



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**6th Session**

**Day 2**

**12<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

**HANSARD**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 1994**

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**Speaker: The Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Allooloo, Mr. Antoine, Hon. Silas Arngna'naaq, Mr. Ballantyne, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Mr. Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Koe, Mr. Lewis, Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, Hon. Rebecca Mike, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Mr. Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Patterson, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell):**

Thank you. Good

afternoon. Just before we proceed to Ministers' statements, I want to advise the House that I've given permission for the filming of our proceedings today which will be used in the development of a video for a Legislative Assembly education program that will be introduced into the schools across the territories later this fall. Thank you.

---Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Madam Premier.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**

Minister's Statement 5-12(6): Power Corporation

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, later today I will be tabling a report that deals with the government's proposal to turn the Northwest Territories Power Corporation into an investor-owned utility.

Madam Speaker, the document provides objective information based on two studies by Mr. Fred Abbott and a team of utilities experts. It is designed to stimulate public discussion and debate on the privatization initiative.

Madam Speaker, making this document public is the next step in a process that began over five years ago when the Northwest Territories assumed ownership of the Power Corporation. At that time the government set out to developing the corporation into a self-

supporting business and to examine the idea of privatization.

Madam Speaker, the Power Corporation is now operating in a business-like fashion. And a feasibility study on privatization and a subsequent report on how an investor-owned utility could be formed has been completed.

It is time to give wide circulation to information relating to this initiative in order to receive input from the public and the various organizations that represent them. This input will be helpful to the government and the Legislative Assembly when it deals with the initiative in the fall. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Baffin Central, Ms. Mike.

Minister's Statement 6-12(6): Terms Of Reference - Hay River Group Home Contract

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Madam Speaker, during the past session, I agreed to conduct an independent investigation into the decision of the Department of Social Services to terminate the group home contract in Hay River with Greenway Holdings Ltd. I mentioned that the investigation would be complete within a month and that the terms of reference were being developed.

I will be tabling the terms of reference for the investigation later today. I am also pleased to announce that I have appointed an investigator, Mr. Bill Zarchikoff, who is a principal in a private firm in Yellowknife. Mr. Zarchikoff is a registered social worker with over 20 years of related experience, and is as well a business man. He has worked in juvenile homes and taught in the community college system. For the past ten years he has been in the private sector completing a variety of consulting projects in the social services field.

His report will be submitted directly to me. I expect the report by April 25, 1994. I will inform the Members of the results shortly after the investigation is complete. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Nerysoo.

Minister's Statement 7-12(6): Voices: Direction For Improving The Education Act

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in 1990 the Department of Education, Culture and Employment started the consultation necessary to guide the redrafting of the Education Act. Various partners in education and the general public were consulted, and the department produced a document called, Help Improve the Education Act, which helped focus discussion.

On reviewing the results of this round of consultation, as well as direction provided by the Special Committee on Education in 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and current educational research, the department has developed a final public consultation document called Voices: Direction for Improving the Education Act.

It summarizes the recommendations received from the first round of consultations, and makes proposals to change and reorganize the Education Act. A questionnaire has also been developed to confirm or amend the changes being proposed.

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Many of the specific changes and additions reflect the directions in Towards a Strategy to 2010: A Discussion Paper.

A revised schedule of the new act has now been approved by Cabinet. With the recommendations received through consultation, my department will work with the Department of Justice to prepare a new act which will be tabled for further discussion in the Legislative Assembly next fall, and introduced for debate in the spring of 1995.

Madam Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be tabling the document entitled Voices: Direction for Improving the Education Act. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be here to share some good news with you. When I tabled the

community transfer initiative implementation plan in November of 1992, I said that I hoped the first major transfer would take place on April 1, 1994. I believe that we've met the target date.

We are about to implement two very important...

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Sorry, Mr. Kakfwi. I've just been advised by the Clerk that your Minister's statement has not been filed with the House. It would have to be in the form of an emergency statement, therefore you will have to consider whether you want to seek unanimous consent to proceed with it. Honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

It was filed on March 31. I seek unanimous consent to make an emergency statement.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi, your statement was filed on March 31. That was during the last session and it died on the order paper. According to this session, your Minister's statement is not filed and the only other way is the process that I have advised you on. The honourable Member for Sahtu.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

I seek unanimous consent, Madam Speaker, to make a ministerial statement.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Minister is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with his Minister's statement. Are there any nays?

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Nay.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

There is a nay. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta.

Minister's Statement 8-12(6): New Research Support Programs Through The Science Institute

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Madam Speaker, the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories, with the support of Arctic College, has established three new programs to increase northern involvement in research. These programs are the research assistance support program, the research fellowship program and the research associate program. Each of these programs is structured to support a different aspect of northern involvement in research activities.

The research associate program will offer ten to 15 researchers, who have associate status, office space and basic administrative support in return for a commitment to work closely with the Science Institute and college on science, technology or educational matters. The total fund for this program is \$10,000. These new programs will begin immediately. Program information is now being distributed to the research community in northern and southern Canada.

The research assistant support, research fellowship and research associate programs will help us link post-secondary programs in the north with the scientific community. They will promote understanding of scientific research and projects, and will provide northerners, including college students and staff, with the opportunity to become effectively involved in science. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Madam Premier.

Minister's Statement 9-12(6): Ministers' Absences From The House

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi will be absent from the House tomorrow to attend an urgent meeting of the town council in Norman Wells. The Honourable Don Morin will also be absent tomorrow to attend a funeral in Hay River. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

Member's Statement Re Performance Of Ministers

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Madam Premier. Madam Premier, I rise today on behalf of the Ordinary Members' Caucus. Madam Speaker, pardon me. In December, following the mid-term review, the Ordinary Members' Caucus gave a report on the performance of Ministers. One Minister, Rebecca Mike, was placed on probation. We advised, Madam Speaker, that "Members are expecting a dramatic improvement in her performance by the time this House reconvenes for the budget session a few months from now. If that improvement is not evident. Members will consider removing

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Ms. Mike from the Cabinet at that time."

Throughout the session, ordinary Members have discussed Ms. Mike's performance since the review. Although there has been some limited improvement in her performance, Members remain unconvinced that she is demonstrating the level of competence expected of Cabinet Ministers in the House. Members have also expressed concern about the distribution of work-load among Ministers. It appears that Ms. Mike carries a very light work-load compared to other Ministers.

The Premier has said that she assigned portfolios based upon what each Minister can handle without being overwhelmed. As ordinary Members have noted in this House, there are Ministers carrying very large portfolios. Members are pleased with their effort and performance in handling the extra work. However, although some Ministers are carrying very heavy work-loads, the Premier has indicated to the Ordinary Members' Caucus that she is unwilling to give Ms. Mike any additional responsibilities.

Members are not satisfied with this response. Members believe that Ministers should be equal partners and, if they wish to remain on Cabinet, should carry their fair share. For a number of years, Ministers have been required to give the Premier signed, but undated, resignation letters. This has given the Premier the ability to deal with any Minister whose performance is not satisfactory. In meeting with the Premier yesterday...

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Excuse me, Mr. Ningark, your time for Member's statements has lapsed. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Madam Premier. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

I trust you're addressing Madam Speaker. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to continue with his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Ningark.

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Madam Premier, Madam Speaker.

---Laughter

Pardon me.

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Do you know something we don't know?

**MR. NINGARK:**

I think so. I'll start again from the second paragraph. For a number of years, Ministers have been required to give the Premier signed, but undated, resignation letters. This has given the Premier the ability to deal with any Minister whose performance is not satisfactory. In meeting with the Premier yesterday, ordinary Members were disturbed to learn that Ms. Mike has not provided an undated resignation letter to the Premier.

It is clear that it is the prerogative of the Premier to take action if she has any concern about the ability of any Minister to carry out his or her duties. Ordinary Members agreed that the Premier has these powers and she's in the best position to evaluate the performance of each Minister. The Ordinary Members' Caucus would support the Premier if she determined, on a fair basis, that action is required with a Minister.

Ms. Mike has not been asked to provide a signed, undated resignation letter. Therefore, she obviously has the support of the Premier and the Premier is satisfied with her performance as a Cabinet Minister. Members elected the Premier to provide leadership and ensure the best interests of the people of the NWT are being served.

In our report on the review, we stated Members were looking for the Government Leader to provide

leadership within Cabinet. Madam Premier, Members expressed a concern that strong leadership, which would inspire all Cabinet Members to work together toward a common goal, is missing.

Madam Premier, ordinary Members remain concerned about Ms. Mike's performance and some Members feel a motion of non-confidence is warranted. Ordinary Members agree that the Premier should play a lead role in disciplining or dismissing unsatisfactory Ministers. Since 1987, the Premier has had the responsibility for monitoring the performance and accountability of the Ministers. This responsibility includes imposing appropriate discipline on Ministers who are not fulfilling their fair share of duties in a satisfactory way.

Over the final 20 months of this Assembly, the Ordinary Members' Caucus will continue to monitor the performance of the Premier and hold her accountable for the performance of all Cabinet Ministers. If the Premier is not willing to be accountable for the performance of her Cabinet and show leadership, then the Ordinary Members' Caucus will want to review just how that authority should be exercised. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Lewis.

Member's Statement On Lack Of Confidence In Wal-Mart's Advertising

**MR. LEWIS:**

Madam Speaker, on March 17, the local Woolco store became part of a mammoth North American chain called Wal-Mart. This chain can afford to outsell everyone because it sells so many goods to a huge population. One of the things it does is engage in massive advertising, especially the use of flyers. Members will note in their mailboxes they will see all of these flyers advertising goods at very low costs. It is very impressive. At noon hour today, I whipped out to Wal-Mart because I got one of these flyers in my mail last night. Being like every other citizen, I cannot resist a deal, especially when its an object that I have looked for in this city and haven't been able to find. When I get there I am told, we sell these all over North America, but the particular item you want, you cannot get here. So I went away mad because I

made a special trip to Yellowknife South to visit a store to buy a product that had been advertised for sale.

This instills a complete lack of confidence on my part that when I go to a store, the advertising means anything. The more my mailbox gets crammed full, which at one time I use to get on a Friday in the

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local newspaper, which added to the revenue of that newspaper, I now find it is distributed in my mailbox. So there is no room for anything else of far more importance than advertising that doesn't mean anything. This chain is going to destroy, not only this city, but my confidence if it continues to mislead me in this fashion. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

Member's Statement On Outdated Legislation Of The Dental Mechanics Act

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Members of this House will recall a previous statement in this House by Mr. Whitford and myself about an individual in the territories who specializes in making dentures. Madam Speaker, this person was not allowed to practice his profession and provide denture services to northern residents, largely because of an outdated Dental Mechanics Act.

The act, as it now stands, allows a registered denturist or dental mechanic to fit, contract or repair complete dentures only. The act is silent on partial plates or anything other than complete upper or lower dentures.

I raise this issue again, Madam Speaker, firstly because I feel it appalling that this situation has not been dealt with to ensure the health and comfort of the people we represent. Secondly, because denturists are qualified to provide these services and the Dental Mechanics Act does not specifically say that it cannot.

Madam Speaker, training for denturists has come a long way since the act was written in 1974.

Denturists are now completely qualified to work with partial plates. In fact, it takes a minimum of three years of training to become a qualified denturist. By comparison, a dentist may only study the mechanics of denture making for three months.

My constituents, Madam Speaker, and I, and I am sure other Members' constituents, require these services. I am sure we have all suffered a toothache at one time or other, so we know the kind of pain that is being endured every day by many of our people. We must move forward quickly on whatever action is required to provide these services to our people.

There are people in our communities and settlements who are enduring needless pain and suffering for as long as six months waiting for ordered dentures to come in. This government can take the necessary steps to allow denturists to become established in the north and provide the service we need in a timely fashion. The time has come, Madam Speaker, for this government...

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Excuse me, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

...and see to the needs of all people that we serve. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Is it on record?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Your time was lapsed.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Madam Speaker, I request unanimous consent to complete my statement.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker and honourable Members. For the record, Madam Speaker, the time has come for this government, dentists and denturists to put aside any differences they may have and see to the needs of the people we all serve. Mahsi cho.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Whitford.

Member's Statement On Concerns Re Passage Of Legislation In The House

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, today I rise on an issue of very serious concern. I am referring to, Madam Speaker, the manner in which this government attempted to pass a number of bills through this House yesterday. Specifically, bills 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Madam Speaker, Members received copies of these bills in their binders just prior to sitting yesterday and in an effort to cooperate with this government, we agreed to give the bills first reading before reviewing them in detail. Members were then shocked to discover, Madam Speaker, that these bills contained a coming into force clause as of the first reading of the bill in this Assembly.

I am not sure why this was done, Madam Speaker. The results of this government's disregard for the process of this House has shaken the foundations of our unique consensus system of government. I am shocked by these events, Madam Speaker. There can be no excuse for such actions. Members of this House, whether they are Ministers or ordinary Members, have always tried to work together in an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect. Members trust the integrity of Cabinet in involving ordinary Members and, therefore, the public in all discussions that affect them.

We try to strive for and hope prior consultation takes place so Members are not surprised by the actions of the other party. I feel that this trust has been shaken. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

Member's Statement On Concerns Re New Legislative Process

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in my capacity as Member for North Slave and also the chairman of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges, I am also concerned with our new legislative process whereby bills, after second reading, go to a standing committee. Madam Speaker, as you know this is a new process which

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was adopted only two years ago. I feel after yesterday's events concerning first and second reading of bills, we have to look at our process for the passage of legislation.

Madam Speaker, although our rules do provide that bills, under certain circumstances, can be given notice, first and second reading on the same day, I feel that yesterday, whether it was the intention of the government to endeavour to ram bills through three stages in one day, causes me great concern as an infringement on my privileges as a Member.

Madam Speaker, the government's actions yesterday did not afford Members the opportunity to review bills after first reading so that a debate as to the principle of the bill could take place at the second reading stage. I feel, Madam Speaker, that although I nayed the progress of a bill yesterday, I am sure other Members would have supported me had they realized the implications of allowing the bill to go ahead.

Madam Speaker, I have serious concerns with yesterday's events, which I could have raised as a point of privilege. But I was fortunate enough to get support from my colleague for Inuvik to assist me in deferring yesterday's process. Madam Speaker, I have instructed our researcher for Rules, Privileges and Procedures to research this whole issue and report back to the committee, and I will be following it up at a later date. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

Member's Statement On Notices Of Requests For Wolverine Carcasses

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. On May 26, 1993, a constituent in Coppermine saw and shot a wolverine at his spring camp as he was aware that a reward was offered for its carcass by Renewable Resources.

His awareness was a result of the public notices displayed on bulletin boards in the community by the department. The notices, which I will ask the Pages to distribute now, picture a wolverine with a caption "Attention wolverine hunters, Renewable Resources would like to buy the carcasses from all wolverines you take. The renewable resource officer in Coppermine will pay you \$25 for each one."

The next day my constituent's son took the carcass into the local Renewable Resource's office and was given the \$25 as shown in the notice. However, later on my constituent was given a ticket for shooting a wolverine out of season. Madam Speaker, upon receiving the ticket my constituent was upset as he thought he had been unjustly charged by the department. He disputed the ticket by hiring legal counsel to defend his case in court. My constituent spent thousands of dollars at personal expense to defend a \$115 fine, due to his feeling that he was entrapped as the request for wolverine carcasses was posted in the off season, with no mention of the hunting season in the notice or, for that matter, posted anywhere else in town. There was evidence presented in court that confirmed that hunting seasons were not posted in any public place in Coppermine.

My constituent lost his case as the judge recognized the complexities of the wildlife regulations. And while sympathetic to my constituent's situation, the judge held that the notice for wolverine carcasses did not meet the technical requirements to prove entrapment. The judge further ruled that there was a duty upon the hunter to seek out the hunting regulations.

Madam Speaker, what bothers me in this situation is that although the Department of Renewable Resources did not entrap my constituent as was ruled by the judge in court, the department certainly created a misrepresentation by leaving the notice up even after the wolverine hunting season had closed. At the very least, the department should have posted notices to advise local resident hunters of the hunting seasons in which animals can be taken.

There are many wildlife regulations in the NWT which cover different species of animals, different areas and different seasons for the same animals.

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude by statement.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to continue. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Continue, Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, colleagues, Madam Speaker. Many of our hunters may not know all the wildlife regulations which affect them. Certainly, some hunters may be confused as a result of renewable resource officers enforcing some regulations such as that of wolverine, and not enforcing others such as migratory bird regulations.

Madam Speaker, I believe it is long overdue for our government to ensure all hunters are fully aware of the wildlife regulations in their area, and more importantly to advise all hunters which regulations will be strictly enforced in order to minimize any possibility of misunderstandings which affect all hunters in our communities. The onus of responsibility for awareness of hunting seasons should rest with the Department of Renewable Resources and not on the individual hunter, as the department has the resources to ensure the hunting seasons are generally made known to all residents in each hunting area. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

Member's Statement On Canadian Association For Suicide Prevention Annual Conference

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, between May 12 and 15 of this year the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention will hold their annual conference.

Madam Speaker, I believe it is a tribute to the good work and the hard work done on suicide prevention in the Northwest Territories by the Government of the Northwest Territories, by this legislature and by many community groups that has resulted in this very important national association choosing the Northwest Territories to hold their annual conference. This is the first time they have ever held a meeting north of the 60th parallel. I would like to specifically give credit and congratulations to Kanatsiaqtut, the Baffin crisis line, which I believe is the first volunteer crisis line



to be established in the Northwest Territories, which was instrumental in securing the invitation to the Canadian association to meet in the Northwest Territories, specifically in Baffin, and is in fact hosting this conference along with assistance from the Department of Social Services.

Some 300 delegates from all across Canada are expected to attend this important conference, Madam Speaker. I would like to show Members a beautiful...Oh, I have the wrong poster.

---Laughter

It's a beautiful poster. I grabbed the wrong one, Madam Speaker. This is also a conference being held in Iqaluit this summer, but I picked out the wrong one, Madam Speaker.

However, I can say there is a beautiful poster that has been prepared advertising this important conference. I just want to say that I know that the Minister of Social Services has been invited to participate in a panel. I, myself, have been invited. And I believe MLAs have also been invited to attend this important conference. I know you would be welcome if you could find time in your busy schedules to participate in this worthwhile event.

Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the group, thank the government for committed and anticipated support, and there is a bit of a list...(Microphone turned off)

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to Ministers' statements.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to Ministers' statements. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Kakfwi.

REVERT BACK TO ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 10-12(6): Progress With The Community Transfer Initiative: Cape Dorset And Inuvik Transfers

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I understand it's now filed. Is it proper to proceed?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

(Microphone turned off)

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Thank you. Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to share good news with all of you today. When I tabled the community transfer initiative implementation plan in November of 1992, I said that the first major transfer would take place on April 1, 1994. I believe we have met the target date.

We are about to implement two very important community transfer agreements. Both Cape Dorset and Inuvik have invested a great deal of time and effort in moving toward greater control over programs and services which affect the daily lives of community residents. The vision of these community leaders paves the way for home-grown solutions to the many diverse and evolving issues facing the north today.

The hamlet of Cape Dorset has entered into a very comprehensive transfer agreement. As of April 1, the hamlet will be responsible for economic development, social services, public works and housing. The community's desire for increased control dates back to the hamlet turnovers in the early 1980s. The community transfer initiative has provided the hamlet with a vehicle to realize their long-standing aspirations.

The Inuvik transfer is particularly unique because all three community government authorities have worked together as a team in their pursuit of community control. The town, band council, the community corporation and the Inuvialuit, will all be responsible for setting their own rules for lotteries and will become more involved in economic development. Through a transfer framework agreement, both the tripartite committee and the government have committed to negotiate further transfers in 1994-95.

Clearly, both of these transfers are the result of a team effort. Without the dedication and commitment by Ministers Don Morin, John Pollard, Rebecca Mike, John Todd, Richard Nerysoo and the staff of the departments of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Social Services, Personnel, Economic Development and Tourism, Public Works and Services, Safety and Public Services, the Financial

Management Board Secretariat and the NWT Housing Corporation, it would have been impossible to get to where we are today.

In the face of many other critical issues, my colleagues have made it a priority to respond to community requests for increased autonomy. Based on the considerable interests expressed by communities, and the interest in the requests we anticipate as a result of these agreements, our ongoing commitment will be required.

When I met with the Cape Dorset hamlet council in February, we agreed that all the issues will probably not be resolved by the April 1 implementation date. Both parties will have to take a leap of faith and trust in each other's commitment and capability to resolve matters such as wage parity, overhead costs, capital funding and retention of surpluses. I'm confident that a continued spirit of cooperation will ensure timely resolution of these and other matters.

