to cope with the stress of independent living. Men who batter women: families that communicate only through the expression of violence and pain; elders who suffer alone -we must do something to stop this pain. There

must be a renewed effort to place effective and culturally aware counselling services within regional and community settings. Our current system of providing clinical expertise through a series of fly-in and fly out circuit services is simply not working. We need to ensure that these resources are placed within the regions and communities in the Northwest Territories.

The Government Leader's New Directions initiatives states that cabinet did everything it could to protect programs in the social services field. I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker; however, we must now extend the same principle that we have applied to the regional transfer of other government programs to the Department of Social Services. We simply have to look at decentralization as a process through which we can bring mental health counselling, clinical treatment and family-based healing closer to the people who are suffering. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Todd. Members' statements. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Member's Statement On Confidence In Government Leader's Ministerial Assignments

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak on the goings on in this Assembly this past week. I was not here at the time the motion was made by Mrs. Marie-Jewell. This was because I felt the Government Leader can assess the situation and come to an agreeable solution, and that this was not the way of my upbringing.

Considering the fact that the government is trying to consolidate certain departments in an effort to save money, cabinet has been put in the very difficult position of trying to manage a system with very limited resources.

Under Ministers' statements yesterday, the Government Leader implied that there will be reassignments after reassessing the Ministers' abilities. This is one of the routes suggested by the ordinary Members in their motion. In a consensus style of government, there has to be agreement among a majority of Members. I agree with the outcome of the Government Leader's response. I have confidence in the Government Leader. She will be able to address the concerns of the ordinary Members with regard to the recommendations in her deliberations. I have every confidence in the

Government Leader that her decision will be in the best interest of all the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement On Government Working For The People

MR. ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) Since I have been elected to the House, I am beginning to know the ropes. However, there is some concern about the Government Leader and the Ministers. They are here to represent everybody in the Northwest Territories. Over the last few days I have been concerned about a few things. There are a few organizations and Members that have told me to raise certain things, so I have raised them in this House. I hey must be very concerned about things that are happening around the North for them to come to me and to tell me to bring these things to everybody's attention. If the government is not working for the people, if it does not look like it is working for the people, we are the ones that should remind them. If the people are not happy with the things they do and how they work, these concerns have to be raised. I am really concerned about these things, and that is why I wanted to raise them today. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Returns to oral questions. Mr. Alloo.oo.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Question O610-12(2): Outside Firms Bidding On Northern Work; And Further Return To Question O614-12(2): Arctic College Procedures For Contractual Agreements

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Todd on June 23, 1992, with respect to outside firms bidding on northern work. Arctic College, in co-operation with the Baffin Divisional Board of Education, is currently seeking catering services for the high school and college students in Iqaluit. The college and the board contracted with the firm of Cini Little in Toronto to prepare the necessary tender documents. This firm was also asked to provide the

tender documents to interested caterers in southern Canada.

Arctic College and the Baffin Divisional Board of Education followed established GNWT contract regulations. The bids received will be assessed against criteria which include the business incentive policy. The college and the board are encouraging active bidding and will award the contract according to the regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I have considered the appropriateness of tender documents being made available through a southern contract, and, while this is not an unusual practice, I will be directing Arctic College and the Baffin Divisional Board of Education to use only a northern contract for bidders in the future. Thank you.

-Applause

Further Return To Question O634-12(2): Factors Considered In Advancement Of Children In Schools

Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr Gargan on June 24, 1992, with respect to factors considered in advancement of children in school. This is a further return to an oral question which I answered on June 24, 1992. Mr. Gargan informed me that it was his understanding that a seven-year-old child in Fort Providence has been held back for three years in the same grade because of his size and his age. As Minister of Education, I would like to emphasize that it is not the policy or practice of the school system to keep students from advancing a grade because of their size and age. I have asked the director of the Deh Cho Divisional Board of Education to look into this matter immediately and reply directly to the Member as soon as possible.

Further Return To Question O633-12(2): Education Assessments

I have another return, Mr. Speaker, to a question asked by Mr. Antoine on June 23, 1992, with respect to education assessments of NWT children. Children in the NWT, who are experiencing difficulties learning, are given both informal and formal educational assessments within the school system. These assessments assist in planning appropriate programs, and are conducted by the classroom teacher, the special needs teacher or the special needs consultant within the child's own community.

In some cases, children are referred for further specialized assessments which involve professionals such as medical specialists. At present, these assessments are often conducted by a multi-disciplinary team from Stanton Yellowknife Hospital or at the Glenrose Hospital in Edmonton for children of the Western Arctic. Some children may also be assessed in their own community by the clinical assessment team from the Department of Social Services.

The Department of Education is aware that accessing these specialized services might be difficult. Referrals for specialized assessments must be made through a medical system or the Social Services system. These assessments are paid for by the Department of Health or the Department of Social Services. School boards have no designated funds to either provide or contract for specialized assessment services.

Because this is not just an educational issue, a working committee with representatives from the Departments of Education, Health and Social Services is looking at ways to improve the delivery of all services to children, including specialized assessment services. This committee will make recommendations for improving the access to the delivery of support services to children within the NWT during the next school year.

Further Return To Question O579-12(2): Teacher Education Program, Keewatin

Mr. Speaker, I have another return which is somewhat unusual. This is a reply to a question asked by one of my colleagues, the Hon. James Arvaluk, asked on June 19 with respect to the Keewatin teacher education program. This is a further return to Question O579-12(2) which I answered on June 19, 1992.

Seven of the potential 10 to 12 students have applied to enter the second year of the Keewatin teacher education program in September 1992. After discussions between my department and the Keewatin Divisional Board of Education, it was agreed that the board would provide funding for two students to enrol in the program in September 1992. Funding for the remaining students who enrol will be provided by the Department of Education. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: One thing for clarification. I was not quite sure you said this was a further return. I am not aware of anything in the rules that allows further returns. I think I will review Hansard tonight, and

tomorrow I will make a ruling on that, because it is now a concept to me. Returns to oral questions. Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question O571-12(2): Aboriginal Residents, Registering For Business Incentive Policy

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a return to a question asked by Mr. Gargan on June 18, regarding aboriginal residents registering for business incentive policy. The benefits of the business incentive policy are available to businesses that are majority northern-owned and that maintain permanent business facilities in the NWT. The BIP compensates those businesses for the higher costs of maintaining those facilities and employees. The contracting departments are only able to determine if a business qualifies for the benefits, if, at the time of the tender evaluation, the business has registered. Native-owned and administered firms will have no problem obtaining registration. Departments must evaluate hundreds of tenders each year, and it would not be possible to check the status of non-registered businesses at the time of each tender evaluation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Returns to oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

Return To Question O576-12(2): Federal Survey On Alcohol And Drugs In The NWT

HON. TONY WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Ms. Mike on June 22.

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Further Return To Question O627-12(2): "Healing Our Spirit, " Worldwide Conference"

Mr. Speaker, I have another return to a question asked by Mr. Brian Lewis on June 23, dealing with the 'Healing Our Spirit' worldwide conference. I have been advised by the conference planners that they anticipate between 3000 and 3500 people from around the world will be attending the 'Healing Our Spirit' conference. Over 1500 people have already registered. In the Northwest Territories, although all 42 alcohol and drug projects and treatment centres were contacted, in writing, to select one participant to attend the conference, only 29 projects have responded. Therefore, 29 workers from alcohol and

drug projects from across the Northwest Territories will be in attendance.

This is considered to be the premier event of the year relating to alcohol and drug addictions and abuse. The conference will address community-based responsibility, action and empowerment in seeking solutions to addictions. It will also include a variety of cultural activities aimed at all ages making it a family celebration of sobriety and wellness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Further Return To Question O629-12(2): Food Basket Survey

Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence, I have yet another return. The question was asked by Mr. Henry Zoe on June 23, dealing with the food basket survey. The analysis of the food cost survey will be conducted to determine which communities will need to be moved on the food scales to accommodate higher food prices identified in the food cost survey. The department will also be looking at the impact of the consumer price index on food since the time of the last survey.

It is anticipated that additional funding will be required to provide for necessary food costs since the time of the last survey. A separate cost impact will be developed for both the movement of communities on the scale and the impact of the consumer price index on food itself. Indexing, therefore, will be dealt with and considered separately from the cost impact. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Returns to oral questions. Mr. Patterson.

Further Return To Question O624-12(2): Status Of Complaints Commission Review Re Kitty Nowdluk-Reynolds Case

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: The head office of the RCMP Public Complaints Commission has advised that the panel which heard the matter has not yet delivered its report, though it is expected to be delivered sometime this summer.

Return To Question O631-12(2): North Pole Expedition Rescue

The two members of the Weber-Malakhov expedition were attempting to reach the North Pole on skis. They were unable to fully complete their journey due to poor ice conditions. On June 21, 1992, the two adventurers were picked up by an aircraft belonging

to Bradley Air at latitude 88 degrees 48 minutes. There are no costs to the Government of the Northwest Territories for their aerial pickup.

MR. SPEAKER: Returns to oral questions. Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question O552-12(2): Status Of NWT Power Corporation Franchise Agreements

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Todd on June 17, on the status of franchise agreements.

On December 17, 1991, I indicated to this Assembly that there appeared to be a great deal of confusion over the purpose of franchise agreements, and that little progress had occurred to date to successfully conclude agreements between the corporation and communities in its service area.

Currently, the corporation has a request before the Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board to authorize franchises between the corporation and each of the 10 unorganized communities. It is anticipated that this authorization will be provided shortly.

In addition, the Public Utilities Board has scheduled public hearings into the terms and conditions of the standard form franchise agreement for July 9-10, 1992, in Yellowknife. It is anticipated that these hearings will result in clarification of the requirements and parameters of an appropriate franchise agreement. These parameters will be communicated to all communities within the corporation's service area with a view to encouraging settlement of these franchise agreements. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. Oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question O645-12(2): Civil Action Against GNWT And Doctor Re Malpractice

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health. Yesterday, the Minister tabled the Abortion Review Services Committee Report. The committee reviewed abortion services and procedures at the Stanton Yellowknife Hospital. The Minister commented that the committee did not refer any matter for specific investigation by a professional licensing or other disciplinary body because it did not find professional malpractice. My

question to the Minister is, can the Minister confirm, in this House and to members of the public, that not withstanding the finding of the review committee, that it is the right of any woman who considers she has been subject to professional malpractice to bring civil action against the doctor concerned as well as against the Government of the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: I must caution Members that this question is really asking for what is essentially a legal opinion of the Government Leader. Civil cases fall within the jurisdiction of the courts. I would like to ask the honourable Member to consider rephrasing his question. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, in light of the statement that the Minister made yesterday, I would like to ask her whether or not a woman has the right to launch a civil suit against the doctor or against the government if the woman feels she has been subject to professional malpractice.

