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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. Koe, Mr. Lewis, Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, Hon. Rebecca Mike, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Mr. Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Patterson, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. John Todd, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

Speaker's Ruling

SPEAKER (Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell):

Thank you. Good afternoon. Before beginning orders of the day, I would like to provide my ruling on the point of privilege raised by the Honourable Richard Nerysoo on Friday, March 4, 1994. Members may recall, Mr. Nerysoo's point of privilege was twofold. He expressed concern with respect to a Member's statement made by the Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Charles Dent, on February 29, 1994. Secondly, he raised a concern with respect to the media's interpretation of Mr. Dent's statement.

By way of background, Mr. Dent had risen under the item, Members' statements, on Monday, February 28, indicating he was speaking on behalf of the Ordinary Members' Caucus, to voice the concerns of the OMC with respect to the absence of the Minister from the House during the budget process. Specifically, Mr. Dent had indicated a concern that Members had only been advised of the Minister's absence that morning and felt that this reflected and I quote, "a cavalier attitude" on the part of the Minister given that this department estimates were being considered by the House.

The Honourable Richard Nerysoo took exception to this statement and, in raising his point of privilege, stated on page 1218 of unedited Hansard, "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." Mr. Nerysoo went on to state, "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."

Upon his return from meetings in southern Canada, Mr. Nerysoo tabled on March 2, extracts from unedited Hansard of February 16, which indicated that he had in the course of a Minister's statement made that day, advised the House of his expected absence towards the end of February.

The basis of the honourable Member's point of privilege is that the statements made by Mr. Dent, and subsequently reported in the media, were a challenge to his personal honour, his character and his integrity.

Due to the significance of the issue raised, and the Member's obvious concern, Mr. Lewis, the Deputy Speaker, asked for debate so as to assist the chair in arriving at a decision. Mr. Dent responded to the point of privilege by stating and I quote from unedited Hansard on page 1220, "The Minister has been back in the House for two and one half days now, and this point was not raised when it was first possible." Mr. Dent further stated that his 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. He felt that if there was a breakdown in communication that this issue was one that should be addressed in another forum and was not appropriately the topic of a point of privilege.

As Members know, rules 19(2) provides that "When a matter of privilege arises, it shall be taken into consideration immediately." Our rules also provide in rule 19(1) that, "A Member may always raise a question of privilege in the Assembly immediately after the words are uttered or the events occur that give rise to the question." Finally, for the point of privilege to be dealt with in a substantive fashion by this House, I must first determine whether (a) that there has been a prima facie breach of privilege and (b) that the matter has been raised at the earliest opportunity.

On the first issue of whether a prima facie case of privilege exists, I have reflected on the role and purpose that parliamentary privilege plays within a democratic system. As Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, 6th edition, states at citation 24, "Parliamentary privilege is a 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...The privileges of Parliaments are those rights which are 'absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers'."

I note that Mr. Nerysoo also offered this citation in his argument on the point of privilege.

I also direct the Members to Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, 6th edition, citation 69 which states, "The Speaker has reminded the House, 'It is very important to indicate that something can be inflammatory, can be disagreeable, can even be offensive, but it may not be a question of privilege unless the comment actually impinges upon the ability of Members of Parliament to do their job properly'."

After reviewing the portions of unedited Hansard dealing with Mr. Dent's Member's statement, Mr. Nerysoo's tabling of Hansard extracts in reply and Mr. Nerysoo's point of privilege, I find that Mr. Nerysoo does not have a point of privilege. What is clear from unedited Hansard is that Mr. Nerysoo and Mr. Dent both have differing recollections of whether the House

Page 586

was advised of Mr. Nerysoo's planned absence earlier than the Minister's statement made by the Government House Leader on February 28. Disagreement between Members may give rise to one Member taking offence at the statement of another, however, I do not believe, on these facts, that the statements made by Mr. Dent were serious or offensive so as to attract the broad protection of parliamentary privilege. In reaching my decision on the matter, I have relied on citation 31(1) of Beauchesne's which states, "A dispute arising between two Members as to allegations of facts, does not fulfil the conditions of parliamentary privilege." I find that Mr. Dent's statements, and the obvious dispute here as to the facts, are not comparable to the factual situation cited in Beauchesne's citations 64 to 66 and citation 70 wherein prima facie breaches of privilege were found.

It is not the chair's responsibility to determine if Mr. Nerysoo or Mr. Dent's facts are correct unless there is an obvious breach of privilege. In reviewing this matter, it became evident that although not a breach of privilege, there were certain actions that need to be considered by all Members when making statements and following House procedures. I would suggest that there may be a need to tighten up the procedures for informing the House of the absences of Ministers and perhaps this could be addressed by the Government House Leader and the Cabinet. I am sure it would greatly assist the ordinary Members if the House could be advised, not on the day of the

Minister's absence, but prior to the required absence of the particular Minister.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

MADAM SPEAKER:

I would also urge that when ordinary Members and, in fact, all Members are going to make statements in this House, they do the necessary research and make every effort to present their facts correctly prior to speaking on an issue. This careful attention could avoid these types of disagreements. Our Legislative Assembly is a forum for discussion of serious issues affecting northerners, it is not a forum which should be treated lightly or without respect for the accuracy of facts that are cited within this House.

I would also like to comment on the Member's lack of timeliness in raising his point of privilege. The statements alleged to be offensive were spoken on February 28, 1994. The records of the House indicate that Mr. Nerysoo was present in the House on March 2 and 3, 1994. Mr. Nerysoo did not raise his point of privilege until half way through House proceedings on March 4, 1994, notwithstanding the fact that he was clearly aware of Mr. Dent's statement as evidenced by tabling on March 2, 1994, extracts from Hansard dealing with his travel plans. Our rules clearly provide that a point of privilege must be raised at the first available opportunity and I rule that, in this case, the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta did not raise his point of privilege in a timely fashion as required by our rules.

In addition, I would like to advise Members that the statements reflecting on the conduct of a Member in his or her capacity as a Member in and out of the House, tends to lower the integrity of the House as a whole in the eyes of the public. There are actions which, while not directly, in a physical way obstruct the House or a Member, which may not be a point of privilege, but nevertheless could obstruct the House in the performance of its functions by diminishing the respect due to it. I would suggest that reflections upon Members and their activities during proceedings are equivalent to reflections on or of the House. I trust that Members will reflect prior to making remarks to ensure that the dignity and integrity of this institution is held in high regard by the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

---Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Keewatin Central, Mr. Todd.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 45-12(5): Outcome Of Meetings In Toronto And Ottawa

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to inform Members of this House of the results of my trip to Toronto and Ottawa last week.

On March 7 and 9, Mr. Kelvin Ng, Mr. Henry Zoe, Mr. Michael Ballantyne, Mr. Charles Dent and myself attended the annual Prospectors and Developers Association meeting in Toronto.

I was pleased to note the large northern component to this conference and the general excitement amongst participants about mineral development, particularly with regard to the potential of the ongoing diamond explorations in the Northwest Territories.

Aside from the Government of the Northwest Territories' booth, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the city of Yellowknife and several northern businesses had booths in the main pavilion.

Madam Speaker, the Toronto conference provided the opportunity for our delegation to meet privately with Dr. Klaus Zeitler, president and chief executive officer of Metall Mining Ltd and Mr. John Stephensen, president of Kennecott Canada Inc to discuss their companies' plans for mineral development in the Slave geological corridor.

During our meeting with Metall, Dr. Zeitler confirmed that the Izok Lake Project has been delayed because of low base metal prices, the record stockpiles of metal and the high transportation costs associated with this project.

However, both Metall and Kennecott indicated that there is some requirement for transportation infrastructure to ensure the economic viability of mining projects in the Slave geological corridor.

While all parties recognized that sole government financing for this type of infrastructure is highly improbable, I stressed our government's commitment to look for new and creative ways to finance transportation infrastructure in partnership with industry and the aboriginal claimant groups.

Both Metall and Kennecott agreed to participate in a joint government/industry working committee to identify infrastructure needs and financing options for the orderly development of the mining potential in the Slave geological corridor.

Page 587

In Ottawa, the Honourable John Pollard and myself met with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to discuss, amongst other issues, mining developments in the Slave corridor and also the government's role in assisting the orderly development of the mining potential of this region. To this end, Minister Irwin has agreed to identify a senior departmental staff member to participate in the joint working group on infrastructure.

Madam Speaker, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development also agreed to begin negotiations for the eventual devolution of responsibility for oil and gas and minerals to the Government of the Northwest Territories.

As I have stated previously in this House, such an agreement is essential to ensure that the interests of all northerners are protected should major non-renewable resource projects proceed.

Over the next several months, the Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources will be meeting with all interested organizations, including all the aboriginal claimant groups to discuss this initiative and ensure that they are kept fully abreast of these negotiations.

Madam Speaker, this trip also provided the opportunity to introduce the transportation agenda to several federal Ministers. Although no substantive discussions were held on the financing for the agenda, I intend to pursue this matter with my federal counterparts in the immediate future.

I also met with the Honourable John Manley, Minister of Industry, on March 8, to discuss the current negotiations on internal trade. This issue is of great importance to the Northwest Territories as we require assurance that our business incentive and affirmative action policies are protected prior to entering into any agreement that would reduce internal trade barriers.

I intend to reinforce this point with Minister Manley and my provincial counterparts again in Halifax next month at the meeting of Ministers of Internal Trade.

Madam Speaker, before I conclude, I would like to particularly thank our two Members of Parliament, the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew and Mr. Jack Anawak, for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend the meetings in Ottawa and for lending their support to the Government of the Northwest Territories' position on these issues. Thank you.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River, Mr. Pollard.

Minister's Statement 46-12(5): Northern Health Services Network

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to advise this House that, with the support of affected health and hospital boards, the Department of Health has signed a letter of understanding with the Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH) in Edmonton. This is the first step in a process which will result in the development of an organized support arrangement for the NWT health system in the western Arctic and Kitikmeot.

Preparation for the arrangement included discussions with board chairs, executive directors and professional staff members of the Fort Smith Health Centre, the H H Williams Memorial Hospital, the Inuvik regional health board, the Kitikmeot health board, Stanton Yellowknife Hospital and the Mackenzie regional health service and included a recent visit to Royal Alexandra Hospital by board representatives.

Briefly, the primary objectives are:

1. To formalize the status of the Royal Alexandra Hospital as the principal referral centre for residents of western Arctic communities, as well as the Kitikmeot and as the facilitator for access to services provided by its partner institutions and agencies in Edmonton; and,
2. To provide support arrangements for the department, health and hospital boards and health professionals in the NWT, in the interests of improving the health of and health services for NWT residents with the aim of providing services as close to home as possible.

The signed letter of understanding forms the basis upon which a formal agreement can now be developed. This will require the active involvement of boards on a joint steering committee to guide the process. I have asked the deputy minister of Health to expedite the creation of a steering committee with representation from Stanton Yellowknife Hospital, the NWT Medical Association, the Department of Health, the affected health boards and Royal Alexandra Hospital and to proceed with the development of a formal agreement. Madam Speaker, I might add that there may be other people we'll consult with in that process.

In the interim, the Royal Alexandra Hospital will create an administrative unit to deal with NWT health service requirements and make specific support arrangements, including additional efforts to meet the language and cultural requirements of aboriginal residents.

Royal Alexandra Hospital supports the inclusion of NWT representation on the governing board of Royal Alexandra Hospital and on any successor board that might be created.

The department believes that this initiative has the potential to secure and improve health services for NWT residents who must be treated in Alberta, while supporting the maximum use of NWT resources. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Prior to going to Members' statements, I want to advise this House that I have received a letter dated March 15 to the Honourable Jeannie Marie-Jewell, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. "Dear Madam Speaker, I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories the passage of Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, during the Fifth Session of the 12th Legislative Assembly. Yours truly, D L Norris, Commissioner."

Page 588

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Workers' Training Fund Initiative

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the NWT workers' training fund initiative has been well received by the communities and the people of the NWT. Many young people have been given the opportunity to take advantage of such an initiative. Although we were not able to please everyone, we were able to help many young women and men to gain some work experience which will prepare them for the future.

I would like to commend the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment for a job well done.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Amittuq, Mr. Alloo.oo.

Member's Statement On Search For Missing Hunters

MR. ALLOO.OO:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to inform the House of a search and rescue that recently took place in my constituency, specifically, Igloodik. (Translation ends)

On February 27, 1994, Eric Nutarareak and David Irquittug left to go hunting and planned to return home the next day. When the two hunters had not arrived by March 1, the community became concerned and organized a search of the area where the two men were thought to be hunting. Ground search parties sent from Igloodik and Hall Beach, however, did not have success.

On March 3, the air search people provided the use of their twin otter aircraft with local spotters. The community also received assistance from the GNWT through the community organized search for missing persons policy. The extensive and intensive search continued for the next five days.

Madam Speaker, I'm very happy to report that on the evening of Monday, March 7, 1994, the two hunters were found alive and were airlifted from the site the next morning. After the medical examination, Eric Nutarareak was released while David Irquittug of Hall Beach was medevaced to the Baffin Regional Hospital in Iqaluit with severe frostbitten feet. I'm informed that Mr. Irquittug is in good spirits although he may be required to receive further medical treatment for some time to come.

I would very much like to thank the residents of Igloodik and Hall Beach, the RCMP, and the emergency measures office of the Department of MACA in Iqaluit for coordinating their efforts which resulted in the successful conclusion of this search and rescue operation. Thank you.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Lack Of Morgues In Northern Communities

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. We all know that when a person from our family and community dies it is a very difficult and confusing time. Unfortunately, there is a long-standing situation in my constituency that makes this time much worse. This situation I'm speaking of is the lack of morgues or designated facilities in northern communities. When a person dies, the body needs to be maintained at a special temperature to prevent the onset of decomposition.

Presently, there are no such facilities available in my constituency. I'm sure that this is the case in other communities as well. There are many times when the body has to be held while awaiting autopsy, planes and relatives to attend funerals. In this case, there are no temporary resting places set up in the communities and they are forced to use the community freezer or bury them right away.