Under the terms of the agreements, Ministers remain accountable in some areas and the agreements outline minimum standards and rules which the community must follow. Departments will continue to have contact with the communities through both regional and headquarters offices, to ensure that programs are delivered in accordance with minimum standards. Departments will also continue to provide technical and special assistance when required. The agreements will be reviewed on an annual basis and a process for the future evaluation of the community transfer initiative is being developed.

Madam Speaker, I'm proud that we, as a government, had the vision to provide the means for community control through the community transfer initiative. I'm particularly pleased with the positive support and assistance received from the MLA for Inuvik,

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Mr. Koe, and the MLA for Baffin South, Mr. Pudlat. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Ballantyne.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Need For Children's Advocates In NWT

**MR. BALLANTYNE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today, Madam Speaker, I want to talk about the children of the Northwest Territories. As leaders, we constantly talk about our children as our greatest resource. We talk about preserving the environment for our children, creating jobs and opportunities for the next generation, and providing first-class education for our children. These are all wonderful words, but they are starting to ring hollow.

Sexual abuse against children has reached crisis proportions. Suicide rates are increasing. Our jails are being filled with young offenders. The Young Offenders Act is obviously not working. Alcohol and drug abuse among young people continues at an alarming rate. Dropout rates in our schools are at an unacceptable level. Family breakdowns are causing serious emotional problems to a whole generation of young people. And, fetal alcohol syndrome is taking a damaging and hidden toll.

In our society, there are strong advocates for most groups. Workers have unions. Companies have chambers of commerce and chambers of mines. Environmentalists have strong advocates. Even the anti-fur lobby can manipulate governments around the world. Languages have a Commissioner and freedom of information will soon have an independent advocate. Who speaks for children? Well, everybody speaks for children and nobody speaks for children. Their problems and realities are lost in a maze of competing interest groups and priorities.

I don't think the major priority of this Legislative Assembly should be an ombudsman for all the people of the Northwest Territories. I think we need an ombudsman for our children. We need an independent office that deals solely with the rights and protection of children. I want to put this government on notice that I will be working for the creation of an independent office which will act as an advocate for and protector of all the children of the Northwest Territories. Thank you very much.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

Member's Statement On Congratulating Minister On  
Community Transfer Initiatives

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Minister on the statement he just made on the community transfer initiatives. The community of Inuvik, through the Inuvik community corporation, the Ehdiiat Gwich'in council and the town of Inuvik have worked together over the past year to finalize this community transfer agreement.

This agreement is a unique achievement for the community because it brought together three cultures and organizations to work toward common goals. As the Minister indicated, the agreement contains a framework agreement to finalize the negotiations, an agreement that transfers responsibilities and authorities for an economic development officer who will serve the Inuvik residents and carry out long-term economic planning, and the licensing and regulation of lotteries and bingos in Inuvik.

The three councils that participated in the transfer initiatives have also agreed to form a society that will continue further transfer negotiations and operate the existing initiatives. The community views the transfer initiatives as a small step towards self-government. Another step towards self-government is the implementation of the proposed regional public government which the community fully supports. This regional government will allow Inuvik to more effectively work together with the surrounding communities on various regional initiatives.

The transfers to date do not seem like a dramatic change, but the major accomplishment for the community is a renewed sense of community. Having the various groups work together to control the affairs of the community is a significant achievement. I would like to congratulate all the individuals who worked on this task, the residents of Inuvik, and the officials of this government for this significant agreement. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Baffin South, Mr. Pudlat.

Member's Statement On Congratulating Participating  
Groups In Community Transfer Initiatives

**MR. PUDLAT:**

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to follow up on the Minister's statement today by the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, regarding an agreement reached between the hamlet of Cape Dorset and the Government of the Northwest Territories on community transfers. I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to both parties on this historic agreement. I know that the hamlet council and staff have been working very hard during the past few years, and especially during the last few weeks, to complete all the negotiations.

There are many communities that will look at the accomplishments of Cape Dorset and use it for a guide for what is achievable through the community transfer initiative. I'm very proud that this has been done first in my constituency. I will probably be travelling to Cape Dorset -- though I'm not certain -- with Ms. Cournoyea and Mr. Kakfwi, later on in April to celebrate the official signing of the agreement. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

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**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Member's Statement On Concerns Re Privatization Of  
NWT Power Corporation

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the Premier announced that she will table a report dealing with the government's proposal to privatize the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. I rise today to express my concern that such an important report is coming forward in the final hours scheduled for this House to meet.

Madam Speaker, without time to read the tabled document and reasonable discussion in this House, what may be a one-sided or biased position favouring privatization is now going to the public and may colour the public's perception about just how many Members support this initiative. Madam Speaker, I want to be on record as not supporting privatization of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation in the foreseeable future. In fact, most of the Members with

whom I have discussed this issue have indicated that they don't believe that privatization makes sense right now.

---Applause

Madam Speaker, this is in spite of extensive briefing sessions provided by the government and lobbying in favour of privatization by some Members of Cabinet. I should note, Madam Speaker, that Mr. Ballantyne and Mr. Ng have already spoken in this House against privatization.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to having the opportunity to fully debate this issue with Cabinet in the fall. And, in the meantime, I would like to make sure the public knows that the position presented in the report the Premier will table today is that of the government, in other words, of Cabinet. It does not represent the feelings, desires, wishes or program that all the Members of this House aspire to.

Madam Speaker, I would urge the public to view the report with a very critical eye. I know that I will.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk.

Member's Statement Re Concerns With Changes To Rent Scale

**MR. PUDLUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. There are growing concerns in this House about social housing in the NWT. We are all aware that it is getting more difficult to get housing and we know about the new rent scale to be implemented in the Nunavut area. The Advisory Committee on Social Housing was given the responsibility for and funding of about \$5 million to go to the home ownership program. About 95 per cent of the funding went to the west. At that time, people in Nunavut weren't that serious about going into home ownership.

That was not too long ago, but today there is increasing home ownership in the Nunavut area because they are starting to realize how difficult it is to get housing. More people are interested in being home owners. I want them to be considered before the new rent scale comes into effect because this

seems to be so sudden. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement On Water And Sewer Subsidy Policy

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. Today I would like to express my appreciation for the water and sewage services subsidy program that the Minister of MACA announced on Monday. This subsidy program is something I have been pursuing since I got elected over two years ago. It would certainly benefit my constituents in Fort Simpson.

Presently, we don't have a subsidy program in the area in which I live. We pay \$15 a trip for water, no matter how much water you get. Some people need two or three trips a week, so if you add all that up and multiply it, you're looking at about \$120 to \$180 a month we are paying for water. This subsidy program would certainly help. It would reduce the costs for water we use and bring it down to the level which everybody else in the north has been enjoying since 1987 when this subsidy program came into place.

However, there are Members in this House who are concerned about it because of the lack of consultation. I'm told by Members in this House that they have no problem with the village of Fort Simpson getting the subsidized program, however, there is some concern that there was a lack of consultation with other communities. I would appreciate it if the Minister would consult with other communities as soon as possible so this subsidy program could be put in place so that people in my constituency would enjoy the type of subsidy that everybody in the north has been enjoying since 1987. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 27-12(6): Extension Of Federal Food Mail Subsidy

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Madam Premier, Madam Speaker.  
Madam Speaker.

---Laughter

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Premier, Madam Premier.

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---Laughter

Some time ago, I received a letter from the hamlet council of Pelly Bay regarding the food air freight subsidy to Pelly Bay provided by this government. As we know, Pelly Bay is serviced by air only, but when next summer comes we will be getting barge service.

The concern of the hamlet council of Pelly Bay is that the food subsidy program for the community will be lifted. What the community of Pelly Bay wants is to roll back the cut-off date of the food air subsidy to Pelly Bay for a period of one year. The reasoning behind that is that the only store we have in town is the co-op and it doesn't have a heated warehouse large enough to accommodate a full year's supply. Would the Premier reconsider rolling back the cut-off date for a period of one year? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Madam Premier.

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, I believe the responsibility for that particular subsidy program is under the Minister responsible for Government Services. I would suggest that Minister respond to this question. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Government Services, Morin.

Return To Question 27-12(6): Extension Of Federal Food Mail Subsidy

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Member raises a legitimate concern about the food subsidy. I will take it up with the Minister responsible, the Minister of Indian Affairs. That is where the funding comes from. I will make sure they know of your concern and I will try to address it. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Baffin South, Mr. Pudlat.

Question 28-12(6): Extension Of Time For Community Consultation Re New Rent Scale

**MR. PUDLAT:**

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today I have a question regarding the new rent scale that was tabled yesterday by the Minister of the Housing Corporation. I have a few very serious concerns regarding the process of consultation and the Minister's insensitivity for concerns that have been expressed by my constituents and myself.

Madam Speaker, I was shocked yesterday to learn the document that was tabled by the Minister of Housing was, in fact, the final rental scale. I was under the impression, based on the Minister's previous remarks, that there would be thorough consultation prior to a new rental scale being finalized. Given the fact that there was a lot of concern and confusion in my constituency and others regarding the new rent scale, would the Minister consider allowing for more time for communities to study and comment on the new rent scale? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Unfortunately, Mr. Pudlat, according to our rules, whenever there is a document in committee of the whole, questions cannot be posed to the appropriate Ministers on that document. Therefore, your question would be more appropriate when you are in committee of the whole. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

Question 29-12(6): Method Of Informing Public Of Hunting Seasons

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Renewable Resources. Earlier in my Member's statement, I spoke on a situation where a

constituent in my constituency was charged for taking an animal out of season as a result of him not knowing of the hunting season, and also as a result of the posted notice for a reward by his department, even though it was still posted out of season. How are members of the public made aware of the hunting seasons in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I will take the question as notice and prepare an appropriate response for the Member. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Amittuq, Mr. Alloofoo.

Question 30-12(6): Update On Military Activities In The High Arctic

**MR. ALLOOFOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. During the last sitting of this legislature, I asked a question with regard to military activity in north Baffin in the late 1950s. I did not get a report back whether the government was able to find out from the federal government what actually happened. I wonder if the Premier is able to update us on what has been happening. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Madam Premier.

Return To Question 30-12(6): Update On Military Activities In The High Arctic

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, the information is being sought. We don't have anything conclusive at this time. As the Member knows, there has been difficulty in the past in getting the information. I want to assure the Member that we are working on it. The information is beginning to flow it, but it is taking more time, mainly because of the date that it happened. There have been differences of opinion on exactly what it was that we were trying to seek the information for. We have had some answers, but they all seem to relate to what

the flashes were, rather than what was put into the air. As soon as the information is accumulated, I will make sure the Members have the information. I can assure the Member that the issue is being actively worked on. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

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Question 31-12(6): Progress On Policy For Walk-in Freezers

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I have a motion that was passed back in 1991. It is with regard to walk-in freezers. I have asked for one for Kakisa and it was supported and passed. When Mr. Alloofoo was the Minister, he also said that Renewable Resources and MACA were going to develop a policy. That policy should have been ready in February of 1993, but I haven't heard anything since that time. Has there been any progress made since that time on this whole business of walk-in freezers? I know Kakisa has been asking about this, but I haven't received a report on it.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 31-12(6): Progress On Policy For Walk-In Freezers

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I believe we just reached an agreement with the Department of Public Works. We will be drafting the letter to communities in the near future. Kakisa can expect a letter from us, following some decisions to formalize it through Cabinet. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question 31-12(6): Progress On Policy For Walk-In Freezers

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Since February of last year, were there any Executive decisions on the policy? Has that been finalized?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 31-12(6): Progress On Policy For Walk-In Freezers

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

I am not certain of that, Madam Speaker. I do know we would like to consolidate all of the costs incurred by this government under one ministry and look at an economical way of continuing to provide support to those communities that need the services of walk-in freezers and perhaps give them the options of other types of services that could meet the same needs in places like Kakisa. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

Question 32-12(6): Status Of Agreement With Federal Government Re National Infrastructure Program

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Finance and it is with regard to the national infrastructure program that he announced during the last session. The Minister indicated that once the agreement has been reached with Canada, then he would communicate all the details to the communities in the territories by March of 1994. Is this agreement concluded between ourselves and the Government of Canada? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 32-12(6): Status Of Agreement With Federal Government Re National Infrastructure Program

**HON. JOHN POLLARD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon. Madam Speaker, the agreement between us and

Canada has not yet been concluded. I attended a meeting two and a half weeks ago with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. We agreed that the next draft of the proposed agreement would be drafted by ourselves. That was done. I received word from them early this week that it doesn't quite meet their requirements and they are going to let us know what the problems are. So we are very close, but we have not yet reached agreement, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 32-12(6): Status Of Agreement With Federal Government Re National Infrastructure Program

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Supplementary, Madam Speaker. When does the Minister anticipate that this agreement will be concluded?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 32-12(6): Status Of Agreement With Federal Government Re National Infrastructure Program

**HON. JOHN POLLARD:**

I think myself and Cabinet, Madam Speaker, would like to conclude the agreement as soon as possible. I'm assured by the Minister of Indian Affairs that he wants to see it done as quickly as possible, as well. But I don't think either of us are willing to sign an agreement that doesn't satisfy either the federal government or ourselves when we're speaking selfishly. I'm hoping that in the next few weeks we'll be able to put this thing to bed and make the announcement, but I can't say for sure that that's the case. But we're close enough that I think in a few weeks we'll have it resolved. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 32-12(6): Status Of Agreement With Federal Government Re National Infrastructure Program

**MR. ZOE:**

Supplementary, Madam Speaker. The reason I'm saying that is because the Minister indicated that hopefully we will be able to knock that program certainly by the end of this session. That was during the Fifth Session, Madam Speaker, and we've already concluded the Fifth Session. That's why I wanted to get a time frame from the Minister. He hasn't really indicated the time frame, so I would like to pose my question again. What is the time frame that we're looking at?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

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Further Return To Question 32-12(6): Status Of Agreement With Federal Government Re National Infrastructure Program

**HON. JOHN POLLARD:**

Madam Speaker, my time frame is as soon as possible, but I have instructions from Cabinet that I have to reach an agreement within a certain set of parameters. As is always the case when there are two people negotiating, it's difficult for me to say that it's going to be a month, two weeks, three weeks or tomorrow, because there are two parties who are sitting at the table trying to reach an agreement. But certainly for our part we'd like it to be as soon as possible, but I can't speak for the federal government in saying that they will sit down and comply with all our requests, the same as they can't speak for us and say that we will comply with all their requests. It's a matter of negotiations. It is moving along as fast as we can move it along, and hopefully within a few weeks it will be concluded, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Question 33-12(6): Status Of Document For Resupplying Government Operations By Barge Along Mackenzie Valley

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Minister, Don Morin, Minister of Public

Works and Services. It's with regard to another thing that I have been pursuing in this House from day one, with regard to the water carriers directive that the Cabinet has been operating on. There is a business in my constituency that would like to have the opportunity to provide barging services for resupplying government operations down the valley. The Minister had indicated earlier that he had prepared a document for Cabinet's perusal, and I would like to know what the status of this is. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 33-12(6): Status Of Document For Resupplying Government Operations By Barge Along Mackenzie Valley

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. When NTCL was sold, eight or ten years ago, it was carrier of first choice for all federal government freight. Consequently, Cabinet of the Northwest Territories Executive Council made a decision to give NTCL carrier first choice. The federal government had their decision in place for eight years, and that is lapsed now so we have revisited that decision. We have made the decision to remove the designation of NTCL as carrier of first choice for the Mackenzie corridor, excluding Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk.

Also, as part of the decision, it is my responsibility as the Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works to also begin negotiations with NTCL in the next year to negotiate better rates for freight in all other areas. I have one year to negotiate those rates with NTCL in order to extend their carrier of first choice in all other areas. We have until the 1995 shipping season to do that. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 33-12(6): Status Of Document For Resupplying Government Operations By Barge Along Mackenzie Valley

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. A supplementary to that question is would the water carrier business in my



constituency be eligible now to bid for resupplying of government supplies down the valley? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 33-12(6): Status Of Document For Resupplying Government Operations By Barge Along Mackenzie Valley

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As of today, yes.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Without attempting to abuse the rules of the House, Madam Speaker, I have some questions about the process for consultation on the social housing rent scale, and not about the paper itself. I would like to pose a question to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation.

Madam Speaker, yesterday in response to some questions I asked, I believe the Minister for the Housing Corporation -- when responding to a question about whether written material was circulated at the community consultation meetings held earlier this year and late last year -- said words to the effect of "knowing government, I'm sure something written was put forward." I would like to ask the Minister, since yesterday has he had a chance to review whether, in fact, his officials did provide any written information to communities during the round of community consultation meetings held late last fall and early in the new year? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. I recognize that there is nothing in the document tabled with regard to the process used. Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The new rent scale consultation process has been an ongoing issue for some time. In March of 1987 there had been a public discussion paper for need for a new rent scale, and that was distributed to all communities in the Northwest Territories. Then in June of 1988, the NWT Housing Corporation released a second public discussion paper and possible options for a new rent scale. In February of 1990, a new rent scale was tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the previous Minister, the Honourable Tom Butters. Also, in May of 1993, the Advisory Committee on Social Housing approved the rent scale review process. In July of 1993, a bulletin on rent scale review was

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distributed to all the tenants. That describes the review process and assures tenants that the corporation would talk to tenants to explain the impacts of the new rent scale. In the fall and winter of 1993-94, community consultation meetings were held in each community. District managers explained the rent scale review process, and many tenants at that time took advantage of the opportunity to express concerns and make suggestions to improve the existing scale. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Madam Speaker, I have a lot of respect for the Minister, but I'm going to become impatient if my questions aren't answered. My question was -- and I'm going to waste a supplementary asking it again -- not did the district managers consult communities in the fall and early winter, not was the rental increase discussed -- I know it was, I attended one of those meetings myself. My question is, was there any written information presented by the district managers at the community consultation meetings late last fall and early winter? Yes or no. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The information I have is that in the fall and in winter of 1993-94 during the community consultation process, meetings were held and district managers explained -- they went through flip charts -- the whole rent scale review process. At that time, they explained the principles of the review and ask for comments on how to achieve those principles from the constituents of Mr. Patterson, as well as other Members of this Assembly. They took that input and brought it back to myself and the Advisory Committee on Social Housing. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Madam Speaker, I've carefully reviewed my notes of the community consultation meeting I attended and took the trouble to seek first-hand information about whether written material was provided or not from the Housing Corporation, itself. And, I can tell the honourable Minister, respectfully, that there were no flip charts at the meeting I attended in Iqaluit and there was no written information provided to any of the Baffin communities during the Baffin consultations.

Having stated that fact, Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, if all that happened were discussions of principle, in his own words, and there was no detailed information -- and, in fact, no written information -- presented at the so-called final round of community consultation meetings late last fall and early last winter, how can the Minister assert to this House -- as he did in his statement yesterday -- that there has been meaningful consultation with communities? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The NWT Housing Corporation went to every community last fall and consulted on the new rent scale. The process used, and that was approved by the Special Committee on Social Housing as well as Cabinet, was that we would go out and speak to the communities. We would have no final document to take to communities. It is the proper way to go out and get people's ideas and talk about an idea with communities to get their input, and to later draw up a final document.

If you are going to go out with a final document, there's no sense doing it that way because communities would not like that. We went through the process of going out and canvassing and talking to communities to get their ideas about how to reach the principles of changing the old rental scale to the new rental scale. Communities gave us many good ideas and we put them into the new rent scale and that is what I tabled yesterday. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Madam Speaker, given that the Minister has admitted in the answer to my last question that the final document has not been presented to the communities -- and my community has yet to receive the information, had I not faxed it to them last night -- and given that the Minister has also admitted that communities would not like being presented with a final document without a chance for further input, will the Minister now commit that, once the final round of consultations takes place in May or June -- as announced in his statement yesterday -- communities will still have an opportunity to provide input and constructive suggestions on how this final document can be amended and improved before it is implemented in July of this year? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Mr. Patterson, I have some problems with your question. Your question is about a document that has been tabled. With respect to the process, your question is allowed under the rules. However, referring to a particular document which has been

tabled in the House is not allowed under the rules. Therefore, I would ask if you would rephrase your question and not refer to the document that is in committee of the whole? The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate your advice. Madam Speaker, my question, then, to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation is, given that he's announced there will be a round of community consultations in May and June and given that changes in rent scales are not to be implemented until July -- according to his statement in the House

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yesterday -- I would like to ask the Minister to state clearly to this House if he will be open to accepting constructive criticism and advice from communities and implementing worthwhile recommendations before July 1, if good advice comes out of the round of community consultations in May and June of this year? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is his job to ask the questions and my job to answer them and I'll try my best.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

May I remind the honourable Minister that your reply is not to provoke debate, and that you are to reply to the questions the honourable Members have posed. Thank you.

