



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
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The Honourable Michael A. Ballantyne, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

Hon. Titus Allooloo, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Arngna'naaq, Mr. James Arvaluk, Hon. Michael Ballantyne, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Mr. Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Lewis, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Hon. Rebecca Mike, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. John Todd, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Michael Ballantyne):

Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statement. Mr. Allooloo.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 63-12(3): Active Living Program

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to announce the new active living program which my department is promoting across the Northwest Territories this year.

The NWT active living challenge is part of a national movement to encourage Canadians to adopt a healthy, balanced life-style by being physically active every day. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is taking up the challenge to promote active living in the north.

A calendar of events and an activity guide have been developed. The calendar lists various active living events being hosted across the Northwest Territories. The activity guides provide over 100 ideas for groups who may wish to host an event.

During 1993, individuals, families, work places, schools, voluntary organizations and communities are encouraged to host active living events every month of the year. Groups that host events, and register their participation in the challenge, are eligible to receive an active living flag and a plaque. These are presented monthly to one of the registered participants by an NWT inter-agency committee with representatives from many government departments and organizations with responsibility for the well-being of northerners.

Mr. Speaker, the communities that promote active living events for their residents are contributing to the well-being of our northern society by improving the quality of life. Recent studies have also shown that even moderate amounts of enjoyable daily physical activity can improve a person's physical, mental, spiritual and emotional well-being. I encourage you to promote participation in our NWT active living challenge in your constituencies.

I would like to sincerely thank the inter-agency committee members for their help. They consist of representatives from the Departments of Health, Education, Social Services and Personnel, the NWT Recreation and Parks Association, Ecology North, Storefront for Voluntary Agencies, Sport North, the YWCA, the NWT Council for Disabled Persons, and the city of Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Ms. Mike.

Minister's Statement 64-12(3): Food Allowances

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few remarks on the matter of social assistance food allowances.

The government knows the importance of an adequate level of support for people who are not able to provide for themselves and their families. It recognizes that this is a serious matter.

As you know, food allowances have already been increased this fiscal year. The increase came into effect in October. My recent remarks on this matter referred to the 1992-93 fiscal year and were based on the fact that we had already increased them by five per cent.

The matter of food allowances remains a priority concern of our government. Members can be assured that they will receive serious review and consideration over the next few months. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Constitutional Development
In The New Western Territory

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I made a few notes yesterday morning because I thought I would be given the opportunity to reply to the Commissioner's address. I will use my Member's statement to make one comment about the Bourque commission. On Tuesday, Mr. Speaker, we heard from the Bourque commission. Its report is a model of conciseness and of clarity. No one should underestimate the incredible difficulties that have to be overcome if there is to be a constitution for all the peoples of the new western territory. However, we should heed the words of those who say we must stick with it, keep working on it and not give up easily, even if it looks like a hopeless task at the outset.

I am encouraged with the recommendations that we should have our own legislation covering human rights. We are the

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only jurisdiction in Canada without human rights legislation. This would be a good place for our own government to begin responding to the report as there seems to be widespread support for it in the public. It has been said that aboriginal people would find it difficult to accept human rights legislation. I believe we should accept the challenge of developing human rights legislation because this would be one way in which we could find out if there was enough basis, among all of the people of the Northwest Territories, to provide a common ground before we proceed toward any further major constitutional development.

Now that a newly formed structure has been devised for constitutional development, it is imperative that the work of the steering committee and the working group not be confused with the operations of the Government of the Northwest Territories especially in such areas as decentralization and community transfers. It must be clear that the work ahead has nothing to do with the operation of the present Government of the Northwest Territories. It has to do with building a new set of rules which we can all live by. We do not know exactly what it will look like and it will be some time, Mr. Speaker, before we see its face, but I am optimistic that we will make progress and eventually succeed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Arnagna'naaq.

Member's Statement On Regional Health Centre In
Keewatin

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been some discussion in the Keewatin region over the past ten years regarding the building of a regional health centre. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the time allotted to me this afternoon to speak on this matter. During my last visit, there was a great deal of concern raised on this matter in the communities which I represent. At that time, a consultant was hired by the Keewatin regional health board to consult with the communities in the region.

I speak to this, Mr. Speaker, because the communities which I represent were very concerned that this would turn into the same thing that happened with the Keewatin regional high school. As the honourable Member for Iqaluit, who is not present, knows well, the decision on the regional high school was a dramatic experience and I believe the regional health centre will be just as dramatic. At this point, Mr. Speaker, the Keewatin regional health board is going through the consultation process which should be a normal process for any government. However, I do not believe that it has come to the Yellowknife level yet, to the people who will be making all the final decisions on capital projects.

At the present time a member of the Arviat health committee has not been chosen, as far as I know. In fact, there has not been an active representative on a regular basis since December of 1991. The community of Arviat is very concerned about this. Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister responsible for Health at the appropriate time in this regard.

There are many words which will be said with regard to the regional health centre from the Keewatin regional health board. However, I warn the Minister at this time that there will be many repercussions, as far as the government is concerned, from as menial as the direction of the entrance of the facility to the location of the health facility itself. I will guarantee that right now. I represent two communities which put together have the highest population of either of the other ridings in the Keewatin and they will come together, not necessarily to make a majority, but will create many headaches...

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq, your allotted time has lapsed.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue with my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and honourable colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I represent two communities which put together have the highest population of either of the other ridings in the Keewatin and they will come together, not necessarily to make a majority, but will create many headaches for the Minister and the department when it comes to the location of certain facilities.

To this point in time, the steering committee of the proposed health facility in the Keewatin region is composed of three people from Rankin Inlet except for one member, and that is one person out of five members. I have to ask at this point, Mr. Speaker, where is the justice in this when only one person is from outside of the community where the location of the facility is presently being planned. Only a few people will be satisfied with the results. The costs, numbers and the time are justified. However, I feel the location is not justified. The numbers, as far as Nunavut is concerned, are not clear and with this I have to speak out. The location has not been ratified, as Nunavut has not been created. I believe the people of the eastern Kitikmeot will reconsider their decision on Yellowknife being their destination once they begin to realize that the health facility in the Keewatin is closer to their communities and the people of the Keewatin have their best interests at heart.

Mr. Speaker, this is an attempt to make the Minister of Health and the department aware of what to expect when the issue on the Keewatin regional health facility is brought to them. I will make further comments at a later time and will ask questions as to the progress of the Keewatin regional health facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Arngna'naaq. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Whitford.

Member's Statement On Federal Funding For AIDS In NWT

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not a day goes by that we cannot pick up a newspaper or magazine and find an article on the subject of AIDS. These can be found in one form or the other, either as an announcement of a death, someone of great importance has contracted the disease or some research study taking place on the subject of AIDS. Mr. Speaker, the majority of news items only point out the high profile people, a movie actor, a dancer or a sports personality

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who has either died of the complications associated with AIDS or is critically ill as a result of it.

On March 9, the Minister and her staff spoke to many of the Members about the problem of AIDS in the territories, from which I deduct, at least, that AIDS was an item of serious concern. It is a very serious matter. We have a major announcement and I have not heard any further word on it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement Re Conference On Family Violence And Sexual Abuse In Fort Simpson

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is going to be a family violence sexual abuse conference in Fort Simpson next week. It will be held on March 23, 24 and 25. In February, 1991, it was identified by the Department of Social Services and the Fort Simpson Dene band that our communities were being severely impacted by the issue of child sexual abuse. In order to address this, a needs survey was designed and completed in June, 1991. One of the major recommendations from the survey was with regard to education and awareness of child sexual abuse. The needs survey identified that both professionals and community members needed increased education and awareness on this topic. Since a child sexual abuse specialist was hired in our region in December,

1991, there has been a dramatic increase in disclosures.

Increased training for professionals and support for victims and their families has been another area of concern. In January, 1993, the Secretary of State provided funding for the regional aboriginal women's conference to look at the issue of family violence. The Native Women's Association and the Department of Social Services have also provided funding and expertise to deal with this family violence sexual abuse conference in order to follow recommendations from the needs survey.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important conference which will occur in Fort Simpson. I thought it would be a good idea to inform the Members of this House that we are trying to deal with a social problem in the Fort Simpson region. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Member's Statement On Affiliation Of Science Institute With Arctic College

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to express my strong support for a new direction which has recently been announced with respect to the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, last week when I was gone, a couple of my colleagues expressed some of their opinions regarding this. After reading Hansard, I thought I would like to express my opinion.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly was pleased to learn that the Minister is considering an arrangement which would see close affiliation between the college and the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories. It is my view that such an arrangement would benefit the institute and would also strengthen the college. The people of the Northwest Territories would, no doubt, be farther ahead as a result. Mr. Speaker, I say it would benefit the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories because I believe it could create science technology programs which are currently absent from the college system.

Recognizing the institute's role in technology development, particularly in the areas relating to tanneries and wildlife harvesting projects, shop facilities and access to college world class renewable

resource training programs, would no doubt strengthen the capabilities as well. The college in turn would benefit from this. Post-secondary institutions across Canada have always been active in research and development. Pairing the facilities of the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories and the college would increase our ability to contribute to important research on issues which are relevant to our northern people. Mr. Speaker, the potential for sharing this type of technology in its expertise is no doubt significant. It would not only improve the ability of the college and the institute to meet their respective mandates, but it will save money that this government needs so badly.

I am enthusiastic about the direction which I believe the Minister is taking in this regard and I urge him to proceed in developing a formal implementation plan which can be reviewed by this House in the future. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Marie-Jewell. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Ms. Cournoyea.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 514-12(3): Attendance Of Ministers At Long Service Awards Dinners

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question, asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on March 17, regarding the attendance of Ministers at long service awards dinners.

On February 27, 1993, the Minister of Renewable Resources attended the Government of the Northwest Territories long service awards dinner in Fort Simpson. Travel to Fort Simpson from Yellowknife was by the Minister's personal vehicle. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 318-12(3): Framework For Advisory Committee On Housing

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Zoe on February 23, 1993, regarding the framework for an advisory committee on social housing.

The honourable Member for North Slave requested a written chronology of events leading to the establishment of the advisory committee on social housing. Since the chronology is quite lengthy and since this House has already agreed to establish the advisory committee on social housing, I have provided the chronology to Mr. Zoe in writing. Copies have also been provided to all honourable Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 431-12(3): Organize Competitions For Artists In The West

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Antoine on March 5, 1993, regarding competition for artists in the Northwest Territories.