Madam Speaker, this situation is not acceptable to my constituents. It is time that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide funding to set up the required facilities in our communities to make this difficult time for people less traumatic and restore some dignity to those who have died. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Lack Of Disciplinary Action Against Iqaluit Teacher

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, out of respect for my constituents, the majority of whom are Inuit, I'm going to attempt to make my Member's statement at least partly in Inuktitut. I know Members will bear with me.

(Translation) Madam Speaker, a teacher at Nakasuk School was convicted of assault in the classroom.
(Translation ends)

Students had to testify in court and it was very hard on them. Later, the teacher who was convicted appealed to a higher court. The supreme court said that the first judge had made a technical mistake but a new trial will not be held. It was decided that the children should not be asked to testify again.

(Translation) When he was convicted by the first judge, the teacher was asked to apologize to the students. He has never done this. What is this teacher doing now? The Iqaluit Education Council does not want him working in our schools so he is now being paid for a pretend job at the resource centre in Iqaluit. (Translation ends)

The teacher is now being paid to do a make-work job at the resource centre in Iqaluit. The teacher's union is supporting

Page 589

this teacher. This is not the first time that a teacher who has gotten into trouble with students has been paid to do nothing. Madam Speaker, the discipline provisions of the Public Service Act, the Education Act and the Northwest Territories Teacher's Association Act are clearly not working well. I know that teachers have rights, but so do students and parents. This situation must be addressed in reforms of the Education Act. Thank you.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Maximization Of Benefits
Accrued From Diamond Mining

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Over the past few weeks, mining has been a hot topic of conversation in

this House, in our region and in the Kitikmeot region. The recent trip to an international mining conference in Toronto, followed by meetings in Ottawa, led by Mr. Todd, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, and attended by Mr. Dent, Mr. Zoe and Mr. Ng, demonstrated to all of us the tremendous and unusual opportunities which may open up to us in the next few months. They are opportunities that, at this point in time, very few people in the world have.

It also showed us the tremendous challenges that we face if we are to benefit from this activity. De Beers, BHP, Kennecott, and Metall are huge international companies with tremendous power and influence around the world. Each one of them dwarfs our government in power, employees and influence a hundredfold. The diamond industry, itself, is little known in the Northwest Territories; in fact, it is little known in Canada. So, we have a very steep learning curve to climb very quickly if we're going to have any impact on the results of mining activity.

I urge Minister Todd to take every opportunity here, in South Africa, Australia or wherever to bring us up to speed very rapidly. Otherwise, we will remain -- and I'm not afraid to say this -- cute country bumpkins in a potentially immense mining play.

We have to ensure that the environmental implications are fully understood and that we can overcome them. We have to ensure that aboriginal rights are protected and that aboriginal groups in affected areas are fully involved in decision-making. We have to ensure that we can maximize the benefits of development and are able to provide training, employment and business opportunities in a timely fashion.

It seems obvious to me that we must gain responsibility for mining and for oil and gas as soon as possible. We can almost guarantee that very soon that opportunity will be lost forever. The federal treasury will inevitably suck our resources dry in order to feed the insatiable appetite of southern Canada. And 60,000 people won't really make one little bit of difference. We must act decisively. We must act now.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Retirement Of Maureen McEwan

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. (Translation) Last week in Fort Simpson, we had a feast. The reason we had this feast was for a farewell party for a head nurse who has worked there for 17 years. June will be the last month she will be working there, so this is why we had this farewell dinner for her. This dinner was held at the school gym. We are very thankful to have had her work with us for these many years. She has helped the people a lot. She has delivered many babies around that area. We would like to thank her for having served in those communities for these many years. (Translation ends)

Maureen McEwan is retiring as a nurse in Simpson. She was with us in Simpson for 17 years. Prior to that, she was two years in Liard and one year in Cambridge Bay. This woman has shown the dedication and commitment that many people who work for the government in the communities show. She is a good example of a good worker who is committed. At the feast in Simpson on Sunday, she said she regarded her work as a challenge and she enjoyed it. I have worked with her many times as the former chief in the community. I know she was committed and dedicated. So I am standing today in the House to recognize her. Mahsi.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On K'amba Carnival

MR. GARGAN:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. A few weeks ago there was a carnival on the Hay River Reserve. When you say "K'amba" it means ptarmigan. This carnival is the time to celebrate spring, meet old friends and make new friends. It has been a community event for the past five years. It hosts a number of events for both children and adults such as snowshoe races, tea boiling, sober dances, pancake breakfasts and casinos.

Every year, one of the biggest attractions are the dog races. Mushers from all across Canada come to race and this year was no different from the others.

Another big attraction was the adult talent show. The talent show provided four hours of non-stop entertainment in three different categories: singing; fiddling; and, jigging. The show has become increasingly popular. In fact, last year the organizers had to turn people away. There wasn't enough room to seat everyone who wanted to attend. In an attempt to avoid the same problem this year, the talent show was held at the Diamond Jenness Secondary School in Hay River. It was a huge success. Approximately, 650 people attended.

I am very pleased that the carnival was such a success. However, it could have been even more successful if there had been a large enough facility on the reserve to hold such events such as the adult talent show. The reserve has to continue to rely on facilities...

Page 590

MADAM SPEAKER:

Mr. Gargan, your time has lapsed for Members' statements. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

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

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

MR. GARGAN:

Mahsi, Madam Speaker and honourable Members. (Translation) As it continues to grow in population, this is going to become even more of a problem. I think it is time the reserve receives a new and larger community hall. A new hall will provide a place for people to come out and celebrate any events with friends and family without the possibility of being turned away because there isn't enough room. It would also allow residents to attend community events without the need to travel to another facility.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I would like to stress this very real concern. I would like to ask Mr. Arngna'naaq to take my concerns into consideration. We really require a community hall on the Hay River Reserve. Thank you.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Strategy Against European Animal Rights Activists

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The fur lobby, Madam Speaker, is not a major issue for my constituency, but I have observed the battle for over 25 years and I have some suggestions to make. Madam Speaker, Pierre Daninos was a French writer who, during the 1950s, wrote some satirical books about the English. He invented a character called Major Thompson and used him as a target for all things he found really strange about English people. One thing Daninos found strange was that in Major Thompson's country, animals have a far higher status than people. To illustrate his thought he noted that there was a royal society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, but there was only a national society for the prevention of cruelty to children. In other words, there was royal protection for cats and dogs, but not for kids. I urge this government to use a similar critical approach when it next meets the animal rights activists in Europe.

We have learned that the Dutch, for example, kill 750,000 muskrats a year because they poke holes in their dykes. They throw the carcasses over the dykes into the sea. It could be pointed out that what the Dutch consider a pest and nuisance to be destroyed and discarded is a valuable source of meat and clothing for people in the western Arctic. Mr. Kakwi told me this anecdote and I believe he has used it to good advantage in the past. I am sure we could find many other examples of destroying animals which is a source of embarrassment to Europeans.

The fur lobby has an almost impossible fight on its hands, in my opinion, against the activists in Europe. Attempts to engender sympathy for the aboriginal way of life have not, in my opinion, been very successful. In fact, many people would argue we would be better off spending our money trying to develop markets somewhere else where that battle doesn't have to be fought. What needs to be attacked is the hypocrisy of many European states that are quick to criticize others, but are blind to their own shortcomings. I urge

the Premier to recognize that most of these battles against animal rights activists have, in fact, been lost and all you can do is extend the battle another year or two. If she wants to help extend the war for another year or so, she needs to be tougher and smarter than the vast body of activists lined up against her. I urge this government to take, within this next expedition, aboriginal people who will risk the unpleasantness -- and I mean that, unpleasantness -- with a strong stand. The success of the mission will then be judged by what a miserable time everyone had when they went.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Mr. Lewis, your time has lapsed. I cut you off prior to you stating your last paragraph. Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS:

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my last sentence.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and colleagues. What would help the Premier is a motion passed in this Assembly to provide authority and impetus to the proposed visit to the European states on behalf of the fur lobby.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Morin.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 177-12(5):
Dissatisfaction With Spence Bay Housing Association Employee

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a return to a question asked by Mr. Ningark on February 22

regarding dissatisfaction with Taloyoak Housing Association employee.

On February 22, 1994, the honourable Member for Natilikmiot asked a question regarding Housing Corporation staff using local services such as taxis and hotels in Taloyoak.

Madam Speaker, the honourable Member indicated that I should look into this matter with the hamlet council. I have investigated this matter with the Taloyoak hamlet council and they have indicated that their concerns are the same as Mr. Ningark's. They wish to ensure that GNWT staff and contractors support the local business community.

Madam Speaker, to ensure there is no doubt about where I stand on this issue, I have directed the president of the Housing Corporation to ensure that all corporation employees are aware that if there is transportation available in a

Page 591

community, they are to use that local transportation. If there is a hotel in a community, they are supposed to stay in that hotel. Similar conditions are included under the business incentive policy to ensure contractors use local businesses and our contracts include a penalty to contractors who do not meet these requirements.

Madam Speaker, these measures are in place to encourage local businesses and I will continue to do whatever I can to support them. Thank you.

--Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 284-12(5): Status Of Fort Providence Fire Hall

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Madam Speaker, during our last break before Christmas there were discussions and meetings with MACA officials with regard to the new fire hall that is

supposed to be built this year. As recently as two weeks ago, I phoned the hamlet with regard to whether they have resolved the whole issue of who should build the fire hall. I want to ask the Minister whether he has any new information regarding that project for this summer.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 284-12(5): Status Of Fort Providence Fire Hall

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The most recent information I have, and the Member probably has more recent information, is that the hamlet council was going to meet with the Dene band in Fort Providence. Since then I have not received any more information about whether the fire hall would be built this coming summer. I was under the impression that the Dene band in Fort Providence would be able to meet with the hamlet council and come up with an agreement whereby the fire hall could be built this coming summer. That is the extent of my knowledge at this time. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 285-12(5): Reason For Freezing Contractors' Payments

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance. I received a couple of calls, Madam Speaker, from contractors who have done work for government and they have been told that all payments have been frozen. This is work that has been done, some of it as far back as two months. These are small businesses that need the funding to help with their cash flow and this is causing them a lot of inconvenience. I would like to ask the Minister, why have all the payments to contractors that work for government been frozen. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 285-12(5): Reason For Freezing Contractors' Payments

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, we are a little short of money right now. We have been borrowing money for the last three or four weeks. We are at \$57 million borrowed as of late yesterday afternoon. Our authority from this House is for \$65 million. Last week, I instructed the departments to only pay those bills that we have to pay. We're abiding by all our rules and regulations, it's just that we're not paying in advance of the time that we have to pay those bills. So we're not doing anything intentionally to people, but we are watching our pennies right now because I cannot overspend simply because I cannot over-borrow. Today, Madam Speaker, I will introduce legislation to raise that borrowing limit if the House will give me permission. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.,

Supplementary To Question 285-12(5): Reason For Freezing Contractors' Payments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister another question. When would we expect to have payments start again for these contracts that work for the government? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 285-12(5): Reason For Freezing Contractors' Payments

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, I haven't stopped the payments but if it's 20 days then I'm paying on day 20. In smaller communities where there's a greater distance, then we'll pay a couple of days in advance because we recognize that it takes that time for the cheque to get to those smaller communities. We're just not issuing cheques before the deadline that we have to produce them. If there are some hardship cases that Mr. Antoine has in his constituency, then I'll gladly talk to him after the House and see if there's something I can do to help those people out, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 286-12(5): Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With Federal Government

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance. Madam Speaker, the Standing Committee on Finance in its reports to this Assembly, made recommendations on the formula funding agreement and strongly endorsed, as it has in previous reports, the concept of the Government of the Northwest Territories preparing a comprehensive package of fiscal concerns for negotiation of these issues effectively with the federal government. I'd like to

Page 592

ask the Minister of Finance, without asking him the contents of the package or the strategy, whether the government has put this package together at this time. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 286-12(5): Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With Federal Government

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, yes, we put the package together. The topic was discussed by myself with Mr. Martin. Mr. Martin responded last week by saying that he was not interested in dealing on a package arrangement, that Mr. Morin should deal with Mr. Dingwall, Mr. Todd should deal with whomever he has to deal with, et cetera. On Thursday of last week, this issue came up again with Mr. Todd and myself meeting with Mr. Irwin in Ottawa. Our two MPs, Ethel Blondin-Andrew and Jack Anawak, were present. We agreed at that table to try to get this arrangement resurrected. Ms. Blondin-Andrew called me on Thursday evening of last week and again on Friday morning, and advised me that she has set up or has gotten Dingwall and Martin to agree to a meeting to talk about this topic again, sometime in the next 14 days. I'm in receipt of a letter that has rejected the issue, from Mr. Martin, but our MPs are pursuing it and we're hoping we can

get it back on the table again, Madam Speaker.
Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 286-12(5):
Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With
Federal Government

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance -- again respecting that it's not in the public interest to have negotiations of financial arrangements in public -- would he be willing to brief the Standing Committee on Finance on the elements of this package? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 286-12(5):
Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With
Federal Government

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, there is no secret about the topics. They are formula financing, the GDP cap within that particular financing arrangement, and the perversity factor that we're concerned about. The package also contains the health billings dispute that we are in court with the federal government on right now. And, as everyone knows, Mr. Ron Irwin agreed that we could try to work that out. The package contains the minerals accord and the northern accord that Mr. Todd is pursuing with great vigour. The package contains the grants in lieu of taxes to municipalities that has been a running battle with the federal government for the past three years and the package contains the housing issue that Mr. Morin has been pursuing. We have suggested that if all those things could be on the table at the same time, we may look forward to an arrangement whereby the federal government would clear a lot of our decks of problems we have and we could look to the future with some certainty. Even to the point of discussing a formula funding agreement with them that would split, as the territories do, with incremental funding so that each territory could go its own way in 1999. Those are the elements.