---Applause

Further Return To Question 34-12(6): Written Information Supplied During Consultation Process On New Rent Scale

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll try my best to answer his question. The next stage of community consultation is a regional consultation process to be done in May and June in all regions. And any good advice and recommendations from Member's constituents as well as anybody else's constituents out of the consultation process regarding any of the programs of the NWT Housing Corporation, including the new rent scale, will go to the Advisory Committee on Social Housing and they will address them. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Lewis.

Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**MR. LEWIS:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Justice. I was a little disappointed that he wasn't in the House in the two previous days because I had promised a local businessman on Monday that I would raise the issue of shoplifting with the Minister of Justice. I believe all retailers in the city here assume they are going to lose a little bit of money because of shoplifting. My question to the Minister is this -- it is a very simple question -- is stealing still against the law in the Northwest Territories?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, stealing, as far as I know, is against the law all across Canada. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**MR. LEWIS:**

This one individual who asked me to raise this issue has found that shoplifting has reached epidemic

proportions in his stores in the middle of the city. Even when people are caught red-handed, the police will not lay charges against any individual who is a juvenile. I would like to ask the Minister, does the law apply unequally in our system? That, if you're a certain age, you get charged, but if you're a juvenile, you don't get charged?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I believe there is a need to do some public education in this regard because there is concern for the businesses that operate. As we know, the cost of all merchandise and goods that are shoplifted are passed on to the owners and subsequently to the public. At the same time, if we charged every accused person on the first instance, our court costs will be horrendous. There is a view that there is still an informal process to deal with offences, particularly first-time offenders. Often, in small communities, for instance, the parents resolve many matters themselves. In the time I was growing up, issues were often dealt with between families, without resorting to the RCMP and authorities. There is a view that many first-time offenders, when they are dealt with through the parents, are often brought to realize they were wrong and they do not commit offences after the first instance. A great public service is rendered, in such cases. I believe that we need to do some public education in this regard. We will be asking the department to consult with the RCMP and the business community to discuss what kind of a cooperative approach can be taken, keeping in mind the concerns of the business community, but also the situation with the young people. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**MR. LEWIS:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Since the RCMP will not press charges against young people who have a lot to learn, at what stage then will the RCMP press charges? Is it after the first or second offence?

When do they decide that they will take on the responsibility of law enforcement and not require the shopkeeper to press charges?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I understand even though charges may not necessarily be laid, all incidents are kept on file as reported to the RCMP. We do keep a record so that generally after the first offence, then serious consideration is given thereafter to lay charges. Thank you.

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**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**MR. LEWIS:**

Since the Minister has agreed that education is a very important part of this and if you find after the first offence, you don't get charged, and the second, you don't get charged, how is a young person going to learn if he or she finds that after more than one offence, no charges are laid by the RCMP and the onus is placed on the shopkeeper to do so?

How is this teaching young people that there is a consequence of continuing to break the law?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 35-12(6): Stealing Considered Illegal In The NWT

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, as I have said, I will be asking the department to meet with the RCMP and consult with the local chamber of commerce to advise what is an acceptable approach to resolving these issues. We may find that perhaps a local justice committee may be one of the many mechanisms we can use to help

deal with the issues without going too one-sided in protecting the interests of the business community. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Whitford.

Question 36-12(6): Review Issue Of Accountability Of MACA

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question I would like direct to the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. The Minister will recall the issue I raised last session concerning the Inukshuk Housing Cooperative project. I was encouraged to receive a letter from the Minister's office advising me that a meeting has taken place with all the parties affected with the hopes that some resolutions would come out of it. I am still not quite satisfied and the constituents I represent are not satisfied that the principle of accountability has been properly addressed. Everyone agrees that a mistake had been made, but it cost my constituents \$10,000 a year for three years as a result of that error. Will the Minister agree to review the issue of accountability of his department to ensure that citizens not be so adversely affected without proper compensation?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 36-12(6): Review Issue Of Accountability Of MACA

**HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I will agree to review the issue of accountability. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Ballantyne.

Question 37-12(6): Time Table For Updating Companies Act

**MR. BALLANTYNE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Justice. The Minister is aware that the present Companies Act in the Northwest Territories is badly in need of revision. It is acting now as a disincentive to businesses in the Northwest Territories. Could the Minister tell me his timetable to have this act revised and brought into a modern context?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I have asked the department to provide that information to me some time ago. If they have provided it to me, I have long forgotten what the information read. So I will have to take the question as notice until I have read it once again. I will provide the information to the Member in writing. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

Question 38-12(6): Price Review Of POL Products

**MR. ZOE:**

Madam Speaker, I was going to pose a question to the Honourable Don Morin, Minister of the Public Works and Services. But I see that he just stepped out, so I will refer my question to the Premier to take it on behalf of the Minister.

Madam Speaker, during the Fifth Session, I raised an issue. The issue was the POL product prices in the territories. At that time, the Minister responded that they were reviewing the prices of POL products in the territories and this should be done by March 31. I would like to ask -- since he just walked in -- the Minister, have the prices for POL products been reviewed, as he indicated, by March 31?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 38-12(6): Price Review Of POL Products

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. We were hoping to have that done by March 31. We haven't been able to meet that deadline. I am expecting that to be done any day now. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 39-12(6): Review Of Punishments For Shoplifting

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. To follow up on my colleague's questions about shoplifting which was featured in a local paper last week, in the article the police were quoted as saying, "First-time offenders are not usually the problem, and the sheer terror of being found out and reported is usually enough to stop many first-time offenders from ever shoplifting again." But there's an indication there that habitual shoplifters are a growing problem in Yellowknife. Perhaps, Madam Speaker, we need to take a look at whether the punishment fits the crime. Obviously, currently, punishment is not providing a

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disincentive for those who are convicted. I was wondering if the Minister could advise what the Department of Justice is doing to encourage the federal review of the effectiveness of punishments for this crime -- the crime of shoplifting -- in light of its growing frequency.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 39-12(6): Review Of Punishments For Shoplifting

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, we do know that in different parts of the world, the different countries and civilizations have different ways of dealing with offences like this. For instance, it's been reported that in some Middle East countries there is only one offence committed by the offending hand. On the first offence, your right hand is cut off. On the second offence, the other one is cut off, and it's difficult after that to shoplift.

---Laughter

I know of stories where tourists have found goods and wallets that have been dropped on the roadside, days after, in some of the more remote parts of that part of the world. However, that was also the case here, as late as the mid-1950s and even early 1960s, in some of our communities. It's not the case any more. We do know that it is a growing offence.

As I've said, we have no specific suggestions to make to the federal government at this time, but that whole area of young offenders is under review with the federal government and there is going to be some consultation done with other jurisdictions and discussions in the upcoming Justice Ministers' meeting that we're having in November. So there's nothing specific to suggest to the federal government at this time about how to deal with the growing shoplifting trend across Canada. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 39-12(6): Review Of Punishments For Shoplifting

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm glad to hear that the Minister isn't proposing such barbaric measures as cutting off young offenders' hands to the federal government. But, I think, Madam Speaker, perhaps what we need to do is look at the reason why people shoplift in the first place. There are several reasons. It gives some a sense of power. They feel they're controlling the situation. It can become an addiction, like taking a drug. And, often, it's done on a dare. They think it's funny or it's a joke. Or, perhaps they're doing it because they're neglected and breaking the law gives them attention they don't get from their parents or in their home situation.

If, as I suspect, Madam Speaker, shoplifting is a symptom of a much deeper social problem, does the Department of Justice ensure that those who do get to the courts right now and are convicted receive adequate counselling to help them deal with their problems?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 39-12(6): Review Of Punishments For Shoplifting

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, we are engaging in a review of the kinds of programs and support we give to the people who come under the care of the Department of Justice to make sure we do everything we can to provide correction and counselling services to ensure those people who are charged and convicted have an opportunity to come out with a zero chance of re-committing offences. I believe the Department of Social Services also has some programs available at the community level that also focus on the same thing, before offences are committed. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

Question 40-12(6): Investigation Into Hunting Charge In Coppermine

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is again directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources. It is regarding the same situation, the circumstances surrounding my constituent in Coppermine being charged as a result of reviewing a board notice posted by the Minister's department. I would like to ask the Minister if he'll commit to look into the situation which occurred in Coppermine to ensure that hunters in all areas are not misled by his department in the future as the result of reward notices being posted in the communities for furs while those animals are out of season? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 40-12(6): Investigation Into Hunting Charge In Coppermine

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I have taken the original question as notice and now that this one is on the record, I will be taking it into consideration in responding to the Member. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Mr. Kakfwi, this question was not identical to the first one. It pertains to the same issue, but it is not a

repeat of the original question you took as notice so, therefore, I allowed it to proceed. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 41-12(6): Commercial Caribou Harvest

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Renewable Resources. Madam Speaker, I understand there was a commercial caribou harvest in the North Slave region this year which was an initiative undertaken by Canada/Northwest Territories economic development agreement, the proponent being the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

Madam Speaker, I was just wondering if the Minister could advise whether in a commercial hunt such as this one, there is any effort to ensure the harvest concentrates on bulls or are female animals allowed to be taken as well?

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**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I must say that I don't know that information so I would have to take the question as notice. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Whitford.

Question 42-12(6): Level Of Funding For Western Arctic Leadership Program

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to address a question to the Minister responsible for Education. It deals with the subject I raised yesterday concerning the western Arctic leadership program. This issue is of concern to many of my constituents and that's the reason I raise it today, Madam Speaker, as well as yesterday. I believe in the budget, funds were approved for the western Arctic leadership program. Will the Minister confirm to this House whether the

funds were at the same level as previous, in order to let the program continue?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 42-12(6): Level Of Funding For Western Arctic Leadership Program

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The allocation for that particular program came out with the resident program and there's been no reduction. Generally speaking, the Department of Education has never reduced its actual commitment. There was a reduction that took place before by the Department of Social Services and not Education. We are maintaining our commitment to the particular program.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Supplementary To Question 42-12(6): Level Of Funding For Western Arctic Leadership Program

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Will the Minister advise the House on how these funds will be distributed?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Education, Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 42-12(6): Level Of Funding For Western Arctic Leadership Program

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just for the information of Members, the normal practice of distribution is determined through an agreement between the departmental Minister and the western Arctic leadership board. The funding for June has already been determined. The longer term solution is a matter that is now before Cabinet for consideration and discussion. That's generally what the practice is for distribution.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 42-12(6): Level Of Funding For Western Arctic Leadership Program

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your patience. I have one final question to the Minister. Many of my constituents support the principles of which I spoke yesterday and on which the program is based. They are not sure, however, if there is a process or criteria for the selection of applicants in place. I would like to know from the Minister if they have a criteria for the selection of qualified applicants?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Education, Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 42-12(6): Level Of Funding For Western Arctic Leadership Program

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, just one point before I respond directly to the question. Nobody, including myself as Minister, disputes the argument about excellence in programs. I think what we need to do is to ensure that the programs are responding to the original intent of the program and, for that matter, the direction that has been given to me as Minister for initiatives the provide for excellent programming. Nobody disputes that.

On the matter of student selection, what I will do, Madam Speaker, is provide a copy of the selection criteria to the honourable Member immediately.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Question 43-12(6): Provision Of Financial Assistance For Mackenzie Times

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question should be directed to Mr. Todd, the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism, but he's not here, so I will direct it to the Premier. This is with regard to one of my constituents, Mr. Joe Mercredi. He's the owner of the Mackenzie Times. His last paper was issued because of the financial hard times.



I would just like to say that this is the last aboriginal paper in this part of the country. He's been operating for a number of years and he said in public, on radio and in the paper, that he's been having some problems and has to shut down. I would like to ask the Premier if this government is prepared to see if they can help Mr. Mercredi and his Mackenzie Times out, to see if it is still a viable business and if we can help him continue it? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Madam Premier.

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, I will take the question as notice and refer it to the Minister responsible so that he can deal with it, upon his return. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

Question 44-12(6): Review Of Regional Councils

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for Madam Premier. In the Kitikmeot region, the mayor of Cambridge Bay has been requested by the

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GNWT's regional director to submit his views on the Kitikmeot Regional Council. It seems that the government is doing a review of the regional council. I would like to ask Madam Premier whether this is true or not, whether there is a review being undertaken of the Kitikmeot Regional Council or any other regional councils, for that matter? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Madam Premier.

Return To Question 44-12(6): Review Of Regional Councils

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, in terms of funding for regional councils, we are doing an overall review of the operation of the councils. As the Member knows, there was a comprehensive review because troubles arose in the Baffin and also in the South Slave area.

Consequently, we are looking at how we fund all the regional councils, how they are doing and how their operations are going. Madam Speaker, it is not a negative review. It is just to see if we are providing the required support, what kind of work-load the regional councils have, and how things are going. It's an ongoing process, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 44-12(6): Review Of Regional Councils

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask Madam Premier, then, in this review of the regional councils, is the government soliciting any of the views of the regional council members themselves? Are they having input in this review process? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 44-12(6): Review Of Regional Councils

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, my understanding is that over the last number of years, various regions have developed different approaches to deal with the issues of coordination of government programs and services in the regions. When the regional councils meet, the regional directors are present, some Ministers are present and a consultation takes place. Regional councils make suggestions on whether the support from government is adequate. We are dealing with regional councils on a continual basis, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 44-12(6): Review Of Regional Councils

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask Madam Premier if there is consideration for funding cutbacks to regional councils or maybe even

dissolution of some regional councils as a result of this review? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 44-12(6): Review Of Regional Councils

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, the intent is not for dissolution or cutbacks. As the Member may know, the Kitikmeot Regional Council has operated very effectively and appears to be one of the two that are intact and carrying out their duties in a public forum. There's no intent to make any cutbacks, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

Question 45-12(6): Purpose Of Funding For Research Support Programs

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. It is with regard to his statement about the new research support programs. The first program is the assistance support program in which 15 researchers will get up to \$1,000 each to hire northern assistants. Research takes a while, it doesn't take one week. It looks like for the amount of money, you would anticipate that one person would be hired for maybe one week at the most, with those kind of dollars. I would like to ask the Minister what exactly was the intent of the \$1,000 to hire northern assistants?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 45-12(6): Purpose Of Funding For Research Support Programs

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The intent, Madam Speaker, is to provide an incentive for those who are conducting research, and to provide additional dollars

to the amount of money they already have for the research they're undertaking. In other words, it is a topping of the resources they have so we encourage them to recruit northern students and northern residents to be part of the research.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The time for oral questions has lapsed. Item 6, written questions. The House will recess for 15 minutes to half an hour.

---SHORT RECESS

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 7, returns to written questions. Item 8, replies to opening address. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

ITEM 8: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Mr. Patterson's Reply

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Madam Speaker, I know this may be the last day of this session. I know that, being in my autumn months in this Assembly, I should be statesman-like and not cause disturbances over issues, but I must say that I have been impelled to rise today to make a brief reply.

I am alarmed that the spirit of goodwill and support for the principles of consensus that marked the opening of this Assembly and the good words from both

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candidates for leader and Members of Cabinet about involving ordinary Members in decision making and making the important decisions, ones that were made by all Members, have gone astray and awry.

I have a terrible concern that the reshaping northern government working group and the Advisory Committee on Social Housing are not, in fact, providing meaningful consultation which could lead to constructive criticism of proposed government policies and changes, but rather are being used to rubber stamp policies that have been developed by the bureaucracy behind closed doors and are dumped on Members of the Legislative Assembly at the last minute with the expectation that we won't squawk too loudly.

Madam Speaker, a prime example of that is the report of the Advisory Committee on Social Housing. I don't want to criticize the first report. I don't want to criticize the people who have worked hard on that committee and had done their best, but I do know, from talking to some Members of that committee, that there is a high degree of frustration with the role, just as I suspect there may be a high degree of frustration with the conflicting roles of ordinary Members in the reshaping northern government Working group.

The Minister of Housing had assured us yesterday that the new rent scale has been approved by the Advisory Committee on Social Housing. The advisory committee has a mandate to review new policies and programs and report back to Members of the Assembly on its findings. The committee has apparently been reviewing this new policy for upwards of a year. Is there a word about whether or not the committee approved the new rent scales in this 20-page report? If it is one page, they are not numbered. There is not a word about whether or not the committee approved this policy. It says they had several meetings and they considered it. It says they were briefed on it. It doesn't say, the committee recommends the new rent scale.

It is surprising that the committee has not made any comments, but it is not surprising to me that they have been hesitant to endorse this new social housing rent scale, because the details have only been presented in this House yesterday. That is another concern I have, Madam Speaker. We have a limited time for discussion of this matter. It is going to be rushed into the committee of the whole today. I had no opportunity to consult with my constituents meaningfully. I have done my best. I have warned them that change is coming, but I don't think they would regard that as consultation.

I did go to the trouble of faxing all 44 pages of the rent scale to the staff of the Iqaluit Housing Authority. There was no time to call a meeting of the appointed members on that housing authority, in a rush last night, but I did fax the information to the staff. They met last night. I am grateful that they have provided me with some initial thoughts on the rent scale change from the point of view of people who are going to have to make it work. They weren't consulted. They didn't know what is in this document. My constituents don't know what is in this document and were not consulted. If this is how this government is going to do consultation and this is how consensus government decision-making is

supposed to work, then there is something seriously wrong.

I am going to have a few more comments on the rent scale matter, Madam Speaker, but I wanted to give a couple of other examples. The same thing happened with the water and sewer policy. I think that the matter has been before Cabinet and was considered in early March. The Minister of Municipal Affairs had every opportunity to at least put the matter in a Caucus briefing and give us detailed information of the community-by-community impact. That would have been a responsible way to consult with MLAs before this matter was announced publicly and circulated to municipalities. Instead what happened, once again, is we were presented a fait accompli. We've been forced to react after the fact and all of this happened in the dying days of the Legislature, long after the budget of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs was presented, long after the Minister of Finance presented his budget speech, which suggested there were no new taxes except for corporate taxes.

Many of our constituents, I believe, Madam Speaker, are going to say that these are hidden taxes, these sometimes substantial increases in user fees for water and sewage. Yet, did the government present this information as part of their strategy for the 1994-95 main estimates? No, it was dropped at the last minute. In the Legislature, the Minister presented a statement that it was a fait accompli and it would be administered at a certain time. The Premier suggested that we could make a motion calling for the matter to be reviewed by the Standing Committee on Finance by a certain date, but the government would choose to accept our advice or not choose to accept our advice, as it saw fit.

Now, Madam Speaker, the same thing happened yesterday with the tabling of three important pieces of municipal legislation, or maybe it was four important pieces. Since the tabling, from talking to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, I've learned that there are important reasons for moving with this legislation on an emergency basis and there are important reasons for making the legislation retroactive in one case back to 1969 and in other cases to the date of first reading of the bill.

But, did the Minister give the ordinary Members the courtesy of even consulting with them in Caucus and saying, I've got a problem, I have to move with this legislation, may I please have your indulgence to go ahead on an emergency basis with retroactive

legislation, and I want to explain the reasons why so you won't be caught by surprise when you wake up the next morning and find out you've allowed a bill to go past first reading that had such enormous retroactive application? No.

Those are three examples, Madam Speaker, where I think this government -- which has promised consensual decision-making and consultation -- has, for some reason, failed to properly consult with MLAs. I don't have to think hard to think of other examples. I think the staff housing policy was similarly dropped on Members of the Assembly as a *fait accompli* and, it was only after we had a chance to review it, ask good questions and make constructive comments, that the government, in a series of fits and starts, reluctantly modified the policy so at least it had half a chance of working.

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Madam Speaker, this is not the way to run a railroad, but I suspect that on occasion, when Cabinet makes decisions, they think they're on a train. Now, I want to also say that I know we're in the long downward slope towards an election. It's not that far away. There are 18 to 20 months until the next election. I know some Ministers feel there won't be any changes, their positions are secure and they can afford to be a little bit cavalier to those of us who dare ask questions. But, I want to say that I found the attitude that I've been dealt by some Ministers in this House to be bordering on arrogance, to be cavalier, to be flippant, and to trivialize the issues that I dare bring up.

There's one practice I want to specifically mention that I think actually borders on offending my Member's privilege. That is, I'm not amused when I ask a series of questions on behalf of constituents or corporate constituents -- without mentioning their names, I ask the questions not because I want to get into personalities but because I want to get into the issues and policies -- and a Minister says, so and so is a shareholder, you must be representing this particular businessman, you must be representing this particular person. I understand this person is a shareholder, and immediately personalizing the policy issue I wish to discuss. And, perhaps even worse, Madam Speaker, reveals confidential information that is only available to the Minister in their capacity as a Minister, knowing the background of bids, tenders and the like.

I don't think that's a respectful manner in which to respond to questions of a Member of this Assembly and I don't think it's responsible conduct for a

Minister. I want to cite that as another example of deterioration of the mutual respect that I think should be in this Assembly, and an erosion of the so-called consensual decision-making process that I think we all believe in. I just hope that these few comments of mine will cause some Ministers -- and I think they know who I'm talking about -- to reconsider their approach.