Nunatta campus of Arctic College delivers a fine arts program in Iqaluit, and has recently organized a fine arts and crafts competition as an initiative to enhance the development of arts and crafts in Nunavut.

Through fund raising activities in Nunavut, Nunatta campus secured funds from the private sector to support the project and to sponsor the cash prizes. The competition categories included a broad range of arts and crafts from carving to drawing and printmaking, jewellery and silversmithing, photography and traditional crafts.

This is the first year that a fine arts and crafts competition has been organized by Arctic College. If this project is successful in Nunavut, the college may expand the competition to the western Arctic.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Allooloo.

Further Return To Question 518-12(3): Participation Of NWT Athletes At North American Aboriginal Summer Games

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Zoe on March 17, 1993, concerning North American aboriginal summer games.

Mr. Speaker, I have some additional information to provide on this summer's North American indigenous games.

The second North American indigenous games will be held July 18 to 25, 1993, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The first games were held in Edmonton in July, 1990.

Several teams from the Northwest Territories did participate in these first games in 1990, including men's and ladies' fastball teams from Fort Smith. The department provided grants to these teams to assist their travel costs. There were no formal trials to select an overall official Northwest Territories team, as such.

Mr. Speaker, the department has only received, to date, a couple of inquiries about the 1993 aboriginal games and we are not aware of any definite plans being made by any teams to participate.

The department does not have a program or any plans to select and send an official team to represent the NWT at these games, as it does to the Arctic winter games or Canada games. The department is prepared, however, to consider support similar to that given to teams that participated in 1990.

Mr. Speaker, sport in the Northwest Territories is the envy of many jurisdictions. Our individual sport organizations, our Sport North Federation and the various competitions and major athletic games we support place heavy emphasis on providing participation opportunities for our aboriginal people. Perhaps that is why there is less need to establish or support separate competitions. However, we have supported and will continue to support these groups that have been organized to promote aboriginal games, such as the various regional Inuit and Dene games associations and the NWT Arctic sports association.

The department will speak to these regional Inuit and Dene games associations and to the NWT Arctic sports association to see if they have plans to support or organize participation in these 1993 indigenous games. We are certainly prepared to work with these

groups and to also consider any direct requests, as we did in 1990.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that most of our regional Inuit and Dene games groups have made plans for their own traditional games celebrations, held each summer. Our Sport North Federation is also in the final stages of preparing for the NWT's preparation in August at the 1993 Canada summer games. However, within this schedule, the department is ready to assist where there is interest in participation in the 1993 indigenous games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 496-12(3): Wood Prices For Senior Citizens

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Lewis on March 15, 1993, regarding wood prices for senior citizens.

The price of \$55 per cord of wood for senior citizens applies to all senior citizens, regardless of where they reside, but anyone who purchases wood is responsible for the transportation of it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 4, returns to oral questions. I would like to recognize in the gallery, the Mayor of Iqaluit, Mr. Charlie Ruttan.

---Applause

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Item 5, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, there has been some concern expressed from my constituency with respect to the corrections division's intention to change the River Ridge facility, which is a maximum secure institution, into an open custody

facility and, apparently, the secure facility in Hay River will be considered to become a maximum secure institution. Since these decisions have come about unexpectedly, I would like to ask the Minister whether the Minister can indicate the reasons for what I believe to be a costly and unnecessary program adjustment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the staff at the River Ridge Secure Facility have been notified that as of April 5, they must be ready to house young offenders. The two other young offender facilities in Hay River and Iqaluit were designated some time ago, in January, to be open custody programs where young offenders could stay. River Ridge is the last to be designated as an open custody. There are no renovations required to allow an open custody program to be carried out in River Ridge. The Member was correct when she stated the facility was not intended for open custody when it was originally built. At that time, there was felt to be some need for secure custody bed space. Now that the number of secure custody beds across the territories exceeds the number needed, there is some flexibility in how present facilities can be used.

The occupancy rate for secure custody facilities as a whole is about 65 per cent. The River Ridge facility has had a very low occupancy rate. It currently has space for 14 and is only occupied by five young offenders. There are 19 staff at River Ridge. Mr. Speaker, the intent of our short-term remedy to the situation is to make better use of the staff we have, which is 19 people. They are already very well trained and there is very good morale. The facility is in excess of \$2.5 million and just sitting there vacant most of the time. We have to take whatever measures we can to make use of existing facilities. The sense is that we can make better use of it as an open custody facility.

The present young offenders who are there can be out of River Ridge by the end of this month or early in April. With a short break for some training for the staff, we can have open custody sentenced offenders in River Ridge by early April. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I recognize the government's intention of trying to make sure they fully utilize a facility. The concern I have is the government is now intending to utilize a facility for the wrong program. I fully support the government's intention of trying to maximize the use of facilities, providing it is for the proper program delivery. The Minister has indicated that this particular facility will now be switched over from a maximum secure institution, to an open custody type of institution. Recognizing the bed space available, and keeping in mind, Mr. Speaker, that the trend for corrections fluctuates, I can say that correctional centres are probably over loaded in the winter, and under utilized towards the spring. That has always been the trend in my experience. I would like to ask the Minister whether any needs assessment studies, program reviews or strategic plans were done to examine whether this change was needed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, we had originally suggested that another open custody facility be opened up in Hay River. As Members know, for a number of reasons we closed that option. The cost of opening a new facility would be in excess of \$300,000. In the short-term, it is our view that by turning the River Ridge facility into an open custody facility is the best use of that facility at this time.

There are only two classifications for institutions for young offenders that I am aware of. As far as I know there is no such thing as a maximum secure facility for young offenders. There is either a secure facility or an open custody facility. As the Member knows, River Ridge is a very over built facility with a door which is locked every five feet and has very little human element to it from the inside, but it can be used by removing the number of locks and trying to

open it up more. Perhaps, the use of it as an open custody facility will make better use of our limited facilities at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, it has always been my understanding that there are three categories of young offenders, according to the Corrections Act. Mr. Speaker, what I am concerned about is, I would like to ask the Minister in looking at the Justice budget again, there did not seem to be any particular funding identified for renovations. These renovations from changing a fairly maximum secure institution to an open custody would mean the idea of taking out all these locked doors and trying to take the control centre, making many changes to the facility. I would like to ask the Minister, does he know what renovations will be necessary to transform the River Ridge facility into an open custody setting, recognizing that I am sure he has been through that facility himself? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

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Further Return To Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there are no plans to renovate any of the facilities. The fact is, this is seen at this time as a temporary measure. Over the next few months the Department of Justice is planning to get more into the long-term planning to make better use of the facilities we have, to target how to maximize the use of the present facilities we have without having to build different facilities in other communities without first reassuring that the facilities which have been built so far are being used to the best advantage possible. At this time, the River Ridge facility is -- I will not say extremely under utilized -- but it has been consistently under utilized. With the number of staff we have, we think rather than closing down a facility or laying off staff, this gives security to the employees in River Ridge. It will keep morale up, they are being

challenged to meet a need that the government has. I am certain they will do a good job. There are no plans to do anything to make the staff uneasy about their future security as employees. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not know about the idea of keeping the morale up on the staff because I met with the staff over the weekend and I believe it is going to affect their morale. Mr. Speaker, it appears to me the Minister of Justice does not fully understand the types of security and the responsibilities of the Department of Justice under the Corrections Act with respect to young offenders. I do not believe the Minister fully comprehends the Young Offenders Act to recognize his full responsibilities. The Minister says there will be no renovations. I know you cannot keep an open custody in what is designated as a maximum secure institution, and that is exactly what River Ridge is. There are going to have to be renovations to the Hay River facility. As he has said, the young offenders will be transferred to the Hay River facility. I would like to ask the Minister, the expenditures which he is proposing are not in the budget and there will have to be renovations made, whether he realizes this or not. Can he review the act, recognizing his responsibilities and ensure those facilities would be used for their designated purposes to deliver the programs they were intended for? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 520-12(3): Plans To Make The River Ridge Facility Open Custody

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the acts are clear. Either you provide a secure custody or open custody facility. There is no such thing as a maximum secure custody for young offenders. Those ring more of penitentiaries which have been built in more backward years. The programs we provide are the ones which are most important in these cases. The security is not designated so much by the number of locked doors

that we have but it is reflected a little bit in that particular facility. What we have more of, is the supervision that these young offenders have and the level of training that the staff who are provided to secure facilities and open facilities have. It is my understanding that secure facility staff are, generally, much more trained and can more readily handle open custody young offenders than the other way around. My information is that there is no need for renovations, we can use the existing facilities as they are. The Hay River facility has already been designated and now we are redesignating for immediate use the River Ridge facility as an open custody facility. It does not have that much to do with the physical as much as the program and the level of supervision which we provide to these young offenders.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Dent.

Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Premier. Yesterday, my colleague for Inuvik asked a question regarding the transfer of the parks division to Renewable Resources. The Premier indicated this was not a new issue. I assume with that answer she is referring to recommendations contained in the Strength at Two Levels report or, perhaps, the Commissioner's task force on administration, which took place in 1979.