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MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question O645-12(2): Civil Action Against GNWT And Doctor Re Malpractice

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that it was in the mandate of the committee to refer, for more specific investigation by a professional licensing or other disciplinary body, any matter arising from the review where it deemed it to be desirable in the public interest. This was not done. To be very clear, yes, If people still feel they have not had the proper recourse to address their concerns, there is a process to have that request for a review on that specific matter. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question O645-12(2): Civil Action Against GNWT And Doctor Re Malpractice

MR. GARGAN: Just maybe for clarification, is the Minister suggesting that if the woman feels that she has been wronged then she goes to the review committee, or can she still launch a civil suit?

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question O645-12(2): Civil Action Against GNWT And Doctor Re Malpractice

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it would not be back to the committee that looked at these procedures. It would go the normal recourse where they can appeal to the board of inquiry and launch a complaint.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question O646-12(2): Telephone Lines For Snare Lake School

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Government Services. In my Member's statement today, Mr. Speaker, I spoke about a number of communities in the Western Arctic that do not have basic telephone services. My question to the Minister, Mr. Speaker, is what is the Minister of Government Services prepared to do to assist the people of Snare Lake and the Dechi Laot'i E School to obtain access to desperately needed telephone lines.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Morin.

Return To Question O646-12(2): Telephone Lines For Snare Lake School

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am prepared to take the issue up with NorthwTel on behalf of the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question O646-12(2): Telephone Lines For Snare Lake School

MR. ZOE: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could I ask the Minister in what time frame is he considering this; is it going to be next week or a month from now? When does he anticipate trying to resolve this issue?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question O646-12(2): Telephone Lines For Snare Lake School

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as I can write a letter and sign it.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Pudluk.

Question O647-12(2): Result Of Negotiations Re Polar Bear Quotas

MR. PUDLUK: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In springtime in 1992, the wildlife officials were meeting in Grise Fiord, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet and Resolute Bay. They were negotiating as to where they could put the polar bear quotas because some of the communities were satisfied with their quotas and some of them had advanced their season for polar bear hunting. Today I would like to find out exactly what they have done with this process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I will take that as notice and try to provide an answer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The question is taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Koe.

**Question O648-12(2): Support For
Great Slave Lake Fishermen**

MR. KOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. On June 19, I asked the Minister about the fishermen of Great Slave Lake and the problems that they sent in by correspondence and by demonstrating here in Yellowknife to the Minister. He indicated that basically it was problem of the B class fishermen. I have correspondence that indicates that a Great Slave Lake Fish Company was established and shares are owned by both A and B class licence-holders. These fishermen still have concerns and they want some solution of these concerns because the fishing season is starting to get under way. They need equipment and some money to do the job, a job which I think they know best and can do best. They do not want to go on welfare. My question is, does this government support the fishermen's concerns?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question O648-12(2): Support For Great Slave Lake Fishermen

HON. JOHN POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, yes, we support the concern that the price of fish is not as high as we would like to see it, or the fishermen would like to see it. One of the suggestions by this company, Mr. Speaker, is to get exemption from the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation in some species of fish and that, of course, will have to come from the FFMC. We have told this company in a letter some two or three weeks ago, before the company was incorporated, the kind of information that we would

require as a department in order to be able to assist them. To my knowledge, until today, Mr. Speaker, I have not heard that we have received a reply in that regard. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question O648-12(2): Support For Great Slave Lake Fishermen

MR. KOE: A supplementary to the Minister. What is the Minister's department doing to assist these fishermen in getting them exemption from the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation?

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MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question O648-12(2): Support For Great Slave Lake Fishermen

HON. JOHN POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, we have no objections to these fishermen seeking exemptions from FFMC. I should point out to you, though, that if we felt that there were going to be exemptions in the whitefish area that would be to the detriment of the other fishermen who are fishing and selling to FFMC, then we would have some concerns. To that end, Mr. Speaker, I have spoken with Mr. Ross, who I think is a principal in the new corporation, and asked him if I might arrange a meeting between himself and the Fishermen's Federation to try and resolve their differences. Mr. Ross has again refused, but I am following it up with a letter to him, asking him to talk to his people and reconsider, and at least take the opportunity to try and resolve their differences with the other fishermen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question O648-12(2): Support For Great Slave Lake Fishermen

MR. KOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The fishermen in question established a company called Great Slave Lake Fish Company. I would like to ask the Minister what is he or his department doing to assist this company in getting established so they can operate as a business?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question O648-12(2): Support For Great Slave Lake Fishermen

HON. JOHN POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, as I previously stated, the company did approach us before it was incorporated sometime around the last week of April, and we have provided to the company the kinds of information that we would require in order to be able to assist them. To my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, they have not got back to us yet, but we have provided the information to them with regard to the kinds of things we need to know to help them get off the ground. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: This is your last supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question O648-12(2): Support For Great Slave Lake Fishermen

MR. KOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before being appointed as a Minister, I understand that you, as an ordinary MLA, were a member of the Great Slave Lake Advisory Board. The question is, are you still a member of this advisory board?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Koe, if you are asking if he is a member of the advisory board in his capacity as Minister, it is a valid question. Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question O648-12(2): Support For Great Slave Lake Fishermen

HON. JOHN POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, I was never a member of the advisory board. I was an alternate. Mr. Chummy Plummer was the member, but he lived in Winnipeg and I lived in Hay River, and the meetings were always held in Hay River or close by, and so I represented him on that particular advisory board. Upon becoming a Minister, I informed the Department of Fisheries that I would no longer sit on that board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. I have Mr. Lewis next.

Question O649-12(2): Block Funding For Capital Projects

MR. LEWIS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for MACA the following question: Could he indicate what stage he is at in negotiations between his department and the municipality of Yellowknife to arrange block funding for capital projects, since the whole business of funding capital projects has caused great difficulty for the municipality?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O649-12(2): Block Funding For Capital Projects

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, when the new municipal funding formula was approved by cabinet at the end of March of this year, I made a commitment to the City of Yellowknife that I would work on a block funding arrangement for the coming fiscal year, since the new funding formula allows for block funding for municipalities, and since the City of Yellowknife, amongst other municipalities, was very interested in obtaining such an arrangement. I can tell the honourable Member that discussions have been under way at the officials level. They have been hampered a bit by holidays and travel, but I understand now that Mr. Lagore is back, discussions are proceeding actively with my officials. The results have not yet come to my attention, but I know it is being worked on actively and it still is a priority with myself to get a proposal together for presentation to cabinet. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question O649-12(2): Block Funding For Capital Projects

MR. LEWIS: I believe that the City of Yellowknife has made a claim for over a million dollars on capital money that is owing the city. I am wondering if there is any progress being made in returning that money to the city over the last few weeks.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: I will have to take that as notice, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been taken as notice. I have Mr. Gargan next.

Question O650-12(2): Criteria For Selecting Members Of Abortion Services Review Committee

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health, and it is with regard to some concerns I have with regard to the abortion services review committee, which was authorized by the Minister to review the abortion procedures at Stanton Yellowknife Hospital. Of the four committee members, one member was the president of the Canadian Hospitals Association, which Stanton Yellowknife Hospital is a member of, and the other is a physician. I would like to ask the Minister, can the Minister explain to the House what criteria were used in the selection of committee

members to ensure that the review would be independent and objective?

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MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question O650-12(2): Criteria Used For Selecting Members Of Abortion Services Review Committee

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I believe the idea was to have people from the various professions who knew how hospitals worked; also to have someone from the medical profession to have a knowledge of how the medical profession works. The review of the abortion procedures at Stanton Hospital, on the report that is here, shows the terms of reference in which the committee would conduct itself. What was attempted was to find people from the professions, as well as lay people and people knowledgeable about the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Todd.

Question O651-12(2): Recommendation Of Public Utilities Board Re Rate Structures

MR. TODD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, in October of 1990, the Public Utilities Board conducted a review of electrical rate structures in the Northwest Territories. One of the recommendations of this review was that the provision of power subsidies by the GNWT should be separated from the rate structure of electrical utilities in the Northwest Territories. Could the Minister tell this Assembly what this government has done to redesign power subsidy programs offered by this government in response to this recommendation?

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question O651-12(2): Recommendation Of Public Utilities Board Re Rate Structures

HON. JOHN POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, we have looked at it several times. There have been all kinds of recommendations made to us; getting rid of the subsidy program; making it user-pay. There have been people in the Northwest Territories who say we should be paying less because we are on hydro power, that it should not be a sort of pooled system. To answer the Member's question directly, we have done nothing as yet to address this problem that

some people across the Northwest Territories consider the inconsistencies between power rates. It is a very complex subject, particularly since the Government of the Northwest Territories in many instances is the person who pays the bill for power through one means or another. So we have had some looks at it, Mr. Speaker, but we have not done anything to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Todd.

Supplementary To Question O651-12(2): Recommendation Of Public Utilities Board Re Rate Structures

MR. TODD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell me whether these power subsidies are solely funded by dividends paid to the GNWT by the NWT Power Corporation? How are they paid?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question O651-12(2): Recommendation Of Public Utilities Board Re Rate Structures

HON. JOHN POLLARD: That has been the practice to date, Mr. Speaker, yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Todd.

Supplementary To Question O651-12(2): Recommendation Of Public Utilities Board Re Rate Structures

MR. TODD: Mr. Speaker, as the Member is aware the NWT Power Corporation has been granted a six per cent interim increase in electrical rates by the Public Utilities Board earlier this year. The PUB will be holding public hearings on the Power Corporation's application this week. In fact my concern is that the power rates may even increase. Could the Minister tell me whether the power subsidy programs have kept pace with the increases in the electrical power rates?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question O651-12(2): Recommendation Of Public Utilities Board Re Rate Structures

HON. JOHN POLLARD: Mr. Speaker, the subsidy is based on the rate charged for power in Yellowknife. So in effect it does keep pace, although if the price of power goes up in Yellowknife, obviously there is some

loss of subsidy. But when there is an increase outside of Yellowknife, the subsidy does increase.

MR. SPEAKER: Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question O652-12: Results Of Abortion Review Committee

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday while I was away from the House the report of the abortion review services committee was tabled and I have been unable to read it as of yet. However I have heard through the media reports that there is a member of this committee who does not agree with this report and as a result will be formulating her own report. I would like to ask the Minister of Health if this is correct?

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to remind Members that a question should not ask a Minister to confirm or deny something from the media, but If the Member would like to rephrase the question to ask for specific information.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, I would like to ask the Minister of Health whether or not all abortion review committee Members agreed in totality with this report that was tabled in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question O652-12: Results Of Abortion Review Committee

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge all members agreed with what is in the report. One member wanted to add more. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question O652-12: Results Of Abortion Review Committee

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the Member did want to add more to the report, is the Minister willing to entertain the request of adding more to the report?

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question O652-12: Results Of Abortion Review Committee

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I believe one of the Members asked earlier how we set it up so it would be completely objective and at arm's length

and totally out of anyone interfering with the work of the committee. I have no jurisdiction to add or take away from the report. The report was presented. My understanding is there was opportunity to have an addendum to the report. The individual chose not to do so. The report has been delivered and I cannot do anything to manipulate or add or change the report.

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MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Lewis.