They have all the power, they have all the knowledge, they have all the staff. I'm just a humble, ordinary MLA who dares to ask a few questions. I don't like the defensive attitude, I don't like the arrogant attitude and I don't like shareholders of corporate constituents being brought up on the floor of this Assembly, to their embarrassment and anger. I don't think it's fair and I don't think it's right.

Madam Speaker, just a few words on the new rent scale. I want to say, Madam Speaker, that first of all, I fully understand -- and I said this about staff housing rental increases -- that there are heavy pressures coming from Ottawa. And, if changes aren't implemented, there will be financial penalties to the Housing Corporation. I also fully understand some constituents of mine could afford to pay more rent. I agree that more money has to be collected from tenants of social housing in the Northwest Territories. I want the Minister and Cabinet to understand that, in principle, I know the difficult task they have to do.

However, Madam Speaker, what I'm really concerned about -- and maybe there was a chink in the armour today -- is the Minister of Housing was suggesting yesterday that this is it, the document is final, no further changes will be considered. Today in question period, he said well, maybe, if there's good advice coming out, I'll refer it back to the Advisory Committee on Social Housing. Maybe this is a suggestion that there is a possibility of good advice coming forward out of this.

I would like to think that if this government believes in consensus and truly believes in community consultation, they will be open to good advice that will come -- and I know it will come from my constituency -- about how to make this thing work. Right now, I can tell the Minister from the brief opportunity I've had to study it, it ain't gonna work in Iqaluit. The result of the application of this policy, as is, is going to undo the progress that has been made in encouraging tenants to take a greater responsibility for the maintenance and the costs of their own housing. That progress will be undone.

Madam Speaker, when I consulted with the staff of the housing authority, including some of the bilingual tenant relations officers, they said they believe the policy is going much too far, much too quickly. You cannot make up for things that should have been progressing overnight, they told me. Even the GNWT employees, they said, were given a better deal of having rents and utilities phased in at a more realistic rate.

The other thing I'd like to stress, based on advice from these employees, is that there shouldn't be a preoccupation with income, Madam Speaker. The reality is, that even if people have good household incomes, that doesn't necessarily mean they're going to be able to own and maintain their own homes. It does not necessarily mean that they're going to be able to pay more rent. We all know this to be true, Madam Speaker. Many of my constituents don't have good money management skills. This issue came up in the Report of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. Many people, because they are new to the wage economy and to dealing with money, cannot yet manage their money effectively. Just because people have a sizeable income, it doesn't mean they are going to be able to wisely spend and invest their money.

One of my big concerns is the progress we have made on tenant education in Iqaluit, and I congratulate the Iqaluit Housing Authority, for the progress they have made in getting people to pay their rents. That progress is going to be undone if we suddenly force sizeable rent increases on people who are struggling now to pay the minimum capped rent ceilings for their housing units. Many of my constituents are struggling to pay even \$350 a month. The Minister may say, they have big incomes. There is no reason for that. Madam Speaker, we can't fix that overnight.

One thing that I am very concerned about is the 4.5 PYs given to the Iqaluit Housing Authority to manage over 400 houses, which is the same number of PYs given to Pond Inlet and Pangnirtung housing association with about half of the social housing units. Those 4.5 persons are struggling right now just to deal with the day to day problems of maintenance and getting even the minimum rent paid. They have made progress. There is still almost \$1 million in arrears annually in Iqaluit, just on the modest rents that are having to be paid.

Does the Minister really believe that, in one blow, suddenly people are going to be able to cough up

\$500, \$1,000 or \$1,500 more a month or 50 per cent of that, over two years? It isn't going to happen, Madam Speaker. That is why we have to carefully look at the timing and phasing in. What will happen is that tenants will give up, they will say they will be

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overwhelmed with the financial pressures because of the difficulties of managing money, because of social issues which cripple many of these families, and the result will be that some people will be utterly defeated by these increases. I don't want this to happen, Madam Speaker. I want this to work. But, I believe that, at least, some significant number of people are going to throw their hands up and say, we are going to move onto the beach and join the families that are now still, unfortunately, living on the beach in Iqaluit. Or, they are going to say, we will refuse to pay the rent. We will then have to proceed with evictions. We will have to expand the rental staff to deal with these problems.

Unless this matter is handled carefully, that is going to be the result in my constituency. I think the Minister is being driven by the federal government, the financial deadlines and pressures. I think that he should stop and ask, will this new rent scale actually work?

I want to quote to the Minister what one of the staff people said to me when I asked for their comments on this new proposed rent scale. They said to me, "Until recently, there wasn't even a light at the end of the tunnel, but because of the hard work they have been doing there, a light was starting to show. Improved tenant counselling, improved tenant education, people are starting to come in to talk about their financial affairs, starting to take their obligation to pay rent seriously, but if this new rent scale is imposed without some serious reconsideration of the timing and the pace, the light at the end of the tunnel will go out."

Madam Speaker, in tabling of documents, I am going to table a three-page account of initial thoughts on the rent scale changes that were given to me by the dedicated staff of the Iqaluit Housing Authority. I said that I would explain to Members of this House, this was done in a hurry. They are initial thoughts. They are not perfect. Because there is some threat that this may even be the last chance to make any input on this matter, I am going to take the liberty of tabling these comments, so at least I will have some input in this debate today. I want to explain that this was done in a hurry. If we have more time, better

information, public meetings, proper explanation of how this thing will work, I am sure there is going to be constructive advice given which can make this new rent scale work.

Madam Speaker, everybody I have talked to about this understands that change is required, that it hasn't been done for many years. I congratulate the Minister for having taken it this far. I have been around long enough to know that there have been several efforts made by previous housing Ministers to revise the rent scale that have completely flopped. Ministers have had to back down, back out or defer plans to make these changes. I would like to see this matter dealt with, but I don't want it to be rammed through. I want to have an opportunity to make some comments and to know that the Minister will be open to recommendations about how it is going to work in Iqaluit.

Madam Speaker, home ownership is put out as a solution for these people who have the high incomes. That is a massive development effort required. I think that all the good candidates for home ownership have already got HAP units and have already built them. Hopefully, they are going to be able to succeed in maintaining those units. These people the Minister is now targeting, who are in social housing now and who may have higher incomes, are going to require much support and assistance. There are only 4.5 people in the Iqaluit Housing Authority. I don't know if the Minister is planning any new and additional resources to help with the community development and the tenant education challenge to make home ownership work. We all want it to work, but it is going to need more resources than the Housing Corporation now has, more preparation of the tenants and I would suspect more time.

One of the things I am now beginning to conclude is that the one thing wrong with this rent scale is it is too much too soon. I think, if the changes were phased in over a longer period of time, yes, I know we will take a hit from the federal government.

Madam Speaker, home ownership is new in the eastern Arctic. Perhaps the eastern Arctic has a break on rents, but the eastern Arctic hasn't had the same degree of support on home ownership programs. I remember the SHAG program when I was first a Member here. I asked a question, why is the SHAG program not available in Baffin Island? There was a SHAG program of the Housing Corporation. It wasn't available on Baffin Island. We are catching up with home ownership in the Baffin.

Before you put the screws on with inordinate, unendurable, unbearable rent increases, you have to pave the way so that people can be prepared to manage the money and make their necessary steps towards home ownership.

Madam Speaker, there are many problems with this policy. I will have an opportunity to deal with them in committee of the whole today. I don't want to take the valuable time of Members this afternoon at length, but I want to say that I had not planned to make a reply today, but I feel that this is the last straw after the manner in which the water and sewer policy was dropped on us, this municipal legislation was dealt with, this rental scale change was dealt with and after the somewhat cavalier manner in which some of my well-intentioned questions have been dealt with in this Assembly, I felt the time is appropriate for me to stand up and say, I don't feel that I am being respected as an ordinary Member. My constituents don't feel that they are being properly involved in decision-making. If consensus government means consultation -- real consultation and not token consultation -- then let's make sure these advisory committees, the reshaping northern government working group, the Advisory Committee on Social Housing and the consultation processes that are laid out to deal with the latest major issue of the rent scale change, are meaningful and can lead to constructive criticism and improvement of the work done by the bureaucrats, which is often done in secret and behind closed doors.

So, Madam Speaker, I thank Members for their indulgence and the opportunity to rant and rave a bit. I am glad this session is coming to an end. Perhaps I will calm down once the session is over. I do want to work with the government in a positive way and with the Minister of Housing in a positive way. I admire him for many of the initiatives that he has taken. I admire him for having the courage to deal with this issue. But with all respect, he has some very good policy people who have worked very hard, but they need help. They need to know the situation in Iqaluit and in other communities if they really want to make

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this thing work. I am willing to help. I hope my advice will be considered and can lead to changes in the rent scale. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. 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. The honourable Member for Baffin Central, Ms. Mike.

#### ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### **HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 7-12(6), Terms of Reference: Independent Review of Contract Termination - Hay River Group Home.

##### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Nerysoo.

##### **HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to table two documents. I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 8-12(6), Voices: Direction for Improving the Education Act, translated into Inuktitut.

Madam Speaker, I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 9-12(6), Annual Report 1992-93, Science Institute of the Northwest Territories.

##### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Hay River, Mr. Pollard.

##### **HON. JOHN POLLARD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 10-12(6), Public Service Annual Report, 1992-93. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

##### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

##### **HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I have two documents to table. Tabled Document 11-12(6) is Budget Projections for the Establishment and Operation of an Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Regime.

The other document I wish to table is Tabled Document 12-12(6), Legal Services Board of the Northwest Territories, Annual Report, 1992-93. Thank you.

##### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 12, tabling of documents. Madam Premier.

##### **HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 13-12(6), Minister of Transportation's Response to the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions regarding the Elimination of the Northwest Territories Highway Transport Board.

Madam Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 14-12(6), Open for Business: Privatization of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. Thank you.

##### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

##### **MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table a three page document from the staff of the Iqaluit Housing Authority. Tabled Document 15-12(6) is entitled, Initial Thoughts on Rent Scale Changes, April 7, 1994. Thank you.

##### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Whitford.

##### **MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to table a document. Tabled Document 16-12(6) is a letter written to Mr. Ningark from the mayor of the Hamlet of Pelly Bay concerning the roll-back of the date for the proposed cuts of the food air freight subsidy.

##### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

##### **MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to table, Tabled Document 17-12(6) which is a letter from a

constituent in Coppermine outlining his concerns with the situation of his taking a wolverine out of season. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 18-12(6), 1992-93 Annual Report of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Madam Speaker, it is not under tabling of documents, but I would like to move a Member's statement to the committee of the whole.

Motion To Move Minister's Statement 6-12(6): To Committee Of The Whole, Carried

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik, that Minister's Statement 6-12(6), Terms of Reference - Hay River Group Home, be moved in committee of the whole for discussion today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

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Minister's Statement 6-12(6) will be placed into committee of the whole on the order paper for today. Item 12, tabling of documents. Madam Premier.

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**

Madam Speaker, I wish to table, Tabled Document 19-12(6), Government of the Northwest Territories' Response to the Languages Commissioner's 1992-93 Annual Report, April 1994. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTION**

Motion 4-12(6): Setting Of Sitting Hours By Speaker

**MR. KOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, April 8, 1994, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House.

Madam Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 13, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

Motion 5-12(6): Recommendation To Revoke Appointment Of Honourable Rebecca Mike To The Executive Council

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, April 11, 1994, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that this Assembly formally revoke the pleasure of the Assembly from the appointment as an Executive Member of the Honourable Rebecca Mike.

And further, that this Assembly recommends that a new Member be chosen to sit on the Executive Council.



Madam Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Mahsi cho.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 13, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Motion 6-12(6): Tabled Document 14-12(6) "Open for Business" Privatizing The Northwest Territories Power Corporation

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, April 11, 1994, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that Tabled Document 14-12(6), Open for Business: Privatizing the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, be moved into committee of the whole for discussion today.

Madam Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 13, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

Motion 7-12(6): Tabled Document 6-12(6) "Terms Of Reference For Independent Review Contract Termination - Hay River Group Home"

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, April 11, 1994, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that Tabled Document 7-12(6), Terms of Reference for an Independent Review: Contract Termination - Hay River Group Home, be moved in to committee of the whole for discussion today.

Madam Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 13, notices of motion. Item 14, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

ITEM 15: MOTIONS

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion regarding sitting hours today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with Motion 4-12(6). Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Koe.

Motion 4-12(6): Setting Of Sitting Hours By Speaker, Carried

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion concerning Tabled Document 14-12(6).

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with his motion. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Dent.

Motion 6-12(6): Tabled Document 14-12(6) "Open For Business" Privatizing The Northwest Territories Power Corporation, Carried

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and honourable colleagues.

WHEREAS, the document, "Open for Business" Privatizing the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, has been tabled in this House;

AND WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the public for the document to be discussed by this Legislature;

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that Tabled Document 14-12(6), "Open for Business" Privatizing the Northwest Territories Power Corporation," be moved into committee of the whole for discussion today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

This will also be placed on the order paper. Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion regarding the terms of reference for the termination of the contract for the Hay River group home.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with his motion. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Koe.

Motion 7-12(6): Tabled Document 6-12(6) "Terms of Reference For Independent Review Contract Termination - Hay River Group Home," Carried

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

WHEREAS, the document "Terms of Reference for an Independent Review - Contract Termination Hay River Group Home" has been tabled in this House;

AND WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the public for the document to be discussed by the legislature;

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave that Tabled Document 7-12(6), "Terms of Reference for an Independent Review - Contract Termination Hay River Group Home" be moved into committee of the whole for discussion today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today with regard to the recommendation to revoke the appointment of the Honourable Rebecca Mike from the Executive Council.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with Motion 5-12(6). Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Gargan.

Motion 5-12(6): Recommendation To Revoke Appointment Of Honourable Rebecca Mike To The Executive Council

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, section 55(1), the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner the appointment of Members to the Executive Council;

AND WHEREAS, pursuant to section 55(2), the persons appointed to hold office during the pleasure of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS, the Assembly, pursuant to these powers, has chosen the Honourable Rebecca Mike to sit as a Member of the Executive Council;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that this Assembly formally revoke the pleasure of the Assembly from the appointment as an Executive Member of the Honourable Rebecca Mike;

AND FURTHER, that this Assembly recommends that a new Member be chosen to sit on the Executive Council.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, since November of last year, discussions have been made with regard to the mid-term review and some of the performances of the Ministers. In the discussions in the Members' statements, one of the things that came out was there was unanimous agreement that the Honourable Rebecca Mike's performance, both leading up to the review and during the review, was unacceptable resulting in a grade of "f."

There are three major areas of concern with this Minister. The Minister is not open when questioned by Members. The purpose of question period is to raise areas of concern with the Minister, not personally attack her. However, the Minister takes

all questions as an attack and deals with them in a hostile and defensive manner. The Minister has also failed to take full responsibility for her department, instead constantly referring to the problems left by previous Ministers. These were statements made, Madam Speaker, during the mid-term review. Members were also appalled when Ms. Mike admitted she disregarded the interim report of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. Those reports were issued to allow the government to begin working on this important area. It is inexcusable that the Minister has essentially ignored these reports. The third one was with regard to Social Services. It is incumbent upon her to push social issues in Cabinet. Ms. Mike has shown no leadership in this area. As a result, social issues do not appear to be a Cabinet priority.

Madam Speaker, these are some of the comments that were made at that time. During the last several weeks, this has been discussed by ordinary Members, to a point where we weren't going to get anywhere with the way things were going in that area. All ordinary Members know that we have discussed this in length and we seem to be at a stalemate on what to do. Naturally, Mr. Ningark, as a representative on OMC, did make a statement to that regard. He made a statement to the effect that although they are not happy with the Minister, it was up to the Premier to do this.

I believe on December 4, there was a motion passed in this House to rename the Government Leader "Premier," which gives her the further powers on this responsibility. If my understanding is correct, the Premier in any other province, or the Prime Minister for that matter, deals with his Cabinet as he sees fit. This was passed unanimously by the Members of this House. Unfortunately, the Government Leader chose not to address the issue at that time.

Madam Speaker, during the next few months, there are going to be a lot of issues that are coming up that the Minister has to deal with. One of them is social reform. In that regard, we have a situation where social assistance has to be addressed, family allowance has to be addressed, social security has to be addressed, shelters for women have to be addressed, daycare has to be addressed, disabled persons have to be addressed, blind people have to be addressed, families of abused environments have to be addressed, the family law review committee has to be addressed and, also, the senior citizens' homes all have to be addressed. Naturally, the Greenway group home has to be addressed as well.

Those issues are not going to go away because the Minister is responsible. It concerns me that if we don't address those situations and the Minister who is responsible for that area, we might be put into a situation where it is unfair to the Minister, herself, whether she can carry out that big a responsibility.

I have a concern, Madam Speaker. In my constituency, we don't have that big of a social assistance issue. Unemployment is quite low, but I have a lot of senior citizens, a lot of children and a lot of women in my constituency who need to have their concerns addressed. I'm afraid that even this kind of load, which isn't to this point that great a work-load, hasn't been responded to in the appropriate way.

Madam Speaker, before I close, I made a statement earlier and I want to comment on it. My statement was not with regard to the Minister but with regard to the responsibilities carried out by other Ministers. We give certain Minister's lighter loads and that is one of my biggest concerns. I feel it is unfair for some Ministers to be carrying more than their share of the responsibilities. I don't think that's right. Any Minister who thinks it is should resign. I don't think it's fair for certain Ministers to be carrying out everything, while others are not. That was the other concern I wanted to talk about.

I will say this, to all the Members here -- or at least the Members who wish to address this -- that this issue has gone on long enough. The media has picked up on it. The Premier has tried to address it but I wasn't satisfied with the responses I was getting and I walked out of the meeting. We have to stand up in this House and answer to the public. I'm doing this in fairness to my constituency, but also in fairness to the honourable Minister of Social Services. Perhaps it is time we resolve the issue instead of waiting and having her worried all summer long and not able to concentrate on her job.

I would hope that, once we resolve this, we can let the issue rest. I don't intend to get up again in this House and make statements with Members who don't back up what they say. I certainly don't want to be put into a situation where I'm the fall guy for the rest of the Members. I would like to say to the Member that I think, in all fairness, we have to deal with the issue now. It's not going to wait. I can make a prediction right now, Madam Speaker, and that is, from henceforth to the end of our mandate, I don't think there will be another motion of this kind coming up. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. As a seconder to this motion, I would like to say a few words. The reason I agreed to second this motion is because we're here as legislators to represent our people in the communities and to provide the best programs and services we can to them. We bring the issues into the House and try to get answers from different Ministers who have been elected by all of us to take on different departments, lead them, and take on the responsibility as Ministers.

Our job here is to try to represent our people by asking questions and by trying to get answers from the Ministers. Since the review and since these proceedings are now viewed publicly on television in the communities, people in the communities watch these proceedings and know now what is going on in the House. They know what kinds of questions are being asked and what kinds of answers we're getting. The people in the communities see the kinds of responses we're receiving.

I've been told, many times, that there seems to be a lack of response from the Honourable Rebecca Mike on important questions. As a result of that, I thought it would be good to see if we could make some changes. I said this privately and I'm saying it publicly now that I think we've been dealing with this long enough and this is the place to make a decision. We're all elected here to make decisions.

I'm supporting this motion of my colleague to see what everybody here feels like. I agree with my honourable colleague, Mr. Gargan, that once we

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decide how we are going to deal with this motion, we leave it at that. Some Members wanted to leave it with a strong statement. I agreed with that, however, a strong statement would be made, but the problem would still be there. If Members in this House feel she's doing well enough, they have to vote that way.

The other problem I have is the rest of the Cabinet Members are carrying very heavy loads. The Premier indicated that she assigns the work-load according to the abilities of the Members of the Cabinet. She made that statement to us yesterday in Caucus. I

want to point out the work-load that we have for the rest of our term, with the amalgamation of Social Services and Health that is coming, and the revision of the income programs. There is a lot of work. I just wanted to clear the air by agreeing to have my name as a seconder to this motion. We'll put it on the floor and decide here whether we support this motion or not. Mahsi.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Whitford.

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This issue has been on my mind quite a lot since the discussion and I don't think that since December 3, 1992, I've gone through as bad a few hours as I have in this last 24 hours. I thought I would just stand up to say that this morning when the statement was made by our representative of OMC, I believe it was collective. I had an opportunity to speak in OMC where the issue was at its peak. Where the issue is of concern and it's of concern to all Members, and it's not that I disagree with my honourable friend, Mr. Gargan, in all of the things that he's said and what Mr. Antoine has said on behalf of the Members that he speaks for, but I thought that the statement said it all.