Mr. Speaker, I thought the government had committed to a consultative process on departmental consolidation for transfers. At what point had the government planned to involve the Strength at Two Levels working group in the consultation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, it was to be part of our meeting Wednesday, because we had an open afternoon. However, we are re-scheduling the meeting. We were going to have it on the agenda. The Legislative

Assembly decided to meet on Wednesdays rather than leaving that period open. I have to re-schedule the meeting. We were going to discuss that at that time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, Mr. Koe wondered during his preamble to one of his supplementaries whether there were other divisions being transferred. However, this question was really never addressed. Mr. Speaker, the Beatty report also suggested that fisheries be transferred to Renewable Resources. Is this also being considered?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

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Supplementary To Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

MR. DENT:

Mr. Speaker, the Beatty report also suggested that not only the parks division but also tourism be transferred from Economic Development and Tourism to Renewable Resources. Is this one being considered?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, no.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

MR. DENT:

Mr. Speaker, the Beatty report made many suggestions about the transfer of divisions, one of which was that the Science Institute should go to the Department of Environment and Renewable Resources. Yet, just last week we heard that the Science Institute is being considered to go to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment Programs. I am not aware that the Strength at Two Levels working group was ever involved in consultation of that division transfer. As we heard just a minute ago, the working group was only going to be advised after the fact, the process had started to move parks to Renewable Resources. What is the purpose of having the Strength at Two Levels working group if they are not going to be involved?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 521-12(3): Consultation With The Strength At Two Levels Working Group

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, the working group is going to be involved. What we have done was instruct the department to come forward, in a period of time, with a plan on how we would do the various tasks. As I have said, regarding the working group, we were going to look at that and clarify the roles which we have on the issue of parks. As I have expressed to the Member, this issue of clarification on the best place to put parks has been in the discussion stage for quite a number of years. I just want to set it straight that this is what I was referring to. The issue was to be on the agenda for Wednesday. We will re-schedule the meeting and look at it at that time. At this time it is in the planning stages, there has been no decision made. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health. In January, 1993, I learned that a report was released by the Canadian Wildlife Services indicating a high level of cadmium has been found in caribou liver and kidneys. The report went on to say that caribou have been found safe for human consumption. Mr. Speaker, I have heard that this report has been called back by the Canadian Wildlife Services because there were no experts in human health involved in the study. Recognizing that cadmium is a toxic substance, can the Minister inform Members of this Assembly what actions her department have taken to ensure that the report is correct and that the caribou are safe to eat?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There have not been any official studies carried out by the Department of Health. The samples have been collected through Renewable Resources. The report was published prematurely and that is why it has been called back. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

MR. GARGAN:

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon government did a comprehensive public information campaign regarding cadmium. I would like to ask the Minister why the department has not done anything with regard to that campaign and whether the caribou are safe to eat.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The samples which were collected in the territories were carried out by Renewable Resources, in the last five years. We do not have an adequate database in the NWT to conclude whether the cadmium found in the caribou is dangerous to human health. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

MR. GARGAN:

Whether or not we have a data base, is your department determining if caribou meat is safe to eat? How do you determine that?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health and Welfare Canada was the one who determined the meat safe to eat. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

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Supplementary To Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

MR. GARGAN:

In the meantime, is the Minister suggesting that we continue to eat the caribou?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 522-12(3): Action To Ensure Caribou Meat Is Safe To Consume

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 523-12(3): Departmental Research Into Cadmium Levels In Caribou

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I was going to ask a different Minister a question. However, with the answer received by my colleague for Deh Cho, since we know there is cadmium in caribou, is the department considering to undertake a study to determine if the caribou are safe to eat, in conjunction with her colleague, the Minister of Renewable Resources, so that it can be determined for sure that caribou is safe to eat?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 523-12(3): Departmental Research Into Cadmium Levels In Caribou

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health and Welfare Canada is the one who should be doing the studies to see if the caribou meat is safe to eat or not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 523-12(3): Departmental Research Into Cadmium Levels In Caribou

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Speaker, I am not too worried about what Health and Welfare Canada has to say with regard to this issue. I am asking our government, our Department of Health, are they going to undertake a study similar to the one the Yukon government is undertaking so that we can be sure that caribou meat is safe to eat in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 523-12(3): Departmental Research Into Cadmium Levels In Caribou

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Renewable Resources has been collecting the samples in collaboration with the Department of Health. It then goes to Health and Welfare Canada. We only have five years of this sampling. It is not conclusive to say whether it is safe or not so, the studies will continue. Yes, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 524-12(3): Status Of Proposed Budget Planning

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Government Leader regarding the proposed budget planning and approval cycle. When I was first elected last year I received some documents called multi-year budget cycle and four way system of government, and proposed budget planning and approval cycles. My concern is with the capital planning process. Last year we undertook a process where, as MLAs, we had input or comments on capital plans. I am wondering if that same process is going to be followed this year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 524-12(3): Status Of Proposed Budget Planning

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 524-12(3): Status Of Proposed Budget Planning

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. If that is the case, I have many concerns with regard to how the process went last year. Before this process starts again for community and MLA input, I was hoping we would be given a chance to have some input into the way the process went through last year. I am wondering if there will be an opportunity for us to make comments on the way the capital planning process was done last year, so that we can improve it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 524-12(3): Status Of Proposed Budget Planning

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know we received quite a number of very favourable responses, particularly from the communities. If there are some difficulties with it, I will discuss this matter with the Minister of Finance and would be prepared to meet with MLAs individually to discuss the process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

Question 525-12(3): Access Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, on March 9, the Minister of Health and her staff gave a briefing to Members of this House regarding HIV and AIDS in the Northwest Territories. We were provided with some statistics dealing with this illness. The end results and the transmission of it were frightening, Mr. Speaker. Coincidentally, on February 11, the federal government through Mr. Benoit Bouchard, Minister of Health, announced significant increases to the national AIDS strategy program. Has the Minister's staff been in consultation with their federal counterparts regarding this increased emphasis on the national AIDS strategy?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

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Return To Question 525-12(3): Access Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The staff are aware of the federal government money for the AIDS program. The federal government have stated they plan to put more money into the AIDS program. There is not enough detail yet as to how the money will be divided between jurisdictions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 525-12(3): Access Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that the department is aware of it. I asked the question of whether they had been in consultation prior to the announcement as to how the strategy is going to be undertaken, Mr. Speaker. They use words such as partnership. To me, a partnership means consultation. Was the department consulted about our programs in relation to this national AIDS strategy?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 525-12(3): Access Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, no.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 525-12(3): Access Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are we involved in this fairly substantial announcement, Mr. Speaker? This involves \$42 million. A large amount of money is being allocated, are we involved in this strategy?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 525-12(3): Access
Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We should be. The federal government just made the announcement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Your final supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the documents and I am not a Cabinet Minister any more. It has been one week, we did not just get this. This just did not pop out of the blue. Are we involved in this program?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to get clarification whether he is talking about our own program on AIDS or a federal government program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Whitford, if you would like to pose your question again, you may.

Supplementary To Question 525-12(3): Access
Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary, supplementary. Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is the national AIDS strategy, and national means, I gather, all the provinces in Canada including the two territories. Is the Northwest Territories involved in this national AIDS strategy?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 525-12(3): Access
Federal Funding To Combat AIDS

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 526-12(3): NWT Athletes' Participation In
Aboriginal Summer Games

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Earlier today, the Minister returned a reply to one of the questions I raised yesterday in regard to the North American aboriginal summer games which are going to be held in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, in his reply the Minister indicated he will be consulting with the regional Inuit and Dene games association to see if they had made any inquiries or plans to support groups which are going to be participating in the summer games. Although it is the department's prerogative to see what these other groups are doing, I do not think it would really matter at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, because time is of the essence. I do not believe we could participate at a community or regional level now because it is approaching upon us very rapidly. What other plans is the department looking at? What is the other process if these groups do not have any plans for their participation at the summer games, what is the department going to do? How are they going to handle the requests being made from various sporting groups?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

Return To Question 526-12(3): NWT Athletes'
Participation In Aboriginal Summer Games

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For this particular event this summer, we have been treating it on a case by case basis. We have had a couple of inquiries, but we have not received any proposals from communities. I would welcome any proposals from the communities of the Northwest Territories if they want to be part of the aboriginal summer games. I would also encourage the Member if he wishes to let his constituents participate in this event, to encourage them to put together a proposal. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

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Supplementary To Question 526-12(3): NWT Athletes' Participation In Aboriginal Summer Games

MR. ZOE:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Minister indicated earlier and in his recent response, that the department is willing to support. I assume he is making reference to financial support. What type of financial support would these individual sporting groups receive? Would that be determined by the make up of the team or is there a specific amount the department provides? How are they doing to determine this financial support?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take the question as notice. Before I do that, there will be a similar contribution...

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo, you have a choice. You can either take it as notice or you can answer the question, but you cannot do both. Mr. Allooloo.

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

I will take it as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Question 527-12(3): Saskatchewan Hearings Into Uranium Mines

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a question of the Government Leader. There are plans at this point for two separate panel hearings in the province of Saskatchewan regarding six different uranium mines. I would like to know if the government is aware of these panel hearings.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 527-12(3): Saskatchewan Hearings Into Uranium Mines

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, yes we are aware of them.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Supplementary To Question 527-12(3): Saskatchewan Hearings Into Uranium Mines

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know if the Government of the Northwest Territories has any plans to become involved in these hearings.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I will take that as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question has been taken as notice. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Lewis.

Question 528-12(3): GNWT Involvement In Phase I Of National AIDS Strategy

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To follow up on Mr. Whitford's question to the Minister of Health on the national AIDS strategy, I would like to ask the Minister whether the Government of the Northwest Territories was involved in phase I of the program. The announcement which Mr. Bouchard made on March 11, was about phase II. Was the Government of the Northwest Territories involved in phase I of the program in which an amount of approximately \$37.3 million was spent nationally?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health, Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have to take his question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question has been taken as notice. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Pudlat.

Question 529-12(3): Information On Great Whale Hydro Project

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Renewable Resources a question. My constituents in Sanikiluaq are very concerned about the Great Whale project going ahead. Can the Minister of Renewable Resources indicate to the House whether he has been working with the environmental working group in Sanikiluaq regarding the Great Whale project? If he has any information about this, can he bring the information into the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

Return To Question 529-12(3): Information On Great Whale Hydro Project

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 530-12(3): Transfer Of Arctic College Credits To Southern Institutions

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment Programs, and it has to do with Arctic College. It has been brought to my attention that the accreditation of Arctic College is only recognized at a few post-secondary institutions in the south. Could the Minister tell me which institutions the credits which the students received at Arctic College are accepted? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment Programs, Mr. Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not know them all. I will gladly take that question as notice and provide the detail for the honourable Member.