As far as dollar figures back and forth about what we require, we never ever got to that stage. It was the principle that was rejected by the federal Finance Minister. From my experience with other Ministers, and in talking to Mr. Todd from his experience last week, everybody points to Mr. Martin as the man you have to beat in order to get any other federal Minister to do something for you. I will be talking to him on the phone this week and we will be pursuing him at a meeting within the next two weeks, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 286-12(5):
Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With
Federal Government

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, since the federal Minister of Finance seems to be taking a divide and conquer approach to the Government of the Northwest Territories' wish to have a comprehensive discussion of our fiscal needs, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, notwithstanding his efforts with the MP for the western Arctic and others, has he asked the Premier to intervene with the Prime Minister to place the proper priority on this comprehensive approach? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 286-12(5):
Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With
Federal Government

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, I briefed the Premier from Calgary on Thursday and it was agreed between ourselves, Jack Anawak, and Ethel Blondin-Andrew that we wouldn't bring the Premier into the issue until such time as we had exhausted the next meeting with Mr. Martin. But, certainly, if we're not successful...and I'm not knocking the federal Finance Minister, he's doing his job, but he doesn't have enough time to understand the complexities, the problems we have here and the issue we want to place before him in a comprehensive fashion. We are hoping to plead our case again and have our two MPs present to support us. If we're not successful at that time, we'll come

back and ask the Premier if she will intervene with the Prime Minister. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 286-12(5):
Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With
Federal Government

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wasn't completely satisfied with the response to my second question, Madam Speaker, so I'm going to pursue it with the Minister. I will refer to the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Finance, on page 44 of our report, that there should be an integrated plan and political strategy and that it should be available to the Standing Committee on Finance for review in

Page 593

February 1994. I would like to ask the Minister, Madam Speaker, about more than just the elements of the plan. We all know what the major fiscal issues are. Since these important discussions are going on now with the federal government, will the Minister of Finance brief the Standing Committee on Finance, on a confidential basis, on not only the plan but also the political strategy that this package approach represents? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 286-12(5):
Comprehensive Package For Negotiation With
Federal Government

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, I will certainly do it, I will. But, I don't have much more to tell the Standing Committee on Finance than I've told this House. Those are the issues. We know that Mr. Morin is short \$43 million from the federal coffers. We know that the dispute on health billings is \$79 million. We know that the municipalities are not getting their taxes paid by the federal government and we know those particular amounts. We know that it is the formula funding agreement that is mostly holding up the northern accord and the minerals accord. I'll certainly sit down with the Standing Committee on Finance and discuss

the issue. But, have I got a piece of paper that says, Well, here Paul, you give us \$20 million for this and we'll forget this over here and then cut us a little bit there and give us a grant over there. I don't have that written down on paper, Madam Speaker. But, I'll certainly agree to meet with the Standing Committee on Finance. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 287-12(5): Meetings With Mining Industry
Re Provision Of Northern Employment

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Over the past couple of days there has been a lot of discussion about potential in mining and potential opportunities for northern employment in mining. My question to the Minister is, have his officials had an opportunity to sit down with the mining industry and explore ways we can assist in providing those opportunities to northerners?

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 287-12(5): Meetings With Mining
Industry Re Provision Of Northern Employment

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr., or Madam Speaker. Excuse me. I want to indicate to the honourable Member that our initial discussions centred around the matter of the Izok Lake development. It included Metall and the communities of the Kitikmeot. What we are now doing is expanding that discussion to include other developments with my honourable colleague, the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. That department has been the coordinating body for the development of an overall position on development. It will include the matter of responding to educational and training needs.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 287-12(5): Meetings With Mining Industry Re Provision Of Northern Employment

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is still premature for anyone to be certain but if we are to be optimistic and the signs are optimistic right now, there is a good chance that construction could start on a mine within the next year. So, there's not a lot of time. The Minister knows full well the problem we've had in the past of getting our people geared up to take advantage of these opportunities. Can I ask the Minister if he will commit to sitting down with mining companies -- especially in the diamond area -- in the next couple of weeks, having discussions with them, and reporting back to this House the sort of arrangements he's able to make with them to get at this immediately? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 287-12(5): Meetings With Mining Industry Re Provision Of Northern Employment

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, we will certainly try to see if we can arrange for those meetings. I can indicate to the honourable Member that, really, my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, is the key Minister in this issue. I can indicate also what was identified for the Izok Lake development. We are talking about total number of requirements, not only those who were part of the production of that project, but overall positions. We were able to identify the overall requirements. Those requirements may be applicable, also, in the diamond mining industry. It is just a matter of the training that is required and it could be that we have already been able to identify that. I believe we have already met with the Dogrib communities, as well, identifying positions. So, we have already done some of the work, and what we probably need to do is be more specific about the actual job requirements and training requirements specific to the diamond industry.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 288-12(5): Report On Ottawa Meetings

MR. NG:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance, again, and it is with regard to his trip late last week to Ottawa to discuss financial matters with some of the federal Ministers, besides Mr. Martin, who said no to looking at dealing with the financial issues of the territorial government in a package deal. I would like to ask the Minister if he could advise this House of other meetings that took place in Ottawa and the results of those meetings. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Page 594

Return To Question 288-12(5): Report On Ottawa Meetings

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, I attended the meeting with Mr. Irwin, and then I met with Mr. Todd and the staff the following day to go over what the plan of action should be. I think Mr. Ballantyne was involved in that. Beyond that, I didn't have any more meetings with federal Ministers, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 289-12(5): Responsibility Of Environmental Protection In The NWT

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Renewable Resources, and it is again to do with mining. We all share the same concern that the environment is protected. The Minister knows there has been some confusion in a lot of people's minds about who has jurisdiction over various components of the environment here in the Northwest Territories. Could I ask the Minister if he is now satisfied in his mind that he is very confident as to the aspects of environment that his department is responsible for and aspects that the federal government is responsible for.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 289-12(5): Responsibility Of Environmental Protection In The NWT

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, the legislation that governs environmental protection in the Northwest Territories is in two bodies. As the Member knows, the federal government has, what you might say, the lead on that in that its legislation overrides in areas where there is overlap. However, for the most part, it is clear in the Department of Renewable Resources' mind what responsibility the federal government has in relation to its legislation and its jurisdiction. It is clear what the responsibilities of the department are and what type of legislative protection it can provide to the public in governing the development in industry. What is not always clear is how enforceable some of these are. In any case, I think the government, or at least the department, is fairly clear about who has what role to play in monitoring the development in the Northwest Territories.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 289-12(5): Responsibility Of Environmental Protection In The NWT

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think it is very important that we send out a clear message to industry and that we have a clear, fair approach here that will protect our interest but also gives them the opportunity to have some certainty that if they go through an approach, they can proceed. If they meet all the requirements, they can proceed with their development.

Have any of his officials sat down with the mining industry to, at least, have preliminary discussions about potential problems, with a view to looking at positive solutions early in the game, as opposed to waiting later on in the game and slowing the whole process down needlessly?

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 289-12(5): Responsibility Of Environmental Protection In The NWT

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, I am not aware of what meetings have taken place between the Department of Renewable Resources and the mining industry and if any specific meetings have taken place with the specific mining companies that are proposing to have development take place in the Northwest Territories.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 289-12(5): Responsibility Of Environmental Protection In The NWT

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Supplementary, Madam Speaker. My understanding is that the technology used in modern diamond mining is more benign than a lot of the technology used in other forms of mining. I think it is important that the Minister and his department become as familiar as they can with the actual technology that will be used. I wonder if I could ask the Minister for a commitment that the Minister will have his officials have a good look at the possibility of diamond mining, with a view to developing some positive relationships with the industry so that problems can be anticipated and solved in a timely manner?

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 289-12(5): Responsibility Of Environmental Protection In The NWT

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, the department, if it hasn't done so already, will be happy to deal with Member's request. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 290-12(5): Hiring Policies Of Diamond Mining Companies

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My question is to Mr. Todd, and it is also about mining. I would like to ask Mr. Todd, since we have dozens of companies, in fact, engaged in mining activity in the Northwest Territories, mostly at the exploration stage, could he indicate whether these companies have a hire north policy or some policy, in fact, that would give preference to northern people?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Mr. Todd.

Page 595

Return To Question 290-12(5): Hiring Policies Of Diamond Mining Companies

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my understanding, in discussion with the exploration companies and the mining companies, that there is no policy as we understand it from a GNWT perspective. However, there is a commitment, if you want, that as they move towards the development of this industry, there has to be significant benefits to the Northwest Territories. Otherwise, we would view the development somewhat unsympathetically. I suppose that would be the best way I could answer, at this time. But, the way I understand it, there is no specific hire north policy. We are trying to provide them with some encouragement in terms of relocating in the north. We did recently provide some financial support to the Colomac mine in an effort to hire Mr. Zoe's people in his area, so some efforts are being made. There is a great deal more that have got to be made, but some efforts are being made at the present time. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 290-12(5): Hiring Policies Of Diamond Mining Companies

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you very much. I will pursue this probably as a written question if I can't get the feel for it that I need. I would like to ask the same Minister if he is aware of any company who is committed to this, at present. Many of them talk about the future and what is going to happen in the future, but is he aware of any company at all right now that is committed, apart from the example he has given of Colomac, to hiring northern people?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 290-12(5): Hiring Policies Of Diamond Mining Companies

HON. JOHN TODD:

I am not trying to evade the question. I can't speak on behalf of the corporations but certainly, in discussions with them, they have indicated that an important part of their corporate strategy, if you want, in the development of this industry, is the recognition that there has to be significant benefits and job opportunities accrued to northerners. I have indicated as loud and as very clear as I can be that this is an important issue and if it wants the GNWT's support, it has to be negotiated to the development of these mines. Hence, the reason, to some extent, for trying to move expeditiously in trying to get some legislative control through the mining accord. So, I think that in the 1990s, there is a recognition by the major developers that they have to behave in a responsible manner. But from what I understand, there is no specific policy that says they will hire north first versus going south or something to that effect, if that is what the honourable Member is looking for. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 290-12(5): Hiring Policies Of Diamond Mining Companies

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I hate to put anybody to unnecessary work, but it seems to me that we have to have this kind of information. I would like to ask the Minister whether he will undertake to write to the mining companies that are heavily involved in northern exploration and to get from them, in writing, what their policies are with regard to hiring people.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 290-12(5): Hiring Policies Of Diamond Mining Companies

HON. JOHN TODD:

I want to assure the honourable colleague and the House that is the number one priority for me in the development of a mining accord and in terms of trying to get some legislative influence over these developments. I would be more than happy to write to these companies and ask them if they have a specific policy as it relates to northern hire. But, I think it is one thing for me to write and ask them. The other thing is for them to enact it if the mines go into place. If I may, I would suggest to you that what we really need here is some serious legislative clout to protect, not only the jobs, but the business opportunities that will arise should this development come forward. But, I will be only too happy to do what the honourable Member has asked. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, newspaper reports in Alberta last week suggested that the Premier of Alberta is starting to feel pressure to lower tobacco taxes. Mr. Klein was quoted as saying that what is now becoming a problem is cigarettes coming from Quebec, Ontario and other jurisdictions where taxes are lower and that pressure is starting to mount to lower taxes. I would like to ask Mr. Pollard, I think the Minister of Finance assured us that there was a wall of western solidarity that had been achieved through Ministers of Finance. I would like to ask the Minister are there cracks and fractures in the western wall of tax solidarity on the tobacco issue? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

It is being breached, Madam Speaker, by Canada Post, I think, for the most part. Madam Speaker, the Finance Departments of the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC are still working together. We are still a solid group, we believe. The Premier of Alberta has been pressured -- I believe the right word is pressured -- by the Prime Minister and there is no question that it is difficult to stop entrepreneurs who are mailing

Page 596

cartons of cigarettes across the country. Although, the federal government is looking at that issue.

In fact, as a little aside, Madam Speaker, last Thursday, catching a plane out of Ottawa, there was a fellow going through the security area and of course his bag buzzed. So, they opened it up and it was just full of cartons of cigarettes. Obviously, he was going to a different province and was going to report it and pay the taxes.

Madam Speaker, we are going to report to our Premiers, once the Finance Ministers have come up with a plan. At the present time, we're together at the Finance level and, of course, it will depend on what our Premiers say when we present the plan to them. I will keep the House posted. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

MR. PATTERSON:

Madam Speaker, having heard Mr. Pollard's assertion that everybody is still solid on not lowering tobacco taxes, I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance, are there any other jurisdictions in the country -- other than the Northwest Territories -- that are proposing to raise their taxes to fill the hole left by the federal tax reduction? Are there any other jurisdictions proposing this move? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, Premier Ostashek from the Yukon, who is also the Finance Minister of the Yukon, initially said that he would like to move into the federal tax room. He hasn't said anything lately that I know of. But, I don't know of any other provincial jurisdictions that are considering it and that is what we are doing at the present time. I won't make a recommendation until we've seen the report that our respective colleagues across western Canada and the north have come up with. When that happens, when we see what the implications will be for us, I will make a recommendation to the House.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

MR. PATTERSON:

Madam Speaker, I'm not an advocate for lower cigarette prices, I want to clarify that. However, the Minister of Finance just stated that he is going to be considering this issue when he reviews the report of the western Ministers of Finance. I had understood that the Minister had earlier announced in this House that he was going to move with legislation to move into the federal taxing room, increase the limits on the smoking age, improve tobacco tax evasion measures and this sort of thing. Is the Minister now saying that he is merely considering this move and the final decision has not been taken by this government to move ahead with amendments to the Tobacco Tax Act? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, there are a number of elements. I've been asked to lower taxes and I've said no to that. The second thing is, I've said I'd like to put the price of tobacco back to where it was prior to the Quebec and federal government arrangement. I'm

firm on that, going back to where the price was. I said that I would like to talk about, think about and look at the implications of moving into the federal tax room. The reason I'm not prepared to commit to that right now is because I would like to see what the effect might be upon us. I would like to see what the other provinces are going to say about that. Mostly, I want to see what Mr. Martin says about it because he may be a little annoyed if I move into his tax room. I am committed to putting the price of cigarettes back to their old price and I'll commit to that, but I don't think I've ever said categorically that I'm going to move into the federal tax room.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Since the Minister has indicated that he will be taking certain measures, including increasing the legal age for purchase in the Northwest Territories -- which I, personally, would support -- can I ask the Minister, at what stage is the draughtsmanship of the new legislation or amendments at this point in time? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 291-12(5): Western Solidarity On Tobacco Tax Issue

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, it is on my desk at the present time. There's one hitch that has been holding it up and that is the raising of the age to 19 years of age. It is a question of whether it should be in this act or another act. I'm trying to find out today if we can, in fact, if we can do it in the Tobacco Tax Act and then the issue can come through the House and on to committee. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 292-12(5): Strategy For Employment In Mining Industry

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. It deals

Page 597

again with the issue of the potential for diamond mines in the territories. A few years ago, Madam Speaker, we had a little boost to our economy when oil and gas was high on our agenda. The industry took a good, hard look at what was available in the territories as far as the workforce and took measures to examine and sort out what kind of jobs were going to be needed for that industry and begin training people long before the industry was well established. I wonder if the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has done the same thing with the potential for diamond mines? Have they looked at the possibilities, what jobs are possible, what type of training is going to be needed and set an inventory for that? I would like to ask the Minister if that has been done by his department.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 292-12(5): Strategy For Employment In Mining Industry

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, that work is now being done. In fact, some of the work has already been done, in some cases. We are working in conjunction with my colleague, Mr. Todd, to develop an overall money strategy which includes the matter of education and training.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 292-12(5): Strategy For Employment In Mining Industry

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I realize this is new and it may be premature to be approaching some of these corporations, BHP, for example. Has a protocol been established with these mining companies to look at

the types of jobs they would be having for people in the north?