I personally had asked the Premier when I had a chance to speak with her in a meeting, and I expressed my concerns. The Premier assured me that everything was okay. I wanted to leave it at that because I personally have no problem with the decision that the Premier makes as far as her Cabinet. I was in her Cabinet and any decision that she made, I followed. The statement this morning said exactly that. That the Premier has been notified of the decisions of many of the Members, my feelings included. I was assured by the Premier that there was no problem that she couldn't handle. I trust the Premier and I respect her decision. With that, Madam Speaker, I will not support the motion but I will not oppose it. I will abstain from voting on this as was advised by my constituents, who I took the time to phone yesterday. It was also the decision of the Caucus that I belong to. With that, Madam Speaker, thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I, like many of my colleagues, have had some concerns with the performance of the honourable Member in this House since I have become a Member. I have seen some improvement since the fall and I think she is making a concerted effort toward improving her performance, particularly in answering questions in this house. However, I feel that the issue of addressing the Cabinet Member's performance and the accountability as noted in the statement by the chairman of the Ordinary Members' Caucus this morning is not a direct responsibility of us as ordinary Members of this House. I believe the Madam Premier was elected by Members of this House to provide the leadership to the Northwest Territories, to the Legislative Assembly, and to the Cabinet. I believe she has a responsibility in dealing with this problem if she perceives it as a problem. That would include any performance and the accountability of her Cabinet Members. Because of that, Madam Speaker, I don't feel it's my decision; I'll be voting against the motion. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Baffin South, Mr. Pudlat.

**MR. PUDLAT:**

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a short comment to make with regard to the motion. During our meetings of Ordinary Member's Caucus I have stated, not because I'm reluctant or afraid of any Ministers or Members, but I have stated during our OMC meetings that I would talk about this in the House. I would state my position this time around, not in OMC, as I stated earlier, Madam Speaker. I have not changed my mind with regard to the vote. Myself, I haven't been able to come to a conclusion as to where I might stand. I am not sure whether I'll be able to be voting against or for the motion. It's not because I'm afraid of what certain Members might say. That's just the way I feel personally. I haven't been able to come to a conclusion. Not because I'm trying to take it easy on any other Members or not because I'm trying to be different. I will be undecided with regard to this particular motion. I just wanted to tell you that I will probably abstain from voting on the motion. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I worked with OMC in drafting the statement which was read by our chairman, Mr. Ningark, earlier today. The key point in that statement to me was that the Premier should play the lead role in assigning responsibility and imposing discipline where necessary. I strongly support that view, Madam Speaker. As a matter of fact, during the first territorial leadership committee I supported the motion which would have allowed the Premier to select her own Cabinet. In spite of the fact that the motion was unsuccessful at that time, I still believe that the Premier should be held accountable for the overall performance of her Cabinet. To put it in a sports-like comparison, she's the coach of the team and it's up to the coach to make sure that the team is winning.

Madam Speaker, as the OMC statement said earlier today, the Premier obviously has confidence in the Minister or she would have taken action. Like my colleagues on the Ordinary Members' Caucus, I intend to watch carefully and evaluate the performance of the Premier by how her Cabinet performs to see if she is providing leadership and if she is building a team. Because I support the position put forward by OMC, at this time I'm not going to try and make the decision either way for the Premier and so I will be abstaining from this vote.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Ballantyne.

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**MR. BALLANTYNE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I, too, was part of drafting the statement that was read by the leader of OMC this morning. I stand by that statement. I had something to do with some of the stronger terms in that statement. The Caucus gave the Premier the power of discipline. Like my honourable colleague, not just once but twice I've supported the concept of the Premier picking their own Cabinet. That hasn't been successful. The Premier indicated to us in Ordinary Members' Caucus that she had confidence in the Minister at this point. I'll give the Premier and the Minister the benefit of the doubt. I think the

choice and the accountability is that of the Premier. I won't be voting for or against this motion but I want to publicly state that if I'm not happy with the decisions of the Premier for any of her Cabinet Ministers, that in the fall session I will vote to take away that right of discipline from the Premier. I'm holding the Premier accountable for the discipline of all of her Ministers and will be watching closely how she exercises that power. I will abstain from this motion. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Madam Speaker, I would like to say that I admire Mr. Gargan for having the courage of his convictions to bring this motion forward and Mr. Antoine to second it. I know that wasn't an easy decision. I know that, when we work closely together in this Assembly, it is difficult to be hard on one another. Perhaps that is one of the weaknesses in our system. We tend to be kind to one another in many difficult situations.

Whatever the result of the vote today, I think it is appropriate that the matter not be skated over and be dealt with here today. It has been on everyone's minds for some months and I am sure, most particularly, the Member for Baffin Central, with whom I sympathize. I have been in the same situation she is in now. Once, a motion of non-confidence was put against me. Once, a motion of non-confidence was threatened to be put against me. I understand what she is going through. I think, when all is said and done, it will have been appropriate to bring the matter to a head today. I admire Mr. Gargan for saying that the matter, in his view, will have been put to rest.

I think we all are concerned about work-load. I understand, having been on Cabinet, the pressures that are on Ministers. I have seen Mr. Pollard hobbling around on his cane at times.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Mr. Patterson, could I remind you to make your comments relevant to the motion that is on the floor.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think that part of the motivation for the motion, according to the mover, was a concern about the inequitable distribution of work-load. I want to say briefly on that point, Madam

Speaker, that I think this is something we should be concerned about. I think the government has put on itself a very ambitious time table. I formed the conclusion, when I was Minister of Health and Social Services long ago, that it would be impossible or extremely difficult to amalgamate the two departments. I became convinced that it was going to be, in itself, a massive undertaking. Set aside income support reform, dealing with sexual abuse, suicide and the alcohol and drug issues. That alone is a full-time occupation if it is going to be done well.

With respect to the new Ministers in Cabinet, it will be a full-time occupation for even an experienced Minister. The problem being, Madam Speaker, that when you have two bureaucracies discussing jurisdictions, responsibilities, amalgamations and downsizing, you have to be a strong leader in order to make progress because of the nature of bureaucracies.

I don't want to get off track, Madam Speaker, but I believe that it is the Premier and Members of Cabinet who know better even than myself as an ordinary Member whether they can carry on with the work-load they have over the next number of months and handle all of the agenda items on their plate with the mix of strengths and weaknesses that there are now on Cabinet. We see the Ministers perform in question period, in committees, but we don't see them doing their day-to-day work. My position is, which is similar to Mr. Dent's, I defer to the Premier and Members of her Cabinet as to whether or not they think the present mix of experienced and new Members is adequate to undertake the work remaining in the life of this session.

Madam Speaker, I am going to be voting so as to allow the Premier and Cabinet to make this decision. I think if the Premier and the Cabinet stand up and vote against the motion, then, to me, that will be a clear indication that the Premier and her colleagues have decided that they can carry on and handle the high expectations of the people of the Northwest Territories and ordinary Members here. I think the ball rests with the Cabinet and particularly with the Premier, Madam Speaker.

I do recall that, in 1985, when there was a similar motion also made by Mr. Gargan, and also difficult for all of us to deal with, the Cabinet of the day which I was a part of decided that there would be a free vote. I know Cabinet has met on this issue just not too many minutes ago. Perhaps they have taken some position. I am very interested to find out what that

position is. We will soon know. I would welcome the Premier's thoughts on this matter.

I would like to close by saying that, whatever the result today, I would like to assure the Premier that she has my full support for taking the disciplinary measures and the performance monitoring measures as she sees fit, provided it is done in the spirit of fairness and with her very best information available to her. I think it is the Premier who knows best, whether the situation is manageable or not. I have been in her shoes. I know that, sometimes, there are matters that cannot be discussed in the Legislative Assembly, that are factors in the Premier's judgment of the performance of the Ministers, matters that are confidential, Cabinet privileged issues, which we don't know about and really have no right to know about in this House.

I do think it would be a terrible setback to the evaluation of responsible government and the office of the leader of the elected executive, the Government Leader and now the Premier, if we were to have to decide this fall that somehow this responsibility for disciplining and monitoring Ministers should fall back on the Members of this Assembly. I think that would be a step backwards. I think we all want to see the Premier have that authority and have the courage to exercise it, if required. I, for one, would respect the Premier's action if she should take it today or in future.

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Madam Speaker, I have taken some brief time to consult with some valued constituents on this matter. I think the general advice I got was that, even though -- when I was in this situation myself as a Minister -- the judgment of the House and the honourable Members which I respected was rather strong and perhaps, in the view of some of my constituents, rather harsh, my trusted advisors have suggested that it is a complicated matter, a difficult job. The Premier knows more about this issue than any of us. Being a Member for Baffin and being a neighbouring constituent of the honourable Minister who, believe it or not, wants to cultivate good relations with her constituents, I believe I should leave the matter to the Premier and the Cabinet. So, after some consideration over months and particularly during the last number of hours, I'm going to be like Mr. Dent and vote so as to allow the Premier and Cabinet to make this decision. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much. Madam Speaker, I am a messenger in this case, but not a killer. I believe that Madam Premier, when she met with OMC, indicated that she's satisfied with the performance of the Minister at this point in time. She indicated that there has been some improvement in the performance the Minister in question, in this case, Ms. Rebecca Mike.

Madam Speaker, there has been some speculation that in OMC and Caucus people talked behind closed doors about whether to get rid of Rebecca Mike from the portfolio. This has gone on, not only in OMC, but also on the Cabinet side. I would like to thank the mover of the motion, Mr. Gargan, and the seconder of the motion, Mr. Antoine, for giving us the opportunity to talk about this openly and not behind closed doors.

---Applause

Madam Speaker, I believe in giving my colleague another chance to see another day, for my Creator has given me another chance so many times in the past so that I can stand up and talk on this matter. Madam Speaker, like my colleague from the Kitikmeot region, Kelvin Ng, I will be voting against the motion. But, again, I would like to express my appreciation for the mover and the seconder of the motion. Thank you very much.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk.

**MR. PUDLUK:**

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to make a brief comment on the motion. This is not the first time that I've been in this situation. This has come up about three times since I became a Member in 1975, when we tried to remove a Minister from the Cabinet. I appreciate that the motion was put on the floor so that we can comment on the motion, so that our constituents can hear.

I think that in the future, it will be difficult at times when the Premier is able to remove Ministers from the Cabinet on her own. In some cases, it would be fine if she is given that power. We all think differently. I'm sure some of us would be very unhappy if the Premier

removed a Minister while Members approved of that particular Minister. A motion would probably be introduced if a Premier is able to remove a Minister and we didn't approve.

We all know today that the Premier can remove a Minister for logical reasons. We all witnessed that when she removed a Minister before. But, if there isn't a legitimate reason, then she can't remove a Minister from the Cabinet. If she removed a Minister we approved of, I'm sure most of the Members would be unhappy about that decision. I don't want to wait until the fall. If we remove Ministers from Cabinet just when they're getting to know their responsibilities, those people who consider running for Cabinet would have those setbacks. I won't be supporting the motion. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Amittuq, Mr. Allooloo.

**MR. ALLOOLOO:**

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. We all know now that it is a very heavy work load to be a Minister, especially with her portfolio. We want to move forward as a government. We started in 1967 with an appointed council, with the Commissioner in charge of the council. Even when we started to have elected Members, the Commissioner was in charge. But now we select our own Speaker, Premier and we can now say we're all elected.

Madam Speaker, up to now the Premier hasn't had the authority to remove a Minister. I feel that the Premier, as we said to her before, should discipline the Ministers and remove Ministers if she has a legitimate reason. We have now given her the authority to remove a Minister and the Premier should be responsible for that. She said that she is happy with the work of the Minister in question right now. The Minister in question has said she was happy with her job, as Mr. Patterson and Mr. Dent said. I won't be voting on this because I am sure this can be solved with Cabinet. I think the Premier can do what she thinks. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. Madam Premier.

**HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:**



Madam Speaker, I, too, will say that it took courage to bring the motion on to the floor. I fully realize that this topic has been discussed other than in this House. I want to assure the Member, as well, by changing the name from Government Leader to Premier did not extend any further powers to my position; it was merely a name change.

I, too, in the past have suggested that if we wanted to take a further evolution on responsibilities that the Premier should also be allowed to pick the Ministers. However, our decision together was to continue with the process. As a result, the responsibility, that I take very seriously and which has been put into my hands, is to make sure the job gets done to the best of the ability that we have. When the rating process was put in place what really didn't happen was a way on how the Members wanted to monitor this. One of the concerns they had was using the word defensive when a question was placed to the honourable Member. In my discussions, I believe this is an area where there was great improvement. I think the Members will understand, as well, when you're new and when there are so many people who have a great deal of experience that you have to answer to, you do have a feeling of defensiveness. You feel that

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perhaps it's a new area that you've taken and it's very difficult.

There's been a question of work-load. As Members know, in Canada, in many places in the world, and in the Northwest Territories, people are changing their focus, people are moving much more quickly to know and feel that, whether it's constitutionally, or with rights on programs, there is a demand for delivery. A number of Members who have had experience before will realize when we discuss portfolios, one of the most critical areas that people have an opposition to taking on a responsibility is to health and mainly to social services because it's always been determined, particularly social services, that this is an area where you were dealing with the end result of social breakdown, the end result of people evolving and feeling not part of the system so therefore struggling to take part. In that struggle to take part, people question their own ability to be worthwhile citizens. Therefore, this portfolio, although it may appear small in size, is an area which affects many of the people who have ended up at the bottom of the ladder.

I know many of us have been in a situation where... we've been a privileged group of people where we've

been able to take part in the educational system, maybe we've had parents that supported us more, maybe we had communities that had more support, but we have to realize that times are changing and people are demanding more and more from the government to lend support in areas where the families should be there, where the communities should be there. People are demanding those changes to try to reflect that and give that support back to community, back to families. When you do that it has to be understood there has been a great deal of stress and strain in that area pulling on people's emotions, pulling on people's self-esteem, pulling on people's ability to make a living, pulling on people's ability to feel good about themselves. I know there have been questions about work-load. This is a very heavy work-load. In dealing with clinical areas of some program delivery, it's much easier to measure success, measure action against the final output as it represents individuals. This is hard to measure, it's difficult to measure.

I want to bring to your attention some of the things that have happened in the last little while. Mind you, this is not our work ourselves but has been cooperative work with the standing committees, with people who have taken much interest in the social well-being of Northwest Territories residents. In the last while what we've done under the direction and involvement of the Minister, and these things sometimes can not be translated and sometimes go astray in measuring whether a person is reacting or responding to the wishes of the Legislative Assembly.

Before us, we have a Guardianship and Trusteeship Act. We've been struggling with that for ten years or more. We've been struggling with the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act for many, many years to say something of value to traditional people and how they do things, how do we give it recognition? We come to you with an income reform package and this has been done with the involvement of the Minister and the particular person that we're talking about. The staff housing strategy has not gone away or been developed without a great deal of pain. The youth initiative program is something that has come to fruition. The child welfare reform, response to the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. I know in one of the responses it was said that the Minister wasn't responsive, but at that time we weren't able, because of the cross-section of that responsibility and reaching other departments, to have a comprehensive report and response.

The alcohol and drug workers' salaries have been looked at. The strategic plan for alcohol and drug services, the social services human resource plan, the training program for family violence workers and shelters, the solvent abuse strategy, the adolescent solvent abuse pilot programs. These are things that have been brought forward in the last little while and these are issues that have been on the table previously over a long period of time. I believe that some of these areas would not have happened if it wasn't for the dedication of the Minister that's responsible. It took a great deal of involvement and listening to people to get to that stage.

Madam Speaker, I feel that at this time there has been improvement in this Minister's responsibility to the specific area that she's responsible for. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. I've been following the discussions today with a lot of interest and I've been obviously very interested in this area since last fall when we went through the mid-term review. I was one of the ordinary Members who tried to influence some action last November, once the review was completed, but even before the review, and once the review was done.

Today in this House I have not heard one Member stand up and speak in support of the Minister in question. Not one Member. The focus today has been on the Premier and on her ability to lead and provide leadership. Most Members have expressed that opinion and their support of the Premier. I think we have all been thinking about this a great deal. Many of us are procrastinating a great deal on this issue as to what we do. We have been doing this since last fall. The comments that were made today and during this past week in our back room discussions are all the same ones that we went through last fall.

In terms of the Premier exercising the authority to remove Ministers, I think only once in this past two and a half years has she done that where she asked a Minister for his resignation.

I support the actions of the mover and the seconder in getting this out in the open. That took some courage. I certainly support the move to do that and to be able to discuss this publicly. The Minister in question, after the mid-term review, has stated publicly because we had given her a failing grade that the Members put me in and the Members have to take me out. I think that was in several newspapers and I heard it personally. I honestly believe that it is up to us as Members to exercise some responsibility and vote in the best way we can. I think democracy has to take its course and it is going to happen one way or another today. We have to live by the results. I don't think anybody should take any of this personally. It is one person, one vote. I think the people who are abstaining are doing so because they are supporting the Premier and want the Premier to make a decision

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one way or another. We will live with it. I, personally, will vote in favour of the motion. Mahsi.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the motion. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today, when my colleague for Natilikmiot, did a Member's statement on behalf of ordinary Members, I was in favour of the comments that he made. But, things have changed. I listened to a number of Members with great interest when they spoke to the motion in front of us. I am glad that it was brought forward. It took a great deal of courage. I realize that most of the Members, as my colleague for Inuvik has indicated, are hoping that the Premier would take some sort of action, but that is not the issue that is under discussion. The question that is in front of us is with regard to one specific Executive Council Member.

Madam Speaker, I realize that there has been some improvement made by the Minister since the last review. I know that the Executive has been very supportive. That is why she did make some sort of improvement. Nevertheless, I still remain unconvinced that the Minister, in my view, is demonstrating the level of competence expected as a Cabinet Minister.

Since we introduced television, many people have commented to me about the actions that take place in

this House. It is reflected on this House. I thought seriously about how I should vote this afternoon. I am not going to, as other Members have, leave it up to the Premier to decide. As my colleague from Inuvik indicated, the honourable Member in question has publicly stated that it was the Members of this House who put her into that position, and if they weren't satisfied with her then they should have taken her out. I read that in the paper. Now, we have an opportunity in front of us that you could decide for yourself to either go one way or the other.

I have nothing against the honourable Member in question whether she is on that side of the House or on this side. If she is on this side of the House, I would support the initiative that she undertakes and even help her. Earlier on, Madam Speaker, I indicated that everything we do here, people outside this House see us, especially on television. I am not too pleased with the conduct of the Minister who is in question. I still claim that the competence level is not there, although there have been improvements within the last few months. Members of this House have to seriously consider how they are going to vote. Not only that, Madam Speaker, I am curious to see how the Executive Members are going to vote or how they are going to respond to this particular motion, to see if they are going to speak to the motion or not. They are the ones who work on a day-to-day basis with the Member in question.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I will be supporting the motion under consideration. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. I just want to advise Members, by the authority vested in me by Motion 4-12(6), we will continue past the ordinary time that we generally set until we feel the business of the House is completed. To the

motion. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan, closing remarks.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Madam Speaker, I have listened with interest to the Members. I want to thank the Members who are supporting me. I also want to thank the Members who are being honest enough to vote against it and also the Members who are abstaining. This is a controversial issue. I realize that, Madam Speaker. Even though we say sometimes we are a consensus government, when it comes to controversial issues, it

is almost predictable who will vote for it, abstain from it and who will vote against it. Any kind of motion that is diplomatic, nice and easy, or whatever you want to call it, gets unanimous consent. But when we take on a controversial issue like this, we should maintain some kind of integrity in this House and among the Members too. This is an issue that is far too big to ignore.

I say to ordinary Members that we have dwelt on this issue for a couple of weeks now and we've wasted our time, a lot of our time, trying to address this issue. The only solution we could find was to make a nice little statement against the Premier. But, we really haven't addressed the issue, and that is, whether or not certain Ministers can take on certain responsibilities.

The other issue, Madam Speaker, is that during the next year a lot of committee Members are going to be tied down with committee work on the government's behalf. I just cannot see ordinary Members running after Ministers, doing follow-up work, while they should be out there doing their own work and committee work too. So, whatever happens, a Member has to be able to travel and not worry about what is going to happen at the Executive level. They should be able to travel and say, this Minister will follow up on my concerns.

I want to tell all the Members here, and especially the ordinary Members, that I'm not after the Minister's job. I'm also not afraid of the Minister or afraid to address this issue in public. I'm not going to be afraid because I want to do certain projects or perhaps I have been asking for little favours and I'm afraid I will lose them. This goes beyond what you are going to get in capital allocations. This goes beyond whether or not you're going to get in next fall. This goes beyond that. It is a situation about whether we, as Members, the 24 of us, can carry out our work without overburdening each other. I see myself perhaps being overburdened by a Minister who maybe cannot carry out her duties.