Question O653-12(2): Co-Ordination Of Northern Science Activities

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Government Leader. When the decision was made to decentralize the Science Institute of the NWT, was the Government Leader aware that there was a piece of federal legislation establishing a Polar Science Commission, in which there would be a northern office to co-ordinate northern activities, and that the report that led to that legislation, that recommended that office be in Yellowknife and combined with the Science Institute of the NWT?

MR. SPEAKER: That is really two questions, but if the Minister would like to answer in a general way.

Return To Question O653-12(2): Co-Ordination Of Northern Science Activities

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I am aware of that federal legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question O653-12(2): Co-Ordination Of Northern Science Activities

MR. LEWIS: Since there will be no presence in Yellowknife of the Science Institute of the NWT, has the Government Leader determined which of the two places in the NWT, Igloolik or Inuvik, will be the place that is combined with that Polar Science Commission?

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question O653-12(2): Co-Ordination Of Northern Science Activities

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: That consideration has not come up.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question O653-12(2): Co-Ordination Of Northern Science Activities

MR. LEWIS: In light of this knowledge that there is a need to co-ordinate northern science, is the Government Leader prepared to reconsider the decentralization of the Science Institute of the NWT?

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question O653-12(2): Co-Ordination Of Northern Science Activities

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, no.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Antoine.

Question O654-12(2): Assessment Of Students By Health, Social Services And Education

MR. ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Education in regard to the question he answered on assessment. I would just like to qualify it and say that Dr. Kinloch from the Department of Health briefed me on the assessment going on in Fort Simpson Hospital, and in that discussion he pointed out that assessment was a big concern there. This is correct, there is a great concern in the community of Fort Simpson, as well as in the region, in regard to assessing children in the education system. He even said that approximately 25 per cent of the students in my region need to be assessed. The other day when I asked the Minister about that, he said that approximately 25 per cent of the students in my region need to be assessed, and that the assessments take place in Yellowknife or Edmonton. Today he states the assessment is done by the Department of Health or Social Services and Education and the school boards do not have funds. I would like to ask the Minister if there is a co-ordinated effort on the part of the government to provide adequate assessing of students in the NWT.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

Return To Question O654-12(2): Assessment Of Students By Health, Social Services And Education

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government recognizes that this assessment work has to be co-ordinated. As a result the Departments of Education, Health and Social Services are looking at ways to improve the delivery of all services to children. Their report will be coming back to respective Ministers with their recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Antoine, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O654-12(2): Assessment Of Students By Health, Social Services And Education

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This assessment is very important to the school boards and the parents. When a review is being done to look at assessments by departments, are the school boards and concerned parents going to be involved in this review?.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Allooloo.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: I will take the question as notice and get back to the Member tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being taken as notice. Mr. Koe.

Question O655-12(2): Increase In Licence Fee By Liquor Licensing Board

MR. KOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Government Services who I believe is responsible for the NWT Liquor Licensing Board. I have been advised by some hotel owners in the North that the licence fee for purchases from the Liquor Commission has already been increased to 10 per cent from the current fee of five per-cent. This is 100 per cent increase in a time of restraint and higher operating costs, and I think this is going to have a significant impact on customers and operators. My question to the Minister is, what is the justification for such an increase at this time?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Morin.

Return To Question O655-12(2): Increase In Licence Fee By Liquor Licensing Board

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The liquor fees increased from five per cent to 10 per cent. There have been no increases since 1972; that is 20 years. It is all part of the user-pay; 0 you want to drink you have to pay. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question O655-12(2): Increase In Licence Fee By Liquor Licensing Board

MR. KOE: I pity the drinkers, but my question was on what basis and what justification? Because it has been 20 years since an increase, is not justification, not in times where hotels are closing, bars are closing and less and less people are frequenting these establishments. Why the increase?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question O655-12(2): Increase In Licence Fee By Liquor Licensing Board

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is to keep in line with the user-pay arrangements and to help finance the Liquor Licensing Board. That is basically why the increases were put there. Once again, I will say that there was no increase in 20 years. That is enough justification, I believe.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question O655-12(2): Increase In Licence Fee By Liquor Licensing Board

MR. KOE: It is my understanding that the five per cent fee that exists more than adequately covers the cost of administration of the licensing board and the inspectors, and with less inspectors because there are less operators, less hotels, less bars, I do not see any justification for this type of increase. User-pay does not justify -- this is not an answer to me.

MR. SPEAKER: Could I say that the rules state very clearly that a Minister may respond to a question, may decline to respond to a question, and the Minister may also respond in a way that the Minister thinks is a correct response, but a Member might not. So Mr. Morin is well within his rights, under our rules, to respond in the way that he has responded. With that, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question O655-12(2): Increase In Licence Fee By Liquor Licensing Board

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, Mr. Koe, since 1972 there has been no increase. It is a five per cent that users will pay and it will increase to 10 per cent, and I feel that is enough justification to do it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question O656-12(2): Obtaining Legal Aid For Medical Malpractice Suits

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice with respect to abortion procedures and the possibility of civil actions being brought by women who feel that they have been subjected to professional malpractice. Will the Minister advise the House whether women who wish to assert their rights to legal action with respect to abortion procedures will be eligible to apply through legal aid.

MR. SPEAKER: Again, that is asking a legal opinion of the Minister of Justice. If I could ask the Member perhaps to rephrase that question.

MR. GARGAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice. In the event that a woman feels that there has been professional malpractice done to her by the medical profession, is she entitled to legal aid?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

Return To Question O656-12(2): Obtaining Legal Aid For Medical Malpractice Suits

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, that would depend on the situation of the applicant. It would depend on their income. Legal aid is not available to people who are deemed to be able to pay for their own legal advice. It would depend on the person's personal financial circumstances. The best way to find out would be to apply for legal aid. I cannot answer the general question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome a number of artists from communities all over the North who are here in town for the Festival of the Midnight Sun. They come from Cambridge Bay, Whitehorse, Pangnirtung, Baker Lake, Iqaluit, Lac la Martre, Fort Providence and Rankin Inlet. On behalf of the Assembly, welcome.

---Applause

Oral questions, Mr. Todd.

Question O657-12(2): Meeting Mental Health Needs Of Northern Communities

MR. TODD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Social Services and deals with applying the New Directions initiative to meet the mental health needs of people living in the communities. Presently there is a clinical services program in the alcohol, drugs and community mental health services division which is comprised of child

care workers and mental health professionals who carry out psychological assessments and counselling for troubled youth in their families. Could the Minister of Social Services indicate whether he would be prepared to, or willing to, consider decentralizing this program so that these clinics could be closer to the client groups they are intended to serve?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Whitford.

HON. TONY WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question O658-12(2): Accelerate Provision Of Additional Phone Lines Into Snare Lake

MR. ZOE: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Government Services. Mr. Speaker, earlier this afternoon the Minister responded that he is going to write a letter to NorthwesTel on the issue that I raised earlier in my Member's statement with regard to telephone services. Mr. Speaker, I feel that this is an important issue that the Minister should move on, as I expressed in my Member's statement, urgently. I want to ask if the Minister would be prepared to meet with NorthwesTel in an effort to have them accelerate their plans for the provision of extra phone lines into Snare Lake?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Morin.

Return To Question O658-12(2): Accelerate Provision Of Additional Phone Lines Into Snare Lake

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have said to the Member earlier, I will write a letter to NorthwesTel and if I find time I will meet with them, if they are willing to meet. Just for the Member's information, NorthwesTel's capital funds for providing full community phone service is based on NorthwesTel board approval. They have a construction review process which is updated yearly. Dates given in the plan are not really that reliable because they are updated yearly, and they often change because of improvements and delays scheduled for unserved communities. As of November 1991, it has Snare Lake pay phone in 1993, according to the schedule I have. I know the Member is concerned and I will raise this issue with NorthwesTel. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Zoe, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question O658-12(2): Accelerate Provision Of Additional Phone Lines Into Snare Lake

MR. ZOE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I am strongly suggesting to the Minister that he does meet with NorthwesTel because the schedule that I have from NorthwesTel does not indicate that. One of the reasons that NorthwesTel is not moving to provide additional phone service to communities in the Western Arctic is that there is heavy subsidization by NorthwesTel to the small communities. I am suggesting to the Minister, or asking him, if he would be willing to meet with them to try to get NorthwesTel to accelerate their plans in providing extra phones to the smaller communities in the Western Arctic.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Zoe, you might not have liked the answer the Minister gave but the Minister did answer your question. Oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question O659-12(2): Ministerial Action If Students Are Unfairly Held Back From Advancement

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be careful here. The Minister of Education did say that he would like to emphasize that it is not the policy or practice of the school system to keep a student from advancing a grade because of their size or age. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if, in the event that it is being practised in my home community, what course of action would the Minister take to the people that are doing that.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Alloo.oo.

Return To Question O659-12(2): Ministerial Action If Students Are Unfairly Held Back From Advancement

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take appropriate action. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question O659-12(2): Ministerial Action If Students Are Unfairly Held Back From Advancement

MR. GARGAN: Thank you. The appropriate action, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that just to confirm the seven year old that was referred to is a son of mine. It is my son and we were told that because of his size that maybe he would not advance because

the bigger kids will give him a hard time. In another instance, Mr. Speaker, there was also Ronald and Shirley Bonnetrouge who have a daughter by the name of Samantha who was also held back because of her size. Also David and Harriet Gargan have an adopted daughter named Wendy, that also was held back. I would like to ask if the Minister would look into those particular names.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Allooloo.

Further Return To Question O659-12(2): Ministerial Action If Students Are Unfairly Held Back From Advancement

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question O659-12(2): Ministerial Action If Students Are Unfairly Held Back From Advancement

MR. GARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to look into the situation. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he might be able to provide me with the list of students since 19M that have not been advanced in levels or grades. I would like to get a list of that if you could provide it.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Allooloo.

Further Return To Question O659-12(2): Ministerial Action If Students Are Unfairly Held Back From Advancement

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Mr. Speaker, yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Todd.

Question O660-12(2): Increase To Liquor Licence Fee

MR. TODD: My question is to the Minister responsible for Government Services, and it is a follow-up to Mr. Koe's question. If a five per cent liquor licence fee covers all administration costs, and this 100 per cent increase is required, is it a tax grab or is it additional revenues required with respect to the cost of administration? Tell us what it is. Is it a tax grab or is it an administrative necessity?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Morin.

Return To Question O660-12(2): Increase To Liquor Licence Fee

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding it is an administrative necessity.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question O661-12(2): Review On Cost Impact Of Indexing Social Assistance Rates

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Social Services. On June 23, the Minister told me that the department would be analyzing the cost impacts of the new food cost survey on social assistance rates. This review would be done this summer and completed by September. The department also will be looking at tying social assistance rates to the cost of living index. I understand this will be a separate review. My question to the Minister is, could the Minister tell me when he expects the review on the cost impact of indexing social assistance rates will be completed?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Whitford.

Return To Question O661-12(2): Review On Cost Impact Of Indexing Social Assistance Rates

HON. TONY WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot give a definite date, but I would aim for the same time, September.

