



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

5th Session

Day 20

12th Assembly

HANSARD

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 1994

Pages 533 - 560

Page numbers reflect printed Hansard

The Honourable Jeannie Marie-Jewell, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Allooloo, Mr. Antoine, Hon. Silas Arngna'naaq, Mr. Arvaluk, Mr. Ballantyne, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Mr. Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Lewis, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Mr. Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Patterson, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. John Todd, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Lewis):

Item 2, Ministers' statements.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 36-12(5): Assistance For Preparing Income Tax Returns

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Mr. Speaker, in a Member's statement on February 16, 1994 and again in oral question period on February 18, the honourable Member for Baffin South expressed his concern that, particularly in smaller communities, residents often do not have assistance in preparing their income tax returns. He was concerned as well that, because of this, sometimes tax returns may be prepared inaccurately. We share Mr. Pudlat's concern on this important matter.

As I indicated to him, the Government of the Northwest Territories does not have a program whereby it can send accountants to communities to help with tax return preparation. However, during the tax preparation period, Revenue Canada officials do conduct visits to communities in the Northwest Territories for this purpose. During these visits, Revenue Canada officials normally conduct workshops, after which they make themselves available to provide specialized assistance with individual tax returns. We were also informed that Revenue Canada has planned a series of trips this month to the communities in the eastern Arctic to provide workshops and to provide residents with tax preparation assistance. This week, officials are travelling to Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, Arviat and Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, in our discussions with Revenue Canada, we requested them to make additional, special visits to smaller communities to provide specialized assistance to residents. Following our request, Revenue Canada is planning to include Lake Harbour in their itinerary next week. Additional visits are also planned for Gjoa Haven, Spence Bay, Pelly Bay, Pond Inlet and Cape Dorset before the end of March. Unfortunately, due to repairs made to the only hotel in Sanikiluaq, it will not be possible to visit Sanikiluaq prior to April 30 of this year. Hopefully, a visit can be arranged for the spring of 1995.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Finance will be following up with Revenue Canada to ensure that they will continue to include Northwest Territories communities in their future visits. I thank Mr. Pudlat for bringing this issue to my attention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 37-12(5): International Women's Day

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tuesday, March 8, is International Women's Day.

In the Northwest Territories women have played a strong role in the changes that have taken place socially, economically and politically.

They have been the starting point of many new initiatives that have been taking shape in the Northwest Territories. The revamping of the child care program, declaration of zero tolerance policy and the gender equality review are examples of the work women have initiated.

The role of women in the north has been that of a catalyst for change. At the same time, they continue to provide the kind of support needed to make sure family units and values remain strong in a period of rapid change and competing interests.

Mr. Speaker, International Women's Day is a day for women and men to recognize and celebrate the contributions women have made to society. Northern women, whether they are involved in traditional pursuits or the wage economy, are helping to make a

difference in today's world. And they will continue to do so every day of the year.

Minister's Statement 38-12(5): Minister Absent From The House

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to advise the house that the Honourable Rebecca Mike will be absent from the House today on personal business.

Minister's Statement 39-12(5): Housing Ministers' Meeting

And, also, Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation will be away from this House on Monday, March 14, 1994. The Minister will be attending a meeting of Housing Ministers in Regina on that date. Mr. Morin, along with the Ministers from five provinces are participating on a special ministerial subcommittee formed to address the housing needs and conditions of residents living in northern and remote communities.

The committee will be making recommendations to all federal, provincial and territorial Housing Ministers on how these needs

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can best be met. The Minister will be back in the House on Tuesday, March 15, 1994. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Nerysoo.

Minister's Statement 40-12(5): Meeting Of Labour Market Ministers

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise this House about the meeting of Labour Market Ministers held on the evening of February 28, and on March 1.

The agenda began with an update by the federal government on income security reform. The Minister of Human Resources Canada, the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, highlighted the \$800 million identified in the recent federal budget speech which is set aside for innovative social security reform pilot projects over the next two years.

I believe that the investing in people initiative which we plan to introduce in the next fiscal year, and other possible initiatives to be developed which support this approach, to be candidates for sharing in this opportunity for reform.

By the end of the month, the deputy ministers have been tasked to complete draft guidelines for the scope, principles and qualifications of eligible reform projects, as well as guidelines for approval, evaluation and funding.

The Ministers also discussed the focus paper, "A Study on the Modernization and Restructuring of Canada's Social Security System," released that day by the parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resources Development. The paper called for submissions by March 9, 1994. Mr. Speaker, I will provide a copy of the Federal Government's standing committee paper to all Members of this Assembly.

Following this, the committee plans to produce an interim report on March 25 outlining Canadians' concerns and priorities for income security reform. The committee then plans to consult more broadly across the country and will prepare a final report by September 30, 1994. This report will include a review of the federal government's action plan and recommendations for reform.

Once this report has been released, the federal, provincial and territorial Ministers will meet again to review the recommendations to advise the federal government on legislative reform and to share information about progress on reform in each of their own jurisdictions.

The Honourable Rebecca Mike, Minister of Social Services, and myself are planning to release a territorial preliminary discussion paper on income security reform before the legislature concludes in April of 1994.

Mr. Speaker, during the meeting on March 1, Ministers also discussed such matters as:

- reducing duplication and overlap between governments;
- federal youth initiatives, namely internship and the youth service corps;
- barriers to employment and training;
- labour mobility as part of the interprovincial agreement on reduction of trade barriers;

-standards and interprovincial computerized examinations for the trades; and,

-increasing private sector investment in training.

Mr. Speaker, we also discussed how the forum of Labour Market Ministers might be better organized to respond to today's challenges for change in our unemployment insurance and social assistance programs. We have to meet today's fiscal realities while providing for Canadians to become more productive, and we must continue to provide a social safety net. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 41-12(5): Family Law Reform

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reform of NWT family law legislation has been a priority of this government for many years now, and we should acknowledge the contribution of the former Ministers of Justice, Mr. Ballantyne and Mr. Patterson, in this area. It has been acknowledged by them and certainly by us that our legislation is archaic and seriously flawed in many respects. In recognition of this, a working group was formed some time ago to advise the government in this area, and the Family Law Review report was produced.

The departments of Justice and Social Services have analyzed the report, developed responses and are in the process of consulting with groups on proposals for reform.

The Honourable Rebecca Mike and I intend to prepare draft legislation for tabling in the Legislative Assembly before the term of the current government expires. Our target is the winter session of 1995, or approximately one year from now. To meet this objective a massive amount of work is required, which will require additional resources dedicated exclusively to this project.

We are looking at three new pieces of legislation: a Family Law Act; a Children's Law Act; and, a Child Welfare Act. These will replace existing legislation in this area. In addition, we are looking at incidental amendments to other legislation.

Our intention is to complete consultation, prepare drafting instructions and commence drafting as soon as possible.

In our view, the reform of family law legislation is one of the government's priorities. In this area it impacts on the lives of our people on a day-to-day basis and the reform of legislation will have a positive impact for generations to come. It is the duty of this government to do everything within its capabilities to achieve real progress in this area in the lifetime of the current government. Thank you.

---Applause

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Prospectors' Conference In Toronto

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, starting this weekend there will be a prospectors' conference in Toronto, and a large number of northerners will be attending with the goal of letting mining and exploration companies know about products and services which are available in the north. Representatives of private companies as well as the Yellowknife economic development authority will try to pitch mining and exploration companies on using and buying goods and services in the north.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism has played an important part in helping coordinate these approaches, and I thank the Minister for his support in this area.

Mr. Speaker, to date, the history of mineral development in the Northwest Territories has shown very limited benefit to northerners. There is relatively little employment of northerners and, according to the response of Mr. Todd to Mr. Pudluk's written question earlier this week, only about ten per cent of those employed in mining in the Northwest Territories are aboriginal. Mr. Speaker, this failure needs to be addressed.

This government has expensive responsibilities in mine safety and inspections, yet receives no royalties; in fact, no tax revenue other than the small amount of payroll tax, unless the employees are northerners or the company chooses to file as an NWT company.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's time to get aggressive in seeking a financial understanding with the federal government, as well as devolution of responsibility over all aspects of mineral development in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, this government needs to involve all the players, including aboriginal groups in the process. But let's get moving towards an accord on minerals with the federal government...(inaudible). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you very much, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Pudlat.

Member's Statement On Congratulating Arctic Winter Games Participants From Baffin South

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a statement today congratulating the young people from my constituency who have been selected to represent the NWT at the Arctic Winter Games next week.

They are from Lake Harbour, Jawlie Mingeriak and Julie Oolayou, who is the holder of senior women's record for the high kick; from Cape Dorset, Mosese Qimirpik; and from Sanikiluaq, Caroline Appaqaq who at 15 is the first ever competitor from that community and is already seen as somewhat of a hero by her community.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am extremely proud of these young people and wish them the very best from the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Pollard.

Member's Statement On Birthday Wishes To The Premier

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask Members to join me in congratulating the Premier on another birthday. It's her birthday today, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

---Singing of Happy Birthday

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

I'm sure everybody will appreciate that outbreak of happiness in this Assembly.

---Laughter

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Allooloo.

Member's Statement On Countering Anti-Fur Lobby

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For many years now the people and the Government of the Northwest Territories have been working hard to counter the European anti-fur lobby. It seems that despite all of our efforts we are unable to get our message through to European people.

Last night and again this morning there was an information item on CBC radio about the new TV advertisement in Spain for chocolate bars. To my dismay, I heard that the ad portrays seal hunters who are going after seal pups, as used to be done in Newfoundland but isn't done any more. Children dressed in the polar bear costumes would come and chase the hunters away before any pups are killed. In celebration, the polar bears will sit down and eat chocolate bars with the seal pups.

Since the animal activists got the European Parliament to ban seal skins, there has been a very serious negative impact on the people and the economy of the eastern Arctic. The once profitable seal harvest provided people with the chance to earn their own living and be proud of the ability to support their families. In the 1970s, a seal pelt was worth upwards of \$70. A hunter is lucky today, Mr. Speaker, to get \$5 for the same pelt. Without a market for sealskin, there has been an increase in suicides and other social problems, as many former harvesters are unable to make a living and support their families.

It is very frustrating to know that there are many seals, including thousands of Newfoundland seals, that come up to Baffin Island in the summertime and the spring -- which they never used to do -- looking for food. The cod and the fish supply in Newfoundland is way down and as a result the seals

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are coming up. I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. As you may know, Mr. Speaker, thousands of Newfoundland seals and Harp seals, are coming up to the Northwest Territories to feed on food that resident seals eat. We don't know at this point what impact these thousands of seals that are coming up to Baffin Island will have on the local food chain. I've asked the federal ministry to look into this matter and they have yet to determine what the impact is. My concern is that the food of the resident seals that we eat and rely on is being depleted in the eastern Arctic.

Mr. Speaker, it disturbs me to see the continuing lack of awareness of the Europeans about the importance of seal harvesting to the people of the eastern Arctic and the coastal people in the western Arctic. I hope that the Minister of Renewable Resources and this government will continue their effort to educate those who don't understand the northern way of life. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Allooloo. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ballantyne.