Madam Speaker, the other thing I want to say, too, is I'm not on any of the Executive's consultation lists. I've been a Member now for ten years and have yet to see Ministers coming up to me to ask certain favours. If they did, they would be very lucky if I did it. I'm not a person who is easily manipulated. Members of the Executive Council have been entrusted with a great responsibility by the Members of this House. We have entrusted these Members with these responsibilities because we felt they were the best people to do the job.

I appreciate that the Minister regularly faces difficult situations and difficult decisions. They are not perfect and they will sometimes make mistakes. Occasional errors in judgement are part of any job and a Member of this House understands that. But the Members of this House, indeed all citizens of the Northwest Territories, expect a certain standard of performance from Members of the Executive Council. The work of the government directly affects almost every aspect of life of every northerner. If that work is not done

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properly, northerners can suffer.

Madam Speaker, I regret it is my opinion that the honourable Member for Baffin Central has not been able to provide strong guidance and leadership to her department. While I appreciate the efforts the honourable Member has made as a Minister, I feel her performance is not adequate and has not met the expectations of some Members of this House or of the residents of the Northwest Territories.

We have given the honourable Member every opportunity to show this House she is able to perform the tasks assigned to her, but we cannot continue to dance around this issue. Some Members of this House have lacked confidence in the honourable Member's ability for quite a while and we must now make a decision. We must either leave the issue alone or decide now to face facts. I believe it is time to thank the honourable Member for her efforts and to find another Member who may be more capable and better able to get the job done. That is why I have introduced this motion of non-confidence today.

Madam Speaker, I hold nothing against Members for the decisions they are going to make, nor do I hope the honourable Member for Baffin Central holds this motion against me. I would request a recorded vote.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. A recorded vote is being requested. Mr. Clerk.

Recorded Vote

All those in favour of the motion, please rise.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Gargan, Mr. Zoe, Mr. Koe, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Lewis.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

All those opposed to the motion, please rise.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Ng, Mr. Arngna'naaq, Mr. Pollard, Ms. Cournoyea, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Morin, Mr. Nerysoo, Mr. Ningark.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

All those abstaining from the motion, please rise.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Mr. Patterson, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Dent, Mr. Ballantyne, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Allooloo, Ms. Mike, Mr. Whitford.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The motion is defeated, with eight against, five for, and eight abstentions.

---Defeated

The next order of business, item 15, motions. Item 16, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed with first reading of Bill 6.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with first reading of Bill 6. Are there any nays?

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Nay.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Honourable Member, you have not received unanimous consent to proceed with Bill 6. Item 16, first reading of bills. Item 17, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Baffin Central, Ms. Mike.

ITEM 17: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 2: Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kivallivik, that Bill 2,

Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act, be read for the second time.

Madam Speaker, this bill sets out the simple procedure to obtain recognition of the aboriginal custom adoption that will have the effect of a court order.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

Bill 2 has had second reading. The bill stands referred to committee. Item 17, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Baffin Central, Ms. Mike.

Bill 3: Guardianship And Trusteeship Act

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that Bill 3, Guardianship and Trusteeship Act, be read for the second time.

Madam Speaker, this bill provides for the court appointment of the guardian to make decisions on behalf of an adult who is incapable of independently managing his or her personal care or health care and for the court appointment of the trustee for an adult who is incapable of independently managing his or her financial affairs.

Some of the key provisions of this bill are concerned with the establishment of the office of the public guardian; the circumstances under which an adult may be found by a court to be in need of a guardian or a trustee; the procedures by which application may be made to the Supreme Court for guardianship and trusteeship orders; the powers and duties of the guardian or trustee when acting on behalf of an adult; and the consequential amendments that are required

to integrate this bill with the Public Trustees Act, the Trustees Act and the Mental Health Act. Thank you.

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**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Lewis.

**MR. LEWIS:**

I have taken a personal interest in this issue of guardianship for the last several years, Madam Speaker. I have been to several seminars on the whole issue of guardianship, and I have been in consultation with people who are considered to be innovators in both Manitoba and British Columbia, where they are trying to come to grips with this problem in a way that is a little bit different to what we were used to in the 1950s and 1960s. In my opinion, this bill does not reflect progressive, modern thinking about the way in which guardianship should be exercised on behalf of those people who may be capable of issuing a little bit of judgment themselves about a trustee relationship that makes more sense to them. Even though they perhaps do not have the capacities that everybody else has, there is some modern thinking today about how they should be approached. For that reason, I cannot support the principle of this bill.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the principle of the bill.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

Bill 3 has had second reading. Accordingly, Bill 3 will stand referred to a committee. Item 17, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Kivallivik, Mr. Arnagna'naaq.

Bill 9: An Act To Amend The Charter Communities Act

**HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:**

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin Central, that Bill 9, An Act to Amend the Charter Communities Act, be read for the second time.

Madam Speaker, this bill clarifies the authority of a municipal corporation to establish, operate and restore public quarries. The bill also clarifies the authority of a municipal corporation to enter into and implement an agreement that delegates responsibility to the municipal corporation for the administration of Commissioner's land. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Madam Speaker, I will be supporting the principle of the bill. As Members know in this House, I have been an advocate of community governments. I think the principle of the bill will give municipal corporations an opportunity to establish, operate and even restore a public quarry, particularly on Commissioner's land. I encourage Members to support this bill. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

To the principle of the bill.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

Bill 9 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill will stand referred to a committee. Item 17, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Kivallivik, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Bill 10: An Act To Amend The Cities, Towns And Villages Act

**HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:**

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin Central, that Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act, be read for the second time.

Madam Speaker, this bill clarifies the authority of a municipal corporation to establish, operate and restore a public quarry. The bill also clarifies the authority of a municipal corporation to enter into and implement an agreement that delegates responsibility to the municipal corporation for the administration of Commissioner's land. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

Bill 10 has had second reading. Accordingly, Bill 10 will stand referred to a committee. Item 17, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Kivallivik, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Bill 11: An Act To Amend The Hamlets Act

**HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:**

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin Central, that Bill 11, An Act To Amend The Hamlets Act, be read for the second time.

Madam Speaker, this bill clarifies the authority of a municipal corporation to establish, operate and restore a public quarry. The bill also clarifies the authority of a municipal corporation to enter into and implement an agreement that delegates responsibility to the municipal corporation for the administration of Commissioner's land. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

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Bill 11 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 17, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Kivallivik, Mr. Arnagna'naaq.

Bill 12: An Act To Amend The Commissioner's Land Act

**HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:**

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin Central, that Bill 12, An Act To Amend The Commissioner's Land Act, be read for the second time.

Madam Speaker, this bill amends the Commissioner's Land Act for the purpose of validating certain quarry fees and charges that have been levied under the act. The bill also clarifies the power of the Commissioner to authorize the issuance of quarry permits, to authorize the making of an administration agreement respecting Commissioner's land and to make regulations in respect of these matters in the establishment, operation and restoration of quarries. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. I have some concerns with this particular bill. It relates to the use and administration of Commissioner's land. On April 22, 1994, the Gwich'in signed a comprehensive land claim agreement and so have the Inuvialuit and Sahtu. I am not sure of their particular dates. One of the objectives in these claims is to provide for the Gwich'in, specifically to provide for certainty and clarity of rights to ownership and use of land resources. In this bill, one of the powers is to authorize the making of an administration agreement respecting Commissioner's land. To me, that's the

use of certain land resources. Under another section, section three, under the Gwich'in claim, that any government, when making changes to any programs or responsibilities of government, needs consent of the Gwich'in for use of lands within the Gwich'in settlement area. I'm just very curious and I know we can't ask questions in this forum, but whether or not consent was given by the Gwich'in for this particular act? The government needs to consult with the claimant groups and I'm just very curious as to whether or not proper consultation was done, not before the introduction of this bill in this House like yesterday, but much before that? We shouldn't be seeking consent after the fact, after the bill's introduced, but much before the bill was introduced.

Madam Speaker, times have changed. The responsibilities and authorities of land use are changing. There are land claims in place, there are regional governments in place that want to monitor and administer particular lands or have some say on the use of those lands within particular settlement areas or particular regions. I hope that the government abides... the government needs to abide by the spirit and the intent of land claims and should not be introducing bills like this before they get consent of particular regional groups or regional land claims. Mahsi.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It will just be the principle of the bill itself, Madam Speaker. The bill would have come into force on June 29, 1969 and it would have come into force on the first reading. I don't know why we have a committee that would be travelling to the communities to discuss this when in fact it's already come into force on the first reading. That's the way I interpret it so I can not support this bill.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

To the principle of the bill. Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Bill 12 has had second reading and accordingly will stand referred to a committee. Item 17, second reading of bills. Bills 2, 3, 9, 10, 11 and 12 have all had second reading and will be referred to committee.

Item 18, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 2-12(6), New Social Housing Rent Scale; Minister's Statement 6-12(6), Terms of Reference -Hay River Group Home Contract; Tabled Document 14-12(6), Open for Business: Privatization of the NWT Power Corporation; and, Tabled Document 7-1296), Terms of Reference: Independent Review of Contract Termination - Hay River Group Home, in committee of the whole with Mr. Ningark in the chair. Members, you will stay in committee of the whole until the House is ready to report progress. Thank you.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The committee will now come to order. What is the wish if the committee? Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Mr. Chairman, I recommend that we deal with Minister's Statement 6-12(6) and Tabled Document 7-12(6), together.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Mr. Koe is recommending that we deal with Minister's Statement 6-12(6) and Tabled Document 7-12(6). Do we have concurrence of the committee? Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

Minister's Statement 6-12(6): Terms Of Reference - Hay River Group Home Contract

Tabled Document 7-12(6): Terms of Reference: Independent Review Of Contract Termination - Hay River Group Home

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Since we're dealing with the Department of Social Services, it would be nice if the Minister was present.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Why don't we take about a 15 minute break to get the Minister ready to deal with the matter. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):** I will call the committee to order. There are no opening general remarks, therefore I open the floor to general comments. We are dealing with Minister's Statement 6-12(6) and Tabled Document 7-12(6). General comments. Mr. Zoe.

General Comments

**MR. ZOE:**

Mr. Chairman, I have been following with interest, as have some of my colleagues, the issue that my colleague from Deh Cho raised about the Hay River group home contract. I want to make reference to the Minister's statement first, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, when Mr. Gargan raised this issue, he specifically asked the Minister if she was prepared to strike an independent committee to investigate these allegations, as was requested by Greenway, subsequent to the their contract being terminated by her department. The Minister replied yes. But, the Minister made a statement today, Mr. Chairman, that doesn't reflect the request of my colleague from Deh Cho.

The Minister has indicated that she agreed to conduct an independent investigation. But that wasn't the request. We asked for an independent committee to do the investigation. In the Minister's statement, the Minister has appointed an investigator, one person, to undertake this work. Now, before I go on, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask why the Minister has gone with this investigator rather than an independent committee to do the investigation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Minister of Social Services.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To respond to Mr. Zoe's question, I'll be candid with this. When I talked to my deputy minister and gave him the commitment I made in the House the day the Member for Deh Cho asked the question whether an independent committee could do the investigation on this contract, my deputy



and I had trouble interpreting committee, whether it was a committee of this Legislature, or what. We didn't know. I told him that there was urgency to get this going.

Between me and my deputy Minister, we decided that it would take a lot longer to try to get a number of people to investigate this. I instructed him to find out if we could get a person to investigate not just the contract, but how the events took place that led to the termination of the contract. I told my deputy minister that I felt the legalities of the contract could be handled by a private firm or private lawyer, and not a government lawyer. There were serious allegations made on the department and we both felt it would be fair that the whole thing be looked over.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

General comments. Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Mr. Chairman, I'm not satisfied with the response I'm getting from the Minister. I was glad that my colleague from Deh Cho asked for this investigation into these allegations. They are serious allegations, as the Minister indicates. I would rather an independent committee from outside the system undertake this review. That's what we asked for. Maybe a committee of three. People who are knowledgeable. This is not a committee. In the statement the Minister made this afternoon, she did not mention a committee. I was appalled, Mr. Chairman, by the actions of the Minister.

This isn't an independent committee, it's an investigator. On top of that, Mr. Chairman, I have concerns about the investigator who the Minister has retained. It is my understanding that the investigator who is being retained by the department to do this work has a standing offer with the department. So, how could this independent investigator be impartial when he has a standing offer with the Department of Social Services? I can't see this person she appointed being impartial. How can you consider someone who takes on a number of projects for the department to be impartial, when he works on an ongoing basis? There, again, I don't see any impartiality with the person who is being appointed.

The information I have indicates that the person who is being appointed has ties, a close relationship, with the department. I have concerns about that. I would

like to hear the comments of the Minister before I continue, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I respond to Mr. Zoe's question, I would like to bring in a witness, please.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Do we have the concurrence of the committee that the Minister bring in the witness?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witness into the room please. Thank you. For the record, Madam Minister, would you introduce the witness?

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me is Ken Lovely, my deputy minister.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. There was a question directed to the honourable Minister and she wanted to bring in the witness before responding to the question. Madam Minister, are you able to respond to the question now?

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my knowledge, this individual who we have hired doesn't have a standing offer with the department. However, he has worked in the past for us four times. Our department has also turned him down twice. Other proposals that he responded to or made a proposal to, we had a call.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Mr. Chairman, if there is no standing offer in place, I am still of the opinion that this particular individual has a relationship with the department. As the Minister indicated, in previous years, they have utilized this particular person and he has done a bit of work for our government, particularly Social Services. There is a strong relationship that is there. I am of the opinion that I can't see this individual being impartial.

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Mr. Chairman, while I have the deputy minister here with the Minister, I would like to pose the same question. Why did the department not strike an independent committee, as my colleague from Deh Cho strongly suggested, to investigate these serious allegations, rather than going with one independent investigator? I would like to pose that same question to the deputy minister.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The question is directed to the deputy minister, Ken Lovely.

**MR. LOVELY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The primary reason for going with one investigator was partially an interpretation of what was said in the House. It was our view, in discussions with the Minister, that what was most important was having an independent investigation, not necessarily having an independent investigation by a committee. Therefore, we proceeded in discussions with the Minister to seek an individual to do it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Mr. Chairman, when this issue was raised, my colleague from Deh Cho specifically asked for an independent committee. I am sure the deputy minister's review of the Hansard was on page 2080, when my colleague from Deh Cho specifically asked the Minister to strike an independent committee to investigate this serious allegation by the Greenway Holdings subsequent to the contract being terminated by the department. The response from the Minister was, "Yes." Why did the deputy minister, as head of the department, advise the Minister otherwise?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Upon the completion of the draft of the terms of reference, I did go to the Member of Deh Cho's office to consult with him with on the terms of reference. At that point, he did say he had no problem or that was all right and we went on talking about the custom adoption bill. I did consult before the terms of reference was finally approved. To address your question, Mr. Zoe, the conversation between myself and my deputy minister took place and we did have a problem about an independent committee. There is a board of inquiry, but the word "committee" itself was a problem.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Mr. Chairman, it is irrelevant what the Minister is saying. On page 2080 in the Hansard, the Minister said yes to an independent committee. She comes into the House today with a Minister's statement with something else, totally different from what she committed to. Why did she change her views? I don't feel that an individual or firm can be impartial. I would rather see a committee or board of inquiry. I don't necessarily care what phrase you use. I would say a committee of some sort, perhaps a three person committee to undertake this work and report back to the Minister on their findings. That was what I was anticipating. I was glad that my colleague had raised that issue. I was hoping to see that in the Minister's statement today, but it shocked me by her appointing an individual as an investigator and not a committee.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I said earlier, in answer to the honourable Member for Deh Cho, I went to his office to try and find out exactly if the terms of reference for the person to do an inquiry would be fine with him. He said he was in agreement with it. As well, I would like you to know that the contract that is in question was for \$200,000. Even if

we started two or three people to have an inquiry it would cost much more.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

The information that the Minister is providing to us is irrelevant to me, because I am not privy to the private discussions that the Minister has behind closed doors. In our discussion in the House, a commitment was made to my colleague from Deh Cho that this was going to take place and I looked forward to it. That an independent committee investigate the serious allegations that were made. Now, the whole thing is changed. It is not the independent committee that the Minister committed herself to. That's where I see the problem. I don't see this as impartial, with the method the Minister is using.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

General comments. Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a couple of items I wish to raise. The whole issue of the contract is one thing, the termination of the contract, the role of the contractor and the department is one issue. I, for one, don't believe the issue of terminating the contract is an issue I would concern myself with. I think there are several major missing issues that we have to discuss here. I was hoping there would be some indication of those in the terms of reference for the review, but they're not there.

The first one is the primary purpose of a home such as this. One of the roles and responsibilities of the department is the care of our children. Our honourable colleague from Yellowknife North made a very good statement today about the care of children, who cares for them and who speaks for them. That is one of the issues that is missing here.

Another one is the role and responsibilities of the homes we have, the group homes, receiving homes, whatever names we use, and our foster homes. There are contracts for all of these and agreements between the department and the people who provide care in whatever form and whatever type of home we use. I'm very familiar with the roles of foster parents, and I've passed these on to the various officials in your department over time because when I first

became an MLA and also when we were travelling across the north with the Special Committee on Health and Social Services, we had lots of presentations and people talked to us privately.

Some of the issues are the role the foster parents play and the role the department plays. Both, hopefully, are on the same plane. The whole purpose is to look after the children who have been placed in the department's custody. The other issue, the third issue, is the whole role of Social Services

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employees and their supervisors. None of these are in the terms of reference tabled today.

The terms of reference are very specific, did the department have grounds to terminate the contract. Obviously, they had grounds or they wouldn't have done it, so why are we going through this whole investigation to determine that? The regional supervisor signed a letter of termination. Obviously, he was supported by the regional superintendent, the deputy minister and the Minister. So, I don't understand why we are wasting time to go through the chronological events of why the contract was terminated.

What I would like to see is some of the issues I have mentioned. It is my understanding that some of the obligations of social workers and the department is that there have to be designated people responsible for each home. There has to be a contact person for each resident. There has to be a program plan for each person put in care. In that plan, there is included some kind of assessment and some kind of treatment program. Both, whoever is caring for the individual and the department, would hopefully have open communication because they are both responsible for the care of that child.

Some of the complaints I've had across the north, and it is just not this particular case in Hay River, I hear complaints across the north that a lot of these things are not done. We know why. We know that social service workers are overworked. We know that in small communities, the worker is responsible for a wide range of programs.

We also know that kids, once they're apprehended, are dropped off, any hour of the day, in a foster home setting, usually with no history. The worker drops the kid off and the foster parent all of a sudden has full responsibility for this person. They have no medical

history, no educational history, no history of behaviour or anything and then they're held responsible. If anything goes wrong, who gets the blame? I don't see any of these things in these terms of reference. I would like to see them.

The whole issue of roles and investigation into the roles of foster parents should be in here. Investigation of the roles of social workers should be in here. We should know the parties and what they're obligated to do, and whether they are doing it. I would like to hear from the Minister or her deputy on some of the comments I made and how they're going to address those issues.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. All the questions are directed to the honourable Minister, but if the honourable Minister wants to assign the responses to her deputy, she may do so. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. During question period, Mr. Gargan's question requested other departments to look into the possibility of investigating this whole matter. I mentioned to him that I would go ahead with the investigation because on March 24, 1994, the letter that was written by Jane Groenewegen stated the following. (End Translation) "(Inaudible)...the contract have caused a lack of communication, no support, and the actual sabotaging of our relationship with the children in our care. This made it very difficult for us to effectively do our job."

This, to me, is a very serious allegation and I am taking it very seriously. Mr. Koe's suggestion of what should be included in the terms of reference, they are good suggestions but for programming for foster homes. In fact, what we are doing here now, I feel, we might be jeopardizing the actual investigation. We are talking about the children that came into the care of Social Services. There is a certain element of confidentiality and I tried to maintain that by agreeing with the Member for Deh Cho when he asked for an independent committee investigation. I agreed. Later on, when the terms were drafted I did meet with him.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. The chair continues to recognize the Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You're saying all the things I said but yet they're not reflected in the terms of reference. The issue is, again, I don't understand why the whole terms of reference are on the termination... the contract has been terminated. We want to look at future contracts, future foster parents, future group home contractors and the types of care and responsibilities of both parties. I'd like to see that in these terms of reference.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll let my deputy minister respond to Mr. Koe.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Lovely.

**MR. LOVELY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The terms of reference were designed to look into the allegations made by the contractor about the treatment of the contractor by the staff of the Department of Social Services. The terms of reference for this investigation were designed to avoid a situation casting blame, or the intention of casting blame. It was intended to look into the circumstances behind the terminating of the contract to see if the termination was justified. In looking at the termination of the contract though, it was always the intention that the investigator would look into the quality of the care of the children, the quality of the supervising of the administration of the group home. You'll see in the elements of these terms of reference that there is reference to doing interviews of people in the community and organizations in the community to do just those things; to find out how effective the care of the children was by talking to the children, by talking to people in the community who are aware of the care that was being provided and by talking to the contractor and the social workers.