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MR. SPEAKER:

The question has been taken as notice. Item 5, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 531-12(3): Temporary Release Policies For Inmates

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister provided information to the Members regarding some of the procedures in the correctional centres in the Northwest Territories. My concern is that I did not find the information provided enough explanation. For instance, I understand that inmates in the territorial correctional institutions may apply for a temporary absence from the facility for rehabilitation or employment purposes. Under the policy, inmates are not released on temporary absence until one third of the sentence or three months has been served. However, the warden can waive this rule if in his or her opinion the release is in the rehabilitative interest of the inmate. Mr. Speaker, given that there are certain criteria which the warden must taken into account prior to considering a request for a temporary absence for an inmate is entitled to it under the program, can the Minister advise what substantiation the warden is required to maintain in support of a decision to waive the normal waiting period for a temporary absence? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 531-12(3): Temporary Release Policies For Inmates

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there are factors which the warden considers in making such a decision. It generally applies for a temporary release. It is also used to

determine whether some consideration should be given to waiving the three months. As I have said in this House on at least two occasions, it is done with a view of looking at the interests of the inmates, what would be in the good interests of the inmates and as well the public. There are security concerns for the public. In this case, looking at the criminal history of the inmate, if any, the number of offenses and the length of time between offenses. We look at the nature of the offence and the performance of the inmate in the programs and in the facility where they reside, and any other information which may be useful in regard to looking at whether there may be some risk involved in making such an exception where the requirement to serve at least one third of the sentence should be served before temporary absence should be granted. I think the warden uses these factors. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 531-12(3): Temporary Release Policies For Inmates

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Can the Minister explain what policies or procedures are in place, if any, to monitor the warden's decisions to waive the rule for temporary absences in order to identify any problems with the practice? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I can check on that question for the Member. I will take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question has been taken as notice. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Lewis.

Question 532-12(3): Press Release Announcing National AIDS Strategy

MR. LEWIS:

Thanks, Mr. Speaker. We had agreed today we would discuss AIDS in committee of the whole. I would like to ask the Minister of Health whether she has, in fact, read the press release issued March 11,

which says, "Minister announces renewal of the national AIDS strategy."

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 532-12(3): Press Release Announcing National AIDS Strategy

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, no, I have not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 532-12(3): Press Release Announcing National AIDS Strategy

MR. LEWIS:

Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Maybe today we will have an opportunity to include information which we have received from the federal government to help us in our task in dealing with AIDS. This announcement includes a \$6.2 million allocation for education, \$17.8 million for research, \$9.8 million support to non-government organizations, \$5.4 million for care, treatment and support, and \$1.5 million for coordination and collaboration. The bulk of the money, Mr. Speaker, is \$17.8 million for research. I would like to ask the Minister, since we have had a presentation from Dr. Gilchrist, whether we actually do any research on AIDS in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question has been taken as notice. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Question 533-12(3): Construction Of Gravel Pads For HAP Units

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. I

would like to know when gravel pads are constructed for HAP units who, whether it is the government, the client or the contractor, has to be satisfied that these pads are built properly?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 533-12(3): Construction Of Gravel Pads For HAP Units

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Housing Corporation has to be satisfied.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

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Supplementary To Question 533-12(3): Construction Of Gravel Pads For HAP Units

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When a client is not satisfied with the work which has been done on their particular gravel pad, is there any recourse for that client?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 533-12(3): Construction Of Gravel Pads For HAP Units

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The client should register a complaint with the regional office. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Pudluk.

Question 534-12(3): Regional Directors' Budget For Community Travel

MR. PUDLUK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to Madam Premier. In the past the regional director

used to travel to the communities. I wonder if there is still a budget for their travel to the communities.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 534-12(3): Regional Directors' Budget For Community Travel

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

Question 535-12(3): Contents Of Spill At Royal Oak Mine

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister responsible for environmental issues. Mr. Speaker, we had a fairly serious spill at Giant Mine last week and all indications seem to play down the significance of it. It was not a major spill, but it was reported that it contained some toxic material however, we are not sure what yet. I wonder if the Minister has had a chance to find out what the spill contained?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

Return To Question 535-12(3): Contents Of Spill At Royal Oak Mine

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The spill occurred on territorial lands, not on Commissioner's land, and the federal government is responsible for administering and also finding out what contaminants were involved in this spill. Apparently, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs is preparing a report on the substance which was spilled at Giant Mine. Their report is expected to be completed by next week. I have requested a copy to be sent to my office as soon as the report is done. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 535-12(3): Contents Of Spill At Royal Oak

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many people in this city and around the territories are concerned with any spill that we have of an unknown nature. In this case, anything around an industrial area is of great concern, certainly to us because we are bordering on a great body of fresh water. I understand the spill is frozen so it is easy to remove. Can the Minister tell the House what the status of the clean up is?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

Further Return To Question 535-12(3): Contents Of Spill At Royal Oak

HON. TITUS ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, when it was reported at about 6:20 in the evening, clean up started that night and it was completed the next day. It took no more than 12 hours for the spill to be cleaned up. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 536-12(3): Guidelines For Applications For Lottery Licences

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Minister responsible for public service with respect to the policies his department uses for determining eligibility for lottery licences that are submitted. He indicated to me in his return to oral question, "Lottery licences may be issued to recreation or cultural committees set up by these organizations. When initial applications for licences are reviewed from such recreational or cultural committees, information on the membership on the committee is provided by the applicant and must not be restricted to a particular group of people." It goes on to state, "The Elks and Legion service clubs are open for membership to the general public." Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat concerned with the attitude with regard to the response is very general and broad. I would like to ask the Minister if he would make a

commitment to have his department review the eligibility for licences which are submitted? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Safety and Public Services.

Return To Question 536-12(3): Guidelines For Applications For Lottery Licences

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the honourable Member said, the eligibility criteria was developed several years ago when the federal government granted provinces and territories the right to legalize gambling, provided it was conducted and managed by charitable organizations. I agree with the Member that there is some concern about eligibility and I will ask the department to conduct a comprehensive review to determine more definitive guidelines so as not to exclude people, but to include people.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

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Question 537-12(3): Surveying AIDS Victims To Educate Others

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Health a question concerning AIDS. In 1991, an anonymous survey was conducted in the territories of some 973 blood samples. In that sampling, Mr. Speaker, one unknown infection was identified. According to the information, the numbers of AIDS cases in the territories is on par with the provinces, so we are no better or no worse. Further on in that information, Mr. Speaker, in 1992, eight cases were reported and in 1993, three cases have been reported. I just wonder if we are doing any more sampling such as the 1991 survey.

MR. SPEAKER:

I will allow the question, but if I could ask Members to consider the fact that this particular document is on the order paper for committee of the whole. It is not normal parliamentary practice to talk about issues that are on the order paper for committee of the whole before there has been an opportunity to discuss them

in committee of the whole. I will allow this question, but I would ask Members to consider that. Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 537-12(3): Surveying AIDS Victims To Educate Others

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is training medical staff and whenever there is a reported STD, they are encouraged to talk to the patients to try and get as much information as they can. I do not think we are doing any official surveys strictly on AIDS. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 537-12(3): Surveying AIDS Victims To Educate Others

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for my ignorance for asking questions on this matter. I was leading up to a point that because of the number of cases which are being reported, I wanted to find out whether something was being undertaken, in schools for example, to continue education to young people on this dreaded disease. If I am out order, I still would like to know if we are undertaking any programs in the school to inform young people of this disease.

MR. SPEAKER:

I said this time I will allow that question, but your original question referred to a document that is before the committee of the whole. In future, I will be reluctant to allow it, but this time I will allow that question. Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 537-12(3): Surveying AIDS Victims To Educate Others

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister of Health, I could have easily given the direction to the department. One of the reasons I had asked the department to give Caucus an information session on AIDS, is so the Members would have an opportunity to have input. That is the reason why we have the AIDS debate on the order paper, so everyone will have an opportunity to speak on how we should be dealing with this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The time for oral questions as elapsed. Item 6, written questions. Item 7, returns to written questions. Item 8, replies to opening address. Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 12, tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. Item 14, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. Item 16, first reading of bills. Item 17, second reading of bills. Ms. Cournoyea.

ITEM 17: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 23: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 1992-93

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu that Bill 23, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 1992-93, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill would make supplementary appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1993. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 23, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 1992-93, has had second reading and accordingly the bill stands referred to the committee of the whole.

Item 18, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 2-12(3), The Justice House - Report of the Special Advisor on Gender Equality; Tabled Document 19-12(3), 1992 Master Plan for Corrections Service Division; Tabled Document 91-12(3), Northwest Territories AIDS Project - Review; Tabled Document 92-12(3), HIV and AIDS in the Northwest Territories in 1993; Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act; Bill 17, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1993-94; Committee Report

10-12(3), Report on Tabled Document 21-12(3): Payroll Tax Act; Committee Report 11-12(3), Report on the Review of the 1993-93 Main Estimates; Committee Report 15-12(3), Tabled Document 33-12(2): Government Accountability: A Legislative Action Paper on Access to Government; and, Committee Report 16-12(3), Final Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Rules, with Mr. Ningark in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

This committee will come to order. When we concluded yesterday we were dealing with the budget of the Department of Social Services, general comments. What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We should continue with the main estimates of the Department of Social

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We will take a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

Bill 17: Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1993-94

Department of Social Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We will resume the committee's discussion with the Department of Social Services. Before we proceed with general comments, does the Minister wish to invite the witnesses in? Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Can the Sergeant-at-Arms please escort the witnesses. Madam Minister, for the record can you please introduce the witnesses.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Blair Dunbar, deputy minister and Mr. Dave Tyler, finance director.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We are dealing with the 1992-93 Main Estimates for the Department of Social Services. Are there any general comments? Mr. Antoine.

General Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to make some general comments on the Department of Social Services. I would like to inform the Minister and her staff that the social services provided in my constituency is very good. The people who receive the programs and services in the communities are satisfied with the people who are involved within your department. There is no problem with them at all. The only problem I see in that department is that there is a great deal of work for only a few people. There are not many resources available to them. My concern with your department is that there are a number of unfunded positions in my riding. These people are vital to the services which are provided to the people at the community level. The job of this government, and particularly this department, is to provide programs and services to the people who need them the most. That service is provided, however, it could be done better if there were more PYs allocated. One specific area of concern is that we have a specialist who is both the alcohol and drug specialist and, at the same time, the community mental health specialist. She has two areas which she specializes in. It should actually be split up to allow for two positions in that area. She has quite a large work load to do both jobs, and to do both adequately is a real challenge. As more services are provided into the communities, there are more social problems being identified. Because of the work and the level of services provided in my riding, this is a concern. I wanted to make this comment. The people we have in our area are very good and they work well with all of the communities. The leadership

in the communities are totally satisfied with this working.