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 292-12(5): Strategy For Employment In Mining Industry

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just to advise the honourable Members, presently the new Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources has established a steering committee to address the whole matter of the mining developments in the Lac de Gras and the Slave geological area. I think the experiences we had with the KIA, Metall Mining Limited, Human Resource Development Canada and Education, Culture and Employment, along with Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, in our initial discussions on the Izok Lake initiative, was a good basis by which we should continue our consultations and discussions with the mining industry. I think that will be a template for the same kind of dialogue and discussions we conduct with BHP, or any of the other mining companies involved in the Lac de Gras area.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 292-12(5): Strategy For Employment In Mining Industry

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to know what would have been the response from these companies? Are they very responsive to the kind of suggestion that we look at and prepare our young people for work in that industry?

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 292-12(5): Strategy For Employment In Mining Industry

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The discussions we have held so far have been extremely positive. It is a matter now for us to develop the appropriate training programs and we can then consider how best to deal with that in the strategy itself. I think it is important that we ensure it is part of an overall strategy and not a strategy isolated to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

Question 293-12(5): Criteria For Living In Outpost Camps

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources. Madam Speaker, living in an outpost camp is one of the most effective ways of dealing with the problem we have, especially in times of financial restraint. When a family lives in an outpost camp, the government assists them and they don't have to worry about the rent, we have no roads to maintain, we have no recreation facilities in outpost camps, we don't provide any social assistance to outpost camps, we don't have to worry about maintaining schools, we don't have to provide staff to people living in outpost camps. What is the eligibility criteria for a family who wants to live in an outpost camp? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, I have to take the question as notice. I have no idea what the requirements are for people to be eligible to set up an outpost camp or be eligible to enter an outpost camp.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 294-12(5): Cost Of Commercial Travel Versus Charters

MR. NG:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Premier and is regarding a response to a written question she tabled yesterday on trips to Barrow, Alaska and Yakutia, Russia. Although I am encouraged and agree with the government's efforts to support business initiatives, which may, in the future or already, generate economic activity and benefits to northern firms and individuals, I also acknowledge that the government was instrumental in facilitating the project design

Page 598

and construction of a new village in Yakutia, Russia. Madam Premier has expressed our government's support by accompanying these delegations to Alaska and Russia as outlined in her response. She has also advised us that both trips were cost-shared charters with business interests. Did the Premier consider the cost-effectiveness of travelling via commercial scheduled airline service versus chartered service to attend these trips? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Madam Premier.

Return To Question 294-12(5): Cost Of Commercial Travel Versus Charters

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. For all our travel representing the government, we consider all avenues of travel, the time frame we have to travel and the most cost-effective way. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 294-12(5): Cost Of Commercial Travel Versus Charters

MR. NG:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. What type of activities took place in these countries besides the official opening of a new village in Yakutia, Russia?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 294-12(5): Cost Of Commercial Travel Versus Charters

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Madam Speaker, at some point in time, when the honourable Member has an opportunity to travel to Russia, I invite him to experience some of the ways the Russians do business. I know many times in Canada, the Northwest Territories people get upset about the government, how they do business and how many meetings you have to go to, but let me tell you when you go to Russia, even the very smallest decision they have to make, there is a multitude of meetings that start first thing in the morning and go through many social functions and right into the evening. So I would say we had about three different meetings. One meeting was in relationship to a further contract that Ferguson Simek Clark were attempting to finalize on the airport terminal building, which they got. So we had some meetings in that area. We had some meetings with the sub-government groups that are in the decision-making process. So there were several small meetings during the time we were there.

I was pleased that we finally concluded the village. I have been involved with that enterprise with Ferguson Simek Clark for several years along with the Department of Public Works. The steps you have to take to even get there are horrendous and I am glad that it finally reached its end. For the next trip, I would like to have someone else take that marvellous opportunity. Thank you.

---Laughter

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 294-12(5): Cost Of Commercial Travel Versus Charters

MR. NG:

If the government wishes to pick up the cost of it, I will certainly consider it in the future. I would like to ask a final question. Is there a policy that the government has or a protocol that it has related to on how they support private business ventures that are wishing to do business internationally? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 294-12(5): Cost Of Commercial Travel Versus Charters

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Madam Speaker, we don't have a policy on how that is done. The particular enterprise came out of -- particularly with the Russian venture -- many years of cross-cultural exchanges. There was an opportunity. Business doesn't occur like it does in the Northwest Territories or Canada or anywhere else in the world because you have to go through a lot of government agencies who are part of the system on how to conduct business in the USSR, so it is very complicated. I tried to learn as best as I could how to get through that maze. It took a lot of time and there have been a lot of changes in that particular state of union. But, at that particular time, this came out of the government exchange programs that had existed over a number of years, and there was no other way where decisions could be made to finally narrow and nail down a deal without using government protocol. We were requested by this Northwest Territories company to assist them in trying to get the decisions made as required. So it was done as a one-time effort, and as for other requests that have come, to my knowledge, they have generally been responded to at the request of specific groups who need to have some type of political protocol to get the attention of another jurisdiction. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 295-12(5): Procedures For Tracking Imported Tobacco

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister of Finance, and it relates to the tobacco tax. I am intrigued by the suggestion that the Minister made some time ago that any imported cigarettes into the Northwest Territories would be self-declared; that is, the individuals importing them from a province that doesn't have a high tax will simply phone up to the Department of Finance and declare that they have these cigarettes and ask how much they have to pay. I would like to ask the Minister whether his department is able to track this kind of information so he can provide myself and the House with the numbers of people who are phoning in and if they have established a new phone

system so that they can cope with the numbers. Is there a system in place by which they can actually track this kind of information?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Page 599

Return To Question 295-12(5): Procedures For Tracking Imported Tobacco

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Madam Speaker, the phone line in the office has been sort of like the Maytag repair shop. The phone hasn't been ringing, Madam Speaker.

---Laughter

In the new legislation that we will be bringing forward, hopefully, Madam Speaker, there will be a requirement in there similar to the Liquor Act, that if you are going to import a case of cigarettes or a number of cigarettes or tobacco from outside of the Northwest Territories then you would seek a permit to get it imported into the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 296-12(5): Minister Todd's Vocabulary

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know that recent mining meetings are a very serious subject, and I know it is not Friday, but I would like to ask the Premier about some statements made by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources on CBC on March 14 about his recent meetings.

Madam Speaker, there have been some complaints about the Minister's vocabulary in the past, but I noticed in this interview he used a relatively mild four-letter word, as far as four-letter words go. He said, and I heard this four times on the various newscasts beginning with Iqaluit on Monday, "There is an agreement to sit down and take a look at what it would take to get these things up and running, what kind of infrastructure is required and who the hell is going to pay for it." Now, Madam Speaker, my

question to the Premier is, is this new restrained vocabulary on the part of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, the result of a quiet discussion the Premier has had with the Minister about whether a Minister of the Crown should use profanity? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Madam Premier.

Return To Question 296-12(5): Minister Todd's Vocabulary

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Madam Speaker, I believe that the main asset that any political being has is how you express yourself and the effectiveness of how you express yourself. In the opposite direction, there has been some concern about some Ministers who appear to be too calm and...

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Microphone turned off)

---Laughter

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

...not raising a bit of colour in their presentation and representation of this Legislative Assembly. I would like to say that the Minister, of whom the honourable Member has questioned his ability to express himself in, perhaps, another way, I believe that I very much welcome...

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Microphone turned off)

---Laughter

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

...his colourful approach and innovative ideas and expressions on how we are going to get there. I think that the paper that was given to me is mild compared to some of the things he could say, and I certainly give him a lot of credit for restraining himself with such a...

---Laughter

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

...well-placed four-letter word. Thank you.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

Question 297-12(5): Minister's Support For Economic Strategy In Taloyoak

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the honourable Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. The Kitikmeot Inuit Association, in conjunction with CEDO, has done a very good job in compiling information regarding the economic development strategy for the Kitikmeot region. My question to the honourable Minister, Madam Speaker, is, will the honourable Minister support the initiative of Taloyoak CEDO to take over the operation of economic development in the community of Taloyoak, the hiring of an economic development officer under the CEDO?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 297-12(5): Minister's Support For Economic Strategy In Taloyoak

HON. JOHN TODD:

Provided the honourable Member representing that area is in agreement with it, we would be only too happy. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Item 6, written questions. Item 7, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 7: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 9-12(5): Monitoring Of Big Game Hunting Outfitter Quotas

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Antoine to the Minister of Renewable Resources concerning the monitoring of big game hunting outfitter quotas:

Monitoring Big Game Harvests

Quotas are one option for controlling harvesting. Other options include establishing hunting seasons, restricting the type of animal that may be hunted, such as male Dall sheep with a

Page 600

minimum horn size and restricting the number of animals a hunter may kill.

Quotas are established through wildlife regulations after consultation with various user and management groups. The size of a quota is based on information such as population size, traditional harvest levels and local knowledge and is set within the limits of sustainability.

Where quotas exist, hunters can only kill an animal if they have obtained the appropriate wildlife tag. These tags are issued by licensed dealers or through the Renewable Resource offices.

Barren-ground caribou are the only species for which quotas have been assigned to big game outfitters.

Quotas are monitored through hunter questionnaires, kill sheets and export permit records. For some species, specimens are also required from the harvested animals to allow the department to monitor specific attributes of the animals as part of the sustainable harvest monitoring. Polar bears, muskox, barren-ground grizzly and wood bison are species where harvest under quota is intensively monitored. Barren-ground caribou harvested under outfitter quotas are also monitored by the means listed above.

Where quotas are not established for a big game wildlife population, the harvest is monitored to ensure that the population numbers and productivity are not declining. Monitoring takes various forms and includes such things as sampling of harvested animals, field observations and patrols, outfitter and hunter reports and tracking of licenses and permits.

An example would be in the Mackenzie Mountains where quotas are not established however, other restrictions exist. These include no harvesting of mountain grizzly and only one of each species of Dall sheep, woodland caribou, moose, mountain goat, black bear, wolf and wolverine may be taken. In the case of Dall sheep, harvest levels have been monitored since 1965. The horns are also photographed and plugged and measured for identification; the measurements show that the

majority of rams taken are mature males. Harvest levels have remained virtually unchanged for the past decade.

Outfitter Licenses

There are three classes of big game outfitting licenses: A, B and C. In some cases, the area in which an outfitter is allowed to operate is restricted to wildlife management areas, and in other cases, such as for class A outfitters, to a defined area.

There are eight holders of class A outfitter licenses. All operate in the Mackenzie Mountains in what is designated as wildlife management zone E/1 covering parts of the Sahtu and Fort Simpson regions. These are exclusive areas designated by regulation and are available to individuals, corporations or community organizations.

Class B outfitters may provide services to non-resident hunters for barren ground caribou, wolf, wolverine, barren ground grizzly bear, black bear and wood bison. Five class B outfitter licenses are currently issued to NWT residents and resident corporations who are not HTAs or bands. Other types of outfitting licenses designated as class B are only available to community HTAs or bands for outfitting hunts within their traditional hunting areas.

Class C outfitter licenses are available only to HTAs to outfit hunting in their traditional hunting areas for polar bear and muskox.

All classes of licenses are issued annually and are subject to a yearly departmental review to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation.

When an outfitter (other than an HTA or band) decides to relinquish a license, the Department of Renewable Resources advises the license holder to notify community organizations of their intent to sell their assets, and advertise in territorial newspapers. The sale of the assets is ultimately a business decision between the buyer and seller, but the department reserves the right to review the suitability and competency of any potential purchaser. The department reviews all applications for a license, including past experience as an outfitter as well as ability to conduct an outfitting business in a manner that reflects positively on the NWT outfitting industry.

Licenses held by community organizations cannot be sold, although they are allowed to joint venture as

long as the controlling interest remains with the community organization.

Return To Written Question 11-12(5): Dollars Spent As A Result Of Mineral Development

Return to Written Question 11-12(5) asked by Mr. Ng to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism concerning dollars spent as a result of mineral development.

1. How many dollars were spent in goods and services, wages and benefits by mineral exploration companies for work performed in the Northwest Territories?

In 1992, mineral exploration companies spent an estimated \$38 million on goods and services in the search for minerals in the Northwest Territories. An additional \$1.4 million in expenditures went towards personnel costs/travel. 1993 expenditures are not available.

2. How much of the total dollars spent is going to NWT businesses and individuals?

In 1992, northern purchases of goods and services totalled an estimated \$11.4 million. Of personnel costs and travel, \$14,000 was northern. 1993 expenditures are not available.

3. How much of total dollars spent is going to aboriginal companies and individuals?

This information is not available.

This information is from a study (draft two) being done by private consultants under contract to the Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

Page 601

Return To Written Question 12-12(5): Information On Meetings Held In Europe

Return to Written Question 12-12(5) asked by Mr. Alloo to the Minister of Renewable Resources concerning information on meetings held in Europe.