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MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question O662-12(2): Approved Financial Assistance For Educational Leave Applicants

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a question to the Minister of Education in respect to his response on written questions to Mr. Koe. The Minister of Education has submitted an appendix A which indicates new educational leave applications in the 1992-93 academic year, and in addition, continuing educational leave applicants 1992-93 academic year. Can the Minister indicate to this House what portion of this list has been approved for financial assistance by his department?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Allooloo.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to take that question as notice and get back to the Member tomorrow with the answer.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Lewis.

Question O663-12(2): Update On Review Of Fuel Purchasing

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, this is for the Minister of Transportation and Government Services. The aviation industry in the communities have been contacted by Government Services for their input in a review of fuel purchasing by the Government of the Northwest Territories. Would the Minister update us on the response from these interests, outlining the problems they have encountered, and give us some idea of the status of the review process to date?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister.

HON. DON MORIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been taken as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question O664-12(2): Bringing Mentally Handicapped Persons Back From Southern Institutions

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to ask a question from the statement I made on behalf of social agencies a few days ago, that has to do with a question to the Minister of Social Services. I am aware that there are several mentally handicapped persons from the NWT who are living in southern institutions. The Association for Community Living has reported that this government's spends \$100,000 annually to care for these individuals in southern institutions. Has the Department of Social Services looked at bringing these people back from southern institutions?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Whitford.

Return To Question O664-12(2): Bringing Mentally Handicapped Persons Back From Southern Institutions

HON. TONY WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have a number of persons in southern facilities for a variety of reasons, and it has always been our interest to repatriate, wherever possible. It is a practice that we will continue.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question O664-12(2): Bringing Mentally Handicapped Persons Back From Southern Institutions

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you. Supplementary. Would the Minister look at funding now or existing services to care for these persons at home or in an institution in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Whitford.

Further Return To Question O664-12(2): Bringing Mentally Handicapped Persons Back From Southern Institutions

HON. TONY WHITFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the department will certainly consider that. As a matter of fact, I think they are doing that in some communities already, with the establishment of facilities for handicapped individuals.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Mr. Pudlat

Question O665-12(2): Power Rate Increases

MR. PUDLAT: (Translation) Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Transportation or Housing. I want some clarification on the six per cent raise. The electricity has been raised by six per cent. Would this mean that the employees get a raise as well?

MR. SPEAKER: He is talking about power rate increases. Perhaps the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation would answer. Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question O665-12(2): Power Rate Increases

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure exactly what the question is, but the six per cent would have to be adjusted to all consumers, no matter where they live, including Power Corporation employees. However, I know that if it is relating to the Housing Corporation, there is an arrangement where the Housing Corporation makes up for a bigger part of the increase, or any part of a power bill. I do not know if I am addressing the right topic, but with the six per cent everyone is affected; however the subsidy kicks in, in communities outside of Yellowknife, which does not show a big impact. I do not know if that is relating to the particular area that the honourable Member is referring to.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Pudlat.

Supplementary To Question O665-12(2): Power Rate Increases

MR. PUDLAT: (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps my question was two questions. I am sorry if I was not clear. I will rephrase my question like this to the Minister for Energy, Mines and Resources. The employees are afraid of losing their income. My question is, are they losing their income or are they going to be stable as it is? Perhaps this is more clear. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question O665-12(2): Power Rate Increases

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, the employees of the NWT Power Corporation are not affected by the increase. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Oral questions. Mrs. Marie Jewell.

Question O666-12(2): Number Of Electrical Inspectors In The NWT

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to pose a question to the Minister responsible for Safety and Public Services. Can the Minister advise this House as to how many electrical inspectors he has in the Territories and has the amount of electrical inspectors decreased over the past year?

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MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patterson.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of question I would really appreciate some notice on. I could guess at the answer but I would hesitate to do that. So I will have to take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. There is nothing in the rules to decide what questions they should be given notice on.

--- Laughter

Oral questions. Item 6, written questions. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Question W44-12(2): Annual Operational Costs And Liquor Tax Revenue Of The Liquor Licensing Board

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a couple of questions for the Minister responsible for the Liquor Licensing Board.

1) What amount of revenue is currently raised annually by the five per cent liquor tax?

2) Please provide details of the annual cost to operate the Liquor Licensing Board.

MR. SPEAKER: Written questions. questions. Mr. Clerk. Item 7, returns to written questions.

ITEM 7: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, return to Question W37-12(2), asked by Mrs. Jeannie Marie-Jewell to the Minister of Social Services concerning the status of the board of management for alcohol and drug services.

W37-12(2): Status Of The Board Of Management For Alcohol And Drug Services

Hon. Tony Whitford's return to Question W37-12(2), asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on June 18, 1992: The board is currently made up of the following members: Ms. Nancy Peel of Yellowknife. Ms. Peel is the chairperson of the board and her appointment terminates December, 1993; Ms. Helen Maksagak of Cambridge Bay. Ms. Maksagak's appointment terminates March, 1993; Ms. Martha Poitras of Fort Smith. Ms. Poitras' appointment terminates September, 1993; Rev. Irvin Hohm of Norman Wells. Rev. Holm's appointment terminates December, 1993; Dr. Ross Wheeler of Yellowknife. Dr. Wheeler's appointment terminates December, 1993.

Costs to operate the board in 1988-89 were \$33,271; in 1989-90 costs were \$43,193; in 1990-91 costs were \$42,246; in 1991-92 costs were \$23,837.

The board last met in early November, 1991, in Yellowknife. The board also held a conference call with divisional staff on April 29, 1992.

The board had hoped to meet after this sitting of the Legislative Assembly when A was expected that the 1992-93 budget would be announced. However, due to the extension of the interim budget to the end of September, 1992, a decision still has to be made on whether a meeting will be held or not.

MR. SPEAKER: We will take a short break.

--- SHORT RECESS

The committee will come to order. Item 7, returns to written questions. Item 8, replies to Opening Address.

Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Zoe.

ITEM 10: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 13-12(2): Report Of The Standing Committee On Public Accounts On The Review Of The Financial Statements Of The GNWT And The Report Of The Auditor General For The Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1991

MR. ZOE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the first report of the standing committee on public accounts to the 12th Legislative Assembly. We had four days of public meetings, on April 29 and 30 and June 1 and 2. Part one of this report describes the details of the hearings. Part two contains the general observations about the hearings as a whole, and part three contains our recommendations.

During the hearings, the committee was very aware that the government now finds itself with a significant budget deficit. Hard financial times increase the need for much greater vigilance amongst government managers. We have tried to reflect our current financial situation in our recommendations by stressing the need for much greater responsibility and accountability throughout government.

Mr. Speaker, we wish to thank the Auditor General's staff which included Mr. Raymond Dubois, Deputy Auditor General; Mr. Roger Simpson, principal at the Edmonton regional office; Mr. Dale Shier, manager of the NWT audit team, for their assistance. We also wish to thank the comptroller general, Mr. Jim Nelson, for his help in co-ordinating the appearance of the witnesses.

Mr. Speaker, on February 26, 1991, the Auditor General of Canada, Mr. L. Denis Desautels, forwarded his report on the Legislative Assembly to the Speaker, the Hon. Michael Ballantyne.

This document, along with the public accounts 1990-91, became the focal point for four days of public hearings. The Auditor General's report is divided into six chapters. First, financial issues; second, compliance issues; third, legal aid; fourth, government travel; fifth, asset management; and sixth, Kerns reported in previous years.

Most of the report deals with three major issues: Legal aid, government travel and asset management. The first two issues were the major agenda items on April 29 and 30. The chapter on asset management was reviewed during the hearings on June 1 and 2 of this year. In addition to the public hearings, Mr. Speaker, the committee met in camera on several occasions to prepare for public meetings and review recommendations. On April 27th, the committee heard from senior financial managers within government. These managers explained their roles and responsibilities and described the government's financial planning systems and monitoring processes. On April 28th, and again on June 1st, the committee met with the Auditor General's staff to go over the Report of the Auditor General to the Legislative Assembly in detail.

Before making specific recommendations, the committee wishes to make a general observation about the hearing as a whole. This year, the hearing took place in a very different atmosphere. For the first time, the government is in a serious deficit situation. This reality should influence every aspect of government. It should send out a signal across government that things must change; that there must be far more fiscal responsibility and accountability than we have been accustomed to seeing in the past. But this message does not seem to be getting across,

Public Accounts Committee Will Hold Managers Accountable

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During the hearing, committee Members got the distinct feeling that witnesses did not take the public accounts committee seriously. By way of this report, Mr. Speaker, the public accounts committee wishes to signal loudly and clearly that this situation will change. The committee intends to be taken seriously. It has adopted a new philosophy; one that is much more proactive in holding managers accountable for their past actions, and it intends to bring about the kinds of changes that are needed.

In keeping with this new more aggressive philosophy, the public accounts committee has introduced some procedural changes. It will meet more frequently. In the past the public accounts intends to limit their meetings to one meeting per year. This committee will meet several times over the course of the year. This will give it the opportunity to follow-up on issues raised by the Auditor General and to investigate its

own areas of interest. It will follow-up on commitments made by witnesses.

In the past the committee has been told by various witnesses that corrective action is under way, but the committee has become frustrated waiting to see the results. A delay of several years can occur between the time the problems are pointed out and the time they are fixed. This is unacceptable. From now on, the committee will require witnesses to get specific dates for making required changes and will monitor the dates very closely. It will insist upon co-operation and coordination among government departments and agencies.

Many problems that come before the committee require a coordinated approach, but departments seem either not to notice this fact or they choose to ignore it. They often strike out on their own, developing systems and procedures that respond to their individual needs but do not correspond to the needs of government as a whole. This "doing what's good for us" mentality inevitably leads to higher costs and the decline in level and quality of services. It cannot be allowed to continue.

Finally, the public accounts committee will work more closely with other committees of the Legislative Assembly. When matters that come before the committee fall within the mandate of other committees, the public accounts committee will refer such matters to the appropriate committee with all due haste. A closer working relationship among all legislative committees will help ensure greater responsibility and accountability throughout government.

During the public hearings, the committee discussed the various issues raised by the Auditor General with senior departmental officials. The committee then developed specific recommendations. We present a brief summary of the issues followed by specific recommendations.

This year, for the first time, the Auditor General's report contains a reservation of opinion on a financial statement. A reservation is a statement by an auditor that he is unable to reach a conclusion on all or part of financial statements.

Health Care Billings Dispute

At issue is the dispute between the GNWT and the federal government, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, over health care billings. The GNWT

claims that the federal government owes \$32 million for health care claims, and the federal government disagrees. After reviewing the issue the Auditor General stated that the reason for the reservation is: "As an independent auditor, the Auditor General of Canada cannot take sides but has to weigh carefully all the evidence to reach an opinion. We do not disagree with the calculation of the government's claimed amount, but there is not enough audit evidence for us to conclude whether all this money will be recovered. The government has not provided for any possible loss, as it also does not know the future outcome of its claims. This is the reason for our reservation in our audited report!