The other things which I wanted to mention is that in Social Services, in the area of the senior citizens' home, there is an area which overlaps. Once you get into level II and level III care, it switches from Social Services to health issues. We have a senior citizens' home in Fort Simpson. The elders are getting older. There are more of them coming in. We have to start looking at another level of service to provide them with the care which is required. There again, we are looking at extra funding for them. There is a situation in Fort Simpson where three years ago when this home was first opened with \$292,000, to date the budget is still the same. There has been no increase in the last three years. As the elders get older there is more and more level III care provided. The level of funding has not increased with the amount of care which is being provided.

It is getting very difficult to operate. I have nothing against the other communities I am going to mention, but I just want to compare some numbers because there is going to be a new senior citizens' home on the Hay River reserve. I think it is a good thing there. All the communities should have senior citizens' homes. I want to compare the funding levels. There are going to be five elders in this facility in Hay River. I understand the budget is \$345,000. As well, there is a home in Rae that has eight elders. The amount of beds we have in Fort Simpson is 12 and we have \$292,000. If you start comparing it, I do not know if you have a criteria for funding senior citizens' homes. How do you base the funding in each home? I know there are other facilities around the north. Does the Minister have a criteria in her department to determine the level of funding that goes to each senior citizens' home? On the Hay River reserve, there are five beds and they are getting \$345,000. We have 12 beds in Fort Simpson and we have been getting \$292,000 for the last three years. I think there are centres around the north. I wonder if the level of funding is to the number of beds, or what? Is there a criteria that you follow? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The criteria that is in use is the modified plan from Manitoba, but we do not

have enough in our base yet to develop, so that is where we are at right now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. Is your department going to be developing a policy or some criteria to determine how senior citizens' homes are going to be funded?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there general comments? Mr. Antoine.

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MR. ANTOINE:

Is this criteria being presently developed, or is it going to be developed? If it is, when are we going to be seeing this criteria? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will let Mr. Dunbar respond to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar, you have the floor.

MR. DUNBAR:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. Work has been done with the various contractors in the senior citizens' facilities over the last two or three years in trying to develop an agreed upon staffing and program plan. We have used the standards that were developed in Manitoba, so we were not re-inventing the wheel completely. These have been modified. The dilemma lies in the fact that, in order to staff up to the appropriate levels

in all of these facilities, we just do not have enough money in the base yet to accomplish that. Part of the difficulty which has occurred in some of these areas is contracts were tendered. The amounts that some of the facilities currently receive are based upon the results of tenders which are two or three years old.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. The problem in Fort Simpson is that they have been operating on the same level of funding for the last three years and it is always short. Now, they need a supplement to operate to the level they are supposed to. I was wondering if the department is aware of that. I was wondering if the department is dealing with it. If so, will this facility in Fort Simpson receive additional funding?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we are talking with the operator.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there general comments? Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. There is another community in Fort Liard. As I said before, I think all of the communities should have a senior citizens' facility in one form or another. In Fort Liard, they do not have a senior citizens' facility that was built by this government. A few years ago, the band council decided to do something on their own. They built a little log structure with four units in it. It is not really up to standard to the type of senior citizens' facilities that the territorial government builds for seniors in other communities. This is a log unit and it is not up to standard, but there are still elders living in there. This unit badly needs repair. They have to burn wood. It is not very well built, but that is still the only facility provided to them in the community. It was done by the band. I was asked by the people to bring it to the attention of this government and to the department. They would like to see if the government could provide them with a

facility comparative to other communities which receive these facilities. This was a comment I wanted to make. I know it is a capital issue, but I wanted to raise that at this time.

Moving along to youth initiative funding, there is a program in that department. Has this program been used in this current year? If so, what has this program been doing over the year? I have not heard very much about it over the years. I was wondering if it has been used to the level that it is supposed to be used. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will let Mr. Dunbar respond to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. The youth initiative program has been active this year. There have been several projects funded upon application from various groups. I am not aware of any other in this particular constituency than a project in Trout Lake that was funded this year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

On the youth initiative funding, I wanted to know if generally this program has been utilized to its full capacity in the past year and this current year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. The one area in Social Services which is of concern to me is, as the different problems arise in the communities there is a need for more services and programs. One of the areas which was brought to my attention is -- it is also a capital need -- there is a need for a safe home in the Fort Simpson area. We do not have one there and whenever women need a safe place to go there are no safe homes in my constituency. Women have to be shipped to Hay River or Yellowknife from as far as Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte or Fort Simpson. There is a real need to provide that sort of service in the community. This need should have been there many years ago, but I do not know why this was not addressed earlier. Maybe it was addressed earlier, I am not too sure about the history of this, but there is a real need for this kind of facility in our constituency. Do you have any comment on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe that was a point and not a question. Does the Minister wish to respond?

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will let Mr. Dunbar respond.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR:

Mr. Chairman, the original group of safe shelters which were established and funded arose from the results of the recommendations from a report called "Choices." There have not been additional shelters established except in a couple additional locations. The question of additional

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shelters is one we will have to look at in terms of the capital plan process and also from a problematic point of view as to whether it is a question of promoting additional shelters or whether there are other community-based projects which could provide the type of support and assistance to people in this type of crises.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Nahendeh.

MR. ANTOINE:

I think this is my final comment. On the social assistance food allowances, I too have concerns regarding this particular area. As I said in an earlier Member's statement in the House about the trapping season being very poor this year and many people in the smaller communities depend on the income they make from trapping but because of it being a very poor year it was very difficult to make any money from trapping. As a result, many people have turned to social assistance. There are people in the smaller communities who have never received social assistance before, but this year is the first time they are going for help because they have no other alternatives. As a result of that, it has been brought to my attention that the amount of allowance they receive is not adequate, it does not meet the level of support which it should. I know they are grateful they are receiving something, but if that is the only thing they are depending on for this period of time it is not adequate. In the Minister's statement today, the Minister indicated that this government will seriously review and consider, over the next few months, the matter of food allowance. She indicated there was an increase in October, but even that increase is not good enough and it should be more than what it currently is. I just want to make that one comment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. In the order of speakers I have Mr. Arvaluk, Mr. Zoe, Mr. Pudlat then Mr. Gargan. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My comments will be in two parts with a couple of questions, Mr. Chairman. It seems to me in the past ten years that Social Services' programs have allowed some families, especially middle aged ones, to become chronic social assistance recipients without any incentive to find work or another forms of income. That has been passed down to their children when they are growing up in their teens or early twenties. I have also noticed that the chronic social assistance recipients do not discourage their daughters from having children because they want to adopt them and thereby be able to receive more social assistance. By having more

children, they cannot afford to live on a regular earned salary. I am not saying not to have this kind of program because this is a Canadian right. I would like to ask the Minister if there is a program within Social Services to encourage chronic social assistance recipients to find other means of income or other means of independent living? Is there a problem within the department in doing that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department is working together with the Department of Education.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

Mr. Chairman, I am not quite sure exactly what the Minister's answer is. Did she say there is a program? If so, what is the program to encourage chronic social assistance recipients to take some courses, become employed and become independent of social assistance?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Would you clarify your first response, Ms. Minister?

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment Programs is geared to training these people, who are identified by the Member for Aivilik as chronic social assistance recipients, to try and encourage them to either upgrade or to take training so they can seek employment when they finish with their training. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I believe the Member for Aivilik is referring to the able bodied. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, those are the able bodied, especially men who are in their thirties or forties and have more or less been brought up in that

category, and have learned nothing but how to get the best out of social services. That was my point.

There is a federal program called the social assistance recipients project, which upgrades adult students and gives them work experience. It has been rather successful. Not only do they have successful upgrading courses, but they have also been in Coral Harbour. Individuals have been able to find jobs after these six month courses. Is the territorial government department planning to do a similar type of program, such as that of the federal government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the one I mentioned is that kind of program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we know, historically, I think all aboriginal people, in fact all societies, have this common law that is everyone must participate in economic development. In other words, everyone is encouraged very strongly to contribute to the well-being of people in the camp. Those who are not contributing to the well-being of the community used to be killed or they would have a council of elders speak to that particular person. Will there be some courses along this line at least encouraging the community to take on that responsibility to rid the system of the chronic social assistance recipients?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that can be worked out through community transfer plans. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

I have a last point, Mr. Chairman. As you know, my comments were going to be short. I want to make this very clear on the record that I am not against Social Services programs. Social Services has not been active in helping individuals become more self-sufficient to the degree that Education, with the incentive program for aboriginal employment and Personnel have. I am very hopeful that the Department of Social Services will find positive programs rather than just giving out social assistance and doing some counselling. Social Services should develop programs so society as a whole could benefit and become more positive. If it became more positive, I believe minor or petty crimes would decrease. I would encourage the department to start finding ways to work with other departments in lessening the dependency on social assistance. With that note, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the Minister for that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department, at the present time, is working with the Departments of Economic Development and Tourism, Renewable Resources and Education, Culture and Employment Programs, to try and tackle the problem that Mr. Arvaluk is addressing. I think, in the next few months, our department is going to be busy to try and see how we can deal with this problem that exists across the north. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there general comments? Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I want to make a few comments with regard to Social Services. It seems that this particular department appears to be struggling to manage its programs and services, next to the Department of Health. There are a number of serious issues that the department has to deal with, issues including: drug and alcohol programs, especially the funding component of it; social assistance with regard to food and clothing rates and the whole structure of rates; the issue of elders' assistance in terms of funding for elders, particularly

in the area of wood fuel subsidy; and, the issue of youth initiatives with regard to the funding.

I have heard the deputy minister indicate that the youth initiative funding has been given out in the previous year. I would like to get the breakdown of that if it is possible, Mr. Chairman. Also, regarding the issue of child welfare, it is an area that my colleague on my right has always commented on in the House, especially on custom adoption. Mr. Chairman, I would like to comment on those issues to bring them to the attention of the Minister.