At the same time, it was important for us to assess the quality of the administration of the contract. In other words, how effectively did the Department of Social Services fulfil its responsibility for administering this contract? Discussions about lack of case planning and those kinds of things have to be looked into because, again, they are serious allegations. The bottom line in the terminating of this contract was that

it wasn't working. It was costing the government a lot of money in terms of the expenditure of public funds,

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and in that kind of situation it wasn't in the best interest to either the children or the contractor to continue. Now that questions have been raised about it, it's our view that the independent investigation by contacting these people who have been involved in administration, and in contact with the group home itself, we'll be in a position to provide insights that will allow a person, a third party, a disinterested third party, who hasn't been involved, to make a judgement about whether the Department of Social Services did the right thing. I think that through the interviews though, we are going to get the answers to the questions that were raised in the contractors letter of March 24. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Lovely. General comments. The chair recognizes the Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one of the things that happened with regard to this whole process is that the government has decided to go with a process which doesn't go under the Public Inquiries Act. I think that by doing so it has allowed the Members to address it in this House in some form. Also, I can recall several years ago when there was a doctor in Fort Smith that was in question, we proceeded with an inquiry under one of our acts and it cost this government \$500,000 to do that. We ended up with no answers at all because it was still sub judice. It was still under investigation, there was jeopardy here. In this case, I thought that when the Minister consulted me, and I appreciate that the best way to do it was for the department to initiate the whole thing. I have no problem with that. I don't know whether or not, by discussing it further we are resolving anything right now. I think we should allow the investigation to be carried out right now and allow the department to respond to it by the end of this month, as they said. From there, it's still not going to be a closed case after that. I would think that Members will be allowed the opportunity to look at the results of the investigation as opposed to doing it through one of our acts.

Most of the stuff that was on the terms of reference, and what I told the Minister at that time was that we not only look at the department itself but we also have to look at the services. I would hope that at that time, in order for anybody to carry out an investigation, you have to look at both sides of the story. I thought they did that. I have no problem other than... I guess the children are going to be the ones... Mr. Ballantyne, I believe, was going to say something about it, but it's the children's welfare that is at stake here. I think the investigation can carry on without it jeopardizing or tormenting the children, as it is. Can we allow the government to carry out their investigation and at the same time ensure that those children are in care?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Minister, do you wish to respond to the comments of the honourable Member?

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was my understanding when I went to see Mr. Gargan in his office with the draft independent review terms of reference. I welcome his comments.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Are the terms of reference still in draft form where we can make some small changes to it so that the investigation is carried out to its fullest?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My deputy informs me that the terms of reference have not been given to the person that we hired. There is still room to make some changes.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to think I am a neutral person in this matter. It is far away from my riding and I am not familiar with any of the details. However, Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Member for Deh Cho. I am alarmed to see the children in care are going to be interviewed about an issue that has received significant publicity. I understand these children are adolescents. It would be fair to say that being in care and being subject to the views about the department about issues like whether and when they will be returned to home could be described as being vulnerable and easily influenced.

Mr. Chairman, in my understanding of the situation, I thought that the main dispute was involving adults, the operator of the home and officials of the department. It was described as a relationship which had completely broken down. I would have hoped that the terms of reference would be clearly focused on the relations and the breakdown of relations between these adults who were responsible for this contract.

I do not believe that the children can provide helpful advice. If I know anything about teenage children, they may provide comments about their own parents or about those who are acting in loco parentis, that are actually critical, but maybe for the wrong reasons. My children are critical of me, but it is sometimes because I have taken strong stands on issues that I believe sincerely are in their best interests, such as curfew, et cetera.

Mr. Chairman, my strong view is that it would be unfortunate if the children are drawn into this matter and subjected to the stress of having to take a position in a highly publicized case, when I think it is well known that the children are probably aware of how the department feels about the contractor, namely that the department has seen fit to terminate the contract. I think this is an unfortunate emphasis in the terms of reference. My advice would be keep the kids out of it.

Mr. Chairman, just looking at the facts and listening to comments of other Members, I have some doubts about the independence of the investigator. I note that the investigator is a registered social worker and a principle in a private firm in Yellowknife, who has been in the private sector for the past ten years completing a variety of consulting projects in the social services field.

Mr. Chairman, we all know the government is the big game in town in all parts of the Northwest Territories. I suspect that this individual has had to rely on the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Department of Social Services to survive for ten years consulting in the social services field. Directly or indirectly, I suspect there is a strong relationship there. I actually have received some information that corroborates what other Members have said. The individual described in the Member's statement is, in fact, a principle of a company called Muskox Program Development and this company either has a standing offer agreement with the Department of Social Services or has a relationship with officials in the Department of Social Services -- specifically, Mr. Andrew Langford -- which sees that firm regularly being asked to do work.

The mere fact that the contractor has done work for the department in the past, coupled with the fact that there is not a lot of work outside the government sector for a firm in this very specialized field, indicates to me that there is, at least, an interest on the part of the investigator in not offending the department in undertaking this investigation. I welcome some further comment. We have been told there isn't a standing offer agreement, but perhaps there is a working relationship, understanding or pattern of working relationships. I would have to question whether someone more independent, such as a lawyer, might have been found to do this work.

If we are going to solve what is probably a matter of human relations between the contractor and the department, we should hope that the parties have confidence in the investigator and that both parties feel that if the job will be done, they will participate and cooperate with some confidence that the outcome will be fair. I would like to ask the Minister and/or the deputy minister if they know whether the contractor has confidence in the investigator. I see the department does. Does the contractor? If the contractor doesn't, I question whether it is going to be a complete investigation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated during question period on this matter, I have tried to keep things on a confidential basis, because there is an element that has to be kept confidential. However, what has

transpired during question period should not be discussed in a public forum because of the nature of what we are talking about.

On the matter of the person who is hired, the person whose contract was terminated had not come to me and told me whether she is comfortable or not with the person hired. However, my feeling is this, Bill Zarchikoff is professional and can act professionally when he looks into this matter. I don't feel he has any ties to the department. Although he has been hired in the past, it is because of his professionalism and his knowledge or background in social services and pieces of legislation especially pertaining to children. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. The chair continues to recognize the Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Mr. Chairman, I think sometimes, although it is great to hire north, in order to get independence, you need to go outside the community and outside the milieu to get objectivity. The bottom line here is, as I see it, the department has devised the terms of reference. The department has appointed an investigator with whom it has had a working relationship with in the past and it just doesn't look like an independent review to me. It looks more like an internal investigation, albeit not by a departmental staff person.

I want to say as well that I'm completely puzzled by the Minister raising the matters of confidence and confidentiality in response to my question. I think I've been asking questions of principle about the process. I have no interest whatsoever in raising matters about the details of what went on in the home or any of the identities of the children involved. Forgive me for saying I thought they were adolescents. I don't think that's a great breach of confidence, if I did mention that.

What I was referring to when I used the word confidence, Mr. Chairman, and maybe the Minister didn't quite understand me, was I wanted to know if the contractor has confidence in the investigator. I don't expect the contractor would have the courage to go and discuss this issue with the Minister, with it being under investigation. I'm not surprised the contractor hasn't approached the Minister.

Perhaps her deputy and officials can indicate whether or not the contractor has been approached or has indicated a willingness to cooperate with this investigator and this investigation. My information is that the answer is no. So, it isn't going to work. I would respectfully suggest that, if that's the case and if there's a true desire to hear both sides of the equation, then the department should go back to the drawing board, find someone in whom both parties have confidence and get on with it, in a way that's going to have a credible result and in a way in which the participants are going to participate and buy into. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could take the Member's suggestion and go outside of the territories to look for a person who is independent but I would like to go on the record that in my Minister's statement I stated that the report would be made available to me by April 25 and it would probably take longer than that now.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. The chair continues to recognize Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

I appreciate the Minister's openness to reviewing this. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make one quick comment, without prolonging this. I didn't necessarily say that the only independent person could be found outside the Northwest Territories. I said outside the milieu of the department and the social services field. I have every confidence that there are other people who could be found and who are professionals, who could do a good investigation, such as a lawyer, or a management consultant. There are undoubtedly capable people in the territories who could be brought in. Perhaps someone from another region in the Northwest Territories.

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I don't want to go on record as suggesting we have to purchase services from the south, with the attendant delays and expense that would involve. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can take his suggestion and the terms of reference can be changed with Mr. Koe's suggestions as well.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. The chair now recognizes Mr. Ballantyne, Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. BALLANTYNE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a lot to add to what's been said. I guess the overriding concern I have -- Mr. Koe mentioned them and Mr. Patterson mentioned them -- are the kids. I have seen that all too often in these situations when there's a conflict, the ones who pay the price in the end are the kids. To me, it is the same thing we said to Mr. Nerysoo about education. If there is a conflict between school boards, the department and teachers, the ultimate litmus test is, what is best for the kids?

In this particular situation or situations like this, that is the ultimate litmus test, what is best for the kids? Whatever form the investigation takes, I'm not as concerned about the form of the investigation as I am in whatever is done passes that test, that it is the best for the kids in the long run. Too often, since I've been in politics, I've watched what has happened. I've seen sexual abuse cases where the court case drags on for so long that the kid's testimony is no longer considered credible. Everybody did their job, the judge, the lawyers, the prosecution, the police, but, at the end of the day, the kid loses.

I think that, especially for this department, everything they do that deals with children has to pass that test. My very strong advice to the Minister is if she decides to review the terms of reference and the process, to make sure the process passes that test, that what happens in the review and what comes out of the review is best for the kids. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Thank you. I'm glad that there have been some compromises reached and that the Minister is very

open to taking our comments into consideration. Just to recap, Mr. Chairman, the terms of reference will be redone, the sole question is not the termination of the contract -- that's one of the issues -- but the care and the broader policy issues have been included in here, the roles of foster parents and departmental child care workers.

We would appreciate then, that once an amended terms of reference is made that we will get copies. That, if we're not sitting when they're done, we get copies for our review. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe. Madam Minister, did you wish to add anything to that?

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to thank the Members for their suggestions. I have nothing further to add.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Zoe.

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to reiterate what my colleague for Iqaluit has indicated. I think the department has to seriously consider the question about children. I have the same concerns that Mr. Patterson has raised. I don't think the question surrounds... we're talking about the care of the children but not the children themselves. I think the question is between the department and the contractor; their relationship and so forth, the policies, the allegations that were made. Those are the issues that have to be looked at. I'm glad the Minister is willing to reconsider and redraft the terms of reference.

I concur with my friend for Inuvik that the Members would appreciate receiving copies of the terms of reference before they do anything else. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

**HON. REBECCA MIKE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do agree that the priority all along... that I have been stressing to the Members



during question period when I have been asked questions pertaining to this contract, that the priority has to be placed on the children. Due to the certain circumstances, my responses were limited because of confidentiality. We do agree that, on the terms of reference pertaining to children, can be deleted. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Minister. Any further discussion on this matter? The chair recognizes the Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Thank you. I would like to thank the Minister and her deputy for being here and for taking our concerns into consideration. I would like to now move that these two items be concluded.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Koe. A motion isn't necessary in this matter, Mr. Koe. Does the committee agree that Minister's Statement 6-12(6) and Tabled Document 7-12(6) are concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

At this point, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Minister and the deputy minister for assisting the Members in this matter. You are free to go. What is the wish of the committee? The chair recognizes Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

I recommend that we now deal with Tabled Document 2-12(6), New Social Housing Rent Scale.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Is the committee agreed?

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**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

Tabled Document 2-12(6): New Social Housing Rent Scale

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

The new social housing rent scale, document 2-12(6). It should be found on your desks. If not, it will be circulated around. Does the committee agree that we proceed immediately into this? Is there anything the committee wishes prior to doing so? Is the Minister prepared to go ahead with his opening remarks?

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any opening remarks, but I do have witnesses I would like to bring in. Then I can make some opening comments.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Does the committee agree that the Minister take the witness chair and that he be accompanied by witnesses?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you assist the Minister? Mr. Minister, you may take the witness chair. Let's take a couple of minutes to circulate the documents.

Welcome to the witness chair, Mr. Minister. Would you be so kind as to introduce your witnesses to the committee?

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Dave Murray, the acting president of the NWT Housing Corporation. To my right is Penny Ballantyne, she is the director of policy and planning.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you very much. Welcome. Minister Morin, you indicated that you wished to make some opening comments on the document so please proceed.

Introductory Remarks

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The new rent scale for the NWT Housing Corporation was tabled yesterday and is up for discussion today. This new rent scale hasn't been developed overnight. It's been a long outstanding issue with the Housing Corporation as well as with people out in the communities. Many people raised concerns about the old rent scale; that is wasn't treating people fairly or equally throughout the Northwest Territories. The old policy was in place since 1983. The new program is designed to go into place now to address the inadequacies within our program.

The main principle that we tried to meet and tried to address is that we treated all our tenants fairly and equally no matter where they live in the Northwest Territories. We wanted to provide incentives for tenants to take advantage of opportunities for home ownership programs, and for education and employment as well. Our old scale did not address these things. We also wanted to continue to enjoy the existing funding from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. We also wanted to make sure that tenants could afford the rent that was being requested of them.

The last time this rent scale was brought to this House it was by Mr. Butters, when he was the Minister. It wasn't implemented at that time. We've worked very closely with the communities and the Special Committee on Social Housing to update this scale. One of the things that all Members must remember is that our job as MLAs and as Ministers is to try to treat everybody fairly and as equal as possible. I've always attempted to do that. I always do that in my riding as well. I believe the reason people re-elect me is that when people come and ask me for assistance, I don't ask them who they are or who they represent, I just ask them how I can help them. That's what my job is. I look at that the same way I should be handling my job as the Minister; to try to treat people all the same, all equal.

With the limited amount of dollars that we do have, we have to try to help those people who are in the most need. This is what we're trying to do with this new scale. I'm not going to carry on and on with this issue, Mr. Chairman. I will be happy to answer any question any Member has. I'm here to listen to any concerns that you have and I will try to address them. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Minister. The floor is now open to general comments on the document. General comments. The chair will now recognize the Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

**General Comments**

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it is important on the outset that we determine where we are going from here. I have been hammering away on this issue during the last couple of days and perhaps speaking too much about it. My main concern is that we will be getting good advice from my constituents about how to make this thing work. We realize there is a need for a new rent scale. I would like to know today that this won't be the last chance to have input and to give advice that hopefully could lead to improvements in the present document, however good it is right now and that, particularly, the major round of consultations planned next month and in June could lead to improvements and revisions in this document.

I would like to remind the Minister, and Mr. Pudlat may well have some comments on this himself, that on February 21, 1994, in answer to Mr. Pudlat's question, the Minister made very satisfactory commitments about the consultation process and particularly about the fact that no changes will be implemented until 90 days after the complete process has been gone through, in his words, including full information being provided to the community, which I do not believe has happened yet.

Before we get into the pros and cons, I have a number of questions about: -the cost of living;

-the manner in which the cost of living zones were calculated for communities; -why the overcrowding

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issue wasn't addressed; -the capacity of the corporation to do the community development work, the tenant education, and the home ownership orientation that is required; -issues like money management, whether that is going to be built into the operations of the corporation or whether they expect to do this major job with existing staff; and -the realism of the timing to do this all in two years.

I have many specific issues that I will want to discuss. Before we get into those detailed questions, and hopefully the Minister has considered our views, will there still be an opportunity to revise this rent scale? I

said this about the staff housing policy. This one affects even more of my constituents. I think the notice to tenants will come out right while the election campaign is in full swing. If it is for January 1995 and it is three months or prior to the rent increases, it will be a major election issue. I am not planning to run, but I can tell the Minister that this will be a very significant issue in ridings like mine, which are typical of many, where half the tenants are going to be getting rent increase notices and substantial ones at that.

I would like to have it clarified right now from the Minister. Is this the last kick at the can or will the Minister be open to accepting advice, if it is good advice, from constituents, MLAs, the community consultation process, before these changes are implemented beginning in July of this year? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Any advice the Members would like to give us, we will take that into consideration. The rent scale that is going out can be revised through the consultation process that this Legislature has set up, which I said yesterday. We have a process set up. It can be revised if needed. That process means that there are community meetings in every community once a year. The regional meetings are going to happen in May or June. Advice could come from there. It will come back to the Social Housing committee. They would look at those recommendations. Like I said yesterday, all of our programs in the Housing Corporation can be updated yearly. That is the way it is and it should be done. This is another program that can be updated at any given time. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Minister. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To follow up on that, the Minister is chair of the Advisory Committee on Social Housing. Will he commit now to convening a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Social Housing after the round of community consultations are completed in May and June and before the first stages of

implementation of this rent scale is implemented in July so that he can have the good advice of that committee and perhaps of other MLAs who may wish to participate before finally implementing this new rent scale? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee has already agreed to do that. We were scheduling a meeting in Mr. Ningark's riding some time around that time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

I will let other Members make general comments. I will have some specific questions later. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

General comments. Mr. Pudlat.

**MR. PUDLAT:**

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the new rent scale, I had asked a question today when question period started. I have to inform my constituents before this rent scale is implemented on a rent scale review. For that reason, before it is implemented, we wanted to have a review in my region, especially in Lake Harbour. The hamlet council wanted to review the rent scale and they wanted to be included in the consultations. The previous Minister, when asked privately by the Commissioner, stated that the communities would be given documents detailing exactly how they are going to have the rent scale set up. It has to be done too. It didn't state exactly how the Minister answered the question that the consultation process has to be established before the rent scale is implemented. There will be many people who don't know the exact detail or what is in the rent scale review. There are going to be many people who will not be pleased with this increase before they are told exactly how they are going to have to pay and exactly how the scale is going to be set up, if they don't have the copy of the document or know if the housing associations have

the scale. The people in the communities will want to be informed way ahead of time. They will want to know exactly how the rental scale is going to be implemented.

For that reason, I have a concern that you are going to rush this rent scale. I understood that the Minister indicated that there will be community consultation before the rental scale is implemented. Members of the Legislative Assembly represent their communities. We know it is going to be implemented very quickly and we have to try to represent our communities and try to keep our communities informed.

I have no real concerns, but I would like my communities to be properly informed. They are going to have a hard time accepting it and they will be very afraid of it. For that reason, I would like community consultation, not just with community councils and housing associations, but the whole community population needs to be informed in my region. Is this going to be the way it is going to be implemented?

You said this document is a final document for the establishment of the rental scale. It seems it is trying to get everyone at the same time, even though some people are going to have rents raised and some are going to be lowered. Is my question quite clear? Before the new rental scale is to be implemented, are there going to be community consultations, Mr. Chairman?

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford): Thank you, Member for Baffin South, Mr. Pudlat. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just today I signed letters off to all the hamlet councils, band councils, Metis Nation locals, and local housing authorities with a complete document of the new rent scale. Also, as part of the process of informing people about the rent scale, Housing Corporation staff, working along with the local housing authorities, will meet with every individual client in the communities to explain. That will be done in the summer, prior to any notices going out.

Also, I have notices on my desk going out to individual MLAs, explaining how rents would increase or decrease for every unit in their riding. I just have to sign those off, and you'll be getting those.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. General comments. Mr. Allooloo.

**MR. ALLOOLOO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would tend to agree that we need to do something about rent scales since the Minister stated that the last rental scale adjustment was quite a few years ago and there's great pressure from the federal government for us to change it. Like Mr. Patterson's, my community was consulted -- I believe it was in December or November -- and when the Housing Corporation came into the community, they didn't have the full information for the people to look it. The community asked for information that the people who came into the community could not provide because they didn't yet have clear direction from the ministry to give out that information.

I know the Minister stated in the House that this is ongoing, that this is, in no way, the final document and that it can be changed, that sort of thing. When the next round of consultations takes place, if there's significant, valid concerns of the people in the communities, would this document be changed in order to better reflect the way the people live in certain communities?

I don't agree with the cost of living zone that is in this document. I think it has to be updated. I know the Minister of Social Services is trying to review that. I don't believe it reflects the reality of the cost of living, when you look at the communities in these brackets. I would encourage the Minister to get as much information as possible and put communities in their proper zones. I don't believe my community of Pond Inlet has the same cost of living as communities who receive jet service. It is placed in the same category as communities that have airstrips and regularly receive jet service. I think that has to be looked at more so it can be improved. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Member for Amittuq, Mr. Allooloo. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far as the cost of living zones go, those are the cost of living zones that we get from Social Services. It puts Pond Inlet in zone 8, the same as Pangnirtung. There are quite a few others in that zone. All programs of the NWT Housing

Corporation can be updated through the consultation process. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. General comments. The chair recognizes the Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to say at the onset that I support the concept of user-pay as long as it is implemented fairly and dealt with in a fair manner. The overall intent of this restructuring is to provide more housing for the lower-income to moderate-income families, which our public housing program is supposed to be geared towards. At the same time, I would like to point out that the Housing Corporation, and ourselves have a responsibility to find some alternate and affordable housing for some of these higher income earners. I believe the Minister has tried to address this in saying that the emphasis may be on the access private home ownership units versus public rent supplement units in the next year or two years, or whatever it is going to take.