Member's Statement On Congratulating Arctic Winter Games Participants

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today and tomorrow, hundreds of NWT athletes are embarking on a great adventure. Across the territories, planes

are filling up with excited young athletes all heading for Slave Lake, Alberta, for the 1994 Arctic Winter Games. From 38 communities across the territories, both large and small, they come, proudly wearing the NWT team uniform, their heads spinning with visions of ulus, adventure, pride in their community and pride in their territory.

On a personal note, our family is very proud of our daughter Erin, who is leaving at 3:00 am tomorrow morning to compete in cross-country skiing.

---Applause

I'm sure that all MLAs will join me in wishing our athletes great success in the 1994 Arctic Winter Games. We hope they bring back many ulus, but, more importantly, we hope they bring back life-long memories of a wonderful shared experience and an enduring sense of pride in representing the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Zoe.

Member's Statement On Mining Initiatives In North Slave Region

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to discuss mining and economic development in the Northwest Territories, and specifically in the North Slave area. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Economic Development has already made numerous statements in this House about the importance of mining to the economic development of the north and about the many potential benefits of the new projects planned for the area. My honourable colleague for Yellowknife North and my other colleagues from Yellowknife have also made similar statements.

Mr. Speaker, the Dogrib people are presently pursuing a number of initiatives related to mining activity. The resolution of land claims in the area will help provide a stable climate for mining companies to plan their developments. Dialogue between the Dogrib Nation and companies such as BHP, Kennecott, Royal Oak and so forth are under way, in order to maximize employment and other opportunities for the people of the region.

Mr. Speaker, of course, there is the Dogrib Power Corporation, with its plan to build a hydro station on their land. This project can help the future of mining in the region by providing abundant and inexpensive power to mining projects in the area. It would certainly be a more environmentally-friendly source of power than diesel generators...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. ZOE:

...which is what mines would have to use otherwise. Mr. Speaker, the Dogrib Nation is doing everything in its power to become self-reliant, to give its people opportunities to grow and prosper and I'm confident that the Dogrib people will prosper if they are given the opportunity to achieve their goals and objectives.

Mr. Speaker, the Dogrib people cannot do it alone. They need the assistance of our government to help them meet their goals. I'm confident that the government agrees with me that self-reliance is an important goal for the Dogrib Nation and I encourage the government to undertake the necessary initiatives to help the Dogrib people achieve their self-reliance. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Annual Senior Recreational Hockey Tournament In Fort Simpson

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Last weekend, on February 25, 26 and 27, the annual senior recreational hockey tournament took place in Fort Simpson. A total of eight teams took part in this tournament. Teams from Hay River, Fort Smith, Fort Norman, Fort Good Hope, Deline, and even Lynx River showed up to play in this tournament.

---Laughter

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The teams from Fort Norman, Fort Good Hope and Deline drove over the winter road to participate in this

tournament. It goes to show that even on the seasonal winter roads, there's a real desire for intercommunity activity. So, you can imagine that once the all-weather road down the valley is built, how much intercommunity activity will take place down the valley.

It was a pretty good tournament, Mr. Speaker, with a lot of excitement and controversy. I would just like to say that generally there is a real need to standardize the rules throughout the north for sport so that there is consistency in officiating from one part of the north to another. I think that would really help communities and the sport in the north.

The people of Fort Simpson appreciate the excitement of the game, especially into the finals. Tournaments like these are the results of the Government of the Northwest Territories capital expenditures in building arenas in most communities in the north. As more arenas are built, there will be more and more hockey players coming out of these communities. It is one of the best investments, I think, for the north.

Tournaments are also good for the host communities. It is a boost to their economy. The hotels, motels, restaurants, gas stations, stores and even bars received contribution from this tournament. Usually at these kinds of events dances are held to try to squeeze something more out of the players, if they have anything left. That usually happens, and it is usually organized by a volunteer group. Tournaments like this, in general, Mr. Speaker, are good for the north. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Testing Cruise Missiles And Snowmobiles In The North

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wished our athletes well earlier on this week, so I am going to speak about our favourite topic. Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting for some trepidation for the cruise missile to be tested, as it sort of whizzed by us on its way south. But as luck would have it again, the tests have been postponed due to not so complimentary weather. Mr. Speaker, one has to wonder what the cruise missile has been tested for, given these conditions. I know

that if I were an aggressor bent on harming Canadians, I would be extremely interested in the events of the past week. I would be working busily to develop a bad-weather missile. Maybe a suggestion could be made to request the military to leave a few of these things in Yellowknife, one with Aero Arctic and the other one with Air Tindi. They seem to do just fine in getting around in any conditions in the north. Better still, Mr. Speaker, it was suggested to me this morning that one of them be given to Jim McAvoy and strap it to his single otter. He doesn't seem to have much problem getting around either. Just spread the word and it would strike terror into anyone, knowing that anything that needs to be delivered will be delivered by him.

The good news, which I heard on the radio this morning, is while the cruise testing is batting zero to zero, the testing of the subzero mechanized over-snow transporters in the north have been quite successful. For those of you who don't know what a subzero mechanized over-snow transporter is, it is a code name, the snowmobile.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the cold weather testing of snow machines is far more welcome by northerners who use them everyday for their livelihood than the cruise missile. I believe the people who are testing them will be made welcome in our small communities if they are fortunate enough to visit them during these tests. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Annual Hockey Game Of Legislative Assembly And Media

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, spring is in the air and it is time for us to start the planning process for our annual hockey game with the Fifth Estate North. Tomorrow morning, Mr. Speaker, at 6:00 am, we will meet at the Legislative Assembly for callisthenics in the great hall...

---Laughter

...followed by a light jog around Frame Lake. I have spoken with our coach and general manager and can state, for the record, that Mr. Arvaluk can play on our all-star team if he wants to.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the media that Don "Teflon" Morin has been disciplined by this legislature. After all, he is on the housing committee with me. He has assured me there will be no outbursts of aggression on his part.

The media's most valuable player from last year will be back again this year. Sheila MacPherson has been practising hard.

---Laughter

Not many people know that when she said she was going on holidays to Mexico, she was actually attending the Howie Meeker hockey school.

---Laughter

Our first game this year is in Fort Providence on March 19 at 3:00 pm. I have promised to get Titus "Beebop" Alloo a ride, so he does not get lost and end up in the Baffin.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I have been assured by the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association that the rule book will be the same in English as in French. Henry "Zorro" Zoe has agreed to play.

---Laughter

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Mr. Speaker, I believe that Mr. Kakfwi has been a good boy this year and can play, if his wife lets him.

---Laughter

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to wish the athletes, especially those from the Deh Cho, good luck in the Arctic Winter Games and bring back a gold. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

That sounds like the last Members' statement. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 232-12(5): Airline Services To Natilikmiot Region

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Ningark on March 1, with respect to airline services in the Natilikmiot region. On Tuesday, March 1, 1994, the Member for Natilikmiot asked me if I knew if any air carriers, in addition to First Air, had plans to introduce scheduled air services to the communities of Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak and/or Pelly Bay.

Officials at the Department of Transportation have made inquiries of the regulatory authority, the National Transportation Agency in Ottawa, about competing licences to offer scheduled air services to the Natilikmiot communities. Buffalo Airways, Calm Air, Keewatin Air, NWT Air and Ptarmigan Airways all hold valid federal licences to offer scheduled air services to Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak and Pelly Bay.

The companies have chosen not to provide a service to compete with First Air. I have no knowledge of any future plans for these air carriers to offer scheduled services into these communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Arnngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 129-12(5): Fort Resolution Water Treatment Plant

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Gargan on February 17, 1994.

In response to the concerns raised by the honourable Member regarding the quality of the drinking water and the location of the water treatment plant in Fort Resolution, I advise the honourable Member of the following.

While the use of chlorine has affected the taste of the water for a short duration, I would like to assure the

Member that the treatment of water at the current location meets the Canadian drinking water standards.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs recognizes the community's desire to relocate the water treatment plant in order to make better use of the land in that area. An engineering consultant was retained by the department to investigate the matter.

The results of this study are still under review and a monitoring committee has been established with representatives from the community and the departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Public Works and Services.

Both departments will continue to work with the community council to ensure that a safe and reliable long-term supply of water is available to the residents of Fort Resolution.

I have a second response, Mr. Speaker.

Further Return To Question 264-12(5): Emergency Equipment For Hay River Reserve

This was asked by Mr. Gargan on March 3, 1994 regarding the Hay River Reserve emergency communication system.

The department provided communication equipment to the reserve in past years. But now, the community has taken the initiative to improve their situation. In the recent past, the Emergency Measures Organization had assisted the reserve by supplying a basic VHF communication system which allowed them, during breakup, to communicate on the reserve as well as to the both the GNWT and the town of Hay River off the reserve.

The Emergency Measures Organization has explored various options with the reserve which could lead to funding to purchase a complete VHF communication system.

In 1993, the band submitted a funding proposal to Emergency Preparedness Canada, under the joint emergency preparedness program. This proposal was approved by the federal government on November 2, 1993 on the basis of a 50/50 cost-sharing. The system installation was completed in February 1994 and the reserve now has a fully operational VHF communication system with a repeater and telephone interconnect linking the band office with vehicles, key personnel, the town of Hay River and NorthwesTel.

The EMO coordinator is travelling to the reserve on March 9 to assist the band in preparing their claim to the federal government under JEPP, and review contingency plans for the 1994 breakup. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Arngna'naaq. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 270-12(5): Minister's Actions Re Devolution Of Minerals, Oil And Gas

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. Mr. Speaker, in his Minister's Statement 12-12(5), the Minister told this House he would aggressively pursue devolution of responsibility for minerals, oil and gas from the federal government.

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Mr. Speaker, also in that statement he noted how quickly development is taking place and how poorly positioned this government is to influence mining companies when it comes to using northern business and labour. My question is, Mr. Speaker, what work has the Minister done in the past month to pursue the devolution of responsibility and a financial accord with the federal government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thanks, Mr. Dent. Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 270-12(5): Minister's Actions Re Devolution Of Minerals, Oil And Gas

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. What have we done in the last month? I've instructed the department to develop a fast-track agenda. Hopefully, if we can get all parties to the table, we've set what I think is a fairly aggressive agenda for ourselves that we hope we can accomplish a mineral accord and an oil and gas accord by the end of this year. Discussions are under way with Mr. Irwin, and discussions are currently under way with Mr. Rayner and others with respect to how we can proceed from where we left off in 1992.