The information on meetings that Minister of Renewable Resources attended in Europe has been tabled and is available upon request.

Return To Written Question 15-12(5): Negotiations On Fire Training Programs And Standards

Return to written question asked by Mr. Zoe to the Minister of Safety and Public Services concerning negotiations on fire training programs and standards.

A formalized agreement between the office of the fire marshal and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs on fire training programs and standards has not been completed. It is anticipated that a final agreement will be reached by July 1, 1994.

Standards for fire training programs were achieved on January 1, 1994. The standards are certification by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), or basic fire training on standards developed by the Justice Institute of British Columbia. NWT fire fighters may obtain NFPA certification by completing the curriculum of the Alberta Fire Training School. The programs are taught in the NWT by the office of the fire marshal, and credit is transferable to the Alberta Fire Training School.

NWT fire fighters who do not wish to take NFPA certification, or who are unable to obtain that certification, may take advantage of continued basic fire training initiatives offered by the office of the fire marshal, including the British Columbia Justice Institute's fire training program, which was purchased by MACA for the office of the fire marshal in 1993.

The issues of fire fighter training and continuing development of standards will be discussed among the office of the fire marshal, MACA and community fire chiefs at the annual general meeting of the NWT Fire Chiefs' Association, scheduled for June 6 to June 9, 1994 in Yellowknife.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 8, replies to opening address. Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 37-12(5), an excerpt from the Financial Post dated March 12, 1994, entitled "Why Pour More Cash Into the Arctic Ocean."

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 13: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 22-12(5): Setting Of Sitting Hours By Speaker

MR. NG:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, March 17, I will move the following motion.

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

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

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, notices of motion. Item 14, notices of motions for first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Hay River, Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 14: An Act To Amend The Borrowing Authorization Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, March 17, 1994, I shall move that Bill 14, an Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 14, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion.

MADAM SPEAKER:

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to address his motion regarding setting of sitting hours. Are there any nays?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Nay.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 15, motions. Item 16, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Hay River, Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed to first reading of Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Page 602

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed with Bill 14. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 16: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 14: An Act To Amend The Borrowing Authorization Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Members of the House. Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 14, an Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 14 has had first reading. Item 16, first reading of bills. Item 17, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Hay River, Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I seek consent to go to second reading of Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking consent to proceed with second reading of Bill 14. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 17: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 14: An Act To Amend The Borrowing Authorization Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Once again, I thank the Members. Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 14, an Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act be read for the second time.

Madam Speaker, this bill increased the amounts that may be borrowed by the Commissioner to ensure the consolidated revenue fund is sufficient to meet lawful disbursements. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 14 has had second reading and, accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee. 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 14, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization 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, with Mr. Ningark in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The committee will now come to order. We have a number of items in the committee of the whole. We were dealing with Education, Culture and Employment when we concluded yesterday. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that we resume consideration of Bill 1, Committee Report 2-12(5), continuing with the Department of Education, and if we should finish that, we move into Safety and Public Services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Do we have the concurrence of the committee that we deal with Education, Culture and Employment and subsequently, when we conclude with Education, that we deal with Safety and Public Services?

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

Department Of Education, Culture And Employment

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We are on page 18-13 of the 1994-95 main estimates. Mr. Minister for Education, would you like to bring in the witnesses?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Chairman, yes, if I could have the approval of the House, I would like to bring in witnesses, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Do we have the agreement of the committee that the Minister bring in his witnesses after the break?

---Laughter

Thank you. Ten minutes.

---SHORT RECESS

Page 603

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): The committee will now come to order. For the record, Mr. Minister, would you introduce the witnesses, please?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. On my left is the deputy minister, Mr. Hal Gerein, and on my right is the man responsible for managing our finances of the department, Mr. Paul Devitt.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Since we have a number of items under Bill 1, I would like to remind Members when you ask questions, try to be as concise and as brief as possible and that the Minister, when he responds to the questions, should try to be as brief as possible. But, I'm not taking away the privilege of the Members to speak in committee of the whole.

Culture And Careers

We're on page 18-13, culture and careers. Total O and M, \$64,434. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to ask the Minister, where is the program called the western leadership program in Fort Smith? Is it under this activity?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

It is under the educational branch.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does that answer your question, Mr. Antoine? Okay. Total O and M, \$64,434.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Educational Development

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 18-14, educational development, total O and M, \$144,548. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance, I would like to make some comments about video production, an item which is contained under the educational development activity. The Standing Committee on Finance has an ongoing concern regarding video productions within the government. In its report, in the 1994/95 Main Estimates, the standing committee asked for a briefing to justify continuation of in-house video production. The Departments of Education, Culture and Employment and Renewable Resources provided that briefing to the Standing Committee on Finance on February 23, 1994. On behalf of the standing committee, I would like to thank those departments for presenting that information to us as requested.

The Department of Education suggested, in its presentation, that current levels of in-house video production be frozen with the future needs of the government being met by private sector productions. The standing committee agrees that this would be a reasonable first step and we encourage the department to follow through on that suggestion. Further, the committee suggested that the department take steps to actively stimulate private sector participation in meeting all of the video production needs of government departments.

In the presentation, the department said that most of the costs of the in-house video production go towards producing The Tube, a half-hour youth-oriented information show seen weekly on Television Northern Canada. The department provided the standing committee with estimates suggesting that producing this show privately would double the costs. However, the standing committee wants further information to

substantiate that claim. The standing committee would like the department to provide further information about the detailed costs of producing The Tube. Specifically, committee Members want more detailed financial information which includes all the costs that would allow a direct comparison of private and public sector costs. As well, the standing committee suggested that the department contract the production of two episodes of The Tube to the private sector as a test case.

The standing committee Members feel that the public tendering process will provide a better estimate of the true cost of producing the show privately. With this information, the standing committee and the department are much more likely to make recommendations and decisions that will ensure the most effective use of the resources available to the government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Culture And Careers

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. I have to go back to page 18-13, Culture and Careers. I called \$64,434. Actually, it is \$64.434 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I had to correct myself. The next page, 18-14, total O & M is actually \$144.548 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Before we agree, under which activity is the Science Institute?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Culture and Careers.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

I ask the committee's concurrence to go back to Culture and Careers. I have a few questions on the Science Institute. I didn't notice it in the narrative, so that is why I ask the question.

Page 604

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Go back to Culture and Careers. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As of this date, what is the status of the amalgamation with the Science Institute into Arctic College?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Before I ask the Minister, do we have the agreement of the committee of the whole that we go back to page 18-13, culture and careers?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure by what he means by status. If he could perhaps clarify that for me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Thank you. Several weeks ago, I asked a question about what was happening with the amalgamation between Science Institute and Arctic College. Today,

I would like to know what is happening and where we are with that process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Cabinet decision that had been made would result in the establishment of a Science Institute within each college, one in Nunavut and one in the west, establish a head office with the eastern institute in Iqaluit and the western institute in Inuvik, provide for the creation of a science council reporting to each college board of governors. We intend to rescind the Science Institute Act and replace the responsibility for science and technology functions within the Public Colleges Act. That decision regarding amalgamation obviously differs from the proposal made by the two institutions only in that it places the western institute head office in Inuvik rather than Fort Smith, as proposed by the boards. The board's estimate for the additional cost, for instance, is \$125,000 per year that will be required for administrative support for the Inuvik office. The amalgamation of the colleges and the Science Institute is expected to occur by July 1, 1994, depending of course on the whole matter of whether we get the approval for the Public Colleges Act amendments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Member for Inuvik.

MR. KOE:

Thank you for that information. When are you proposing to introduce the amendments for the Public Colleges Act?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

We are hoping within the next week to ten days or hopefully prior to the conclusion of this session.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Inuvik.

MR. KOE:

What time frame are you looking at with regard to setting up headquarters of the Science Institute in Inuvik?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Even though I use the word "head offices", I would not want the honourable Members to get the impression that, somehow, there is a new headquarters being established. The fact is that we are moving to establish them within the Arctic College system. As such, we want to ensure that they work through the Arctic College system and the board of governors in terms of the decision-making processes. In that sense, I don't want to give the impression that, somehow, there is a separate all-creating entity. However, we are moving to ensure that the so-called head offices or the institute head offices are established and occur by July 1, 1994. That all will be part of the whole matter of the establishment of the Nunavut Arctic College and the western Arctic College.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I figured it was a branch you were referring to. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

When is the earliest we would be made aware of the number of people involved and the types of offices or accommodations that any staff will require?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. We expect a detailed plan within the next month or so from the existing Science Institute board.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Culture and careers. Mr. Antoine, to the same page.

MR. ANTOINE:

I made a statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance with regard to in-house video production on page 18-14. I just wanted to know if

the Minister wanted to make a comment on the statement from the Standing Committee on Finance?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Honourable Minister, would you like to respond to the statement made by the Finance committee?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any major statements to make except to suggest that the position taken by the standing committee is a reasonable one and we will try to work with the advice and the recommendation that have been given to us.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Culture and careers. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Mr. Chairman, I just have one concern and it is with regard to continuing education in Fort Providence. I don't see it in the five year capital plan but we have a situation of overcrowding in adult education. I think they have about six computers and all the necessary gadgets for that but we don't have enough plug ins and the adult class, itself, is way overcrowded. I just wanted to express my concern. I've done some presentations there and I don't know how the students

Page 605

can cope with that type of situation. I just wanted to express my concern and request the Minister to look into it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe the honourable Member is seeking some response from the Minister. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll look into the matter and report back to the honourable Member at the earliest opportunity.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Culture and careers, total O and M, \$64.434 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Educational Development

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational development, total O and M, \$144.548 million. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to tell the Minister that the school in Kakisa has been operating now for several years and the community is concerned that eventually because of the population base, the school might close. I want to say that there have been concerns expressed and if there are any plans for the school, I would appreciate the community being consulted before any decisions are made.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe that was just a point you wanted to make? Thank you. Educational development. I have Mr. Antoine and Mr. Gargan, you are not finished yet? I have Mr. Gargan and Mr. Antoine. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Also, Mr. Chairman, the Minister, Don Morin, made a statement with regard to telephone services and he referred specifically to the new communication systems for the schools. He said that all Northwest Territories schools would be able to use computers to send messages to each other. I would like to ask about the status of that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are working on a system in the Baffin. It is already set up and we're working to set it up in every other region in every school throughout the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

(Microphone turned off)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Gargan, would you try again? I didn't hear anything. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

I'm asking if this communication system would only be established in communities where there is a communication link?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, at the present time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Personally, I think the leadership program that has been going on in Fort Smith for a number of years now is a good program. We need something like that to try to get the students who are interested in achieving high standards involved. The communities are also striving for that. I think this type of leadership program is good and it is available right now. I know that last year we talked about it and the year before that. There seems to be a move by the department to try to eliminate the program.

Personally, I think this government and the Legislative Assembly, should commit ourselves to a long-term commitment to that program. I understand it is very successful. There are more positive than negative things with it. I'm told that there is a possibility that the federal government might donate about \$30,000 to \$35,000 to the program. As well, there is a foundation that might donate a substantial amount of money to sponsor this program as well. With outside money coming in, I think this department and this government should commit itself to a long-term plan to support this program rather than doing away with it.

I know some students who are in the program and they really enjoy it. They get a lot out of it and there are other students who want to be in it. However, at the present time, no new students are being taken in.

Only the students who are already in the program will be there until they are finished their schooling and then this program seems to be winding down. It seems to be a very successful program and we should support success like that. We are striving for excellence and we passed a motion on that in the House. This is one way of showing that we support excellence.

I would just like to ask the Minister, there was a review done recently, last year perhaps, and I would like the review to be made available to Members of this Legislative Assembly so that we can see for ourselves how the program has done and make a decision based on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have not had an opportunity to take the report to the Cabinet. I think it is incumbent upon the Cabinet to have a say in the final decision about which direction we take with that program or any additional programs that might be considered. I would remind Members that when we make a decision of this particular type, there has to be a certain amount of fairness in terms of how we deal with other potential programs. With great respect, we have not yet dealt with the whole matter of how we're going to support a program of this kind for the Inuit communities. You can't make a decision in isolation on that.

I agree with the Members when they talk about supporting excellence in programs, but the fact is, the present criteria doesn't require students to have excellence in terms of their marks for entering the program. If that is what you want, then we have to establish the criteria so that an excellence program is there for those students who want to fit into that program

Page 606

and can access that program. Right now and previously, in my view at least, the selection was more political than actual criteria-based. I want to get out of that business. I support the comment that has been made by the honourable Member, that people who qualify for the program should have earned their way there. I would like the whole matter to be reviewed by Cabinet. I don't intend to make any

decisions in isolation of my Cabinet colleagues and once I know what direction they want me to take, then obviously, I'll be prepared to be more specific about the direction. That is the issue that has to be addressed in making final decisions about the program.

The other thing is, the present dollars which have been allocated are only enough to carry the students who are presently in it. If we're to add more, it would mean that we would need more resources for that program. You have to consider that as well. That is all part of the decision that has to be made in the end by our Cabinet.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational development. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to add to my comments on the leadership school in Fort Smith. The present position of this government of not taking on any more new students creates a feeling of uncertainty from year to year. It affects everybody, especially the students and the parents. It creates doubt among the politicians in this government. There is an uncertainty that is sitting over all of us here. I don't like to be involved in a decision that creates doubt and uncertainty in the communities where a program is successful and there is hesitancy to have a long-term commitment to continue that success.

I just wanted to urge the department and the Minister to provide that report to the Cabinet and make a recommendation that there is a long-term commitment to support this program. That is my suggestion, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't want people to get an idea that somehow this is something new. The costs that we are talking about are primarily for the residence itself and the students living in the residence. It is not a new program. It is all tied to the existing educational programming that is offered in our high school. The fact is, if our students are being more successful because of the program being

offered, then maybe, as a result, we have to review what is being offered in our other high schools to make certain that other students get the same kind of programming.