Mr. Speaker, the committee called in the deputy minister of Health, Mr. Robert Cowcill, and the deputy minister of Finance, Mr. Eric Nielsen, and asked them to explain the reason for the dispute. The issue is indeed complex. After hearing the witnesses, the committee had two concerns: the large amount of money involved and the impact the potential loss of these funds will have on the government's overall financial situation.

The committee considers the Auditor General's reservation to be an extremely serious matter. It reflects negatively on the accountability that government owes to the Legislative Assembly and to the NWT residents, and the particular issues the disputed \$32 million in health care billing can have serious consequences for the government's whole financial position.

Legislative Assembly To Be Kept Apprised By GNWT

This year, Mr. Speaker, two departments went over their budgets. The Department of Personnel overexpended its budget by \$4,234,999. The Legislative Assembly overexpended its budget by \$436,900. In both cases, the departments were unable to accurately forecast their actual requirements. This has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. A number of departments seem unable to accurately forecast how much money they are going to need to meet their obligations. At the end of the fiscal year, they end up having to cover unpaid liabilities, money the government owes, and unrecovered revenues, money the government is owed. Government must improve its ability to forecast what its actual costs are going to be.

Therefore, our second recommendation is that government must develop and put in place

procedures that will allow it to accurately predict the amount of money it is going to need in a given year. These procedures must allow it to forecast unpaid liabilities and unrecovered revenues, and these procedures must allow it to predict its financial requirements, not only at year end but on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

In addition to the systems problem, there are also people problems. The committee is concerned that managers are not managing their resources properly, and that they do not clearly understand their responsibilities. The Financial Administration Act states quite clearly that managers should not spend money if they do not have the necessary money in their budgets, but every year managers in departments continue to overexpand. The committee accepts the fact that, from time to time, managers may require more resources than they have been given in their annual budgets. What it cannot accept is the willingness of managers to spend money they do not have in their budgets. In such cases, there is no excuse for not coming before the Assembly with a request for supplementary appropriations.

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To overcome this problem, the committee is recommending that government must make sure that all managers are aware of their responsibilities for their budgets, and must ensure that all managers stay within their budgets and spend money properly according to approved procedures and the requirements of the Financial Administration Act. If managers lack the necessary skills in the area of financial management, they must receive the appropriate training, and government must hold managers accountable for their performance in financial matters. It must link financial management directly to merit increases for good performance, and to disciplinary action for poor performance.

Financial Problems With Legal Aid Program

The Auditor General reviewed the legal aid program and identified a number of problems. Many of these same problems have been identified by recent studies, particularly by the Strength at Two Levels review and the recent report of the Legal Services Board. Though program costs are rising rapidly, the department does not have an adequate information system to allow it to forecast requirements or monitor expenditures.

The committee recommends that the Department of Justice and the Legal Services Board develop adequate information systems at the earliest possible date. The system must provide managers with the information they need to monitor both the cost and the quality of services. Clear deadlines must be set to develop these systems and put them in place.

There is a significant problem with client eligibility and with cost recovery. The program does not seem to have a clear set of eligibility criteria that is understood by program staff and by the clients. Committee Members recognize the need for some kind of means test similar to the one used to determine eligibility for social assistance. They also suggest exploring a closer working relationship with the Department of Social Services to share information and reduce duplication of effort.

A related problem is cost recoveries. The program seems to have no clear guidelines for assessing the client contribution, and there are significant delays in making collections. The committee recommends that government develop eligibility criteria to determine who can receive legal aid and under what conditions. These criteria must be made available to the public. The next recommendation is that a means test be developed to help determine how much individual clients can afford to pay for legal aid services. The means test must be applied consistently.

The committee felt that many residents do not know their rights and obligations. The present system is an imported system based upon the English model of justice. It does not adapt well to the needs of aboriginal residents in small remote communities. Many NWT residents have their own cultural beliefs and traditions, including dispute settling mechanisms, which are different from the imported legal models. They feel that the present criminal justice system is biased against them. Members heard and recounted examples of inequity of treatment by the system, including the treatment of aboriginal persons by law officers. The committee felt that while improvements are needed to the legal aid system, this cannot be done without considering the major problems with the NWT justice system as a whole. Therefore, our committee recommends that government should carry out an independent review of both the legal aid program and the whole criminal justice system itself. This review should focus upon whether people are treated equally and fairly, whether services are consistently high quality, whether programs and services are cost effective; and that a simply worded

code of rights should be drawn up and translated into all official languages.

Comprehensive Travel Policy Required

The Government of the Northwest Territories spends about \$70 million annually on travel. The Auditor General identified significant problems with the management and control of government travel. There is no comprehensive travel policy. Over the years, travel policies have become fragmented and appeared in several documents. The committee was particularly concerned at the way some travel policies have become institutionalized in union agreements. These tie the hands of government, and making changes is difficult.

Our committee recommends that government should produce a single document that contains all travel-related policies and procedures. This should be distributed to all government departments, corporations and agencies, and it must be updated regularly.

The Auditor General also pointed to poor management control over travel budgets and expenditures. In many cases, documentation was poor to non-existent. Managers are wasting money, and the committee had serious concerns about the integrity of many managers when authorizing travel.

The committee heard testimony from the comptroller general who indicated that he was aware of the many problems reported. The Auditor General's observations suggest that he had not been successful in imposing changes. The comptroller general indicated that he struck a committee to provide a complete review of government travel policy, and the committee has completed its work. It is the understanding of the public accounts committee that the new comprehensive travel policy and procedures is now before cabinet.

The committee agreed with the Auditor General's recommendation regarding travel and recommends that government incorporate into a new travel policy all the recommendations made by the Auditor General in his 1990-91 report, and that government puts its new travel policy into place throughout government, along with appropriate training and orientation sessions, by September 1, 1992.

During the discussions with departmental officials, committee Members were particularly concerned with the high cost of travel. While some of these costs

might be attributed to travel in the North, many others seem to be the result of poor planning and poor management practices.

The committee came up with two specific recommendations that might directly reduce the cost of travel: that government should cut down on the number of air charters and use commercial seats whenever possible; and 2 that government should investigate the use of new technology, video interviewing, to reduce travel costs. The Department of Personnel should explore the potential of this technology to interview job applicants in the South, and government should experiment with the technology to see if it can reduce the need for and costs of travel.

Finally, in its discussions with Mr. Ken Lovely, deputy minister of Personnel, committee Members noted that his department was moving ahead vigorously to correct a number of the inadequacies pointed out by the Auditor General. Changes recently introduced should significantly reduce travel costs. The committee wishes to commend Mr. Lovely and his department for their decisive action.

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Mr. Speaker, in preparing for the public hearing, the committee requested a presentation on the role and responsibilities of government's senior financial managers. While committee Members appreciate the presentation, they noted some differences in interpretation among some of the participants about how the roles should be defined. In addition, there seems to be lack of clarity about the relationship and responsibilities of departmental managers and managers within central agencies.

Role Of Comptroller General

The committee is particular concerned about the role of the comptroller general. The control function of his office is weak. It should be significantly strengthened. The committee noted that the Financial Administration Act empowers the comptroller general with direct action capability, but in practice, the role has been reduced to more of an advisory role, analogous to a slap on the wrist when things go wrong. In the committee's view, this is not adequate, and the independence and role of the comptroller general need to ensure that systems and processes protect public property. The committee feels that roles and responsibilities should be clarified, especially to deal more effectively with financial restraint.

Therefore, our committee recommends that government should strengthen the roles and responsibilities of the deputy minister of Finance and the comptroller general. The role of the comptroller general should be made more independent of Finance, and accountability of the incumbent should be spelled out more clearly. Both the deputy minister and the comptroller general should become more proactive in dealing with spending problems, and they should ensure that all departments obtain value for money.

Asset Management

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General reported on his first audit of asset management in government. This government has some three billion dollars invested in non-cash assets such as inventories, buildings, equipment, arts and other cultural items, et cetera. The committee heard testimony from the comptroller general, who has a leadership role under section 12 of the Financial Administration Act, and the deputy ministers of several other departments with specific custodial responsibilities.

The committee was disturbed to hear a recurring theme that departments had control systems but none were complete, and there is no overall control and accountability for asset control. In reality, no one knows exactly what the government owns or what it is worth. This is disturbing because the assets owned represent major investments in infrastructure and other items for the people of the Territories. The committee had no satisfaction that the various departments were doing a good job of effectively managing and controlling this large investment. The committee also expressed concern about how little departments co-operate and work together to control and manage assets. We heard, too, many examples of why things could not be done, rather than how departments could work together to make improvements.

The committee was surprised at the extent of cultural assets that were owned and, in many cases, not controlled properly. Many cultural items are portable and valuable. These include carvings, prints and paintings owned by Culture and Communications, as well as other significant items owned by other departments. For example, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism had a program to purchase artwork and to lend them to other departments. The committee heard that this is not done and the inventory of these attractive and valuable items is not well controlled. Other cultural

assets have unique characteristics that make them extremely valuable, but they are not properly managed. Meanwhile, the government's warehouse contains examples of ordinary items that are not highly valuable yet take up expensive storage space.

The committee heard that many purchases of capital items are budgeted and paid for under operations and management, not under capital. In many cases items are not ordered on a component by component basis to get individual items in the system under the \$5000 capital asset definition. This is a blatant attempt to avoid showing Kerns correctly as capital assets which are under more detailed scrutiny by the Legislative Assembly, especially in these times of restraint.

Mr. Speaker, the committee, therefore, recommends that the comptroller general develop a strategy to encourage interdepartmental co-ordination in the design of asset control systems; that he create and carry out a plan to provide maximum co-ordination in the design and development of inventory control systems, particularly for the Department of Public Works, Municipal and Community Affairs and the Department of Transportation; and that he report on this plan to the public accounts committee, either in person or in writing at least twice a year.

Our next recommendation is that the departments with assets custodial responsibilities work together to identify where systems, methods and processes can be combined to save money. All asset inventory systems should be completed promptly and should contain all pertinent information about the assets, including all legal descriptions and maintenance data.

Our next recommendation is that the Department of Culture and Communications develop a comprehensive policy to properly manage historical and cultural assets; that the policy provide procedures for acquiring, assessing, classifying, maintaining, protecting, insuring and controlling these assets; and that the department develop a system and establish procedures for conducting an inventory of historical and cultural assets, including those which are the responsibility of other government departments, agencies and institutions.

Our final recommendation, Mr. Speaker, is that the government take immediate steps to stop departments from splitting capital purchases into smaller components and classifying them as O and M expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the standing committee on public accounts on its review of the Auditor General's Report for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1991.

**Motion To Move Committee Report 13-12(2) To
Committee Of The Whole, Carried**

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by my colleague for Kivallivik, that the report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be received by the Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Your motion is in order, Mr. Zoe. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

--- Carried

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The Standing Committee on Public Accounts Report on the Review of the Financial Statements of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Report of the Auditor General for Canada for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1991, will go into committee of the whole.

Reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Dent.

**Committee Report 14-12(2): Report Of The
Special Committee On Health And Social
Services, Interim Report No. 1**

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have an interim report from the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, this report outlines our initial plans, both as to focus and to the process we will use in gathering information. As we begin our work, we are mindful of those aspects of the broader environment which have significant impact on our task.

Mr. Speaker, constituents continually remind us that our major social and health problems are still very much with us, and current efforts do not always seem to be having a significant impact on them. As Members of this Assembly know, we must find ways to do more with less at a time when health costs are growing, and the state of the economy places greater pressure than ever on our social programs. At the same time, government structures and processes are being reviewed in an attempt to streamline services and bring their control closer to the people that they serve.

As we go, we will be listening to all ideas and concerns brought to us, whether or not they fall neatly into the above areas. For example, we take note of the concerns on various social issues raised on June 23 in the Assembly by the Member for Nahendeh on behalf of the interagency group. Looking at program delivery, we will look at our health care system. We have questions about rising costs and the longterm implications of this trend. We want to compare models of service delivery and their effectiveness in meeting people's needs. In all services which seek to help people meet their needs, the people who work directly with the recipients are crucial to the success of the venture. We want to listen to their experiences and hear their ideas about making things better.

We are also concerned about how we take care of these dedicated workers. What do they need in terms of training, skills and personal support if they are to effectively carry on this important work.

In many cases, the best ideas for positive change to services in health and social services are thwarted by external forces such as lack of funds, political support or appropriate legislation and policy. We want to look at the key pieces of legislation to see where changes most need to be made.

Mr. Speaker, we want to base our recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on accurate information gathered from the people who are most involved in the area of social and health needs. We want to hear from those who are in need and from those who strive to help people meet their needs. We want to learn from people who are trying different approaches in helping people. In order to do this, we will start by informing ourselves about what work has already been done in our areas of interest. In some areas where available data is lacking, we may launch special projects or studies. At the same time, we will be refining our plans for a series of community workshops; one to be held in each region. These regional workshops will begin either very late in 1992 or in the spring of 1993 due to the full legislative timetable over the next six months.

We want to approach the process of public participation differently. We want to use a more interactive style than perhaps has been used in the past. We want to hear ideas and concerns from people, especially those who have not always been heard. We want to encourage discussion about the ideas we hear among those in attendance. That way, what will emerge will be a consensus view of both the problems and possible solutions for that region. We

will take these collective thoughts along to community visits when individual committee Members will, in consultation with the local MLA, visit one community in each constituency. Here we will visit people and services, meet with groups and hear their ideas and responses to the ideas and concerns from the regional workshops.

Mr. Speaker, when this committee was established, there was significant interest by Members who made a commitment to assist the vital work of this committee. We, therefore, hope to hear feedback from Members as to our work plan and focus of attention, and I would ask Members to please pass on comments to either of the committee co-chairman.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes Interim Report, No. 1, of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services.

**Motion To Accept Committee Report 14-12(2),
Carried**

Therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for High Arctic, that Interim Report, No. 1, be received by the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is in order, Mr. Dent. All those in favour of the motion? Opposed to the motion? The motion is carried.

--- Carried

The report has been officially received by the Assembly. Reports of standing and special committees. Reports of standing and special committees.

Item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills.
Item 12, tabling of documents. Mr. Zoe.

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ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table Tabled Document 61-12(2), Proceedings of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts which occurred on April 29-30 and June 1-2.

MR. SPEAKER: Tabling of documents. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 62-12(2), Report on Northwest Territories Operations at Expo '92 as at May 31, 1992.

MR. SPEAKER: Tabling of documents. Ms. Cournoyea.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 63-12(2), Northwest Territories Health Report, 1990.

MR. SPEAKER: Tabling of documents. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE: I would like to make a motion to put a report into committee of the whole.

MR. SPEAKER: That is out of order. You need a formal motion. Tabling of documents. Mr. Alloofoo.

HON. TITUS ALLOOFOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 64-12(2), Northwest Territories Education 1991 Annual Report, in English and Inuktitut.

MR. SPEAKER: Tabling of documents. I have a document that I want to table. Pursuant to paragraph 36(1)(b) of the Plebiscite Act, I wish to table Tabled Document 65-12(2), Report of the Chief Plebiscite Officer on the plebiscite on the boundary for division of the Northwest Territories, held May 4, 1992.

Item 13, notices of motions. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

**Notice Of Motion 23-12(2): Appointments To Fill
Standing Committee Vacancies**

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, June 29, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for High Arctic, that Mr. Ningark, the Member for Natilikmiot, be named to the standing committees on agencies, boards and commissions, legislation and public accounts, and as an alternate Member to the standing committee on finance. At the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to proceed with this motion today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of motions. Mr. Koe.

**Notice Of Motion 24-12(2): Election Of Deputy
Chairperson Of Committee Of The Whole**

MR. KOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, June 29, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Keewatin Central, that Mr. Ningark be appointed as deputy chairperson of committee of the whole of this

Assembly. At the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to proceed with this motion today.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of motions. Mr. Koe, notices of motions.

Notice Of Motion 25-12(2): Extended Adjournment Of The House

MR. KOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, June 29, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Keewatin Central, that when the House adjourns on Monday, June 29, it shall stand adjourned until September 9, 1992.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of motions. Mr. Dent.

Notice Of Motion 26-12(2): Tabled Document 62-12(2) To Committee Of The Whole

MR. DENT: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, June 29, I will move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik, that Tabled Document 62-12(2), titled Report of the Northwest Territories Operations at Expo '92 as at May 31, 1992, be moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will seek unanimous consent tomorrow to proceed with this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of motions. Item 14, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 15: MOTIONS

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion appointing Mr. Ningark to several committees.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Lewis.

Motion 23-12(2): Appointments To Fill Standing Committee Vacancies, Carried

MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the appointment of the Hon. James Arvaluk to the cabinet has created vacancies on a number of standing committees;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to fill these vacancies;

NOW THEREFORE, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin South, that Mr. Ningark, the Member for Natilikmiot, be named to the standing committees on agencies, boards and commissions, legislation and public accounts and as an alternate Member to the standing committee on finance.

MR. SPEAKER: Your motion is in order, Mr. Lewis. To the motion, Mr. Lewis. The seconder to the motion is being called, and Mr. Lewis, you have an opportunity to conclude the debate. The question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

--- Carried

Item 15, motions. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with my motion today regarding the election of deputy chairperson of committee of the whole. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed please, Mr. Koe.

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Motion 24-12(2): Election Of Deputy Chairperson Of Committee Of The Whole, Carried

MR. KOE: Thank You, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the appointment of Mr. Arvaluk to the cabinet has created a vacancy for the position of deputy chairperson of committee of the whole;

AND WHEREAS section 41 (1) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act requires that there shall be two deputy chairpersons;

NOW THEREFORE, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Keewatin Central, that Mr. Ningark be appointed as deputy chairperson of committee of the whole of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is now in order. To the motion. Mr. Koe. The question has been called. Seconder to the motion. Mr. Todd? You have the opportunity to debate, Mr. Koe. The question is being called. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

--- Carried

Motions. Item 16, first reading of bills.

Item 17, second reading of bills. Item 18, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 9-12(2), Strength at Two Levels; Tabled Document 10-12(2), Reshaping Northern Government; Motion 6-12(2), Discussion of "Sobriety Clause in Contribution Agreements"; Committee Report 10-12(2), Special Committee on Constitutional Reform Report on the Multilateral Conferences on the Constitution; Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act; Committee Report 13-12(2), Standing Committee on Public Accounts Report, with Mr. Pudluk in the chair.

ITEM 18: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Will the committee come to order? We just have a few remaining items on our agenda. What does this committee wish to do? Member for Thebacha.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to address Bill 30 today, along with the committee report on the standing committee on public accounts. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Does this committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Bill 30, Workers' Compensation Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Thank you. We will deal with Bill 30, which is An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act. Mr. Patterson, do you have any opening remarks?

Minister's Opening Remarks

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a relatively simple amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act, which will respond to a recommendation made by the standing committee on agencies, boards and commissions to this House on June 18. That recommendation, which resulted from hearings and about which the chairman may say more, was that the year's maximum insurable remuneration, which determines the benefits payable in respect of an accident, should be increased. The recommendation also was that this increase should be acted upon prior to the conclusion of the June sitting of this House. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that this amendment is now before this

committee. I would like to thank the ABC committee and the standing committee on legislation for making it possible for this amendment to get to where it is today by overlooking the usual time constraints that would be ordinarily in place with legislation.

I would just like to say that the YMIR has not increased since July of 1988. This is just under a 12 per cent increase. The now YMIR, if this amendment is approved, will go to \$47,500 from \$40,000 and the new level would take effect as of July 1, 1992, if this bill is approved in a timely fashion.

I am pleased to inform the committee that the Workers' Compensation Board has recommended that this level as one that can be met within their existing budget without a need for increased assessments to employers for this fiscal year. It can be funded by the board. In other words, It is an affordable increase based on their projections of the predicted accident rates and the predictable costs.

I would also like to mention, Mr. Chairman, that the ABC committee recommended indexing of the YMIR, and this is something that will be studied by myself. It is something that I am quite sure will be dealt with in the legislative action paper which it is proposed by the ABC committee be developed, recommending areas to amend the Workers' Compensation Act before the end of this year.

I want to assure Members of this committee that the concept of indexing is something that is being taken seriously and will be studied, but this amendment should be considered as an interim step which will bring the YMIR up to higher levels to reflect increases in the cost of living since 1988. I am told that this level of \$47,500, if passed, will put us up within the top bracket in Canada. British Columbia and Saskatchewan, for example, have YMIRs of \$48,000; Ontario's is over \$50,000; Prince Edward Island is as low as \$27,000. This puts the Northwest Territories in the upper range of YMIRs in the country. It is probably never going to be quite enough from the point of view of workers, but it is certainly an improvement.

One other thing I would like to mention, Mr. Chairman, is that although this YMIR affects workers who suffer accidents after July 1, cabinet has also approved, effective July 1, an increase to the pensions that are already being paid to workers injured before this date who are now on compensation. They have not been overlooked in conjunction with this amendment. Their pensions will increase by 7.5 per cent as of July 1, along with this amendment, so It will affect workers

who will be injured after July 1 and, through another mechanism that does not require legislation, namely a cabinet order, the pensions for those who are now presently on compensation have been brought up by 7.5 per cent.

Mr. Chairman, I think this amendment will be seen as a step forward by workers who have complained to their Members in the Legislative Assembly and who have made representations to the standing committee on agencies, boards and commissions. I see it as an interim amendment because we are also going to be working on a more comprehensive legislative review which will look at issues like indexing which could eliminate for coming to the House with amendments like this from time to time. That concept, and other issues that are in need of attention, and which I am sure will be addressed in the ABC committee's report - which I understand will be given later this session - will be rolled into the legislative review. I think this is a timely amendment, and I would recommend passage. Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Thank you. I wonder if the chairman of the standing committee on legislation has opening remarks also. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Comments From The Standing Committee On Legislation

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The standing committee on legislation abbreviated its usual process for the review of Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act. This was in response to a recommendation made by the standing committee on agencies, boards and commissions in Committee Report 11-12(2) and supported by a motion of this House on June 18, 1992.