The intent is to move forward with the oil and gas accord, which is basically in place, to add minerals to it and, hopefully, with the support of this Assembly and with some kind of protection and to ensure that we protect the interests of claimant groups et cetera, we can move forward and come to a satisfactory conclusion by the end of this year. I'm optimistic we can do it. I think the momentum is there, the opportunity is there, and it would be foolish to not move quickly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thanks, Mr. Todd. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 270-12(5): Minister's Actions Re Devolution Of Minerals, Oil And Gas

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary to the Minister is, as the Minister is aware, the Standing Committee on Finance has recommended that the mineral accord be included as part of the overall fiscal package that we're negotiating with the federal government. My question for the Minister is, is he in support of this approach?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 270-12(5): Minister's Actions Re Devolution Of Minerals, Oil And Gas

HON. JOHN TODD:

I support the initiative by the Finance Minister, Mr. Pollard, for a one-window approach. Mr. Pollard has had extensive discussions with Mr. Martin, the federal Finance Minister. We are going to Ottawa next week. While you're at the Arctic Winter Games, we'll be toiling hard on your behalf. The meetings are set up, as I said, with the federal Ministers in an effort to bring this issue up the priority ladder. I feel confident that provided we have unanimous support in this House and we can address the concerns of aboriginal claimant groups, we can move forward with this accord. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. It is well known that the Metall project at Izok Lake, which was a base metal project, has been shelved, put on hold now. It has clearly focused all the mineral exploration and potential into the diamond area. I'm encouraged that the possibility of these precious gems being available in the north end of the Slave geological corridor, which is near Coppermine, of course. However, I understand that the diamond industry is totally different from other forms of mining that we're accustomed to in the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask the Minister at this time if he and his department recognize this difference. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I'm terribly sorry. I didn't quite catch that question. My headset isn't working.

MR. SPEAKER:

Would you like to restate your question since it's your question, Mr. Ng?

Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, yes. I would like to ask the Minister if he and his department recognizes the fact that diamond mining is different, is distinct in itself, from other forms of mining that we're accustomed to in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we clearly recognize that diamond mining is different from base metals. As a matter of fact, my understanding is that we have very little expertise in Canada as it relates to diamond mining. The operators who are currently in place are using extensive experience from South Africa, Australia and places offshore.

I want to assure the honourable Member, with respect to the Izok Lake project that I did get a letter just the day before yesterday from Metall. I see this whole development as not necessarily being stopped, I see it as a postponement. There will be discussions in Toronto next week with the senior management of Metall to see if there is some way that this government can assist them with moving that project forward in the coming years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In recognition of the Minister recognizing that there is a difference between diamond mining and base metal mining, I would like to ask what his

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department has done to find out exactly what those differences are to date. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

HON. JOHN TODD:

Energy, Mines and Resources is working extensively and in close consultation with BHP and Kennecott. We're all learning as we go along because the industry itself is learning, and we as a bureaucracy are learning right now. It's kind of like an evolutionary process here. As we move along with the exploratory work we're learning every day. That's about the extent of it at this time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Second supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, to the Minister. Has the Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources done anything to acquire the expertise to provide this sound, knowledgeable advice that the government will need to deal with diamond exploration and development companies? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

HON. JOHN TODD:

We do have technical people on staff, and they are currently trying to learn as much as they can with respect to diamond exploration, et cetera. Some consideration has been given, for example, to look at the possibility whether our diamond mines in operation to perhaps taking a visit there or learning from some of the people who are currently looking after operational mines in South Africa and Australia. There is some learning going on where exchanges have taken place in the Yakutia, Russia area because of some diamond mining there. It's a learning process for all of us. Steps are being taken. We're trying to quickly learn as much as we can. I know we have to do a great deal more, and I'm hoping that some exchanges between operational diamond mines and ourselves will bring about some of that learning. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

MR. NG:

Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, thank you. The Minister has conveyed that he has technical people on staff, and I respect that. But I'm asking specifically in relation to the diamond mining aspect. I'm asking, will the Minister's department be acquiring the expertise of an individual to deal with diamond mining? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 271-12(5): Difference Of Diamond Mining From Base Metal Mining

HON. JOHN TODD:

We would acquire their expertise within the current resources we have. We have no new resources to go out and buy diamond expertise. The current exploration that's going on in Canada, the exploration companies are buying that expertise from South Africa or Austria. Within the department it's not our intent to go out and get a diamond specialist. It's our intent within our technical staff to learn as quickly as we can about diamond exploration, et cetera.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 272-12(5): Assessment Of Expertise In Diamond Mining

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. In dealing with the opportunities associated with exploration, particularly diamond exploration, this government needs to assess business expertise in the diamond industry to ensure northern residents can take full advantage of this opportunity. I would like to ask the Minister, what has the Minister's department done to ensure this expertise is available to northerners? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister Todd.

Return To Question 272-12(5): Assessment Of Expertise In Diamond Mining

HON. JOHN TODD:

It's a far larger question than just trying to acquire the expertise for the Department of Economic Development. If this diamond venture does take off, it will have an enormous fiscal impact on the Northwest Territories. What we've done is put a committee together in conjunction with my colleagues to try to put a plan in place to determine the kinds of issues that will come about should this take place, the kinds of economic benefits that are going to be derived from it, the kind of support we're going to have to provide to the industry and to the people in the area, the type of

training required, the employment opportunities, et cetera.

So, what we need, I think, anyway -- and I've asked Mr. Bailey to head it up along with Mr. Gerein, Mr. Nicholls and Mr. Handley -- is a kind of a blueprint should this exploration come into being. We have to determine how we're going to protect the interests of northerners, whether it is in the economic field, the training and employment field or the environmental field. This thing has come about very quickly and I'm trying to move quickly to put a paper in place that at least attempts to address all these issues for debate in this House.

I'm hoping to do that within the next 90 to 120 days. In the meantime, we are looking at the kinds of economic opportunities that would be derived from this exploration and where we can provide both the technical and financial support to it. I know that in each of the Ministers' departments...For example, in Mr. Nerysoo's department they are looking at how they would develop the type of training and employment opportunities that are going to come forward. We need to package it in some order for debate, to see if we're going in

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the right direction. We're trying to do that quickly at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Antoine, first supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 272-12(5): Assessment Of Expertise In Diamond Mining

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, there's a plan being developed. This exploration is taking place at the current time. What is in place at this time for northern residents to take full advantage of the opportunities? Is there expertise in place in this department to help these northern residents take full advantage of these opportunities at this time? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 272-12(5): Assessment Of Expertise In Diamond Mining

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We don't have anybody specifically designated to this project at this time within the Department of Economic Development. I spoke to the business community two weeks ago and what we are saying is that if they require support from us, whether it is fiscal or technical, we're prepared to give that. This thing is moving at a pace which is, quite frankly, way faster than government, but we're trying to catch up with it and we're in the throes of trying to develop a blueprint for where we can all fit, and to determine the fiscal resources that are going to be necessary to respond to this exciting and phenomenal national and international mining venture. But, I don't have anybody specifically designated for that at this time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 272-12(5): Assessment Of Expertise In Diamond Mining

MR. ANTOINE:

Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. This is a different type of exploration from the what my previous honourable colleagues had questions on. It is a different type of exploration in mining. Where are the northern businesses getting the assistance that they require at the present time? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 272-12(5): Assessment Of Expertise In Diamond Mining

HON. JOHN TODD:

I think it's important to point out that diamond exploration is new to Canada, it's not just new to the Northwest Territories. My understanding is that right now the expediting firms, the airline companies like Buffalo Airways, and some of the Weaver and Devore type businesses are getting a significant amount of this business.

The technical aspect of it, which I think is what we're alluding to here, is something we're attempting to quickly see what is required. Specifically, what type of infrastructure is required and how would we get in behind it if it was going to be northern? We really

don't have a full understanding of that right now, to be quite frank with you. But, at the present time, at the exploratory stage, I understand that there are a significant amount of northern businesses contributing to this project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Patterson.

Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. It has to do with diamond mining and exploration. The way diamonds are mined is different than how gold, lead/zinc and other mineral deposits are mined in the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the Arctic College or his department doing to prepare Northwest Territories residents -- most particularly in the North Slave and the Kitikmeot -- for jobs that may emerge in any new diamond mines? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Return To Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The partnership that originally was developed was, as the honourable Member should recall, with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Human Resources Development Canada Limited and Metall. The issues being addressed were to develop training initiatives to allow for the participation of people in the Kitikmeot region in mining, generally. Not specific to the Izok Lake area, but in the whole area of mining participation. We are working with those groups.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the efforts that are being made in the Kitikmeot but I believe that the diamond prospects are most likely to occur in the North Slave region. I would like to ask the Minister, are there initiatives planned to allow residents of the North Slave region to take advantage of diamond mining jobs? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Speaker, as I just indicated to the honourable Member, the issue was to deal with overall training in the mining area and we are developing a strategy as to how we should respond. What is important for us to do is to identify the training requirements, the total amount of jobs available in a particular area, and specifically target the possibility of training in certain sectors, whether it is for electricians, carpenters, heavy equipment operators or specialized equipment operators. That information is required

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and we need to work with the North Slave, and we are in fact working with them and with the Kitikmeot so we can respond to those needs. It would be applied right across the Northwest Territories for people involved in mining training programs.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to hear that there's a mining training strategy in the process of being developed. I would like to ask the Minister, when can Members of this Assembly get more information about the process that's being followed and the elements of this strategy which is very important to all of us? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm working in conjunction with my colleague, the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, to develop an overall strategy so that we deal with a number of factors that have to be dealt with. That includes training and education programming, because part of that deals with possible requirements for financial resources. Our view is that it should be a package arrangement as has been suggested by other Members on how we develop programs. So, I am working now in conjunction with my colleague.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that Members would be very pleased to get more information before this session ends on progress in this training strategy. I would like to ask the Minister one specific question about this strategy. I think it's well-known, Mr. Speaker, that we are still feeling the impacts of the largest staking rush in the world in virtually every region of the territories, including even the Baffin region. I would like to ask the Minister of Education, will the proposed mining training strategy also deal with the tremendous opportunities that are still available for northern people who know the land to get involved in prospecting? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you very much. Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 273-12(5): Training NWT Residents For Jobs In Diamond Mines

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would hope it would deal with all aspects of the mining industry. I think the problem that people have is focusing only on a particular region. The fact is that mining potential in the north, right across Nunavut, right across the

western Northwest Territories, has significant potential. The whole matter of training that we want to propose is not for the short-term, but for the long-term. It's certainly our intention to address those particular needs that the honourable Member has raised with me today.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Renewable Resources. This is with regard to the fact that the Northwest Territories government has regulations to govern the acceptable level of sulphur dioxide emissions by NWT companies. Does the Government of the Northwest Territories have the authority to press charges against a company which exceeds the acceptable levels? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

I'm sorry, I didn't get a clear understanding of the question. Mr. Speaker, I would ask if it could be rephrased again.

MR. SPEAKER:

I think it's just repeated, not rephrased. Would you repeat the question, please, Mr. Antoine.