That is a point that was made by the standing committee, that we have to improve the quality of educational programming. Maybe it is something we have to learn from and support in other communities as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational development. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Mr. Chairman, yesterday the Minister, in responding to Mr. Dent's question regarding the reduction in their budget, said that the Arctic College had a \$4 million surplus and even if they took that back, they would still have an adjustment of about a \$3 million surplus. I would like to ask the Minister, if the leadership program is based on political decisions, what is the Minister's feeling with regard to allowing the Arctic College to develop that program, seeing as they do have surplus money to do it? Arctic College is just not in the western college, it is in both east and west and all the regions are involved in it. Would it be possible for the program to continue, maybe not as a ministerial initiative but Arctic College-driven?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. We could always examine that option. However, Arctic College is generally responsible for post-secondary or adult programming. So, in that sense, it is different. The students we are referring to here are generally high school students from grade ten to grade 12. I think there are two different programs that maybe the honourable Member is considering.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

MR. GARGAN:

Maybe, instead of calling it the northern leadership training program, we could look at calling it political

science or something. Then it would fit into the programs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I don't think that was a question, just a suggestion by the honourable Member. Would you like to respond to that?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Chairman, the northern leaders program was a program that used to exist in the department. That program is no longer in existence. We've re-profiled those dollars into the student financial assistance program. The program that the honourable Member for Nahendeh was talking about was the western Arctic leadership program that is located in Fort Smith, the residence. They are two different programs. One is for high school and the other one used to be allocated to post-secondary programming.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To educational development, Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Mr. Chairman, I was referring to the leadership program, whether the title has changed or not. What I'm suggesting is, rather than eliminating the program, we rename it so that it fits into Arctic College programs. The incentive should be that the grants for that program be maintained to allow the program to continue. I would hope that, rather than scrapping it, we look at fitting it in so that it is part of Arctic College.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The decision to re-profile the dollars for the northern leaders program, which was primarily a post-secondary program, was made last year. The decision to re-profile those dollars was in last year's budget. The honourable Member is raising a point

Page 607

about a residence program that is in Fort Smith for high school students.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Educational development. I have Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I would like to, if I could, Mr. Chairman, make some comments on the leadership program. As I understand it, the program has essentially been grandfathered so there are no new entries into the program at this point in time, but the program is carrying on, right? Okay, so we are talking about that program in Fort Smith.

If I could, just to put it into my own context, I remember I was on the Cabinet when the former Minister brought it forward, and many of us supported it. Again, I have some very strong feelings about education and I have expressed them in this House a number of times. There is no single solution to education in the Northwest Territories. There have to be a number of innovative approaches. The support for this particular program was pretty strong in the last Assembly, and I think there is still a fair amount of support for it.

It was put forward as an innovative program that tried to build on the strengths of the old residential schools but put into a more modern context. Now, I haven't seen a copy of the study, which I really look forward to seeing, but every indication to me is that there has been success with the program, but in fairness to the former Minister, he never pretended that the way it was originally developed was the way it had to end up. He said, this is an experiment, and, if it works, let's build on it.

So, I think what the Members are saying is that if there are ways to improve it, I am sure the former Minister would be the first one to agree that this is the way to go. But, I guess a lot of us see this as one element in the big picture of education that really should be considered. As the Minister said, in fact, if there is a high level of success here, perhaps components of this approach should be used somewhere else.

I join the other Members in saying that before any definitive decision is made to end this program, let's have a real good look at the results of the study and let's look at it in the context of how we can improve it as opposed to just having the option of doing away with it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Educational development, total O and M, \$144.548 million. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the details of student residences, Akaitcho Hall will be closed on June 30. I am wondering if we have any other residences that will be closed at this point in time, and in what years are we anticipating the closure of those other residences?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not immediately, except the plans are that most of the major residences will be closed over the next five years, mainly because we are in the transition of moving high school programs into communities - some grade ten, some grade eleven - one year at a time, and so there is a transitional period that we have to consider.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Deh Cho.

MR. GARGAN:

Yes, I would like to ask the Minister which residences fit under that category as Akaitcho would be. Inuvik would be another one. Which other ones are there?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I believe Grollier Hall, as the honourable Member has mentioned, Kivalliq Hall in Rankin Inlet and Ukiivik in Iqaluit.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Educational development. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Isn't the Ukiivik in Iqaluit an Arctic College residence?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mahsi. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I believe there are two buildings in Iqaluit that are named the same, but there is a student residence, as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Educational development. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

So, I asked if we reduce, in the centralized locations we are seeing an increase in residence requirements at the regional level, then. Fort Simpson has two hostels now. Are we looking at saving any money by doing that or is the cost going to be increased by virtue of moving in that direction?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

It is certainly our intention, and presently that is the case, so far, that we are, in fact, saving money in terms of the community and local or regional residences.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Educational development. Total O and M, \$144.548 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Details of grants and contributions. \$7.588 million. I have Mr. Koe and Mr. Gargan. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Yes, I have a few questions on grants but they tie in with contributions. They are related to the Science Institute. On page 18-16, the Science Institute gets annual core funding, but on page 18-15, the Science Institute, there is an item here of \$50,000. It is for matching grants to the Science Institute. Can I get some indication of what these matching grants are or who allocates them, how and what for?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mahsi. Mr. Minister.

Page 608

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. This is generally determined through some criteria for innovation. It is generally

research and determined by the Science Institute as to where it is applied.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Just some information, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he has any policy or guideline with regard to the incentive grant.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The honourable Minister for Education.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

I believe it is the incentive program. I believe we can provide you with copies of the criteria that is used for that particular program.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Grants. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Again, to that task, has the Minister been able to review the statement that was made by Mr. Antoine with regard to that grant and why it is only targeted towards technical students, as opposed to social or other training programs?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

We are, Mr. Chairman, continuing to reassess the student financial assistance program, but the incentive program itself is tied, was a decision that was made by Cabinet some ways before my time as Minister, to be specific on addressing the whole

matter of the educational programming area. That is generally how we are following through with the program itself. I realize that our colleague from Nahendeh spoke about the incentive program and I indicated to him, as well, that maybe part of the review of the student financial assistance may address some of the concerns that the honourable Member has raised.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Grants. I have Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

One final question, Mr. Chairman, is with regard to the community broadcasting grants of \$180,000. It is consistent with the previous years, but I would like to ask whether or not we have any - I guess this is just pretty well continuing support for those communities that have those. Do you have anything for new stations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Depending on where the new stations are or new requests are, we review them based on any decision on the actual request that was made by the community. Once we knew that, we could either instruct the community where to go or assist the community in preparing any submissions necessary.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Grants. I have Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding educational development, community broadcasting grants, are these grants for start-up costs or ongoing operating costs or a combination of both?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. It is to generally assist the operating of community broadcast regular television programming.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is that \$180,000 taken up every year or is there room for new broadcasting societies that are starting up or trying to re-establish themselves? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We could always consider or entertain the idea of new ones, except that we do have many of the grants already identified for existing radio societies. The possibility is always there for us to consider additional applications.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Details of grants and contributions. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Referring to student financial assistance, in the review that is under way in this area, will some consideration be given to decentralizing the administration of these grants to regions? Students in the Baffin region are in school often in Ottawa or maritime provinces. There are a number of them in smaller universities like Wolfville, Nova Scotia, or Mount St. Vincent's in Nova Scotia, Trent in Ontario, et cetera. They seem to have even more difficulties with time and distance and communicating with the very hard working people in the student financial assistance office in Yellowknife. My feeling is that it might be an option to look at having this function regionalized to some extent, where, I would suspect, people in the regions would know the students, their school history and perhaps know better how to help them if they are having a personal or financial crisis. I would like to ask that general question. I think it has worked well with the moves that have been made with child care. I would like to ask if that is being considered for student financial assistance administration. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Precisely, yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

That is the correct answer, Mr. Chairman. I am glad to hear that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

On page 18-16, grants, \$7.58 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Page 609

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 18-17, 18-18, and 18-19, contributions, \$170.923 million. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Mr. Chairman, I have a few questions on some of these contributions. The first one is under northern performers, contributions to performing and showcasing northern talent. I would like to know what criteria is used and how this money is distributed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Generally speaking, it is based on an application process. I will get a copy of the process and the criteria that is used and provide it to the honourable Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Similarly, with the grants to cultural organizations, I assume there is a policy that sets out the criteria and who gets money.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Yes, I believe that was approved some time ago, within the last six months or so.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

All right. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

I assume I would get a copy of that policy also. Under short-term employment program, is the criteria under STEP still similar to what it used to be when it was with Economic Development and Tourism? Are those the type of projects that qualify under this contribution program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Yes, except we are going to consider utilizing those resources for the investing in people initiative that we are undertaking.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Nerysoo. Member for Inuvik.

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, that \$412,000 may be amalgamated under the new program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. I'm sorry, Mr. Koe. I didn't realize you were not concluded.

MR. KOE:

... of Alberta. There is partial funding to provide support services. In terms of where most of our students who are taking post-secondary education go, do the majority of them go to... I assume this counsellor is in Edmonton, so do the majority of our students still go to Edmonton or have they now been spread out across the country? Do you have those statistics as to which southern institutions our students are going to?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Minister Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. It still has our largest population for post-secondary programming, but I would not say it is now the majority of our students. We would have to do an assessment of that, but I don't think it is the majority of our students.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Nerysoo. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

I have two more questions. Under page 18-18, there is an item called labour pools. Is this money also what might be used for your new programs or is this a separate or another make-work program for communities? I would like some idea what this contribution plot is and what it is used for.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Minister Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is one of those other additional funding resources that we could access for the new investing in people for education and training.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question under this category is about education development on page 18-19. There are funds for native communications. Who does this \$105,000 go to and what criteria is used to allocate the money?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I believe you are referring to native communications. Inuit Broadcasting was given \$35,000; Inuvialuit Communications, \$35,000; and, Native Communications Society, \$35,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next on my list is Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Mr. Chairman, under northern performers again, I've been watching the northern arts festival on TV. Is this the category that is under? They are holding it in Inuvik this year. Is anybody who wants to participate assisted under this program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

This would be the program that they would apply under to get financial assistance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. GARGAN:

Presumably then, this grant is for artists right across the Northwest Territories. Do we have enough or are we looking at situations where we have to turn down a lot in order to stay within this limit?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

We have had to turn a few away, but it hasn't been that significant. In other words, we have

Page 610

been able to fund most of the major events that are occurring at which performers have been requested to attend.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. GARGAN:

I would like to ask the Minister about educational leave and classroom assistance. I realize we don't have anything for this, but what is happening now with

regard to classroom assistance as they progress and develop their skills through the years? Or is it still covered under Arctic College and the classroom assistants just maintain their salaries?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thanks, Mr. Chairman. It depends, as they progress through the program, they could qualify as teachers. In fact, some of them are participating in our community teacher education program as well so, in that sense, we do have a situation where they are progressing up the ladder.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MR. GARGAN:

So that doesn't restrict the classroom assistants from progressing then. My other concern, Mr. Chairman, is with regard to school closures under education authority contributions. Last month, on February 16, a number of schools closed. A number of them closed due to different circumstances. It could have been cold temperatures or busses not running. Of course, it trickles down. It started off with the school closing in Fort Simpson and people in communities like Fort Providence asked, why are we not closed? I would like to ask, are you developing some kind of policy with regard to when schools should be closed or when they shouldn't? Or is this pretty well up to the communities?

I talked with the principal this afternoon on it and he said there should be a guideline about what constitutes school closures. If it is 35, 40 or 50 degrees below, or whatever the case might be, I would hope there would be some guidelines for schools closing. I'm sure it affects students.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Most boards are supposed to have those policies and criteria in place because, generally

speaking, they manage the schools and they're responsible for dealing with those situations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

We don't have a consistent policy, but it is pretty well up to the boards to determine when schools should close and when not to?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

I can't say they are the same policies. I think they are consistent, in terms of the reflection of local circumstances. For instance, we in the west don't always have the winds that the Nunavut communities experience. They have to consider that. On the other hand, there is probably the same kind of criteria established for how cold the weather gets. There is probably consistency across the board. It varies, depending on the circumstances but the boards generally develop those policies.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next on my list is Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think we've gotten to the area I'm interested in now. I would like to ask where the obligation comes to pay the NWTTA president's salary. Is that in the collective agreement, is it an understanding that's evolved over the years or what? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The union pays the person and we just handle what you might say is the payroll aspect of it. It is paid by the union.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association Act calls for the teachers association to have responsibility to make by-laws respecting the reprimand, suspension, expulsion, reinstatement and discipline of their members. I'm not quoting that exactly, but that's in section four which, I think, dates back to 1976. I guess I would just like to venture my opinion that the association has not demonstrated to me, in the handling of disciplinary issues that have occurred in my constituency, that they are doing a responsible job.

I have evidence, in fact, that the association executive rejected recommendations of an independent disciplinary panel of teachers that was set up under their own regulations. I suspect that the recommendations of this independent panel were rejected-- and I suspect this because the recommendations were made about the sitting member of the executive of the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association. This has been bothering me since it happened. I've been observing the association and I will simply say that I believe this whole area needs reform. In the review of the education legislation and the strategy work that is under way, will attention be paid by the Minister to this whole area of discipline and problems that arise with teachers? In other words, is the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association Act, its provisions, regulations and by-laws, also something that could be reviewed? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That matter is going to be an issue we deal with under the Education Act review. On the matter of the NWTTA Act, that is not something we want to get into. But the matter of the

Page 611

disciplinary process can be dealt with through the Education Act review. So we can deal with it in that context. We certainly invite the honourable Member to provide his advice as to how we might be able to deal with that matter. That document will be out for consultation in the very near future.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MR. PATTERSON:

I thank the Minister for those comments, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make some comments for the record on the issue now, since I have been invited to do so. I will participate in the review process actively as well.

Mr. Chairman, there are many very dedicated teachers. Most of them are very committed to their work. I am concerned that where there are problems -- and every profession has members that have problems -- the present arrangement which gives the association the authority to discipline its members has not been working effectively. I would like to say I believe this role and responsibility may well be incompatible with the other role that it actively pursues which is to act as the advocate for members who are being disciplined by the employer, the government. I really question how the association can discipline its own while it is often actively representing members who have disputes in the work place with the employer. That is a fundamental problem.