A number of my colleagues on this side of the House have raised certain issues pertaining to drug and alcohol programs. I have noticed the need for increased funding for drug and alcohol programs. I understand, Mr. Chairman, that the department hosts an annual territorial drug and alcohol conference. I understand this particular group has been meeting downstairs for the last couple of days. This particular group, Mr. Chairman, makes recommendations to the department to take into consideration for the following year. I have asked our researchers to analyze all the recommendations which have been made by these conferences and submitted to the department. In going through the recommendations which go to the department on a yearly basis, I have noted a number of them are repetitive, year after year. I am starting to wonder what the purpose of hosting these conferences is when the department is not acting on the recommendations which are put forward by the groups. The groups are the front line workers at the community level, of all the people, they are the ones who should be listened to. That is why the department brings them all together into a community and holds a conference to discuss the problems they are all encountering, their funding their training, et cetera.

I do not have the documents in front of me. I have given them to the researchers to analyze them so I can question the Minister, possibly tomorrow. When I went through those recommendations, Mr. Chairman, I noticed that every year some of the recommendations are the same. I am starting to wonder why we spend money to bring in these people, when the department is not adhering to the recommendations of that particular group. What is the department doing with those particular recommendations? Are they put on the shelves and forgotten about? I do not know. I would like to have those types of questions answered.

With regard to drug and alcohol services, Mr. Chairman, the staff of Social Services who deal with drugs and alcohol are not reaching out far enough at the community level. They cannot, or they are not, meeting with the community leaders on a regular basis. They are not assisting interested groups that want to get into these programs. They are not assisting them in a manner so they can undertake various projects pertaining to drugs and alcohol. I know that some of them do make efforts, but in most cases I would suspect the programs and services which are available through the department are not being conveyed at the community level as it should be. I have a concern with this particular area.

Mr. Chairman, with regard to social assistance for clients who are less fortunate than others within our society, it is our job, or the job of our government, to provide a safety net for these people. Within this particular safety net which we are supposed to be providing, there are many holes.

Since the honourable Member for Baffin Central is new to this ministry, I would like to refer her to a motion which was passed on November 1, 1990, with respect to social assistance rates. In that particular motion, Mr. Chairman, it called for a one time increase which the Minister adhered to in the following year. It also called for an increase in the clothing allowance of 100 per cent. That was in 1990, Mr. Chairman. To date, the clothing allowance has not been increased since 1985. Nothing has been increased. Within this particular motion it was also requested that a food basket survey be carried out. To my knowledge, this has not been done. Mr. Chairman, we also suggested to the Minister of the day that the Minister should index the social assistance rates to the cost of living and adjust those rates every two years. We also suggested to the Minister of the day that these recommendations should be implemented into the departmental plans. Mr. Chairman, if this motion was adhered to by the government in 1991, then Members on this side of the House would not be questioning the government for increases in clothing allowance and the food basket rates. In 1990-91 we were not in a restraint period, but today we are. If the department had taken this motion into account, we would not be in the state we are in because the

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cost of living would have been indexed to the social assistance rates.

I wanted to make the Minister of the day aware and, perhaps she should review the ten pages of the debate surrounding this particular motion I am referring to. It is motion 19-90(2) on November 1, 1990. All of the comments from the debate are still relevant today, Mr. Chairman. I do not want to repeat them in my general comments. I want the new Minister to take a look at what was said in 1990 pertaining to the social assistance rates.

With regard to elders' assistance, Mr. Chairman, I am not sure if this department actually funds elders groups. I know that in my particular riding we have an elders group which is very active in one of my communities. I know they want to do more. They need assistance. This is the department which I believe should be assisting this type of group. I want to raise the issue which I raised in my Member's statement last week or the week before, the assistance which we are giving our elders today in my view is not really fair. Some of our elders are living in substandard units. Many of the elders in my constituency are complaining. They are saying, elder "A", who is living in a modern unit gets five cords of wood or equivalent fuel, that is sufficient for that particular unit, but elder "B" who is living in a substandard unit with poor insulation, although he gets five cords of wood like elder "A", he burns more just to keep the house heated properly. There is an imbalance within our system now. I think the department has to seriously look at that particular problem.

With regard to youth initiatives, Mr. Chairman, I indicated earlier that I want a breakdown as to what the department is anticipating to do in this area. Again, the youth in my area are very active, particularly in Rae-Edzo. They are getting involved at the community level more and more. They also meet with the elder council I made reference to.

To date, Mr. Chairman, those issues are not resolved yet. If the government in 1990, would have taken our motion seriously, we would not be in the state we are right now for the clients of Social Services. I have many concerns. Most of my constituents who are complaining to my office are the clients of Social Services, more than 50 per cent. I just wanted to make those brief, general comments at this time, Mr. Chairman. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. I believe the Minister wishes to respond to the comments made by Mr. Zoe. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would appreciate it very much if Mr. Zoe could give me the repetitive recommendations that have been made by alcohol and drug workers, or if he can make an example of one, it would really help me out. Also, the clothing survey is near completion now. I realize the department has a huge task across the north, but I hope things will change soon. We have a new supervisor in your area in Rae-Edzo, who is more active than the previous supervisor. You brought so many things to my attention without any breaks for me to make a response to your comments.

With regard to fuel subsidies, I sympathize with the senior citizens who are living in substandard housing, but we do have programs within the government for home improvement grants, which probably apply to the senior citizens' homes that Mr. Zoe could make the senior citizens aware of. Many times, if my constituents are not aware of some of the programs that are available in the government, I usually personally make them aware. I think all of us have a role in improving the lives of NWT residents, everything should not be left to the department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

I want a rebuttal to the Minister's comments, Mr. Chairman. I understand what the Minister is trying to say, but the department is aware of these particular issues, these issues are not new. The department is well aware of all of these problems, but nothing has been done to date of significance that I can think of. How much longer is it going to take the department to get its act together to provide adequate programs and services to the people of the territories?

For instance, these rates that I am making reference to, Mr. Chairman, were debated in the House. The department is aware of it. I realize they gave us a five per cent increase in the food rates in October, but that is not good enough. What about the clothing allowance? What about the other issues? The clothing allowance, Mr. Chairman, has not been

increased since 1985. Why is the department not addressing that? It is getting to the point where the department is not managing their affairs properly. They are in crisis management, in my view. The department is reacting to certain issues that they do not have time to do proper planning on, et cetera. That is a problem. The same Minister said the same thing to me in 1990, when we were debating this. It is getting to the point where I am getting frustrated, not only with this department, but with other departments. Mr. Chairman, somebody has to shake the department up and I hope you can do it. That is the point I am trying to make, Mr. Chairman, that this work has to be done and it has to be done effectively, efficiently and economically. We cannot wait.

If the decision of the last government took into consideration the motion which I made reference to, we would not be in this situation because the social assistance rates would have been indexed to the cost of living and increased every two years. The Minister of the day did not agree with that. That is why we are still in a dilemma today. That is why people like yourself,

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Mr. Chairman, have been raising the issue. My colleagues for Deh Cho, Nahendeh and everyone else have been raising those issues. Why can we not get this particular issue dealt with? It is getting to the point where it is dragging on and on. We are always in a catch-up situation, particularly for the less fortunate people who are on social assistance. I think my colleague for Thebacha made reference to the fact that the amount of food we currently provide is only about 60 per cent of what we should actually be giving them. We should be giving them 100 per cent, but it is equivalent to 60 per cent. So, again, we are in a catch-up situation, even with the five per cent which the Minister implemented this past year. All I am suggesting to the Minister is that this department has to straighten out and start proper planning, rather than a crisis management plan, so we can get the work done once and for all. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would not go as far as saying that nothing is happening. There are new facilities being built for people who need them. The

problem is that we do not have adequate funds to address every problem in the NWT. I hear the Member, Mr. Chairman, but I also do not appreciate the comments which are made that there is nothing happening when, in fact, through the Minister's statement I made, I mentioned there are workshops being carried out in different communities on sexual abuse, community works, care takers and alcohol and drug workshops. There is one happening right now downstairs. I certainly will make an effort to try to improve things, but I am a human being. I do not appreciate hearing words such as, "There is nothing happening."

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I would caution the Members to do the business in a diplomatic way. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, it is the Minister's responsibility to provide these types of programs and services to the people of the territories. If she is not willing to do that, then I do not know why she is here.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Point of order.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Madam Minister, point of order.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did not at any time suggest that I will not do anything.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I believe that was not a point of order. Mr. Zoe, you have the floor.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I realize we are in a dilemma, particularly with our financial situation. I realize that. I realize that all departments are having problems because our fiscal outlook is not that great. We are trying to balance our budget, et cetera, in a time of restraint. What I am suggesting to the Minister and to the department, particularly, is that they have to put more emphasis and more output with the resources which are available to them. Between the previous government and today's government I know there is a

big difference there. We are now in a restraint period. That is why she has to instruct her department to work perhaps twice as hard because of the situation we are in today. That is all I am suggesting to the Minister. In my comments, I did not say the department did not do anything of significance. In my view, nothing of significance has been accomplished, that is what I said. I did not say the department did not do anything. I know they are trying, but they have to try harder. That is all I am suggesting. Being a new Minister, I am strongly suggesting to her that she has to give direction and she has to put more emphasis on these issues which I have raised. Those are my comments pertaining to her department. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I would again like to caution the Members not to get too argumentative here. I believe that was just a point you made, Mr. Zoe, it is not a question. Mr. Pudlat.

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While we are dealing with Social Services I have a brief comment. I was happy with the Minister's statements regarding the comments she made about unemployment issues. In the north we are having hard times with finances and we have to work very hard to work together. I want to say that I am not against Social Services, but I think more should be done. People have to work closer together. There are many young people in the communities who could work in different jobs. We have to encourage them to try to make some money. There are many people who are working in different jobs, not making much money and are raising children. They have problems with getting food. If they want to receive assistance, they have to follow the policies of Social Services. As you were saying, families have to work in order to feed their children. When people receive social assistance, if they make a little more than what they usually make, they are not allowed to get that assistance. I know Social Services is trying to work together, however, I would like to encourage them to work harder. If they do their best, much work can be done.

With regard to social services, there are policies within the communities that the recipients have to follow. I represent two small communities in the Baffin region and many of the people I represent make money by carving. People are not buying as

many carvings as they used to. Because of this, I think the young people should be encouraged to find minimal jobs. I know this is a problem for all of the communities in the Northwest Territories. They usually turn to Social Services for assistance. We are aware that Social Services is trying to help. I am not against Social Services or social workers, they have a great deal of sympathy for people. If individuals make too much money and go over the limit, they are unable to get any social assistance. When the family tries to buy food, they do not receive assistance. It is very different in the Baffin, we have cold and harsh winters. I think there should be more jobs made available so that younger people can hold jobs. I think they should be working closer together in the north to see how they can create more jobs and make more money.