Question 274-12(5): GNWT's Legal Authority Re Air Quality

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. My question has to do with the regulations to govern the acceptable levels of sulphur dioxide emissions by NWT companies. My question is, does the GNWT have the authority to press charges against a company which exceeds the acceptable levels? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 274-12(5): GNWT's Legal Authority Re Air Quality

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, we do not have jurisdiction in the area of air quality. We are trying to come up with some guidelines in consultation with the public and certain companies, to try to get commitments that would have people accept certain guidelines under which to operate with regard to what is acceptable or unacceptable levels of emission. There is no legislation in place right now that we can exercise jurisdiction under. We don't have any legislation, as I understand it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 274-12(5): GNWT's Legal Authority Re Air Quality

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no regulation to govern the levels of sulphur dioxide emissions or any other type of emissions in the Northwest Territories, from the Minister's answer to my question. Is the department developing regulations to try to deal with this problem? I have a concern about it because we have some companies that are emitting quite a substantial amount of sulphur dioxide. If this diamond mine goes ahead, it would also be emitting a lot of sulphur dioxide. Is there going to be a regulation in place soon? And, if so, when? Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 274-12(5): GNWT's Legal Authority Re Air Quality

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Renewable Resources has only taken some preliminary steps, as I said earlier, to initiate steps to look at quality controls for air quality. But we do need to do some work with the federal government with regard to a cooperative approach to monitor and possibly enforce certain guidelines and regulations. At this time, I would say to the Member that we are looking at it, but there is nothing specific to report except that it is a concern and we are trying to initiate some work jointly with the federal government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

Question 275-12(5): Monitor Potential Impact Of Diamond Mining On Wildlife

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources. With increased activity in the mining industry, Mr. Speaker, there are many things which disturb our natural environment. There are a lot of people out there, particularly in the North Slave area, working the land, using helicopters, planes, setting up camps and there are even temporary roads put in so they can move equipment and supplies. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what the Minister's department has done to monitor the potential impact of this activity on the wildlife in this area, particularly with the caribou and their migration patterns. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 275-12(5): Monitor Potential Impact Of Diamond Mining On Wildlife

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the department is preparing some documents that would be advising this government about the potential impact on wildlife as a result of the increased activity in these areas. I don't have the specific information available at this time but I know that before I took responsibility of the department, the previous Minister may have put forward questions to the department with regard to that. When I came on in December, it was also one of the questions I asked and they were preparing some information that would give us an idea about how to raise these concerns about the wildlife habitat, the migratory routes and other issues of concern due to this level of activity in the wildlife area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 275-12(5): Monitor Potential Impact Of Diamond Mining On Wildlife

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that the honourable Member has informed me that the department is going to do something, but my question was a little bit more specific, Mr. Speaker. I asked what the department was doing in monitoring where all this activity is happening and he hasn't answered my question. I would like to know the specifics. What is the department doing to monitor the wildlife in the area where this activity is happening? I'm particularly interested in the caribou and their migration patterns. What is the department doing in this area? That was my question. He didn't answer my previous question, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask him again what the department is doing with regard to monitoring. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 275-12(5): Monitor Potential Impact Of Diamond Mining On Wildlife

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, that's the question I thought I was answering. I had asked the same question to the department in December. There has been extensive exploration and staking in this area for the last two years. In fact, most of the land in the North Slave has been staked and there are stakers and companies setting up base camps in a number of areas.

The concern has been put to the department about exactly what steps are being taken to monitor this activity so that they can come up with a framework that would give myself, as the Minister, an idea of what we're going to do to ensure they're not having a negative impact on the wildlife and to be proactive. We have to go out to talk to these developers and stakers and advise them on how they should be conducting their work to minimize any potential impact. As I said, that question has been put to the department.

I know that the renewable resource officers, field officers, researchers and biologists spend a great deal of their time monitoring and watching activities, not only of developers but of local people, so I have no doubt that they are monitoring. That is part of their job. As far as giving the Member specific information about what is being done on a day-to-day basis and what specific measures are being taken, I don't have that information with me but, as I've said, I've asked for it as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Second supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 275-12(5): Monitor Potential Impact Of Diamond Mining On Wildlife

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, does the department have baseline information on water quality, fish levels and marine mammals in the areas of activity? I would like know this information, not only in the North Slave area, but in other areas such as the Izok Lake area. I think it's critical for the department to have this baseline information. Does the department have that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 275-12(5): Monitor Potential Impact Of Diamond Mining On Wildlife

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the department actively seeks out information, both on a scientific basis and also on a traditional basis, in order to establish what would be called a management plan, for fish, caribou, muskox, mountain sheep, grizzly bears and all the other species we harvest or

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that are available for sport hunting. We do some scientific counts by aerial survey. Others are done in other ways, using traditional knowledge of hunters and aboriginal people.

The baseline data, as the Member calls it, is available. It's the basis on which we do our planning. The co-management plans that we develop with the aboriginal people and the harvesters are based on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Ballantyne.

Question 276-12(5): Minister's Commitment To Finalize Oil And Gas Accord

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum resources. It is a follow-up to a question asked by Mr. Dent. It has been a number of years now since our government reached an agreement in principle for an oil and gas accord with the former Prime Minister of Canada. In this House, the present Prime Minister has committed to devolving government programs to the north at a pace that we decide. It is obvious that the prospects for major oil and gas development aren't very good in the immediate future so this is probably a very good time to negotiate an accord.

My question to the Minister is, is the Minister committed to overcoming the hurdles that have prevented us from finalizing the accord and to finalize an oil and gas agreement with Ottawa in this year?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 276-12(5): Minister's Commitment To Finalize Oil And Gas Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I'm committed to finding a way around some of the obstacles that were in place that unfortunately resulted in failure to reach an oil and gas accord in July 1992. The framework for the accord is there and it is my understanding that there were about two or three obstacles in place. I've instructed the department to move quickly to find the appropriate compromise with respect to these two or three obstacles. Given that we can get around those, and we have the political support of people in the Northwest Territories, I'm told that there is enthusiasm at the federal level and there's certainly enthusiasm at this level to reach an oil and gas mineral accord. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 276-12(5): Minister's Commitment To Finalize Oil And Gas Accord

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I'm very happy to hear that response because I think everybody here must recognize that, like other opportunities, if we don't grab them when they're available we could lose them forever. Just again for

the public record, I will ask the Minister if he is prepared to make the necessary adjustments to get around the obstacles that have prevented us from finalizing this accord in the past.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 276-12(5): Minister's Commitment To Finalize Oil And Gas Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

I'm confident that the previous obstacles that were in place can be worked out. There may be new obstacles down the road, I don't know. But the previous obstacles that unfortunately resulted in the lack of the signing of an oil and gas accord in July 1992 can be worked out and we can move forward aggressively to get an agreement in principle with respect to oil and gas and minerals.

The framework for oil and gas is no different than it is for minerals, in a sense, and we want to move quickly to get it done. I want to assure the honourable Member that we're going to take care of the three or four elements that unfortunately resulted in the lack of signing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

Question 277-12(5): Impact Of Diamond Mine Drilling On Wildlife

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources, and it is similar to that of Mr. Zoe. Mr. Zoe asked a question regarding exploration. My question is regarding drilling. One of the things we learned about diamond exploration is that companies look for round lakes as a sign that there are diamonds underneath. They then drill core samples to try to find the diamonds. Some of the companies, if they are large enough and wealthy enough, can do directional drilling, Mr. Speaker, drilling diagonally from the side of the lake. However, smaller companies do not have the dollars to do this and drill straight down through the lake.

It would appear that this would have an impact on fish and other animals that use these lakes. My question to the honourable Minister is, how is the department

monitoring the impact of this drilling on the local wildlife? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 277-12(5): Impact Of Diamond Mine Drilling On Wildlife

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, most of the land that has been explored and staked is federal land. It is, for the most part, the federal government who has the rights over those lands and it is mostly federal environmental regulations that govern the activities. What a federal law requires is that companies are obliged to regulate themselves in accordance with that. The federal government makes sure that activities don't take place unless they comply with present environmental regulations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 277-12(5): Impact Of Diamond Mine Drilling On Wildlife

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since the majority of native people use the area where the mining

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companies do drilling and exploration, I'm wondering if this government, through the Department of Renewable Resources, has any interest in ensuring there are safeguards against these companies. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 277-12(5): Impact Of Diamond Mine Drilling On Wildlife

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there is some territorial legislation that applies but where there is conflict between ours and the federal government. Our regulations are null, as I understand it. We are there with the federal

government and work very closely with them to ensure that activities that are taking place comply with federal and territorial legislation.

In wildlife, it is our legislation that applies in just about all cases except in cases under the Migratory Birds Act, which is international legislation. I don't want to give the impression to the Member that we're laid back and are not interested in activities, we are and we try to monitor and keep abreast of anything that goes on in the land. We are compelled to do so by the communities in the vicinity of these activities. Many inquiries and questions are brought to our offices. I just wanted to mention that it is not always our responsibility and our jurisdiction in this area. But we are there and ensure that the federal government also does their job as laid out by their own legislation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 278-12(5): Safety Training For Staff

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address a question to the Minister responsible for safety. It deals with the issue we're discussing here, diamond exploration and hopefully, in the future, mining. I would like to ask the Minister whether this new resource that we're uncovering and all of the work that is taking place follows the same rules in the mining industry as the ones that exist currently.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Whitford. Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 278-12(5): Safety Training For Staff

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I spoke earlier to the honourable Member, and there is some concern about whether the safety legislation for coring or open mining would apply. We are ensuring that there are improvements in the legislation so we can ensure that certain safety factors are considered in open pit mining and coring.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before I recognize you again, Mr. Whitford, I would like to draw Members' attention to some visitors in our gallery, Mr. James Eetoolook, the acting president for Nunavut Tunngavik.

---Applause

And Mr. Hunt, CEO, and Mr. Pat Lyall, chairman of the Nunasi Corporation.

---Applause

Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 278-12(5): Safety Training For Staff

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the diamond explorations that are taking place, it appears to a lot of people that what is happening out there is pretty much helter-skelter. There are people all over the place and soon, hopefully, there is going to be open pit or underground mining. The enormity of this project brings to mind the question of whether we have enough staff to look after this area and whether they are adequately trained to deal with this new type of mining. I wonder if the Minister would be able to advise me on what kind of extra training his staff are receiving for this.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 278-12(5): Safety Training For Staff

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This matter was discussed with my staff already. We are proposing to ensure that training is provided through either contract or other arrangement so that safety training can be offered in Yellowknife. That may not be the case, totally, but we're hoping that's possible. The other matter the Member raised is a point I raised yesterday on the safety factor. That is an issue that is going to be brought to the attention of my Cabinet colleagues so we can consider additional resources to deal with the matter the honourable Member has raised.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 278-12(5): Safety Training For Staff

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for his answers to the question. I just wanted to clarify the latter point. Currently, the Department of Safety and Public Services has a limited number of personnel and a limited number of mining inspectors. The number of mines that are already involved hasn't diminished at all. The work is still there. So we now add this new component which seems to be quite enormous. I just wonder if they have enough staff to look after all of the new parts of this industry that are being created by this boom.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 278-12(5): Safety Training For Staff

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I am aware of that particular matter. My colleague, the honourable Member for Keewatin Central, is aware of it. I am going to be proposing a method by which we might be able to respond to the increased activity in the mining industry.

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I am hoping that my colleagues will deal with it positively and responsibly in terms of the presentations that we make.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thanks very much, Mr. Minister. Item 5, oral questions. Mr. Alloo.oo.