Has the Housing Corporation already undertaken a survey of higher income families to see if these new rental rates are enacted on what their choice is? Are they going to look at the alternatives of owning their own houses? If that is the case, how is the Housing Corporation going to address that and meet those needs of these higher income families? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the Member is quite correct. Our programs should be geared, especially our social housing programs, to lower income people. Right now, there is no rhyme, reason or justification how the rental program is being implemented. For example, in Iqaluit, we have someone making \$1,527.88 a month. They paid \$255 a month for rent, making \$1,500 a month. In the same community, a person who makes \$9,170 a month pays \$245 a month for rent. It is cheaper than the person making \$1,500.

We have to address those inadequacies within our programs. They are not even fair to people within the same community. So, we will address those to encourage social housing for those people who are

actually in need. We have a long waiting list of low income people who need social housing. We are going to assist, as much as possible, the high income people into home ownership programs. We will do that by our existing access programs as well as encouraging people to go to the financial institutions, with which we have an agreement. I understand, from the Minister of Finance, that they will lend money in these communities and we have to help those people, through consultation, to access that money.

We are also going to beef up and try to sell as many of our northern rentals to high-income people and make small repair programs available for those units. We are also making moves this year...Where last year, any non-allocated units in the eastern Arctic or in non-home ownership communities were lent to other communities that wanted them, I didn't do that this year. We are going to build those 40 access units on spec. When people want to get into that program, those units will be there. We are delivering them, regardless of whether we could give them out. We are doing those things.

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We are also looking at the rent supp program that we have in place, or whether CMHC will agree so that we can turn those rent supps over to home ownership and let those clients buy them and replace them with some social housing the following year and let CMHC come in and carry the O & M 50 per cent cost.

Those are all the new ways we are looking at helping people to get into home ownership. The key here that everybody must remember is that we have a major housing problem in the Northwest Territories. We have many low-income people in all of our ridings. We have high-income people in social housing who are taking that housing away from low-income people. We have other programs that can assist those people. Social housing, a rental program, should be for low income people. We should do everything possible with the higher income people to assist them into home ownership. That is what we are trying to do. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. General comments. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I recognize that the department has seriously looked at all of the alternatives for the higher income families from what the Minister has advised us on. Is the department, in their consultations of this document that is going to be going forward to members of the public and the tenants, going to survey those higher income families to identify exactly how much need and demand there will be out there once this new rent scale policy is put in place? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will be visiting every tenant to see how we can assist them to get into home ownership. That is the survey Mr. Ng is speaking about. We will do that in the summer months. By July 1, 1994, we are going to implement the decreases in rent immediately. This will help some people. There are people who make around \$1,000 a month. They are paying \$185 a month for rent right now. Their rent will go down to \$32 a month. It is encouraging lower income people to keep working and not go on social assistance.

There also might be people in our communities who want to go to Arctic College and they don't want to give up their public unit. This way, they can go to school in Iqaluit or Fort Smith and they are guaranteed their unit when they come back to their community. While they are going to school, the funds that they receive for getting educated are not taken into consideration in their rent. It is going to help many people. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must admit that I haven't had a chance to go through this whole rent scale in detail yet. I have just quickly breezed through it along with all of the other documents that we received. In taking a preliminary look at it, I would like to ask a question similar to what my honourable colleague, Mr. Allooloo, brought up regarding the rent cost zones. It doesn't seem to me that there is any consideration given for the cost zone differentials for families under six. Am I incorrect?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that is true. The average size of families living in social housing is 5.2. The cost of living deduction is rent deduction for households of six or more people. That is applied in addition to that basic income deduction of \$400 a month. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to confirm. You are saying that there isn't any consideration for families under six. Wow! Mr. Chairman, during the House, I raised that question on whether or not the cost differential of communities would be taken into consideration in this new rent scale, the revision now being proposed, and the Minister, at that time, I will have to go back and check my Hansard, but, my recollection is that the Minister assured us that that would be the case. I am wondering about the reasoning for not including cost differentials for families of five members or less. Why wasn't this taken into consideration in this review, then? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I misunderstood the Member. Regarding the new rent scale deductions for special circumstances on page 28, everyone gets that \$400 a month deduction, even the smaller families. On top of that, there is a cost of living deduction for bigger families.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you. The chair continues to recognize Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then I'm correct in my assumption, Mr. Chairman. The Minister has said basically then, a majority of the families in the

communities wouldn't qualify for any cost differentials because of the differences in community living with a regular sized family of 5.2. So in effect, you've negated any kind of cost differential consideration for any communities. Is that correct? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's the basic \$400. Everybody gets the \$400 a month but then for the larger families, you get an additional rent scale reduction. Then there's also the cost zone and that's different again. That's the actual cost of living in every community.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. The chair continues to recognize Mr. Ng.

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**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand the Minister has said that every tenant, regardless of where they live, will receive a \$400 basic reduction. Everybody receives a \$400 basic reduction. My point is though, that doesn't take into consideration the cost of living differential in communities then for families of five, which is your regular sized family. Everybody gets that whether you're in cost zone one or cost zone ten, you get a \$400 reduction. It's only if you have six, according to this cost of living cost zone rent reduction scale, if you have a family of six to 20, as shown in here, then you get some kind of consideration for cost of living. My point is that the regular sized, average family of five or less gets any consideration for the difference in the cost of living in their community. Why not?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, you are correct.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I don't think that's what the Member was indicating. He may be correct but... Mr. Ng.

**MR. NG:**

I realize that I'm correct. I'm asking a question of the Minister. I would like to ask him why wasn't the regular sized family taken into consideration for this cost of living differential factor of a rent reduction? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member has a legitimate concern that he's raised. I thought, and I guess I didn't understand it as well as I should have, that it would vary according to the cost. I understand the issue and I agree with the Member that if you've got five people in your family and you live in Fort Smith, and if you've got five people in your family and live in Pond Inlet, it should be different. I agree. I will take that back and advise the committee in future. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. The chair will recognize Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I was just looking at the rent scale impact analysis, pages 42 and 43. One of the things I've observed is that the total impact with regard to people paying up to \$1,000 or more than \$1,000, about 663, I have 11 members of my community that would be paying up to \$1,000 and one that would pay over \$1,000. I would hope that that 663 that are paying up to \$1,000 or more than \$1,000 would be addressed within the next few years. I don't know what it is but in my constituency I think we are getting about three units. That means that it will take at least four years before we catch up to that rent scale, if that's the case. How do you intend to address the 663 that are paying up to \$1,000 or more?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The majority of this information on the proposed rent scale was gathered this past summer. It's just a snapshot of approximate incomes of people. If, in your communities, Mr. Gargan, people were seasonally employed, that would drive those two numbers up because at that time they were working, firefighting or working on the highway or whatever, their income would be higher at that time of the year.

To address the higher income people, like we've said, we're proposing to sell off older stock, assist people with the banks, encourage the tenants to purchase what rental stock we own outright, if we can get CMHC to agree. Also, we have the direct lending, forgivable loan program, and this is how we plan to address the higher income people.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Minister Morin. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

The other thing that I've also observed with regard to the territorial totals, public houses is over 6,000. If you add up the total amounts, say with the west, there's about 1,936. In the east, 3,332. It still doesn't add up to 6,000. I'm wondering whether the numbers have been mixed somehow. I've just observed that. I don't know whether the 6,000 is correct or the 5,363 is the correct one. If you total all the public houses in all the districts.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is that we have 5,068 total units in the Northwest Territories.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The territorial total is... it must be my eyes then. I think it is a five that I'm seeing. Sorry. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister, are you going to respond?

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

I have Mr. Koe on the list. Mr. Patterson, are you still on the list? Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Mr. Chairman, I have a series of questions and I am heartened that this won't be the last gasp on this issue. I'm going to try to ask my questions as succinctly as I can so as not to take too much time. The first question is in relation with CMHC and the federal government. Mr. Chairman, I understand that our government is fighting the, I believe it's \$17 million we're losing on capital, to the wire, with CMHC -- I may have the figure wrong -- this fiscal year. In fact, the corporation has not even put the funds in the Housing Corporation's budget for 1994-95 to make up for that capital shortfall, so strongly do we feel that the federal government is doing the wrong thing and must restore that funding.

I would like to ask the Minister, why does it appear that we're knuckling under to CMHC in the \$5.3 million in O and M funding? Has the Minister not fought this issue with CMHC and will he not continue

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to do so? As I said earlier, I don't think it will be possible to impose this size of a rent gouge on the present tenants of the Housing Corporation, at least in my riding. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've raised this issue with CMHC many times. I've fought this issue as well as fighting the other issue about getting our funding reinstated for capital projects in the Northwest Territories, CMHC's share. The bottom line is, on January 1, 1994, CMHC would have taken back an additional \$5.3 million from us. I don't have any control over that. I've tried my best to convince them.



CMHC doesn't agree with the principle of subsidizing high income tenants in public housing. They will not subsidize high income tenants, they've said so in no uncertain terms. I managed to get an extension until July 1 of this summer, 1994. I managed to get that extension, so I have achieved a bit to save us some money. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Just a comment, Mr. Chairman. I would respectfully suggest to the Minister, as I said earlier in my comments today, that income alone, without looking at the family circumstances, is not proof that a family can pay more rent or can sustain themselves in home ownership. Unless people can manage their money, unless they're free of some of the problems that afflict families, including social issues, the mere fact that income is available does not mean they're going to suddenly be able to produce the money without a lot of work, a lot of time, a lot of counselling and a lot of education.

In fact, I predict the opposite will happen. I predict that, in many cases, tenants will give up, refuse to pay rent, will be forced to be evicted and will end up in the laps of the Minister of Social Services. And I think there's still a case to be made. Maybe it will have to be a public outcry that will provide the evidence for the Minister to tell Ottawa that it ain't gonna work the way it might work in southern Canada. That's just a comment.

Mr. Chairman, if I could just proceed with some other questions. I'm getting very curious -- and this has been a theme all the way along -- when I compare Pangnirtung and Tuktoyaktuk. I see that on page six and page seven of the proposed rent scale that there's a comparison of two families, one living in Pangnirtung and one living in Tuktoyaktuk. A statement is made on page six and seven that the cost of living is high in both communities.

As I understand it, Mr. Chairman, Tuktoyaktuk is 60 to 100 miles from an all-weather highway. Pangnirtung, by my understanding, is more like 1,600 or 1,700 miles away from the nearest highway. Pangnirtung is in zone eight on the Minister's cost zoning of communities and Tuktoyaktuk is in zone seven. They're not even in the same cost of living zone, so why does this document compare two communities

that are so different that they're not even in the same cost zone according to the department's own zone criteria? Is that not misleading the public? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is that the cost zones were updated by Social Services on March 7 of this year. I started using that comparison just about a year ago, I believe it was, and continue to do so because they are very close to having the same cost of living. They both have very high costs of living, one is in zone seven and one is in zone eight. That adjustment will be made, but we must remember that just to compare two communities, the maximum rent in Tuktoyaktuk is \$1,927 right now and in Pangnirtung it is \$453. In one community, they pay 20.1 per cent of their shelter costs. In another, they pay 8.1 per cent.

I know the Member has some concerns about how we are going to implement the new rent scale, but let me assure the Member that it is in the plan to phase it in. It is in the plan to talk to communities, to talk to community members and tenants. We must also remember what we're here for. We are here to assist people into the programs who need it. Social housing is for low income people, and we have to try to develop the home ownership program and work with the higher income people to get into home ownership.

We have waiting lists in every community of low income people who desperately need public housing. And we have people in public housing who can afford to run their own house. I agree with the Member that we're going to have to work with those people and assist them to get into their own units. We have to counsel them, I agree with him. But, we can no longer continue to subsidize high income people in public housing when we have so many of our poor people needing that public housing. I think we have to try to treat all people fairly and equally and that's what we are attempting to do here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I'm certainly all for fairness too. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister what factors have gone into the Social Services cost of living categories and calculations. What are the general factors that have comprised this rating? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know the exact details, but my understanding is it was calculated from the cost of food, the cost of clothing and the cost of living in the community. It is identical to what Social Services has. We are using the Social Services scale. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Mr. Chairman, I have what I hope will be considered good, constructive advice for the Minister, and that is this: since the object of the increased rents is, in part, to encourage higher income people to go into home ownership, to build their own homes, buy their own homes, et cetera, I would like to respectfully suggest to the Minister that it is more than just the cost of the

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food basket and the cost of clothing that is relevant here. What we also should consider is the cost of construction and the cost of operating a unit.

I think an improvement to the zoning of communities would be to work in an index that has already been developed by the Minister's other department, the Department of Public Works, which I will call the cost of construction index. I'm probably misnaming it. But I would say if you're going to be fair -- and I'll reiterate the principle of fairness -- and expect them to build and maintain units, then you should be building in factors like the cost of power, the cost of oil, and cost of building materials, the cost of maintenance and those kinds of factors. I think that would make a far better, fairer, more equitable formula.

Mr. Chairman, I call tell you that many of these communities on this list developed by Social Services, would not be in the same categories if we factored in

the cost of building construction and maintenance. I think that would be a real improvement in the formula and I would like to ask the Minister if that has been considered, or if it could be considered in the fine tuning of this new rent scale. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. The honourable Minister for Housing.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we will develop that issue paper for the advisory committee, similar to the home ownership program, what we use with CNIT, what it takes to actually run a house for the land, taxes, construction, power, water, sewer and fuel, all the O and M costs of running a house.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very pleased with that response. I think it could improve the document.

Basically, as I understand it, you're taking the cap off rents in Nunavut. The Minister says everywhere, but the fact is that it's only the Nunavut communities where there's been a cap, almost everywhere else the cap was taken off some years ago. At any rate, you're taking the cap off rents in my constituency. But I'm told that the administrative formula for provision of staff to Iqaluit caps the staffing at 4.5 for 250 units, even though the Iqaluit Housing Authority is administering 352 units.

I would like to ask the Minister -- and he's heard me ranting and raving about the burdens on the staff, and I think there's some reference in this strategy to the need for training for staff -- is part of the strategy for the successful implementation of this new rental scale recognizing the tremendous amount of community development, tenant counselling, education required? Is part of the corporation's strategy to provide additional staff resources to the hard-pressed staff, especially in the larger communities, who are already over-taxed in just administering the program as it is, and in getting people to pay the minimal rents, let alone adding \$1,000 or more to those minimal rents in a month? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we will be working with the local housing authorities. We will be working to train and support the staff at the local housing authorities throughout the Northwest Territories. If needed, on a very temporary basis, we will be using our own staff to work with them, spend more time with them to get this implemented properly. And also, we'll be very much involved in the consultation with the clients. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Member for Iqaluit.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

I should try to give other Members a chance, Mr. Chairman, so I'll make this my last question although I have many more. I understand from the information in the rent scale, that there are some 173 tenants in my constituency who are facing rent increases. A clear majority of the rent increase is of at least \$500 and up to and over \$1,000. These people should be encouraged to be candidates for home ownership. Today, in Iqaluit -- and I've spoken to the Minister of Municipal Affairs about this -- I have a constituent who is an access client for this year's Housing Corporation program who cannot get a lot. Today there is no residential land identified in my constituency, even though there are over 100 people who may be encouraged to consider home ownership. I would like to ask the Minister, given that the shortage of land in my constituency, and maybe in others, may well be a barrier to home ownership which is a companion of this rent increase program, does the Housing Corporation have, or will the Housing Corporation develop, perhaps in consultation with MACA, a strategy to provide land so that eligible candidates won't face that barrier if they're interested in taking the plunge into home ownership? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I listened the other day in the House when the Member raised that issue. Right away I thought, well, no lots, no houses. I've instructed my staff already to work with MACA to

develop a strategy so that we have land and building lots available. We need them. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Does the committee agree that Tabled Document 2-12(6) is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

--Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the committee for raising the issues they've raised, for their concerns, and their advice. I would like to thank the special committee on social housing for their advice, as well. I would also like to thank very much my two staff members here and the others who worked so hard on this document. I wish Members the best of luck tomorrow, I won't be here. See you all in Fort Smith. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank the honourable Minister and his witnesses

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for appearing before the committee. Thank you. Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Mr. Chairman, since the business of this House seems to be finished, I move that we report progress.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. We don't have a quorum here. Ring the bell. Thank you. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? The motion is unanimous. I will rise and report progress. Thank you.

--Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

I will call the House back to order. Item 19, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Your committee has been considering Minister's Statement 6-12(6), Tabled Document 2-12(6) and Tabled Document 7-12(6) and would like to report progress that Minister's Statement 6-12(6), Tabled Document 2-12(6) are concluded and, Madam Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Is there a seconder for your motion? The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe. Your motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I missed one item. I would like to do this again one more time and would like to report progress that Minister's Statement 6-12(6), Tabled Document 2-12(6) and Tabled Document 7-12(6) are concluded. Madam Speaker, I move that the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Just to ensure our procedures are correct, Mr. Ningark, I would like to ask, with the concurrence of your seconder, that your first motion is rescinded.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to rescind the first motion. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The seconder agrees? Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Yes.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Now that the motion is on the floor, is there a seconder for that motion? The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 16, first reading of bills.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 16, first reading of bills. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Kakfwi.

REVERT BACK TO ITEM 16: FIRST READING OF BILLS

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

I seek unanimous consent to give first reading to Bill 6.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with Bill 6. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Kakfwi.

Bill 6: Access To Information and Protection Of Privacy Act

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 6, Access to Information & Protection of Privacy Act be read for the first time.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 6 has had first reading. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 17, second reading of bills.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 17 follows item 16. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Kakfwi.

REVERT BACK ITEM 17: SECOND READING OF BILLS

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I seek consent to give second reading to Bill 6.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking consent to proceed with Bill 6. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Kakfwi.

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Bill 6: Access To Information and Protection Of Privacy Act

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 6, Access

to Information & Protection of Privacy Act be read for the second time. This bill provides the public with the right to access information held by government, subject to specific and limited exceptions.

Government departments and agencies are obliged to process applications for access to information and to provide the information within the time frames set out in the act.

The bill also controls the manner in which the government may collect and use personal information about individuals and regulates the disclosure of that information to the public. Individuals are given the right to access information about themselves and to request a correction of inaccurate, personal information.

The bill provides that the Commissioner and the Executive Council will appoint an Access and Privacy Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The Access and Privacy Commissioner will have the power to review decisions of government under the act, including decisions to deny a request for information and decisions to provide an applicant with information that may prejudice the interests of third parties.

The Access and Privacy Commissioner will make recommendations to the government at the conclusion of a review and the government will be required to respond to those recommendations. The decision of the government at that time to accede to or refuse a request for access to information may be appealed to the Supreme Court. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

Bill 6 has had second reading and stands referred to a committee. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 13, notices of motion.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 13. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Koe.

**REVERT BACK TO ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTION**

Motion 8-12(6): Extended Adjournment Of The House

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi. Madam Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, April 11, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River that when this House adjourns on Thursday, April 7, 1994, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, October 5, 1994.

And further, that at any time prior to October 5, 1994, the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice shall transact its business, as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

Madam Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:**

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 15, motions.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 15, motions. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Koe.

**REVERT BACK TO ITEM 15: MOTIONS**

Motion 8-12(6): Extended Adjournment Of The House, Carried

**MR. KOE:**

Thank you. This is it, after two months.

Madam Speaker, I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River that when this House adjourns on Thursday, April 7, 1994, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, October 5, 1994.

AND FURTHER, that at any time prior to October 5, 1994, the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice shall transact its business, as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

---Applause

Item 20, third reading of bills. Just before we go to orders of the day, first of all, I would like to thank the Members for their cooperation in assisting me to get through my first session. I also welcome you all to Fort Smith next week. I would like to take the time to particularly thank our staff, our pages, and our

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interpreters for assisting us in delivering what we want to bring to the people of the north and ensuring this Assembly functions well. Thank you very much.

---Applause

Item 21, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 21: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):**

Madam Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislation at 10:00 am tomorrow morning. Orders of the day for Wednesday, October 5, 1994.

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
  17. Second Reading of Bills
  18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
- Tabled Document 14, Open for Business:  
Privatization of the NWT Power Corporation
19. Report of Committee of the Whole
  20. Third Reading of Bills
  21. Orders of the Day

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. I would like to remind Members of the invitation tonight to go to the

Yellowknife Inn. With that, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, October 5, 1994, at 1:30 pm.

---Applause

**---ADJOURNMENT**