As a result, and I stated this in the Assembly today, we have a teacher who we are stuck with. The Iqaluit education authority doesn't want him working in the schools because he does not have the confidence of parents that he is not going to lose his temper and cause further problems in the classroom. The employer is stuck, apparently, because of the double jeopardy rule. Mr. Chairman, this is not the first time I have seen this happen. I am aware of other instances where teachers who have caused problems in the work place requiring them to be removed from the classroom, are nonetheless continuing on the government payroll because there is no effective way of dealing with the problem, at our sizable expense.

We need every teaching person year we can spare. I am getting complaints in my riding about the lack of a number of teaching services in the local schools including French, including the sciences and yet here we have a teacher who is being paid to do busy work because of our antiquated provisions in legislation on discipline and handling these situations. I want to say that whatever has to be put in place should respect the rights of the teachers and should have due process, but whatever is done, we should not continue to be stuck with these surplus people on full salary, indeterminate as far as I can see, because our

legislation puts the employer in a box. I must say throughout all of this, the association has been actively representing, defending and even lionizing this particular individual as if he is some kind of a hero.

I know there are issues of student violence in the classroom that are of serious concern to teachers, but when the students are concerned about teacher violence in the classroom, the association seems to take a much different approach. It is a very defensive attitude and not one that I think reflects professional integrity. I just appreciate the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to put these comments on the record. I know there are strong opinions. I am not going to ask the Minister to respond, at this time, but I want to say that I believe these issues should be addressed. I have gone so far as to discuss the matter with the current president of the NWT Teachers' Association and he also agrees that the legislation particularly relating to teacher discipline is at least outmoded. He may not agree with my recommendations about how it should be modernized. But I think there is general agreement that these areas have to be modernized.

I appreciate the opportunity to put those comments on the record. I hope that they can be dealt with because the issue is certainly causing great frustration in my constituency and has in the past. I suspect it is causing the Minister, his officials and divisional board personnel frustrations as well. But, most important, it seems to be wasting public money.

I won't say any more, except there is one additional comment I would like to make. This Legislature has made a resolution about zero tolerance of violence. I think the objective of that resolution was to encourage other organizations and bodies to make similar commitments. I would like to say here, now, that, following what I have said about the zeal with which the NWT Teachers' Association seems to have pursued the interests of teachers against students who commit violence, I would like to challenge the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association to consider adopting principles of zero tolerance of violence for their own members as well.

---Applause

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. We are on details of grants and contributions on page 18-19. I

understood, from what Mr. Patterson said, he wasn't expecting a comment back. Proceeding on, contributions. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

If there is no one else, Mr. Chairman, I have another issue I would like to address. It relates to Arctic College. Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister is aware of the shortage of married student housing in the Nunatta Campus. As I understand it, this past fall, there were some 26 applications that were filled for married student accommodation in the 26 units that are presently available in Iqaluit. After those

Page 612

applications were filled this past fall, there were still 31 students with families on the waiting list. I think I made the point in general comments that these students are, in my opinion, good-risk students because they are mature, solid and committed and, often going back to school after having been in the work place, wanting to prove themselves. Most of them are aboriginal students. I understand that the department has put out a tender to survey the student housing requirements in all of the regions. I think this is a good move. Where is that process at? How soon does the Minister expect to receive recommendations on this issue? Since there is a desperate situation in some campuses, when can we expect to have a response from the department and the college? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Nerysoo.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That particular contract that Mr. Patterson pointed out to Members has been issued. The assessment should be done hopefully by the end of April. It would give us some time to deal with how we address the matter of capital expenditures over the next several years. Our view is that we should not be dealing with it only on the immediate requirement, but also long-term planning. That is what we are trying to consider in terms of planning for residences, generally.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the Minister has yet to receive the consultant's recommendations, but instead of the expensive alternative of building student residences, the approach which has been taken in the past, are there other approaches that could be taken in perhaps encouraging the private sector to fill these needs, entering into lease arrangements, guaranteeing occupancy? Will these kinds of options be considered by the Minister? They would allow things to happen much more quickly than building something into a five year capital plan. I am hoping that there will be solutions by next fall. Perhaps I am naive. There were 31 families who couldn't go to school because of housing problems this past fall. I think that is a crying shame. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, those are in the back of our minds. There is nothing to suggest at the present that we're in any way stopping private investors from making their own commitments with a view that the student population could increase in any particular community. That is a decision that they have to make, but we would never stand in the way of that option.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment. Unfortunately, the real estate market in Iqaluit, at least, and I suspect in most of the off-highway communities, is such that, without some inducements and guarantees, the private sector won't even build a single staff housing unit, let alone a multi-plex for students. I think there are going to have to be some creative solutions sought in cooperation with the private sector, rather than just waiting for something to happen. I may be criticized for even daring to suggest this in this Assembly by my student constituents, but it strikes me that the very low charges for room and board in the college system, although they are very favourable to students, may actually be a disincentive to students actively seeking their own accommodation the way college students do in the rest of the country. I wonder if the review of

student financial assistance might also look at that issue. We might be able to, at least, go some way to meeting student accommodation needs if we gave students loans and grants to pay for their own accommodation costs and then repay the state once they graduated, rather than charging them very small rates for room and board to live in a government-owned student residence. Maybe we have to look at a different approach to providing student accommodation and give the students more money but ask them to pay it back when they graduate.

If the Minister has any comments on that, I would be interested. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

In terms of whether or not students use other units, we generally cover those additional costs anyhow. Student financial assistance does that already. The fact is, the resources could be accessed if other additional housing units were to be made available. However, I would be extremely cautious in making that comment, because I don't want the private sector to get the view that they can gouge the system either. I think it has to be reasonable, fair and with the view that there is a return on the investment they've made and they're not losing in the process. That's what I would suggest.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I have Mr. Arvaluk and then Mr. Ng.

MR. ARVALUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a quick question, referring to the Minister's letter to me regarding Victor Sammurtok School. As an example only, it seems that the design was made without any regard for delivery of specialized programs. He suggested that because the community has been focusing on specialized programs, it created overcrowding in Victor Sammurtok School and that it was not necessarily according to the divisional board's calculation of occupancy/utilization rates. Those two become different in that regard. When renovations or expansions are made or there are new schools built, will there be accommodation so that specialized programs can be incorporated into new facilities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I believe that with the involvement of the communities with the board in terms of the planning for any renovations or any new schools in the future, we'll get a better reflection of the actual community needs and then we can build institutions around needs. Without, of course, creating a situation where we are building more than what is really necessary for that particular community. In other words, we'll look at what is needed in terms of programming requirements, but at the same time the program requirements also have to take into consideration the

Page 613

space available. We can work through innovation or we can build additions that can accommodate the programs being provided. There may be other buildings, for instance, in the community that could be utilized. Those kinds of options are always there for us to consider.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two quick questions regarding contributions for day care centres and homes. I'm just curious what the proportion would be for ongoing funding for the day care centres and homes versus the start-up end of it under the \$1.2 million? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the actual breakdowns, but I would be prepared to provide a copy of the breakdowns.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Member for Kitikmeot.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm also interested -- and I don't know if you have this available now -- in how the O and M funding is determined for each specific day

care facility? Is it based on the number of days used, the capacity, or the costs of operating in each particular community? What kinds of criteria do you use to evaluate that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. We would have to provide that to the honourable Member, however, the Member should be aware that we are changing some of the criteria, policies and rate structures because we are making major changes in our programming. So, while I may provide you with a copy of those at this particular juncture, by June we should have some major changes to how we provide child care programming in the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you. My final question is with regard to Arctic College contributions on the last page. There are no designated residences for Arctic College programming in the Kitikmeot like they have in other regions, from what I understand. Because of that, I guess there is no stability in delivering the programs because they don't know what is available for residences, so they don't know how many students they can accommodate for each program. I'm just wondering if your department has any plans to work with Arctic College to address that issue? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. There are two parts to how we're addressing the issue. One, there is a review being conducted on student residences and accommodation. The Member for Iqaluit pointed out that we have a contract for that. The other one is the strategic plan of Arctic College which will offer some methods with which we can address those particular needs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Contributions, \$170.923 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Grants and contributions, \$178.503 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page 18-20, information item, Arctic College.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page 18-21, information item, Arctic College.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page 18-22, information item, Arctic College.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Information item, details of culture and careers activity by task on page 18-23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Information item, detail of educational development activity by task on page 18-24. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Information item, detail of funding allocated to school boards on page 18-25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The next one is information item, divisional boards of education. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Page 614

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): And then, student loan revolving fund. Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the past, we've asked questions about loans that had been written off. In other words, they're not forgiven, they are loans which are still on the books but for all practical purposes, they're not deemed to be collectible. They still remain a debt on the part of the student. I notice that this year there is a large amount of money that is being forgiven. I would like to ask the Minister what is the criteria to determine whether a loan should be forgiven or not?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could ask Mr. Devitt to respond to that, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Go ahead, Mr. Devitt.

MR. DEVITT:

Mr. Chairman, to be eligible to have a loan remitted, a student must have successfully completed at least 60 per cent of their programs, and they must also return to the Northwest Territories to live. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS:

So there is this whole other category of student, then, that, for one reason or another, has borrowed money but can't get work or has become sick or whatever. There would be none of those people included in this over a million dollars that we are, in fact, going to be forgiving students through the remission program.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the loans forgiven, that is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Information item, student loan revolving fund. Agreed? Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the same category as the previous question dealing with student loans and the ability to repay, there are times that students who are originally from the Northwest Territories -- born and raised in the territories, but they are not aboriginal -- find, upon their return, they are unable to repay the loan because there isn't any work in their area or any work at all, and in order to make a living, they have to go away, at least temporarily, from the territories to work. If they were staying in the territories, that loan would be forgiven, but the fact is that they can't. They end up owing this amount of money. Are there any provisions at all for dealing with this kind of a situation? You know, they are bona fide residents of

the territories, and in some cases - I will just add on to it a little bit here, Mr. Chairman - the question had been put to me about whether or not time spent in a voluntary type of work elsewhere in Canada or abroad would contribute to repayment in time, so to speak, of a loan for those individuals who do meet that residential criteria. Are there any provisions at all for that, or is this an impossible situation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister for Education.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the present criteria, there are no provisions for that kind of situation, except I must say to the honourable Member that the Ministers of Education across the country are reviewing the possibility of what you might say is income contingent repayment. In other words, your repayment is determined by the kind of income that you are making. If it reduces the actual loan for that particular month or that particular year because you have a reduced income, then that is what going to be considered. But that is a national initiative, and if all the other Ministers agree on that kind of initiative for loan repayments across the country and the federal government agrees with it, then we will be able to implement it. But that work is now ongoing. We started it this past year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 18-27 of the 1994-95 main estimates on Education, Culture and Employment, student loan revolving fund. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Detail of work performed on behalf of third parties. Agreed? Mr. Gargan.

MR. GARGAN:

Is there any more money for the northern oil and gas action program now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. No, it is a discontinued program.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Gargan. 18-28.

MR. GARGAN:

Well, continuous up to 18-31. So, I am just wondering about the official languages, aboriginal and French. There are no numbers designated. What is the progress on this whole thing?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. That particular question is best directed to the Premier, who is not here at the moment, because she is in charge of the overall position. The honourable Member may want to pose that particular question at a more appropriate time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 18-30. 18-31. 18-28, 18-29, 18-30, 18-31. Agreed? Do I have agreement?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 18-31, total department, \$554,000. That is the detail of work performed on behalf of third parties. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Page 615

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Back to the summary. Program summary on page 18-11, total O and M, \$212.547 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you very much. Does the committee of the whole agree that this department is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you very much. I would like to thank the Minister and witnesses for appearing before the committee of the whole. Thank you very much. That was a long one.

There was a suggestion by Mr. Dent, and with the concurrence of the committee of the whole, we will deal with the Department of Safety and Public Services on page 08-8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Department Of Safety And Public Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the appropriate Minister have any opening remarks for the committee of the whole? Minister Nerysoo.

Introductory Remarks

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to present the proposed 1994-95 O and M budget for the Department of Safety and Public Services. For 1994-95, the Department is requesting \$6.512 million compared to last year's budget of \$6.410 million, for a net increase of \$102,000. This increase is the result of an additional \$100,000 contributed by the Workers' Compensation Board to fund the workers' advisor position and \$2,000 returned to the department base as a result of changes in the proposed program

reduction initiatives. The department is projecting revenues of \$18.279 million, an increase of \$415,000.

I am pleased to inform you that the department is making progress in its affirmative action program. At present, 19 per cent of our staff are aboriginal people and an additional 15 per cent are indigenous non-native. The department has taken steps to further improve its record in this area. For example, our labour standards inspector trainee will be completing her training program in August 1994, and our safety officer trainee was hired in July 1993.

The department has three major initiatives for 1994-95. The first one is completion of the legislative process to enact new mine safety legislation. This process has already involved extensive consultation with mining companies, exploration companies, mine unions and representatives of unorganized mine workers, through the involvement of occupational health and safety committees.

The second initiative is to determine the feasibility, assess the impact and potentially plan for new gaming initiatives.

The third initiative also involves a major consultative process with the residents of the NWT to bring forward a new Liquor Act by 1996.

Beyond these three initiatives are three other objectives, including the tabling of a legislative action paper on electrical safety, the possible transfer of lottery licensing to various communities under the community transfer initiative, and continuation of work on discussion papers that will lead to a new Labour Standards Act. Six discussion papers on labour standards have already been sent out for public comment.

Fire safety continues to be a concern, especially among our young people. The office of the fire marshal has revised the learn not to burn curriculum for preschool to grade three students.

Mr. Chairman, the investigation of accidents and fatalities to determine causes and make recommendations to reduce such accidents will continue to be a high priority in the department, along with monitoring work places to ensure that work practices are safe. The department will continue to ensure that the safety and health of the public is protected through the effective enforcement and administration of legislation pertaining to fire, safety,

gas, boiler and pressure vessels, safety, electrical and elevator safety.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present these short introductory remarks to the Members of the committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we have the statement from the finance committee? Mr. Ng.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

New Initiatives

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department identified three major initiatives for this coming fiscal year: new mine safety legislation, new gaming initiatives and a new Liquor Act.