Question 279-12(5): Circumstances Re Awarding Of Contract To Non-Inuit Company

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, I made a Member's statement on behalf of Nunavut Caucus last week, expressing our strong concern that a major northern warning system contract was awarded to a Quebec firm, instead of Avati, an Inuit-owned company with a very good

environmental and Inuit employment record, which had previously been awarded the contract. Has the Minister done anything to look into the circumstances which lead to this alarming development? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Allooloo. Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 279-12(5): Circumstances Re Awarding Of Contract To Non-Inuit Company

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the issuing of federal contracts is not a responsibility of this Minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 279-12(5): Circumstances Re Awarding Of Contract To Non-Inuit Company

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Mr. Speaker, I would think that the Minister who is responsible for aboriginal people would care enough to contact his counterparts in the federal government. Has the Minister, representing the people in the Northwest Territories, inquired of his counterpart in the federal government as to what happened in this case? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Allooloo. Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 279-12(5): Circumstances Re Awarding Of Contract To Non-Inuit Company

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there is a concern I have as a Minister to make sure that the spirit and intent of the Nunavut claim is followed by governments. The Member is correct, we always have to be diligent to make sure that the federal government does not start to slide into the position of not appearing to honour the original intent and spirit of these agreements. It has been the case with treaties all across this country.

But as far as this particular contract is concerned, as I understand it, the federal government as the contractor has decided for economic or political

reasons to issue a contract to a Quebec firm. This is not the first time that it has happened. It has happened in previous years in other work that has serious implications for people in the Northwest Territories. Have I as a Minister for aboriginal affairs done anything specifically to protest this action by the federal government? I must say that I have not done anything. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 279-12(5): Circumstances Re Awarding Of Contract To Non-Inuit Company

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories was given a copy of our letter expressing great concern over the awarding of the contract, and requesting an urgent meeting from Mr. James Eetoolook, acting president of Nunavut Tunngavik, to the federal Minister of Supply and Services, dated February 21, 1994. My question to the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs is, is the Minister aware of whether a reply was given to Mr. Eetoolook's letter? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why the Member is pinpointing his questions at me. I think Mr. Todd is the one who is very anxious to jump up and answer these questions. Since it is the intent of the Members to seek good answers to their good questions, I must humbly request that he redirect his question to Mr. Todd so that Members of this House and the constituents in Nunavut will get the answer and the information that they seek. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 279-12(5): Circumstances Re Awarding Of Contract To Non-Inuit Company

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was alerted to this situation by Mr. Fred Hunt who is the general manager of the Nunasi Corporation, about two weeks ago. I do have a copy of Mr. Eetoolook's letter with respect to the disappointment of the awarding of this contract to a Quebec firm.

The action that we've taken to date is that I was in consultation with Mr. Anawak's office in Ottawa, asking him if he could make a case to the federal Minister to see what can be done. Letters have gone to Mr. Collenette, the Minister of National Defence, expressing our concern with respect to it, in particular -- as Mr. Kakfwi says -- as it relates to the spirit and intent within the land claim agreement.

I am meeting with Mr. Anawak and Ms. Ethel Blondin-Andrew on Tuesday, and that's one of the issues we intend to address at that time. Hopefully, we'll get some response. I'm not optimistic that we'll get a change, but certainly we want to bring it to the attention of the federal government that, as Mr. Eetoolook said in his letter, under the land claims agreement the spirit and intent was that there be consultation with respect to large contracts similar to the one he's discussing.

We've raised the political profile of the issue. I will be discussing it at some length with Mr. Anawak. Hopefully, we'll be in a position to advise Mr. Eetoolook and the Nunavut Tunngavik group of the results of our discussions with the federal Ministers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you very much, Mr. Todd. Before I recognize another Member, in our gallery we have Martha Flaherty, the president of Pauktuutit.

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---Applause

Mr. Dent.

Question 280-12(5): Minister's Statement Re National Meetings

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have had a number of very serious questions today about some important issues. But it is Friday, and on Friday we sometimes have questions that are not quite so serious. As it's coming to the end of question period, I have one that

may not be quite so serious that I would like to pose to the Minister of Education. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I was paying attention to the Minister's statement and in his statement he made note of national meetings which will be held in Montreal this coming May. I was wondering, given the Minister's statement on Wednesday during tabling of documents, if we could get some clarification. Is this statement then meant to give the House official notice that if we're still sitting in May, he will be absent some time?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Return To Question 280-12(5): Minister's Statement Re National Meetings

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's giving notice to the honourable Member that he need not criticize me if I'm absent.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER:

I think that's pretty clear, Mr. Minister. Any further questions? Mr. Ng.

Question 281-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of Contents Of Contract

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Renewable Resources, and it has to do with an environmental issue. It relates to the same topic my honourable colleague has brought up regarding the awarding of a contract to this Quebec firm, Laval-Fortin. I understand, from their proposal, that they have indicated they are going to burn and bury any excess materials that are left over at the end of this contract, whereas the proposal that came from the other firm, Avati, which is the one that is 100 per cent owned by northerners and aboriginal people, called for the ultimate removal of any excess waste and refuse as a result of this project. I would like to ask the Minister if he is aware of this at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The time for question period has lapsed, but I will allow a response to this question. Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 281-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of Contents Of Contract

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, I am not personally aware of the type of work that's going to be carried out by this contract. But I am sure that because it's not the first time this type of work has been undertaken, the department is monitoring this with the federal government. We will be making sure that whatever work is undertaken is monitored and complies with the federal laws that govern activities of this nature on the lands that are going to be

involved, and that the type of territorial legislation that applies will also be taken into account. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thanks very much, Mr. Kakfwi. The time for question period has lapsed. Item 6, written questions. Mr. Patterson.

ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 17-12(5): Award Of Clean-up Contract For CORE Campsites - North Warning System

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a written question for the Minister of Renewable Resources.

Would the Minister responsible for the Department of Renewable Resources please provide the following information to this House:

With reference to the apparent award of a contract to a Quebec firm to clean up CORE campsites under the north warning system, has this firm been convicted of offences relating to environmental damage for work done on Baffin Island?

What are the particulars of those offences? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thanks, Mr. Patterson. Item 6, written questions. Item 7, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 7: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 6-12(5): Construction Costs Per Square Foot

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, Return to Written Question 6-12(5), asked by Mr. Whitford to the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, concerning construction costs per square foot.

Today I am providing Members with a breakdown, by community, of the costs per square foot for new housing construction. The square foot costs have been determined based on the following assumptions.

-Three-bedroom Housing Corporation home ownership unit, 1064 square feet in size except for Colville Lake and Bay Chimo which are alternative housing program units, 640 square feet in size.

-Crawl space design except for Yellowknife, Fort Smith and Hay River which have basements.

-No land costs are included as those costs vary significantly from community to community.

-Foundation system consists of screwjacks except for Yellowknife, Fort Smith and Hay River which have basements and Repulse Bay, Igloodik, Pangnirtung, Fort Franklin, Inuvik, Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Arctic Red River and Tuktoyaktuk where the appropriate foundation system has been piling.

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-Where actual project costs were available, they were used. Otherwise, estimates based on historical information were used.

Return To Written Question 13-12(5): List Of Courses Offered In NWT Schools

Return to Written Question 13-12(5), asked by Mr. Gargan to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

The list of courses has been prepared and has been provided to Mr. Gargan separately.

Return To Written Question 16-12(5): Public Service Positions Vacant In The Baffin Region

Return to Written Question 16-12(5), asked by Mr. Patterson to the Minister of Personnel, concerning public service positions vacant in the Baffin region.

1. Positions vacant for more than three months: Broughton Island, social worker I; Hall Beach, social worker I; Iqaluit, three project officers, academic

studies instructor, instructor-interpreter/translator program, regional superintendent of Social Services, mental health worker, finance and administration clerk, correctional officer I, cook, correctional officer I; Pond Inlet, classroom assistant, renewable resources officer trainee; Sanikiluaq, social worker IV, classroom assistant.

The exact location of two community justice specialist positions, one for Baffin North and one for Baffin South have not been finalized by the Department of Justice.

2. Positions vacant for more than three months because of housing: social worker I, Broughton Island.

This is an entry level position which does not normally require staff housing. The position was advertised twice, locally in Broughton Island.

The successful candidate in the second competition is from Pond Inlet. He will take up his duties as soon as he can locate private accommodations.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Before we go on to the next item, and in case we have a two or three hour reply, we'll take a break.

---SHORT BREAK

MR. SPEAKER:

I call the House back to order. Before the break, we were on item 7. Item 8, replies to opening address. Mr. Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a point of privilege I would like to deal with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Under our rules, a Member is allowed to rise any time on a point of privilege, so I would like to ask you to state your point, Mr. Nerysoo.

Point Of Privilege

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is unfortunate that Members are not here. However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read into the record and then proceed

with the point of privilege argument I would like to raise. It is relating, Mr. Speaker, to a number of issues, particularly the matter of a Member's statement and subsequent news articles that were on CJCD and, I believe, CBC. It related to the Member's statement on my absence as Minister of Education, Culture and Employment by Mr. Dent.

I will read his comment: "Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Ordinary Members' Caucus to express concern to the government over the actions of the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Madam Speaker, last Thursday and Friday in this House we discussed the budget of Education, Culture and Employment and we were under the impression on Friday that Mr. Nerysoo would be here on Monday. As a result, we left that department in the middle of the review. Actually, we had only started general comments.

"Madam Speaker, we only learned this morning that Mr. Nerysoo would be away for part of this week. Now, in committee of the whole, we are faced with the decision as to whether to proceed with the departmental review of that budget or to stand the budget down.

"Madam Speaker, our understanding is that the Council of Ministers of Education meeting and Labour Market Ministers meeting in Toronto were not planned at the last minute. The Minister should have been aware of the fact that these meetings were on.

"During the mid-term review, it was pointed out to the Minister in the ordinary Members' report card, that Members particularly felt that Mr. Nerysoo needed to make more of an effort to 'treat Members with respect.' Madam Speaker, leaving in the middle of the budget process without advising this House that he was about to do so or advising Members that he was going to have to be away before we started consideration of this budget, we don't think, shows respect for the Members or the process.

"Madam Speaker, we are concerned that this demonstrates, once again, an example of his cavalier attitude that we commented on following the mid-term review. We would hope, Madam Speaker, that the government will, in future, make sure that Members of this House are advised when Ministers will not be present so that we can plan properly to deal with their budgets in committee of the whole without having to go through the process of standing departments down and skipping around. Thank you, Madam Speaker."

Mr. Speaker, citation 24 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, 6th edition, states: "Parliamentary privilege is the sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively as a constituent part of the High Court of Parliament, and by Members of each House individually without which they could not discharge their functions and which exceed those possessed by other bodies or individuals. Thus, privilege, though part of the law of the land, is to a certain extent an exemption from the ordinary law. The distinctive mark of a privilege is its ancillary character. The privileges of Parliament

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are rights which are 'absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers.' They are enjoyed by individual Members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members; and by each House for the protection of its members and the vindication of its own authority and dignity."