I would like Social Services and the government to try and create more jobs and work closely to create these new jobs. There are many people who are not doing anything. If they cannot find jobs they turn to alcohol or substance abuse. Some individuals even die because of this. They start thinking harder about it because they cannot find any jobs even though they are capable of holding a job. We know this has been going on for a long time. I think we want them to work closer together to find more funds to create new jobs in the north.

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I stated earlier that I was going to make a short comment. I have quite a bit more to say, however, I will end now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Pudlat. Before I recognize Mr. Gargan and Mr. Nerysoo, the Minister has an urgent phone call to make. We will take a two minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The committee will resume with general comments. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to touch on the food allowance. The Minister has indicated that there was a five per cent increase for the last fiscal year and that they are reviewing the food allowance over the next few months. In her statements and in the

discussions I have heard so far during the last two days, I have not heard the Minister refer to the GST rebate for people who are on social assistance, nor have I heard anything with regard to the new family allowance regime. The less income you have, family allowance goes up. You have not referred to that at all. I was wondering whether or not your department has been looking at that issue. Even people with salaries are getting some kind of rebate. I do not get it, but I know of people who get it. People who are on the lower scale and even unemployed do receive GST rebates. Of course, the new family allowance, which came into effect in January, must also help the lower income people and the people who are on social assistance, but she has not referred to it at all. I am wondering whether or not you are using parts of that as an equation for social assistance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For GST rebates, the individuals have to file their return, but the child tax credits and GST rebates are not considered part of income for social assistance recipients. The old family allowance is now called the child tax credit.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there general comments? Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

All right. I also know that during the last two days, there was a conference downstairs. I have had an opportunity to make a presentation, and I am interested in finding out from you, Madam Minister, whether or not you had an opportunity to address the people who are meeting downstairs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the opening day of their workshop, I opened their meeting. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

MR. GARGAN:

The Minister is also aware that I made a Member's statement with regard to the sobriety clause for alcohol and drug workers. The Minister has also said, in her response to my statement, she does support it. Has the Minister had any alcohol and drug programs refuse to abide by that policy? Have they been funded? I want to know if there is consistency with regard to that policy. If they do not abide by the policy, they do not get funded. Is that still the rule?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member for Deh Cho is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there general comments? Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also received a letter from the Minister with regard to salaries for alcohol and drug workers. They gave \$2,000 to each worker for Christmas. The balance of the increase would come into effect by the end of February. Has this been done yet?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there general comments? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, can the Minister advise the House as to the amount of funding that has been spent on food in the 1992-93 fiscal year within the social assistance component of the budget? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of \$27 million, it is projected to be around \$22 million.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

What is the projected amount of expenditures overall for social assistance? Can we get those figures? What have we spent on social assistance in total? I am trying to determine how much of that social assistance component is spent on food only. I know she said \$22 million, but what is the total that she anticipates as the projected amount for social assistance?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is \$27 million total.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last year's estimates came to over \$4 million. This department has asked for social assistance again in the budget, projecting \$22 million for food to be expended. Members have asked this continuously, is there any consideration toward the increase of the food allowance? Has there been any indication whether or not Members can feel at ease in advising their constituents, when they go back home, that there may be an increase in food allowances, taking into account that the five per cent food allowance increase in October cost this government \$948,000

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out of the \$22 million budget for food? If you are going to look at ten per cent, you are going to look at an increase of \$2.2 million, but your five per cent is under \$1 million. Is there any indication that the Minister can give to this House at this time whether

consideration for the increase of food allowance is going to be forthcoming? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Mike.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I have indicated in my Minister's statement today, we are going to be doing a comprehensive review of the food allowance. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there general comments? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, I read the Minister's statement before I decided to make my general comments. That is what I have asked. That is why I want some assurance. Mr. Chairman, I am seriously deliberating putting forth a motion, and I am sure my colleagues would support me, directing the government to do an increase to social assistance food allowances. I am trying to give the government as much leverage as they need to address this matter. The Minister's statement indicates that it remains a priority of our government and they will give serious consideration over the next few months. You can interpret that many different ways. You can interpret it saying, "Yes, we would like to increase it, but we do not have the money to increase it." I can understand the rationale for not being able to confirm an increase, but there has to be some indication by this government, before this session adjourns, to try to address the serious concern of the Members on the social assistance food allowances for social assistance recipients. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ms. Cournoyea.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister of Health has indicated this is an issue that we fully realize has to be addressed. As well, she has also indicated that it is a priority issue that we have to deal with one way or the other. I know there is some apprehension because there is not a specific number in the budget for 1993-94. However, given the Minister's statement

and realization that this is a very much a priority concern in this House, we had anticipated addressing the issue once we came up with some kind of formula that would take care of the issues which are out there.

I want to bring to the attention of the House that we do have a supplementary reserve for inflation. That could be used to adjust rates which would then be reflected in the supplementary appropriation. There is an avenue to address the issue that has been put forward in terms of the rates which are paid to social service recipients. So, I want to give some assurance that Cabinet understands this is an area which still has to be addressed. We fully intend to support the Minister in addressing this issue in some form, but we are not quite sure how we will adjust that. We need a little time to do this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there any general comments? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I recognize the Government Leader has indicated that Cabinet is cognizant of Members' concerns. I recognize the budget process allows for inflation rate and forced growth, but the inflation rate this year is about two to three per cent. This would do very little for the food allowances which are already set out. Members feel that more than the inflation rate has to be looked at, to address adequate food allowances to social assistance recipients.

Mr. Chairman, when I look at the amount we have spent on food, I would like to ask the Minister, do you have the numbers of social assistance recipients that we have in the system that utilize this \$22 million for food in the budget? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can provide the numbers to the House by tomorrow. I will table it in the House.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, can we get a ball park figure on the amount of social assistance recipients we have in the north?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Chairman, we have that information. However, my deputy minister has informed me we would have to add all the numbers from the regions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there any general comments? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, perhaps as the deputy minister is adding those figures, other Members would like to make general comments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there any further general comments? Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. About a month ago, Bishop Sperry gave a sermon about good news. He made the point that you hear all kinds of bad news and you never hear about the good news. He is a senior citizen. One of the things he told people was that there are good things happening for senior citizens. He told us that you can buy a ticket from Air Canada for just over \$1,000 to travel anywhere in North America and stop off and visit kids, relatives, or friends and you can take a whole year to do it. This raised a great deal of interest in the community among the older people. They said maybe this is true, perhaps old folks do get good treatment. I began trying to make a list of the advantages for senior citizens who live in the Northwest Territories, including the 500 gallons of fuel and the extended health care benefits. In the city of Yellowknife, they receive tax relief on property taxes so that they can stay in their own homes. Being on a fixed income, it is at times very difficult to keep your own place. If you look around the city there are days where you can get materials at ten per cent off. Since seniors are now

becoming very interested in the future and living with some degree of security, can the Minister tell me about the good things for senior citizens who stay in the territories. What are the good

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things about being a senior citizen and the kind of support that the government gives elderly people who have made big contributions. Are there things which the public perhaps does not know about? Some of these things which I found out about, seniors did not know about. They were not aware of this good news. There were good things there and if they wanted to, they could take advantage of them. Several did not know about the 500 gallons of fuel. There are many other things such as this. If it is good news it does not get around, however, we always hear the bad news.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask my deputy minister respond to Mr. Lewis' question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would suggest that there are some good things in the Northwest Territories for seniors. I believe that we are starting to see the results of some of those things. This government has been very active through the years in considering elders' facilities. When you visit some of these facilities, you can see that we have some facilities which are extraordinarily well designed. We have had a great deal of community input from the elders themselves in the design and the construction of those facilities. It has been part of the process to involve elders in the design of some of these programs.

When you look at the old age pension and the guaranteed income supplement, this government took the steps through the Legislative Assembly to provide a supplement to that. That supplement is currently at \$135 a month. This government has also taken the initiative of providing a subsidy for fuel for seniors living in their own accommodation, in order to try to equalize the cost of living for an individual who is

living in their own home, as opposed to someone who is living in one of the government subsidized units. I believe that has been a very positive step. The seniors themselves are slowly getting together. There is a seniors' society in the Northwest Territories. There are groups of seniors in other communities who are being encouraged by this umbrella body. There is not, as was mentioned earlier, an organized program for seniors funded through the Department of Social Services at the present time, but certainly in discussions with representatives from the seniors' society, there is an interest in seeing this happen. For the first time, Ministers responsible for seniors across the country met in November. This was a milestone in the partnership between seniors in the country and their governments and was seen as such. In my opinion, those would be some of the very positive things which are occurring in the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there any further general comments? Mr. Arngna'naaq.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also have some concerns in the area of social services, coming from a community which has many people on social assistance. It is a variety of situations and circumstances of people who raise issues in the area of social services, varying from custom adoption to the process in which social assistance is handed out to social assistance recipients. However, one of the areas which has been raised by my constituents is that at the present time whenever any person who is on social assistance finds temporary work or is somehow able to access money outside of their social assistance, that is taken away from their social assistance because there is a cap.

I have never been on social assistance, but my parents have. I have said before that I was raised on social assistance. When people who are on social assistance find temporary work or find money they are able to use to purchase much needed capital items such as snowmobiles, outboard motors or any other type of equipment they may need for their hunting requirements, that is taken away from their food basket allowance. From speaking to the people who are on assistance, this discourages them from trying to find any kind of temporary work, or if they are an artist to try to make any money by producing art,

because they know this will be taken away from them when they come into the Social Services office.

The only time a person will try to find work is when they will be finding a permanent job, something which will be over the social assistance cap which is set at this time. I do not know how to resolve that kind of situation, but I think it is a problem, especially with our young people. I have young constituents who are now living away from their parents and have their own place, but are not willing to go out and find any kind of work, even temporary work, because they know when they do find work and earn a small amount of money, that will be taken away from their social assistance which is guaranteed as far as they can see. So, it is a catch 22 situation, we would like the young people to go and find work or become better educated. However, as far as their eyes can see, it is the next welfare cheque. When the cap is set so low that money will be taken away from them, and when they receive assistance it is set towards a certain item -- food, which is a necessity.