The committee has concerns about these initiatives. Most importantly, committee Members are concerned that this department, and perhaps the government as a whole, may be announcing a number of new initiatives which they will not be able to complete at once. Each of these initiatives is complex and potentially quite controversial. There has already been much controversy and contention over proposed new mine safety legislation, for example. Also, recent developments, such as the Catholic bishop's banning of bingo in western Arctic catholic churches, suggest that new gaming initiatives could meet with resistance and controversy.

While such initiatives may be worthy of consideration, and certainly new mine safety legislation is urgently needed, the committee feels the department should carefully prioritize its objectives.

Page 616

More Safety Inspectors Needed

The government's restraint initiatives over the last few years have been effective in keeping the territories out of the kind of chronic debt that is plaguing every other government in the country. However, the Department of Safety and Public Services demonstrates that restraint can be a blunt instrument, often hurting where an impact was not desired.

The Northwest Territories is now home to the biggest staking rush in Canadian history. Since October 31,

1991, over 48 million acres, or almost six per cent of the NWT's area, have been staked for mineral exploration, mostly in search of diamonds. Two mining companies have set up bulk sample operations in hopes of being able to justify actual diamond mines. Lead/zinc exploration in the Izok Lake area continues with hopes of a new mine opening there. But, because of restraint measures, the number of mining inspectors has not increased.

The committee recognizes that mining is a dangerous occupation and that there is a need to improve our mine safety record. This, combined with the recent and anticipated growth in the mining industry, indicates that an increase in the number of mine safety inspectors is urgently required.

The committee is basically reacting to Workers' Compensation Board reports that the mining industry and the construction industry have the highest level of accidents in the Northwest Territories. Given that, committee Members feel that there is an impetus, as well, to increase the number of occupational health and safety inspectors in the construction field. Committee Members are encouraged by government assurances that the situation will be examined.

Recommendation 31

The committee recommends that the Department of Safety and Public Services develop a plan to hire more safety inspectors, especially in the areas of mine safety and occupational health and safety for construction workers, and respond to the committee with that plan by August 1, 1994.

More Fire Safety Resources Needed

The committee expressed concern about the NWT's poor fire safety record. There is a special concern that initiatives of the fire marshal's office are not being felt at the community level. Members felt that appointing and supporting a "fire chief" in each community could be the best way to address the problem. Such a person could administer and train the community's volunteer fire brigade, implement prevention initiatives, and so on.

The committee suggests that the Department of Safety and Public Services, in cooperation with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs or other departments, consider supporting positions for fire prevention and suppression in the communities, and report back to the committee with an analysis.

Committee Motion 20-12(5): To Adopt Recommendation 31, Carried

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee recommends that the Department of Safety and Public Services develop a plan to hire more safety inspectors, especially in the areas of mine safety and occupational health and safety for construction workers, and respond to the committee with that plan by August 1, 1994.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Does that conclude your report from the finance committee? Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

That concludes our comments from the Standing Committee on Finance for Safety and Public Services. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Before we call for general comments, would the Minister like to bring in witnesses on this particular department?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, if they are here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. For the record, Mr. Minister, would you please introduce the witnesses?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my left is the director of finance, Mr. Henry Dragon. On my right is the

deputy minister for Safety and Public Services, Mr. John Quirke.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome to the committee, Mr. Quirke and Mr. Dragon. The floor is open to general comments. Do we want to go page by page? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Line By Line

Directorate

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

All right. Page 08-8, directorate, total O & M, \$838,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Consumer and corporate affairs, total O & M, Mr. Dent.

Page 617

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, under directorate, it was pointed out in the Standing Committee on Finance report that the committee was concerned about the number of initiatives that the department was taking on and one of the ones that we noted was the prospective gaming initiatives. I noticed, in the definitive objectives, that they are planning to determine the feasibility, assess the impact and potentially plan for prospective gaming initiatives. I was wondering if we could get some information from the Minister as to what steps they're going to take to assess the impact of gaming initiatives in the north?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. What I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, is that there was a report on the proposal for the introduction of video lottery and tele-theatre betting completed. It has been drafted and submitted to me for my review. Once I've completed that, we will then submit it to Cabinet for their consideration. If I might, I would like to ask Mr. Quirke to be more specific about the response about how we're going to be doing the assessments. If we are to proceed, it would be more on a pilot initiative rather than opening the concept of gambling to every community and every public location where that might be requested. It would be more specific and more regulated in terms of how we apply it. We would make our assessments based on the use, the kinds of situations and expenditures that are being made. Maybe I could ask Mr. Quirke to add to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Quirke, would you like to elaborate further for the Minister?

MR. QUIRKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things the Minister would have to do in presenting a decision paper to Cabinet for their consideration -- and if Cabinet did approve the introduction of a video terminal program -- is that before any type of public assessment would be done we would have to change the Liquor Act. The present Liquor Act prevents the introduction of these types of machines in licensed premises. One of the recommendations of the report is that if we do go with this program, during the first phase we would introduce these machines in an age-controlled environment. One of the best age-controlled environments we have right now are the licensed premises.

But, before we could do that we would have to change the Liquor Act. It would require an amendment by the Legislative Assembly and at that particular time, that process would be taken over by the Standing Committee on Legislation. In that way, depending on the communities' desires, you would get back public feedback assessment. They would have the first kick at the cat, so to speak. That is where we are in the report. While we explore options in terms of pilot projects, the number of machines, the number of places and the communities, one of the key things to do is to change the Liquor Act to allow

for that type of pilot project to go ahead. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess what I'm looking for is a clearer understanding of what is meant by "assess the impact." Does that mean that there will be an assessment done about what the social impact might be of legalizing gaming? The deputy minister just now indicated that perhaps the first kick at the cat for the public would be after the video lotteries decision paper goes to Cabinet and is made public. But, I'm just curious to find out whether there has been investigation done into what the impact has been of legalizing gambling in other jurisdictions, what steps have been taken, what has been found to be effective in dealing with problems or what is found to be ineffective. Are we going to have a comprehensive strategy in place when this is proposed, if indeed it ever is proposed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Minister of Safety and Public Services.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the points that the honourable Member has raised are important ones for us to consider in terms of reaching a final decision. We have not reached a final decision on this. Part of the assessment that was required was the whole question of social impact as a result of the gambling that we're proposing. I think the advice that the honourable Member has given to us about assessing the existing impacts, for instance in Alberta, Manitoba or, for that matter, in the short-term in Nova Scotia, would be very helpful in terms of how we deal with this particular matter.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A suggestion for the Minister and the department to consider is perhaps early in the process they should see if they can't work in cooperation with someone from the Department of

Social Services to assist in the assessment of such impact.

There is one other question I would like to raise under the directorate. It has to do with the workers' advisor which comes under this task. Earlier on, in the committee hearings on the budget, I asked the Minister if they were looking at increasing the number of workers' advisors and for some details on how the performance measurements for the workers' advisory program would be developed. I was just wondering if he had any further information for me at this time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been no additional resources to increase the number of workers' advisors in this particular budget. There is still work being done on the matter of performance measurement and whether we are getting the best results from the program and from the incumbent. That is generally where we are at at the moment, with the view, of course, of ensuring we are providing the most appropriate service. Once we know that, I think we will be able to better judge whether there are additional requirements. From there, we go through the process of approaching Cabinet to see if they are prepared to provide the resources.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Directorate, total O and M, \$838,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Page 618

Consumer And Corporate Affairs

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Consumer and corporate affairs, total O and M, \$763,000. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question while we're on this page. Perhaps I can talk a little bit more about this. They attempt to

charge any rate they want in the smaller communities, particularly the stores in the communities. I know that in the bigger communities, such as Pond Inlet and Igloolik, they have better options. They have very strong co-op operations. The co-op and the Northern Store attempt to compete for the lowest prices for their products. Communities like that have that option but in smaller communities such as Lake Harbour or wherever there is no extra store, the prices tend to be extremely high. The Northern Stores tend to say that because of the freight costs the food and merchandise are so high. I will use coffee, for an example. One pound of coffee would be around \$3.59 in a larger community. In Coral Harbour, it is \$4.48 for a pound of coffee. How can a coffee that is one pound be \$2 extra just for the freight costs? I wanted to ask the Minister what they can do within consumer and corporate affairs to deal with the high costs in the smaller communities. I was wondering if they would have any kind of protection for such high costs in the smaller communities. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Maybe I could ask the deputy minister to respond specifically to that particular matter in terms of process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Deputy minister, go ahead.

MR. QUIRKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The problem of determining whether the price charged to a product is an appropriate price is a very difficult one to determine. We do have, in the Northwest Territories, the Consumer Protection Act, but it basically protects the consumers against vendors, direct sellers and collection agents. When you are talking about whether the product being sold is at the right price, that is, there is a concern about it being too high, for example, the most we can do is to help the consumer by taking his complaint and then taking it to the federal Department of Consumer Affairs who have the legislative mandate to look into any price fixing scheme, if that, by chance, is going on. So the most that we can do is help that individual by directing or taking their complaint directly to Canada on their behalf. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the quick response. What the stores did, namely the Northern Store, when we made complaints about costs - I will use coffee for an example again; perhaps I should be using flour, cereal, milk and what not, but I know coffee is \$4.48. I think most of us have worked in the Hudson's Bay/Northern Stores as first-time employment, but we used to have to do inventories. We used to put prices on them and we used to have to increase costs for overheads and what not, for freight. However, if I am to make a complaint, for instance - I am using Coral Harbour as an example for a community - and if the Northern Store hears about the complaint, then they automatically lower their merchandise costs, and as soon as the people accept the lower costs, then they tend to raise prices in other items and merchandise. That is the way the Northern Stores work.

However, I will use Pond Inlet as well. There is a long distance between Montreal and Pond Inlet, and the freight costs are very expensive. I will use Lake Harbour as an example, as well. Lake Harbour is very close to Montreal compared to Pond Inlet but the costs are much higher than what they are in Pond Inlet. There are a lot of different stores that charge people for the food, and I am just wondering if the consumer affairs section could be strengthened and be able to go to the communities and see what kind of price index they use in the Northern Stores in the communities.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can certainly look into the matter. The only comment I would make in addition to what I said is that the department did some work in this particular area on the same basis that the Member is raising and the experience was not a very good one. However, we will consider the comments that have been made by the honourable Member and try to respond as favourably as possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk.

MR. ARVALUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to talk about other companies besides Northern Stores. We have an airline in the Keewatin called

Calm Air. It was Nunasi that started an air service. They started out cheap but within two weeks they raised their prices. Would Consumer and Corporate Affairs be able to control the airfares also? For instance, if you buy something and you send it out by freight from Yellowknife to Rankin Inlet, we know the distance from Rankin Inlet to Yellowknife and we know the distance from Rankin Inlet to Coral Harbour, but the prices are the same, even though Coral Harbour and Rankin Inlet are closer than Yellowknife and Rankin Inlet. I wonder if Consumer and Corporate Affairs would be able to control the freight rates that airlines charge? Whenever there is an airline monopoly running, they seem to up their prices whenever they want. Would Consumer and Corporate Affairs be able to control the freight rates?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. There are two problems in the concern that the honourable Member has raised and I am not suggesting in any way that we may not be able to try to help the community deal with the issue. One is the whole matter of air transportation regulation is really under the jurisdiction of the federal government. The other point is that because the federal government has deregulated the airline industry, the basis by which these rates are charged right now is really based on what you might say is the free market situation. In other words, you submit your proposals for rates and the Canadian Transport Commission approves those particular rates. So, it is kind of an awkward situation. I think if they are changing their rates without the kinds of approval, then they may be violating their own conditions of operating, but until we really find and investigate those situations, we wouldn't know that. I would advise you that is generally how that industry is regulated at this particular time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk.

Page 619

MR. ARVALUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very much concerned about this because deregulation and abiding by this trade market system that the federal government has introduced for the competitive airlines in southern Canada does not work in the monopolized airlines, especially in the Keewatin. I'm just making comment now, Mr. Chairman. The same goes for the Northern

Stores which operate in the small communities, that when they have a monopoly or the co-op is not doing very well, they have cornered the market and price the goods anyway they choose.

I really feel that because I represent the majority of the consumers from my constituency, I find it a lot more important than the Insurance Act and Medical Professions Act regulating the insurance industry and Business Licensing Act. These are the things that are important to the operation of good practices for the individual, but for a small minority. For the majority, the concern should be that the consumers have been getting gypped or whatever. They are not being given a fair shake in living conditions, especially in the eastern Arctic where there are no highways. Qujannamiik.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Mr. Minister, do you wish to respond?

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

No, Mr. Chairman, I believe the honourable Member is making a comment and we'll pay heed to the comments he's made.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Okay, page 08-9, consumer and corporate affairs, total O and M, \$763,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Safety

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Safety, total O and M, \$2.316 million. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, again, this was brought up in the report of the Standing Committee on Finance. There is a concern among Members because the Workers' Compensation Board has indicated that in a number of areas in particular, like construction and mining, there are real safety problems. This, I believe, is the activity, under which occupational health is and this is

where we would find, I believe, the inspectors for construction sites. Because I sit on the Standing Committee on Finance, I know that the PYs and the funding for this has dropped in the last couple of years rather than increased. If, indeed, we have a problem with safety and safety inspections in the Northwest Territories, why are we not trying to do something about it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. It seems that we are running out of time. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I can't introduce any motions but, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say that one of the discussions that we had after I became a Minister was to develop a number of proposals that we could submit to the Cabinet. One on the matter of safety inspections and another on mine safety inspectors. Those were the two issues that we were trying to ensure that we dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We've run out of time here. I shall rise and report progress. I recognize the clock. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, witnesses.

MADAM SPEAKER:

I will call the House back to order. Item 19, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

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

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Is there a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Item 20, third reading of bills. Item 21, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 21: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Madam Speaker, there are meetings tomorrow at 9:00 am of the Standing Committee on Legislation, at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus and at 12:00 pm of the Management and Services Board. Orders of the day for Wednesday, March 16, 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

Page 620

- Motion 21, Tabled Document 34-12(5)
"Tradition and Change: A Strategy for Renewable

Resource Development in the NWT" to Committee of the Whole

16. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 10, An Act to Repeal the Metric Conversion Act

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

- 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

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

21. Orders of the Day

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 16, 1994, at 1:30 pm.

---ADJOURNMENT