Citation 25: "The Speaker has stated, 'On a number of occasions I have defined what I consider to be parliamentary privilege. Privilege is what sets Hon. Members apart from other citizens giving them rights which the public does not possess. I suggest that we should be careful in construing any particular circumstance which might add to the privileges which have been recognized over the years and perhaps over the centuries as belonging to members of the House of Commons. In my view, the parliamentary privilege does not go much beyond the right of free speech in the House of Commons and the right of a Member to discharge his duties in the House as a Member of the House of Commons."

Mr. Speaker, as everyone knows, the whole matter of privilege is very rarely brought up in legislatures or Parliament and it should be dealt with by motion giving the House power to impose a reparation or apply a remedy. Mr. Speaker, as you can see, in many respects, the criticism that has been made on me has clearly not been dealt with fairly. It has caused me some great concern about my ability to provide advice and, in fact, to conduct business in this House. It seems, despite my best efforts to serve this House and to serve Members fairly and reasonably and with considerable consciousness of their concerns, the honourable Members feel that somehow, I'm not performing my responsibilities properly.

But, I also, Mr. Speaker, want to read citation 28: "...it is clear that many acts which might offend against the law or the moral sense of the community do not involve a Member's capacity to serve the people who have chosen him as their representative nor are they contrary to the usage or derogatory to the dignity of the House of Commons. Members of the House of Commons, like all other citizens, have the right to be regarded as innocent until they are found guilty, and like other citizens they must be charged before they are obliged to stand trial in the courts. Parliament is a court with respect to its own privileges and dignity and the privileges of its Members. The question arises whether the House, in the exercise of its judicial functions with respect to the conduct of any of its Members, should deprive such Member of any of the safeguards and privileges which every man enjoys in any court of the land."

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, I have been found guilty of something. In fact, the honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake and other Members have suggested that somehow I'm guilty of not advising anyone, this House, my colleagues and other Members. They have found that I was not willing to be present without finding out all the facts about whether I had advised any of my colleagues and this House of my absence.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to now go to citation 59. Mr. Speaker, the fact is, this statement that has been made has somehow been read by the public that I have been irresponsible to this House and I think that is totally unfair. Citation 59: "Traditionally, articles in the press reflecting badly on the character of the House have been treated as contempts. Two members of the staff of the House have been dismissed for writing such articles, and in 1873 the House judged an article written by a Member to be a 'scandalous, false and malicious libel upon the honour, integrity and character of this House, and of certain Members thereof, and a high contempt of the privileges and constitutional authority of this House!'"

Mr. Speaker, I really think that this whole matter challenges my personal honour, and challenges my character and my integrity in terms of my willingness to carry out the duties as a Member of this House and as a Member of Cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, citation 60: "In 1906, Mr. Joseph Ernest Eugene Cinq-Mars, a journalist, was examined at the Bar for an article in the press that the House eventually judged to 'pass the bounds of reasonable

criticism and constitute a breach of privileges of the house'."

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that media, CJCD, CBC, News/North and the Yellowknifer have all condemned me as a result of the documents and the statement made in this House.

Mr. Speaker, citation 62, "The Speaker stated: '...in the context of contempt, it seems to me that the amount to contempt, presentations or statements about our proceedings or of the participation of members should not only be erroneous or incorrect, but, rather, should be purposely untrue and improper and import a ring of deceit'."

Mr. Speaker, I have never lead this House, misinformed or deceitfully worked or provided advice to this House. That, in my view, is incorrect. The suggestion somehow is that I'm deceitful and, in fact, irresponsible. I don't ever believe in the 14.5 years that I've been here, I've ever tried to be deceitful or irresponsible or tried to mislead this House.

I've served this House as a Speaker. Not once did I ever try to misrepresent the people in the House or the people of the Northwest Territories or my constituents. Nor have I tried to lie and mislead the House.

Mr. Speaker, on the matter of reflections on Members, citation 64 "The House has occasionally taken notice of attacks on individual Members. Most notably, in 1880 John Macdonnell, while seated at his desk in the House, referred to a Member, L S Huntingdon, as 'a cheat and a swindler'. Removed from the House, he returned twice more to repeat the charge and finally concluded with a written note to the same effect. For the offence, Mr. Macdonnell was judged guilty of a breach of privilege and was summoned to the Bar to apologize."

Mr. Speaker, personally I have been attacked. I think it is wrong to make the suggestion that somehow I have, in fact, mislead and, in fact, there are allegations that have been made against me that I was not prepared to advise nor inform Members of my absence. I have already tabled in this House the fact that I had advised the Members of this House. If the argument is that I should have provided specific dates, the fact is, Mr. Speaker, we have a forum that we have used traditionally in this House for many years, and that has been to utilize the House Leader as being the person who would represent Cabinet. It

is not individuals who would, in fact, represent themselves to the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

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The other point that has been a long-standing tradition, and I know my colleague, Mr. Patterson, who was Government Leader, made certain of this even in his time in Cabinet, along with my other colleague, Mr. Ballantyne, who was the House Leader previously, made certain that the process of advising the House was not to request to provide for a request to leave, but rather to provide advice that Members would be absent. That has been a long-standing tradition. In fact, that is the process I have used.

Mr. Speaker, citation 67, a suggestion for in this particular case, which is a case of a newspaper, News/North, in fact, the local media here, the radio stations, "It is always the responsibility of the House to decide if reflections on Members are sufficiently serious to justify action. In 1974 and again in 1976, Members complained about newspaper reports about the Speaker allowed that a prima facie case of privilege existed. After debate, the House declined to refer the matters to the Standing Committee..."

Irrespective of that, Mr. Speaker, I still do believe that what has occurred here is the media has accepted -- accepted! -- a statement as being fact, being true. I think, in my view, that is unfair, there is no justification to the arguments that have been made. If the issue that is before the Members of this House is my character, or for that matter is the report card, then the honourable Members in this House should rise and state that fact. But the simple fact is the issue that was brought to the attention of this House was the matter of the absence of Members from this House. During that day there were two other Members of the Cabinet absent, and not once in the documentation was there mention specifically any issue related to those individuals.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to review this particular matter. I would ask you to consider the arguments that have been brought forward and bring back, if you would, a decision on these arguments that I have brought to your attention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Mr. Nerysoo has raised his point of privilege and has given us many facts and citations which have given rise in the past to questions of privilege. Under our rules, when a

matter of privilege arises -- this is 19(2) -- it shall be considered immediately.

The issue that Members have to consider today is the issue that is raised under 19(3), and I will quote it for you. "The Speaker may allow debate to assist the Speaker to determine whether a prima facie case of breach of privilege has taken place, and whether the matter has been raised at the earliest opportunity." I would like to entertain some debate on this issue on the two points raised under 19(3) which is whether there are lots of facts here to support this as a case, and whether it's been raised at the earliest opportunity. Then, together with the comments that have been made by the Member, plus whatever debate ensues in the House, then some judgement can be made about whether there is a point of privilege.

I would like Members to respond to the point of privilege raised by the Member so it will assist us in making a ruling. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's difficult without any preparation to respond to some of the arguments that have just been presented. It would seem to me that, perhaps, we're making a mountain out of a molehill.

In the first instance, as to the point of privilege, my argument would be that there is no point of privilege in that this has not been presented to the House at the earliest possible moment. The Minister has been back in the House for two and a half days now, and this point was not raised when it was first possible. That would be my first argument that there is no point of privilege.

As to the other concerns that have been expressed, Mr. Speaker, the statement was made on behalf of the Ordinary Members' Caucus. So, obviously, ordinary Members were not aware that the Minister was going to be away. While normally this House has a timely process for information about Ministers' travel and Ministers' absences from the House, that did not take place. If the Minister has some quarrel with the House Leader as to that information not having been presented in the House, then I suggest that that quarrel should be taken up directly with the House Leader, it should not be taken up here.

We have, in fact, on many occasions had the chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance advised by a letter from Ministers of their intent to

travel in order to make sure that the scheduling of consideration of departmental budgets in this House is done in a cohesive and coherent manner. That may be an unofficial manner of communication, but it is one that has taken place. In this instance, the Minister's budget was the one that was before this House. The other two Ministers who were absent did not have their budgets in front of the House, and therefore were not in the same sort of situation to be responsible to this House to respond to questions which may have come up as a result of their budget being considered in committee of the whole.

Mr. Speaker, I would also argue that the public perception or the media response to statements made in this House are not matters that would necessarily bear in this argument. If the media should choose to interpret a statement one way or another, that is their right. And the Member has the ability to stand and make a Member's statement to counter that impression that may be taken. But this House has no control over the writings or the broadcastings of media undertakings, therefore, can't be seen to be reacting necessarily to them.

I think, Mr. Speaker, not having had a lot of time to research it, that basically outlines the points I would make to refute the Minister's argument that he has a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. To Mr. Nerysoo's point of privilege. Any other Member? Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, have the same feeling as my colleague for Yellowknife Frame Lake. I agree that this item that has been raised under privilege holds no water. It wasn't brought up at the earliest opportunity, so according to rule 19.4(2) it says, "the matter has to be raised at the earliest opportunity." I think the honourable Member who is raising a point of privilege knows the rules, being a former Speaker of the House, I think would have had the opportunity to raise it as soon as he got back. Unfortunately,

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he didn't take that initiative at that particular time. So I, too, would suggest that although the Member has raised a point of privilege, he doesn't have any point of privilege in my view. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Any other Member to Mr. Nerysoo's point of privilege?
Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of Members that perhaps a couple of weeks, before I made a report to the Caucus at our usual Caucus meeting indicating that there would be a difficulty at the end of February where the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment would be away, and that I was committed to an occasion that I would attend. If I did not, he would be given preference ongoing if there was a difficulty in the number in the House. I just wanted to bring that to your attention because perhaps we didn't follow up by letter, Mr. Speaker, but it's not always that we follow up by letter, we normally advise and there was an advisement approximately two weeks before at Caucus on these particular dates. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you very much, Madam Premier. Anybody else to Mr. Nerysoo's point of privilege? If there is no further debate on this issue, then I will review the Hansard in detail, Mr. Nerysoo's detailed point of privilege, with all the citations. Later, if there appears to have been a breach, then of course Members could propose a motion to redress. I will report back to the House at a later date. This item is concluded for today, so we will go back to our order paper.

We are on item 8, replies to opening address. Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 12, tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. Item 14, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. Item 16, first reading of bills. Item 17, second reading of bills. Item 18, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95; Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act; Committee Report 2-12(5), Review of the 1994-95 Main Estimates; Minister's Statement 5-12(5), Session Business; Tabled Document 1-12(5), Towards an NWT Mineral Strategy; Tabled Document 2-12(5), Building and Learning Strategy; and Tabled Document 11-12(5), First Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner of the NWT for the Year 1992-93. We will proceed into committee of the whole with Mr. Whitford in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Good afternoon. The committee will now come to order. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend the committee move into consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Report 2-12(5), specifically with consideration of the budget of the NWT Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95

Committee Report 2-12(5), Review Of The 1994-95 Main Estimates

Northwest Territories Housing Corporation

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have agreement. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, just for the information of the committee, the Clerk is going to circulate now the 1994-95 initiatives and priorities for all the departments of the government as previously promised. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. As we speak, the documents are being circulated. Is the Minister responsible prepared to make some opening comments?