I would like to stress that when young people who are on social assistance are not able to find any work, if they are on their own or trying to live on their own, find temporary employment will have their social assistance reduced because they earned a bit of money which they may have used for something which was badly needed. It discourages the people. There are often times when I am speaking to people, especially from southern Canada, who see our young people sitting at home and say that we have lazy young people. I do not think that is the case. I think we have young people who want to get things done, want to see themselves improve, but are unable to get anywhere. From what I have heard, it discourages them from looking for any kind of employment, even temporary employment. That is one area that I wanted to raise because it has been raised with me by a number of my constituents.

I would like to separate from that issue and ask about custom adoption. The process at the present time for custom adoption is very cumbersome and very slow. I would like to know exactly what it is that takes up so much time when a family is custom adopting.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the first comment on the social assistance ceiling and the income

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that recipients make and their deductions, these are the kinds of things that have to be reviewed which I spoke about in my Member's statement. Being the new Minister, I have talked at every possibly opportunity with my deputy on the areas that need to be changed.

I will let the deputy minister respond to the custom adoption issue.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR:

Mr. Chairman, thank you. There are two or three things that contribute to it taking so long. One is that there are forms which have to be filled out very carefully. When you start to compare the lettering on the form to the birth certificates and all the documents they have to be checked with, unfortunately we have found errors in many cases and we have to send them back to be re-done. Then, you have to contact the people who are involved and obtain the information and signatures all over again. That certainly contributes to it.

A second aspect which contributes to it is that there are occasions when the work load is such that staff are unable to get at completing some of these things, because they are involved in dealing with other crisis. Sometimes, there is a delay in completing these forms both in the field and in headquarters.

A third area where backlog can occur is in getting the cases actually presented into court. Occasionally, there are delays in doing that. I have had discussions with the deputy minister of Justice recently, and we are going to endeavour to deal with the current backlog during the next few months. We are going to endeavour to get it cleared off.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To get back to the issue which I raised initially, only because the Minister has

responded to it, I realize it is one of these problems which has to be tackled by the department. I also realize it is not going to happen overnight. However, I was making a suggestion that when the department looks at the income of a person, that should be higher than what is being issued to a recipient. For example, a person who is on social assistance will have an income of \$500, but the maximum assistance they can receive will be \$300. There is a gap between the income that person makes for a month and what they receive from Social Services. This is the suggestion which I was making to the Minister as an idea which may be used by the department.

I have a second question with regard to custom adoption. Is this a partial reason why this process is so slow due to our legal system?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

I will have Mr. Dunbar respond.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not know that I am the best person to endeavour to answer Mr. Arngna'naaq's question, I believe it involves a legal opinion of sorts. In a sense, perhaps the legal system does contribute to it. As I tried to explain yesterday, the process which the Department of Social Services has responsibility for, at the present time, is in the completion of the forms which then get presented by the Department of Justice to the Supreme Court through our solicitor. I do not believe there is a great deal of delay once the forms are presented to the Supreme Court. The completion of the forms in compliance with requirements of the court is what we are charged with doing, and this is what we have to do very carefully and in that sense it does contribute to a delay.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did not realize this area had been discussed at length yesterday. I will refer back to the unedited Hansard to review some of the answers.

I know the Minister has indicated that at the present time, when a community issues coupons rather than cash, this process is only there because the hamlet council had wanted it to be this way. I wanted to get clarification of what the process would be for a community to change from coupon assistance to money.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Usually the requests are made from the residents to the hamlet, and then the hamlet will inform the department whether the recipient should be receiving vouchers or cash payments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there are other general comments? Mr. Arngna'naaq.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the community of Arviat this seems to be the case. I am wondering if this is a new process which is being used by the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is not a new process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Are there any further general comments from the committee? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am wondering if the Minister has the figures on the amount of social assistance recipients.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister, do you have the figures on hand?

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My deputy minister has informed me that it will take another minute. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, perhaps I can suggest we go line by line until we get to that particular area. If that

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information is not in by the time we get to community services, I would ask that we defer that particular area or, perhaps, take a break until we can get that information. I would suggest we go line by line.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Is it agreed we go line by line?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Directorate

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 13-8, directorate, total O and M, \$11,601 million. Agreed? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, what is the funding to be used for youth initiatives and has it increased from last year's funding allotment?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Directorate. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, the Minister said it has not increased from last year's allotment, so what was last year's allotments, for the record? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. For the record, Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was \$940,000 last year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Can the Minister indicate if there was a surplus in that particular activity up to the year end, or has that funding been non-sufficient? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been a surplus.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

It is my understanding there has been a surplus. If there has been a surplus, then by how much?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Chairman, approximately \$300,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Member for Thebacha.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, if there has been a \$300,000 surplus which is going to be lapsing from last year, recognizing that the Minister is asking for the same level of funding, I could ask why, but I would like to ask what new initiatives the Minister is going to take to ensure she utilizes this funding for which she is asking to address the needs of the youth of the territories? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the present time, we are preparing an information package for distribution to the communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Directorate. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Within that information package are there any new initiatives you are going to be considering to ensure you utilize this \$940,000 you are asking for?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the past, I believe not all the communities have been aware of these youth initiatives. After the information package has been developed and distributed to the communities, I believe there will be much more response to this program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Directorate. Honourable Member for Thebacha.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, awareness is one thing, I recognize that. The Minister is saying that her officials have not made the communities aware of this funding and that is part of the result of lapsing \$300,000. This particular funding allotment has been in the budget for about four or five years, so what have the officials been doing to make the communities aware that this funding is there? What new type of initiatives or

criteria are they going to consider to ensure they use this funding? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Chairman, I will let Mr. Dunbar respond to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The criteria that has been used for evaluating proposals has been highly dependent upon the proposals being submitted by youth for youth, although adult groups could be sponsoring these particular proposals. They have been targeted at certain types of initiatives, but one of the things that the department recommended early on was that if the proposals funded ongoing positions, it would not be very long before the youth initiatives fund would be consumed on a yearly basis without having new money available. When we listened to the concerns expressed by Members of the Standing Committee on Finance about the lack of awareness, we became very much aware that perhaps we had not really gone out very actively to all communities in the north to make them aware. Staff have visited several communities and several good projects have resulted, but we are going to be doing a much

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more concerted type of advertising and we will be working with our regional staff to become more aware of the program and assisting community groups and youth groups in submitting proposals.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Member for Thebacha. Directorate. Total O and M, \$11.601 million. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to ask a question under the youth initiatives. At one time there was a person designated to look after that particular section of the department. I understand the person who was designated resigned to move onto other

things. Has the position been filled? Is it still vacant or is there someone there now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The position is filled by a person who is on an acting basis. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Merci. Directorate. Total and O and M, \$11.601 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Family and Children's Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Next page, family and children's services. Total O and M, \$13.861 million. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the monitoring and evaluation services for the care of children pursuant to the Child Welfare Act, last year on October 2, the Minister tabled a document on family law review. The report talks about custom adoption and some recommendations with regard to that. One recommendation is that custom adoption practices should not be detailed in legislation, but should be recognized. Has your department looked at this document, and what is your department doing with regard to custom adoption?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will let Mr. Dunbar respond to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dunbar.

MR. DUNBAR:

Mr. Chairman, the family law review report is being reviewed by department staff in conjunction with staff from the Department of Justice. The recommendations are being carefully considered in terms of developing a plan in responding to them. That particular action plan has not yet been finalized.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Mr. Chairman, custom adoption has not been an issue which came out as a result of this report. It has come out continuously by Members, and I am sure it has been looked at by the department, but I do not know what purpose analysing will have. I wonder if the department could make a statement of principle saying, "Yes, we recognize custom adoption", and that wherever possible in a child custody case, the department will consider as a first option the recognition of custom adoption superseding the Child Welfare Act or something to that effect.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. It has to be a quick one here. We have to recognize the clock. Madam Minister.

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Mr. Chairman, I will let the deputy minister respond to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

You have about 30 seconds to do this.

MR. DUNBAR:

I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I misunderstood part of Mr. Gargan's original question, I apologize. We are, as a department, moving with the Department of Justice to try and deal with the backlog. Regarding the question of establishing some principles, I can only state that our staff makes every effort to deal with the actual and extended family members when they are involved, but we also have to remember that in some of these instances, the wishes of the natural parents have to be respected, and sometimes our staff is not involved in that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I will recognize the clock and report progress. I would like to thank the Minister and her witnesses for appearing before the committee. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 19, report of the committee of the whole. Mr. Chairman.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 17 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Seconded by Mr. Pudluk. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills.

MR. SPEAKER:

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 11. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

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REVERT BACK TO ITEM 11: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Report On Bills 18, 19, 21 And 22

MR. ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Legislation has reviewed Bills 18, 19, 21 and 22, and wishes to report that Bills 18, 19, 21 and 22 are now ready for committee of the whole.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Arngha'naaq. Pursuant to rule 66(5), Bills 18, 19, 21 and 22 are ordered into committee of the whole.

Item 20, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 21: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges after adjournment. There will be a Caucus briefing with fishermen at 6:00 pm this evening. Orders of the Day for Friday, March 19, 1993.

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 Motion
14. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
15. Motions
16. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 24, Write-off of Debts Act, 1993
17. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 8, Payroll Tax Act

18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Tabled Document 2-12(3), The Justice House - Report of the Special Advisor on Gender Equality

- Tabled Document 19-12(3), 1992 Master Plan for Corrections Service Division

- Tabled Document 91-12(3), Northwest Territories AIDS Project - Review

- Tabled Document 92-12(3), HIV and AIDS in the NWT in 1993

- Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act

- Bill 17, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1993-94

- Bill 23, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 1992-93

- Committee Report 10-12(3), Report on Tabled Document 21-12(3): Payroll Tax Act

- Committee Report 11-12(3), Report on the Review of the 1993-94 Main Estimates

- Committee Report 15-12(3), TD 33-12(2): Government Accountability: A Legislative Action Paper on Access to Government

- Committee Report 16-12(3), Final Report on the Comprehensive Review of the Rules

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 am, Friday, March 19, 1993.

---ADJOURNMENT