The standing committee on agencies, boards and commissions recommendation was that the Workers' Compensation Act should be amended prior to the conclusion of this June sifting in order to increase the year's maximum insurable remuneration. The reasons for this recommendation are well laid out, Mr. Chairman, in the interim report brought forward by my honourable colleague from Inuvik and the Members of his standing committee. It was noted by the standing committee on legislation that Mr. Koe's committee held extensive public hearings on this matter during May 11 13 inclusive. It was felt that this review process provided an opportunity for public input on

the matter of the years maximum insurable remuneration.

Members of the standing committee on legislation reviewed this bill on the morning of June 24, 1992. The committee was grateful to the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board and his officials for attending to present the bill and responding to Members' questions and comments. The standing committee on legislation also appreciated the attendance of Mr. Brian Roberts, chairperson of the Workers' Compensation Board, who assisted in outlining the more technical aspects of the workers' compensation system and the implications which this bill will carry for workers injured in the Northwest Territories.

The standing committee on legislation recognizes the urgency of this bill and is supportive of the efforts made by the Minister, the Workers' Compensation Board and the standing committee on agencies, boards and commissions to proceed with the speedy passage of this amendment. The standing committee on legislation realized that in passing Bill 30, this House would be making at least an initial stop toward meeting the grievous needs of injured workers in the Northwest Territories.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I think it would be appropriate to underscore the manner in which all parties to the passage of this bill have worked together quickly and efficiently to ensure that these necessary changes are made. I hope that this point is noted by those who might be inclined to criticize this House or our northern system of consensus government.

Mr. Chairman, at its meeting on June 24, the standing committee on legislation carried a motion that Bill 30 should be reported to the House as ready for committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk):

Thank you. Are there any general comments. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE: Yes, I, too, would like to thank all the Members of the various committees, and the Minister and staff of the Workers' Compensation Board for working to get this legislation changed and put forward here. I have a couple of comments on the bill itself. For the record, I note that the bill does not allow for increases to YMIR calculations for those currently receiving benefits. It is effective for people who get injured after July 1. It has also been noted by the

Minister that there have been no increases in payments for over four years. So the actions taken are appreciated as is the Minister's announcement of the 7.5 per cent increase in the supplementary pension benefits effective July 1. This will help, to some degree, the people that are receiving benefits.

I would also like to mention that in further discussions and further legislation, people who are injured now would like in the legislative review some deliberation taken and some consideration of how their allowances are calculated and the types of deductions from the allowances or pension benefits. In particular, they do not get any benefit for living in the North, and many of the pensions are fairly small and the costs associated with living in the North are fairly high. Subsequently, people who receive monthly pensions find it very difficult to live on that pension, and if there are deductions on top of what they are awarded, it makes it much more difficult. One recommendation is that you may look at some kind of northern living allowance. People who are employed by government or other bigger employers in the North get a \$5400 deduction for living allowance and people, when the deductions are taken for compensation, are not given any consideration like this.

We are pleased with the quick action taken by all Members and support speedy passage of this bill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Mr. Patterson.

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: I acknowledge the concern raised by the chairman of the ABC committee. This issue of the cost of living in the North and the fact that our present pensions do not differentiate between a person living in southern Canada, which many of our workers are forced to do, and people living in northern Canada, presents a hardship to those people. I think this is definitely one thing that must be examined in the legislative review that will be undertaken.

I want to thank the Member for those comments. It is certainly something that I think should be looked at, and I want to inform the committee that I met with the Workers' Compensation Board yesterday. We talked about initiating the first stage of the legislative review, co-operatively between myself and the WCB as quickly as possible, bearing in mind a goal of having a legislative action paper in place by the end of this calendar year. And that is certainly an issue that will have to be dealt with along with the hunters and trappers issue, along with concerns about the lump

sum payment policy. There are many other issues that have to be dealt with.

In the meantime, I think it is progress that we are adjusting the supplementary pensions and the YMIR in the interim, but I fully understand that this is only the start of legislative reform.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Any further general comments? Is the committee agreed that we go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): The bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

----Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): Does this committee agree that Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

Committee Report 13-12(2): Report Of The Standing Committee On Public Accounts On The Review Of The Financial Statements Of The GNWT And The Report Of The Auditor General For The Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1991

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pudluk): We will now go on to Committee Report 13-12(2), Standing Committee on Public Accounts Report. Are there any general comments? I believe the chairman of the standing committee on public accounts is not in the House at the moment. We will take a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

The committee will come to order. Mr. Zoe.

Chairman's Opening Remarks

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, with regard to our standing committee on public accounts report, before I get into the contents of the report, the chairman of the standing committee has just been moved over to the other side of the House. That new Member knows the contents of this particular report, and I would just like to convey to him that he knows exactly what the committee heard and how the committee acted to the number of presenters that appeared before the committee. So he has a good understanding as to what the committee expects of its civil servants.

I hope the now Executive Member can convey to his other colleagues on that side of the House what our committee really wants the government to do. Hopefully they would take our advice. Our committee is quite serious, as stated in the report.

The committee has 18 specific recommendations with regard to the Auditor General's report for the year ending 1990-91. As I indicated, the Auditor General's report was divided into six chapters: the financial issues, compliance issues, legal aid, government travel, assets management and items reported in previous years.

A number of witnesses were called to appear before us, and the committee gave a general observation about the hearing as a whole. Maybe to stress that, again, the committee this year during its hearings knew that the government was in a serious deficit situation, and we conveyed that to the managers that appeared before us. The committee also commented that we want to signal loudly and clearly that our committee has to be taken seriously, and we indicated to the public that it will meet more frequently

and also will follow up on commitments made by witnesses. The committee also stated that it will insist upon co-operation and co-ordination among government departments and agencies. Our committee, Mr. Chairman, suggested that it will work more closely with our other committees here in the Legislature. Those comments from our committee have to be taken seriously.

Mr. Chairman, the first item that was reported is the Auditor General's reservation on audit opinion, I guess. The Auditor General stated the reason for the reservation. He said, and I quote: "As an independent auditor for the Auditor General of Canada cannot take sides, but has to weigh carefully all the evidence to reach an opinion, we do not disagree with the calculation of the government's claimed amount, but there is not enough audit evidence for us to conclude whether all this money will be recovered. The government has not provided for any possible loss, as it also does not know the future outcome of its claims. This is the reason for the reservation in our audit report."

Mr. Chairman, after hearing out the Auditor General's staff, we called in the deputy minister of Health and the deputy minister of Finance, and asked them to explain the reasons for the dispute. The committee understood that the issue at hand was indeed very complex. The committee had two concerns, Mr. Chairman. First, the large amount of money involved and the impact the potential loss of these funds will have on the government's overall financial situation. The committee considers the reservation to be an extremely serious matter. It reflects negatively on the accountability that government owes to the Legislative Assembly and to our territorial residents. The particular issue, the disputed amount of \$32 million in health care billings, can have serious consequences for the government's whole financial position.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 1, Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion. Are you ready for the question? The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, the second area that the committee had concerns about was the overexpenditures of departmental budgets. Two

departments overexpanded their budgets: The Department of Personnel overexpanded its budget by \$4,234,999, and the Legislative Assembly overexpanded its budget by \$436,900. In both cases, Mr. Chairman, the departments were unable to accurately forecast their actual requirements. This has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. A number of departments seem unable to accurately forecast how much money they are going to need to meet their obligations. At the end of the fiscal year, they ended up covering unpaid liabilities, money the government owes; and unrecovered revenues, money that the government is owed. Government must improve its ability to forecast what its actual costs are going to be.

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Motion To Accept Recommendation 2, Carried

Therefore, the committee makes their second recommendation. I move that government must develop and put in place procedures that will allow it to accurately predict the amount of money it is going to need in a given year. These procedures must allow it to forecast unpaid liabilities and unrecovered revenues, and these procedures must allow it to predict its financial requirements, not only at year end but on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): It seems we do not have a quorum. Could you ring the bell, please? Mr. Zoe, to the motion.

MR. ZOE: Do you want me to repeat my motion?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, in addition to the systems problems, there are also people problems. The committee is concerned that managers are not managing their resources properly, and they do not clearly understand their responsibilities. The Financial Administration Act stated quite clearly that managers should not spend money if they do not

have the necessary money in their budgets, but every year, managers and departments continue to overexpand. The committee accepts the fact that from time to time managers may require more resources than they have been given in their annual budgets. What they cannot accept is the willingness of managers to spend money they do not have in their budgets. In such cases, there is no excuse for not coming before the Assembly with a request for supplementary appropriations.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 3, Carried

To overcome this problem, our committee recommends, and I move, Mr. Chairman, our third recommendation: Government must make sure that all managers are aware of their responsibilities for their budgets, and must ensure that all managers stay within their budgets and spend moneys properly, according to approved procedures and the requirements of the Financial Administration Act. If managers lack the necessary skills in the area of financial management, they must receive appropriate training, and government must hold managers accountable for their performance matters. It must link financial management directly to merit increases for good performances, and to disciplinary action for poor performances.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Thank you. Your motion is passed. Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

---Carried

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, the third area that the committee looked at was the legal aid program in the justice system. The Auditor General reviewed the legal aid program and identified a number of problems. Many of these same problems have been identified by recent studies, particularly by the Strength at Two Levels review and the recent report of the Legal Services Board. Though program costs are rising rapidly, the department does not have adequate information systems to allow it to forecast requirements or monitor expenditures.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 4, Carried

The committee recommends, and I move, that the Department of Justice and the Legal Services Board develop adequate information systems at the earliest possible date. These systems must provide managers

with the information they need to monitor both costs and the quality of services. Clear deadlines must be set to develop those systems and put them in place.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, our committee also found a significant problem with client eligibility and with cost recovery. The program does not seem to have a clear set of eligibility criteria that are understood by program staff and by the members. Committee Members recognized the need for some kind of means test, similar to the one used to determine eligibility for social assistance. They also suggested exploring a closer working relationship with the Department of Social Services to share information and to reduce duplication of efforts. A related problem is cost recoveries. The program seems to have no clear guidelines for assessing the client contribution, and there are significant delays in making collections.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 5, Carried

The committee recommends, and I move, that the government develop eligibility criteria to determine who can receive legal aid and under what conditions. These criteria must be made available to the public.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed, If any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 6, Carried

MR. ZOE: At this time I would like to move recommendation 6. I move that a means test be

developed to help determine how much individual clients can afford to pay for legal aid services. The means test must be applied consistently.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The motion is in order. To the motion. Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion. Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, the committee felt that many residents do not know their rights and obligations. The present system is an imported system based upon the English model of justice. It does not adapt well to the needs of aboriginal residents in small remote communities. Many NWT residents have their own cultural beliefs and traditions including dispute-settling mechanisms which are different from the imported legal model. They feel that the present criminal justice system is biased against them.