Introductory Remarks

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to present the 1994-95 O and M budget for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

The budget before you is based on GNWT funding of \$56.641 million. In addition, CMHC will contribute \$45.810 million.

As Members are well aware, the federal government has completely withdrawn funding for new social housing construction. However, we still receive Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation funding for the operations and maintenance of 5,227 cost-shared units.

The federal funding cuts have meant a challenge to do more with less. This challenge is being addressed at all levels of the Housing Corporation. Over the next year, all aspects of corporation operations, and the corporate structure itself, will be reviewed. We will make the changes necessary to create efficient, effective operations in communities and across the organization.

I am pleased to report that in December, we successfully negotiated a refinancing agreement with CMHC to reduce the interest we have to pay back on our outstanding loans. The refinancing agreement will save the government over \$2 million, annually.

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been very beneficial and I appreciate the opportunity to work with Members in such a constructive forum.

The corporation is undertaking several initiatives aimed at partially addressing the significant federal funding reductions, as well as providing a more effective use of the corporation's limited resources. These include pursuing other federal government funding, such as funding for employment, training and development. We are also investigating the possibility of private sector financing.

As Members know, we are currently undertaking a review of the corporation's rent scale. Members have received a full briefing on the problems with the current rent scale. I will also report back to Members by the end of this session on the results of the rent scale review. Detailed briefings and consultations will take place with community groups and tenants through March and into the middle of April, as part of the corporation's community consultation framework. I want to assure Members of this House that any changes to the rent scale will ensure that rents remain

affordable for all tenants and that all tenants are treated fairly and equally.

We have some difficult issues to deal with in the months and years ahead. We will have to make tough decisions and changes, and we will need the support of all of our constituents in order to do so. We are addressing many of these issues through the community consultation meetings that are being held in every community. To date, over 50 meetings have been held across the NWT, and the rest will be completed by March 31.

At the community meetings, our district staff share information about federal funding cuts, program and policy changes, and ask for feedback on housing programs and delivery. Recommendations from the community consultation meetings will be forwarded to district meetings. The district meetings will be attended by community housing representatives.

Recommendations from the district meetings will be forwarded to the Advisory Committee on Social Housing for their review. Once this review has taken place, Members of the advisory committee will make recommendations to myself and Cabinet so that we can meet the housing needs of our communities in the best way possible. District meetings will be scheduled following winter session, so MLAs can attend.

In 1994-95, the corporation plans to deliver 100 per cent of its new rental housing units in 1994-95 through the rent supplement program. The 1994-95 budget includes operating funding for the 112 rent supp units built in 1993-94. Delivering all rental units through the rent supplement program gives local and northern developers and landlords incentives to provide private sector rental housing in communities.

We recognize the need to provide better training and support to local housing organizations so they can run their organizations more efficiently and economically. We need to provide local boards, housing managers and staff with the training and tools to provide good housing services to people in the communities.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening remarks. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Is the chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance prepared to give his report? Prior to commencing, the report is located in

your book, on page 82. The Housing Corporation is in your budget books, section 03-11. Mr. Antoine.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister stated that dealing with the consequences of the federal withdrawal of funding for new social housing construction is the government's number one priority. Committee Members appreciate the Minister's efforts in meeting with the new federal government to encourage the reinstatement of funding support. The committee also recognizes efforts aimed at finding new alternatives. This includes the Minister's participation on the new ministerial sub-committee which, committee Members understand, was established to consider the unique housing problems of northerners. However, we recognize that it will be difficult to persuade the federal government to restore or replace the funding that was recently cut. The committee sincerely hopes that the Minister can find other ways of funding the serious social housing needs of the north.

The committee would like to emphasize that the efforts of the Government of the Northwest Territories to restore funding for social housing must not, in any way, interfere with or attempt to supersede the fiduciary responsibility of the Government of Canada to provide housing to its aboriginal people. Canada's aboriginal people were encouraged to come off the land with the promise that housing would be provided for them. They came off the land and now funding for housing has been cut by the federal government. The irony of these funding cuts for northern residents, is that funding is still available to aboriginal people who live on reserves. The relative absence of reserves in the north means that equivalent funding support is not available to provide housing to northern aboriginal people. The committee encourages the Minister to negotiate a solution to our unique housing problem, so that northern aboriginal people are not penalized merely because they do not live on reserves.

The committee applauds the department's recent trend of devolving more responsibility to local housing authorities. As the Minister pointed out, "the more that can be done at the community level, the more efficient it usually becomes, and the more responsible people become."

Corporation Or Department?

The committee agrees with the Minister that the corporation's budget and activities should be streamlined and made as efficient as possible. If changing the corporation into a government department will provide cost-savings, such as the possibility of not having to pay GST, that can be turned into

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additional housing, then so much the better. We would like to see the review of the corporation's operations focus on cost-savings and efficiency and not merely reorganization for the sake of reorganization. As well, the corporation should facilitate innovative approaches to lever private capital. The committee looks forward to hearing from the Minister following the results of the review.

The committee is concerned that since the dissolution of the corporation's board of directors, financial accountability has been diminished. Members suggest that, until such time as the status of the corporation is resolved, the Housing Corporation be accountable to the Standing Committee on Finance for a full review of its capital and main estimates.

Rent Review

The Minister explained to the committee that rent revenue is one of the factors taken into account when negotiating with the federal government on the formula funding agreement. Further, he said that the GNWT will be penalized in these negotiations with the federal government if rent scales for NWT HC tenants are not revised.

The committee recognizes that a change in the rent scale for NWT HC tenants is also needed to adequately cover the corporation's costs. We also know that the present rental system is unfair and that increases are required to ensure fairness and equity, not only among communities across the NWT, but also with the private housing market.

Nevertheless, the committee is very concerned that the corporation keep its tenants informed about anything affecting their tenancy. It is incumbent on the corporation to take the initiative to make sure its tenants are as well informed as early as possible. Committee Members appreciate the corporation's efforts, so far, to consult the communities and people affected but advise that these efforts must be stepped up and continued. Mahsi, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. The Minister will have an opportunity, if he wishes, to bring in witnesses prior to general comments. Does the committee agree that the Minister be allowed to bring witnesses to the committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have agreement, Mr. Minister. Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you. 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, acting president of the NWT Housing Corporation, to my right is Jim Nelson, vice-president of finance for the Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Welcome gentlemen, to committee of the whole today. The first item is general comments on the NWT Housing Corporation. Program summary located on page 11. General comments. The chair recognizes Mr. Patterson.

General Comments

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a few general comments to make then, if I may, I would like to ask the Minister some questions.

Mr. Chairman, I think the big issue that we're all concerned about is the shortfall in federal funding. Since we're now at the stage of considering the Minister's budget, which I think he has acknowledged does not contain funds to deal with this shortfall, I would like to ask the Minister -- and I know he has worked very hard on this -- what is the current status of the negotiations with the federal government? Does he have any hope that this matter will be resolved? If so, when? If it is not resolved in our favour, then what? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I never lose hope. I know that for sure. The status of the negotiations, if you could call it that with the federal government when we look at the actual need of social housing throughout Canada. Right now, everything is based on numbers, the allocation of the national pie. We enjoyed 6.44 per cent of that funding, when it was in place.

What we want to look at and what we've convinced the other Ministers to look at is because somebody is in need in Toronto, for example, of social housing because of an affordability problem, he is not in the same need as somebody in Whale Cove, for example, because they are overcrowded and there is just no house available. We want to figure out a way in which we could address the uniqueness of the northern jurisdictions ourselves, as well as the northern end of the provinces and Newfoundland so that it could give the Minister of Housing more ammunition to take back to his colleagues.

Also, what has been made very clear to us is that there would be no new funding for social housing. When the federal government Minister says we're back in the business, I don't know what business he's back into, but it isn't social housing, I know that. Coming up with \$100 million over two years, I believe they came up with in their last budget, is not going to come near to solving our problems. All we can do is continue to put the pressure on, give them the information, the ammunition to present our case to his colleagues, and have hope that they will see the light one of these days and they will understand that it's only going to get worse. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Morin. Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, if the Minister of CMHC has basically said no more funding for social housing, which is a pretty clear answer, what chances do we have of getting funding for housing in the Northwest Territories for aboriginal people through the Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs? I understand that that department is one of the few in the federal government that has enjoyed substantial increases in its budget, and I believe there have been increases for aboriginal housing, nationally, in the Indian Affairs

budget. Do we have a chance of getting funding from Indian Affairs for housing for the majority of aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories,

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most of whom I know are clients of the Housing Corporation, especially on the social housing side? Is that an avenue that has potential? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some time ago, I wrote to all the band councils and all the aboriginal leaders, and I have always kept them up to date on the issue of housing and where we're going with it. I had encouraged them to lobby the federal government directly and try to get the dollars to solve their housing problems.

I know that through the CMHC process that I'm involved in, through the process the light is very dim to get new money. We will get a portion of the money we save. They've already agreed to that. We'll get that RRAP program. We'll get a percentage of that. But that's not going to come anywhere near the 700 and some units we need to solve the problem. We need 760 units a year for the next ten years to catch up and meet the needs and the demand, right now. That type of money we're talking about is not going to come through that process.

So we have, with the Premier, as well as with our Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard, a package to present to the Minister of Finance for the federal government as well as the Prime Minister to try to get our housing needs addressed through a package deal. That's the only way we can see doing it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I then ask the Minister, what's his understanding of the timing of the presentation of this package and the time when we can expect an answer on this approach from the Minister of Finance for Canada? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In April or so we're going to have a meeting with all the Housing Ministers across Canada. (Recording difficulties)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Sorry, Mr. Minister, some Members experienced a loss of sound temporarily. Could you just...