Members heard and recounted examples of inequity of treatment by the system, including treatment of aboriginal persons by law officers. The committee felt that, while improvements are needed to the legal aid system, this cannot be done without considering the major problems in the NWT justice system as a whole.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 7, Carried

Our committee, then, makes two recommendations. First I move that government should carry out an independent review of both the legal aid program and the whole criminal justice system itself. This review should focus in upon whether people are treated equally and fairly, whether services are of a consistently high quality, and whether programs and services are cost effective.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Your motion is in order.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Motion To Accept Recommendation 8, Carried

MR. ZOE: Our second recommendation pertaining to the same issue, I move that a simply worded code of rights should be drawn up and be translated into all official languages.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Continue, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The next area we looked at was government travel. The Government of the Northwest Territories spends about \$70 million annually on travel. The Auditor General identified significant problems with the management and control of government travel. There is no comprehensive travel policy. Over the years, the travel policy has become fragmented and appears in several documents. The committee was particularly concerned at the way some travel policies have become institutionalized in union agreements. These tie the hands of government, and making changes is difficult. We, therefore, have a recommendation pertaining to that, Mr. Chairman.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 9, Carried

I move that government should produce a single document that contains all travel-related policies and procedures; that the document should be distributed to all government departments, corporations and agencies, and that it must be updated regularly.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Auditor General also pointed to poor management control over travel budgets and expenditures. In many cases, documentation was poor to non-existent. Managers are wasting money, and the committee has a serious concern about the integrity of many managers when authorizing travel. The committee heard testimony from the comptroller general who indicated that he was aware of the many problems reported. The Auditor General's observations suggest that he had not been successful in imposing changes. The comptroller general indicated that he struck a committee to provide a complete review of government travel policy, and that the committee has completed its work. It is the understanding of the public accounts committee that the new comprehensive travel policy and procedures is now before cabinet.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 10, Carried

The committee agreed with the Auditor General's recommendation regarding travel and recommends, and I move, Mr. Chairman, that government incorporate into the new travel policy all the recommendations made by the Auditor General in his 1990-91 report.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Carry on, Mr. Zoe.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 11, Carried

MR. ZOE: On the same issue, Mr. Chairman, our second recommendation, and I move, that government puts its new travel policy into place throughout government, along with appropriate training and orientation sessions, by September 1, 1992.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): A lot of motions. Mr. Zoe, your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

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MR. ZOE: Thank you. During discussion with departmental officials, Mr. Chairman, committee Members were particularly concerned with the high cost of travel. While some of these costs might be attributed to travel in the North, many others seemed to be the result of poor planning and poor management practices. The committee came up with two specific recommendations that might directly reduce the cost of travel.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 12, Carried

I move, Mr. Chairman, that government should cut down on the number of air charters and use commercial seats whenever possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Continue, Mr. Zoe.

---Carried

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, we had two specific recommendations pertaining to the issue at hand.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 13, Carried

Our second recommendation: I move that the government should investigate the use of a new technology, video interviewing, to reduce travel costs. The Department of Personnel should explore the potential of this technology to interview job applicants in the South. And, Government should experiment with the technology to see if it can reduce the need for, and costs of, travel.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Finally, on that topic, Mr. Chairman, in its discussion with Mr. Lovely, deputy minister of Personnel, the committee Members noted that his department was moving ahead vigorously to correct a number of inadequacies pointed out by the Auditor General. Changes recently introduced should significantly reduce travel costs. The committee wishes to commend Mr. Lovely and his department for their decisive action.

The next area that our committee looked at, which was reported in the Auditor General's report, was the role and responsibilities for government-wide financial management. In preparing for the public hearing, the committee requested a presentation on the roles and responsibilities of government's senior financial managers. While committee Members appreciated the presentation, they noted some differences in the interpretation among some of the participants about how the role should be defined. In addition, there seemed to be lack of clarity about the relationship and responsibilities of departmental managers and managers within central agencies. The committee is particularly concerned about the role of the comptroller general. The control function of his office is weak. It should be significantly strengthened. The committee noted that the Financial Administration Act empowers the comptroller general with direct action capability, but in practice, the role has been reduced to more of an advisory role analogous to a slap on the wrist when things go wrong. In the committee's view, this is not adequate, and the independence and the role of the comptroller general needs to ensure that systems and processes protect public property. The committee feels that roles and responsibilities should be clarified, especially to deal more effectively with financial restraint. We therefore have a recommendation to that effect, Mr. Chairman.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 14, Carried

I move recommendation 14. Government should strengthen the roles and responsibilities of the deputy minister of Finance and the comptroller general. The role of the comptroller general should be made more independent of Finance, and the accountability of the incumbent should be spelled out more clearly. Both the deputy minister and the comptroller general should become more pro-active in dealing with spending problems, and they should ensure that all departments obtain value for money.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you, Mr. Zoe. That was a good motion. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Continue, Mr. Zoe,

MR. ZOE: Mr. Chairman, the next area the committee reviewed was asset management in government. The Auditor General reported on his first audit of asset management. This government has some three billion dollars invested in non-cash assets such as inventories, buildings, equipment, art and other cultural items, et cetera. The committee heard testimony from the comptroller general, who has a leadership role under section 12 of the Financial Administration Act, and the deputy ministers of several other departments with specific custodial responsibilities. The committee was disturbed to hear a recurring theme that departments had control systems but none were complete, and there is no overall control and accountability for asset control. In reality, no one knows exactly what the government owns or what it is worth. This is disturbing because the assets owned represent major investment in infrastructure and other items for the people of the Territories.

The committee had no satisfaction that the various departments were doing a good job of effectively managing and controlling this large investment. The committee also expressed its concern about how little departments cooperate and work together to control and manage assets. We heard too many examples of why things could not be done rather than how departments could work together to make improvements.

The committee was surprised at the extent of cultural assets that were owned, and in many cases, not controlled property. Many cultural items were portable and valuable. These include carvings, prints and paintings owned by Culture and Communications as well as significant other items owned by other departments. For example, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism had a program to purchase art works and lend them to other departments. The committee heard that this

is not done, and the inventory of these attractive and valuable items is not well controlled.

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Other cultural items have unique characteristics that make them extremely valuable, but they are not properly managed. Meanwhile, the government warehouse contains examples of ordinary items that are not highly valuable yet take up expensive storage space.

The committee heard that many purchases of capital items are budgeted and paid for under O and M, not under capital. In many cases, items are being ordered on a component-by-component basis to get individual items in the system under the \$5000 capital assets definition. This is a blatant attempt, Mr. Chairman, to avoid showing items correctly as capital assets which are under more detailed scrutiny by the Legislative Assembly, especially in these times of restraint. The committee, therefore, has four recommendations on this topic.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 15, Carried

I move recommendation 15. That the comptroller general develop a strategy to encourage interdepartmental coordination in the design of asset control systems; that he create and carry out a plan to provide maximum coordination in the design and development of inventory control systems, particularly for Department of Public Works, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the Department of Transportation; and that he report on this plan to the public accounts committee, either in person or in writing, at least twice a year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Proceed, Mr. Zoe.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 16, Carried

MR. ZOE: My second recommendation pertaining to this issue, recommendation 16. I move, Mr. Chairman, that departments with asset custodial responsibilities work together to identify where

systems, methods and processes can be combined to save money. All asset inventory systems should be completed promptly and should contain all pertinent information about the assets, including all legal descriptions and maintenance data.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Zoe.

Motion To Accept Recommendation 17, Carried

MR. ZOE: A third recommendation pertaining to this item, recommendation 17. I move that the Department of Culture and Communications develop a comprehensive policy to properly manage historical and cultural assets; that the policy provide procedures for acquiring, assessing, classifying, maintaining, protecting, insuring and controlling these assets; and that the department develop a system and establish procedures for conducting an inventory of historical and cultural assets, including those which are the responsibility of other GNWT departments, agencies and institutions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question being called. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Motion To Accept Recommendation 18, Carried

MR. ZOE: Our final recommendation dealing with the assets management in government is recommendation 18. I move that the government take immediate steps to stop departments from splitting capital purchases into smaller components and classifying them as O and M expenditures.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Continue, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes our report for the standing committee on public accounts.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. I feel we broke a record for making motions today. Does the committee agree that the committee report is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Mr. Arngna'naaq.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make a few comments on the report. Being a Member of this committee I understand and, because this is the first time as a Member of this Assembly, I am informed that these recommendations are very similar to ones that have been made by other public accounts committees. In the form of motions, we have tried to make recommendations which will make the government more accountable, at least at the bureaucratic level.

The public accounts committee have indicated that they will hold more meetings and I, as a Member of that public accounts committee, would like to make sure that that does take place and that this committee will follow-up on their recommendations and call back those deputy ministers responsible for which we have made those recommendations to try to make them accountable.

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Some of the recommendations which have been made are consistent with those made by the standing committee on finance and which I would think Members of the standing committee on finance would be able and willing to back the public accounts committee on their recommendations. From what I can see, it appears that the public accounts committee is a committee which makes the bureaucracy of this government accountable to this

Assembly. Perhaps what we, as a public accounts committee, could do is take these motions and have them delivered to the respective departments they were made for.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): We should be able to do something like that. I am told we have very sharp teeth. Any more comments? Is the committee agreed that the committee report is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The motion to report progress is not debatable. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. SPEAKER: Item 19, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Chairman.

MR. NINGARK: Mr. Speaker, you committee has been considering Bill 30 and Committee Report 13-12(2), and wishes to report that Committee Report 13-12(2) is concluded and that Bill 30 is ready for third reading. I move that the report of the chairman of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Secunder to the motion, Mr. Koe. The motion is in order. All those in favour? Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 20, third reading of bills. Mr. Patterson.

ITEM 20: THIRD READING OF BILLS

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, I would seek consent to move third reading of Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member is seeking consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays, proceed please, Mr. Patterson.

Third Reading of Bill 30: Workers' Compensation Act

HON. DENNIS PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is in order. All those in favour?

Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

---Carried

-Applause

Bill 30 has had third reading. Third reading of bills. Item 21, orders of the day, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Ordinary Members Caucus immediately after adjournment; at 6:30 this evening there will be a meeting of the Nunavut Caucus; at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning of the Ordinary Members Caucus.

ITEM 21: ORDERS OF THE DAY

Orders of the day for Friday, June 26, 1992.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Oral Questions
6. Written Questions
7. Returns to Written Questions
8. Replies to Opening Address
9. Petitions
10. Reports of Standing and Special Committees

11. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
12. Tabling of Documents
13. Notices of Motions
14. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
15. Motions: Motion 22-12(2)
16. First Reading of Bills
17. Second Reading of Bills
18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters: Tabled Document 9-12(2), Tabled Document 10-12(2); - Motion 6-12(2); Committee Report 10-12(2)
19. Report of Committee of the Whole
20. Third Reading of Bills
21. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until 10:00 p.m., Friday, June 26, 1992.

-ADJOURNMENT