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're going to meet with all the other provincial Ministers of Housing on June 6 and 7, I believe it is.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister, if we don't have an answer on the federal funding shortfall before June 7, since contracts have to be awarded, construction has to commence and sea-lift supplies have to be purchased, how is the corporation going to fund the plans to build houses in the coming year without federal funding being guaranteed? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will build as many units as we can with the limited amount of dollars available to us. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a general question to the Minister. It has been mentioned on occasion that we should perhaps try to get the same sort of program in the Northwest Territories that still is allowed on reserves in southern Canada. Could the Minister provide us with an assessment of how that

on-reserve program compares with the deal we used to get from the federal government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is peanuts compared to what we got from the federal government in the past. They have \$130 million for 2,700 reserves across Canada. If that was implemented into the Northwest Territories, you would find the aboriginal people getting a lot less from Indian Affairs than our people enjoyed through the Housing Corporation programs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Morin. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this question has been answered before because another Minister was asked a similar question today. Is the Minister in support of the position taken by the Standing Committee on Finance that everything should be looked at in a one-window approach and that the Minister of Finance or the Premier should be in Ottawa talking about an overall financial package which may include the replacement of the housing program that we used to see?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I am in favour of that approach and that is what the government is doing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Minister, in his opening remarks, talked about doing more with less. In that spirit, I would like to ask him about the so-called alternate units. I have been

fortunate because of the number of people in my riding living on the beach and the support that Members of this House and the Minister have given, which I am grateful for, to try to help out those families. I am fortunate that alternate units have been constructed in Iqaluit. There are two of them. These units attracted great

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interest in my riding. I think that many people were impressed that these units were, although smaller and perhaps not as sophisticated as the very expensive units that are ordinarily built by the corporation, a sturdy and effective alternative to the overcrowded conditions that many people are presently living in in my riding. If we want to do more with less and since, to my understanding, alternate units have been built very rarely in the eastern Arctic -- I am not sure why that is -- are these alternate units an approach that could be taken to get more bang for the buck, particularly in the eastern Arctic? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Alternate units are a great unit that is good for certain circumstances. For example, to house elders who would prefer to stay independent and keep their costs down. We also use those units to help out people, for example, the people who were living on the beach in Iqaluit. It was used more in the western Arctic where there is wood. It is a great option and is good to build them in some places for some people. It is not an option for all people. They are small units and are too small for families. It is not just a matter of expanding them because once people see someone with an access unit, they say that guy has a furnace and I should get the same thing. I think we have 33 alternate units in our budget for this year. They are allocated all over the north. The Baffin is getting two; the Kitikmeot is getting two; North Slave is getting five; South Slave, 13; and, western Arctic, 11. This is more used for elders who take care of themselves. That is what they were originally designed for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the alternate unit was designed originally for needs in western Arctic communities with wood, now that it seems these units are being built in regions like Kitikmeot and Baffin, where there isn't wood, will the design be modified so the package is appropriate to the different environment above the treeline? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we did pull the wood stoves out of those packages and replaced them with oil burning stoves. For Members' information, the alternate units originated in my riding back in the 1980s when Mr. Ballantyne was the Minister of Housing. He was the one who first built these alternate units. They started off 14 by 16 and they have grown from that to what they are today. It does solve some people's needs for housing. But people are still in core need even after they move into this unit. It doesn't completely solve their housing problem. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Morin. That was not an oil furnace, but a stand-alone oil stove.

HON. DON MORIN:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. General comments. Does the committee agree that we go line by line?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Line By Line

Directorate

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Okay. Turn to page 3-15, directorate, total O and M, information item, \$921,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Policy And Planning

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Policy and planning, information item, total O and M, \$395,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Community Development

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Community development, total O and M, \$94,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Human Resources

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Human resources, total O and M, \$1.209 million. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

How many PYs does the NWT Housing Corporation have this year, and how much did they have last year and the year before?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have 156.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Morin. The honourable Member for Nahendeh.

MR. ANTOINE:

Is it 156 PYs this year and were there 156 PYs last year and two years ago?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Mr. Antoine.

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MR. ANTOINE:

Three years ago we were getting the \$49 million for the year from the federal government and now we don't have that money from the social housing program. We are getting funding for that from within the existing pot. Yet, the PYs remain the same. We seem to have streamlined the program, we are getting less houses, yet the PYs remain the same. Has the department ever looked at that? We are trying to see where we can save money so we can build more houses. You have a lot of PYs there, the figure has remained the same. If we could cut that figure down, maybe we could see more special units built in places like Iqaluit.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have managed to do a lot with a lot less. With the same amount of PYs we have managed, without an increase, to redesign all our programs and redesign the construction. We've changed the way the Housing Corporation does business in the north. It is very simple for a department to go to tender on capital projects. We now do rent supps, we do negotiated contracts and project management. The whole way we deliver our capital projects has changed in the Housing Corporation. I'm quite proud that the Housing Corporation has been able to do that with the same amount of PYs they've had in the past.

We also have done a lot more community consultation. We're consulting with people, taking people to the banks, we're helping them get into their

own homes and pay for their own homes. So, I think I agree with the Member that we've been able to hold the line at 156 PYs and we've done a fairly good job of it. We are in the process now of looking at restructuring and after we've finished the restructuring process so that we deliver our programs more effectively than we are today, then there may be some savings. I'm not saying there are going to be, but hopefully there will be. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Morin. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under human resources, one of the objectives is to participate in the implementation of a comprehensive framework for local housing organizations and community government to take on increased authority and accountability for housing programs. I notice that's mentioned throughout your activities. I'm wondering under what context that is as far as increasing authority to local housing associations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're looking at the community transfer program and transferring more responsibility for the programs to them and the dollars to go with it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Morin. Member for Kitikmeot.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister to be a bit more specific. What type of programs? Right now they undertake the maintenance of the public housing inventory. Are you talking about some of the construction aspects and that type of thing? What other categories? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Everything, including construction, maintenance as well as program delivery, home ownership program delivery, the works.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. The chair recognizes the Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think when the government's community transfer initiative was announced, many communities and bands were interested in acquiring control over local programs and housing seemed to be a natural. I know, since I attended some meetings of chiefs at the time -- one in particular in Rae that I think the Minister also attended early on in the process -- that there was a great deal of interest expressed by chiefs in taking over housing.

I would just like to ask the Minister, since the time that the CTI policy was announced as a major initiative of the government -- I think two years ago now -- how successful has the government and the corporation been in turning over and devolving housing programs to communities? How many communities has that happened in? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess, in actuality, none since that time. There are several communities working on it. I believe the furthest ahead is Cape Dorset. But, the Member has to realize that our communities are very, very busy. They are all involved in negotiating land claims, treaty entitlements and a lot of other issues in the communities. When they find time, I guess they will be taking over housing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Morin. Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Is it possible, Mr. Chairman, that with all the effort that's been spent within the corporation on some issues -- and I know there have been good results in

designing new home ownership programs and in scrambling to deal with the federal funding shortfalls -- that the corporation has not put the attention on community development and development of housing associations and authorities that it might otherwise have liked to have made, if those issues hadn't been such a distraction? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Morin.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No. We've responded to every community request that we've received to date. We've responded to every one.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Member for Iqaluit.

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MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to note for the record and for the Minister's attention that until its sudden dissolution by the Government of the Northwest Territories, the mayor and council of the town of Iqaluit were interested in taking over housing. Some steps had been made, with the Minister's help, in appointing the mayor and councillors to the Iqaluit housing authority.

This is something that had been pursued for a number of years by the town of Iqaluit. I would just like to make a comment, Mr. Chairman -- it's not really a question -- that once democracy is restored in Iqaluit -- which I hope will happen soon -- I'd like to see the corporation continue to pursue this initiative with that community. I think they are committed to taking control over housing. It ties in with their already having the responsibility for social services. I think it would be another good community in which to show that devolution can be successful. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Human Resources, total O and M, \$1.209 million. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just had one other question on human resources. Could the Minister

give us a progress report on the efforts to recruit a new president for the Housing Corporation? How's that being done and when can we expect a new president to be in place? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. DON MORIN:

Soon, I hope. The competition for the president closed last Friday. I don't know how long it takes to go through close to 150 applications.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Total O and M, \$1.209 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Community And Program Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Community and program services, total O and M, \$1.506 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Finance And Administration

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Finance and administration, total O and M, \$1.9 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Amortization

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. This is a big one here, amortization, total O and M, \$11.123 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Construction/Development

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Next page, construction and development, total O and M, \$3.194 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

District Operations

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. District operations, total O and M, \$7.708 million. Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the district offices monitoring the operations of local housing organizations, what method do they use? Is it a monthly reporting relationship that they have, or would it be just annually, based on audits and so on? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. The honourable Minister for Housing.

HON. DON MORIN:

Monthly reporting, quarterly reporting and yearly audits.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, I would expect, then, that there wouldn't be any housing authorities that would be in any financial difficulties, similar to some of the municipal hamlets that are in that situation because of the more regular monitoring of this? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister for Housing.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We monitor them fairly closely and work with them. The ones that follow our advice are in good shape. Those that don't aren't. But, they are all in fairly good shape. None are broke.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. District operations, total O and M, \$7.708 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Local Housing Organizations

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Local housing organizations, total O and M, \$77.526 million. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just need a clarification here. You have total expenditures of \$77.526 million. You also have total revenues of \$39.729 million. Is there an incentive for the local housing organizations to be able

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to collect revenues more aggressively, or is \$39.729 million the maximum we can get from all the households to date?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are some communities that are further behind than others on the collection of rent. During the last few years it's become better with the assistance of the Housing Corporation. But there's no incentive today, other than them being replaced with others that can manage the houses better. I guess that's the incentive. I find that the majority of the housing

authorities all work as voluntary boards and they do a fairly good job of collecting rents. They make the right decisions and they try hard to collect rent.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Aivilik.

MR. ARVALUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is this \$39 million fairly conservative for 1994-95 or is it an average?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the best estimate we can give today. For the Members' information, we're also working on a new agreement to provide incentive to the associations to collect the rents.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Aivilik, Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

Last one, Mr. Chairman. Is the \$39.729 million an estimate from the previous year's revenue or is this the maximum potential if you collect all the revenue?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No. This is the best estimate, like I said. Last year's estimate was \$38.398 million and this is the best estimate we can come up with, knowing the facts from the past. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Total O and M, \$77.526 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We will now go back to the activity on page 03-12. NWT Housing Corporation, total O and M, \$56.641 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Next page, 03-13, details of grants and contributions, contributions, \$56.641 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Grants and contributions, \$56.641 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We'll go back to page 03-11, program summary, total O and M, \$56.641 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Does the committee agree that the Housing Corporation is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to thank the Minister and the witnesses for appearing before the committee of the whole on behalf of the Housing Corporation. Mr. Minister.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to thank the Members for passing the budget and I would like to thank my staff for preparing the budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that we report progress for the day. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The motion is in order. The motion to report progress is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will rise and report progress. Thank you. Qujannamiik.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and Committee Report 2-12(5) and would like to report progress and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

That was a motion. Is there a seconder for the motion? Mr. Dent. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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---Carried

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

ITEM 20: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 3: An Act To Amend The Cities, Towns And Villages Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member from Nunakput, that Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The bill has had third reading and is now ready for assent.

---Carried

---Applause

Mr. Pollard.

Bill 4: An Act To Amend The Hamlets Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Hamlets Act be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

---Applause

Bill 4 has now had third reading and is ready for assent. I'm assuming there are no more bills for third reading? Thank you. Item 21, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 21: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Nunavut Caucus at 1:30 pm this afternoon and a meeting of the Ordinary Members' Caucus at 10:30 am on Monday, March 14, 1994. Orders of the day for Monday, March 14, 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

- Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95

- Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

- Committee Report 2-12(5), Review of the 1994-95 Main Estimates

- Minister's Statement 5-12(5), Session Business

- Tabled Document 1-12(5), Towards an NWT Mineral Strategy

- Tabled Document 2-12(5), Building and Learning Strategy

- Tabled Document 11-12(5), First Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner of the NWT for the Year 1992-93

19. Report of Committee of the Whole

20. Third Reading of Bills

21. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until March 14, 1994, at 1:30 pm.

---ADJOURNMENT