



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
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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 (Hon. Jeannie Marie-Jewell):**

Thank you. Good afternoon. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Morin.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 47-12(5): Ministers Of Housing Meeting

**HON. DON MORIN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to provide all Members with a brief report on the meeting of Housing Ministers this week. On Monday, March 14, I attended a meeting in Regina of the special ministerial sub-committee on housing options for northern, remote and rural areas. The purpose of the committee is to examine housing conditions and the extreme depth of need of residents living in these areas across the country. The committee will provide recommendations to all federal, provincial and territorial Housing Ministers on how these needs are best met and funded.

Six provinces and territories plus the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation are participating on the committee. At Monday's meeting, Ministers discussed:

- The severe housing conditions and housing shortfall being experienced by residents living in northern, remote or rural parts of Canada;
- Options and approaches to addressing the needs of these residents as a priority; and,

- Methods of providing assistance to these people which will allow for high levels of community and client involvement, local employment and training and, at the same time, provide assistance at the lowest cost per unit possible.

Based upon the discussions at the Ministers' meeting, officials will be preparing a report and recommendations by early April for review by Ministers participating on the sub-committee and for subsequent discussions and agreement by all jurisdictions.

I am encouraged to see that several other jurisdictions share our concern that the desperate housing conditions of people living in the north need to be addressed immediately. I will keep all Members informed as the work of this sub-committee proceeds. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Minister's Statement 48-12(5): Disposal Of PCB Wastes To Alberta

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Last September, the former Minister of Renewable Resources announced to this Legislative Assembly the successful conclusion of negotiations with Alberta, gaining access for northerners to the special waste management centre at Swan Hills. This agreement has provided a unique opportunity for this government and northern industry to dispose of hazardous wastes at this world-class facility.

I am pleased to inform Members that the departments of Public Works and Services and Renewable Resources have recently negotiated a contract to dispose of government polychlorinated biphenyl, or PCB, wastes at the Swan Hills facility. These wastes result from the operation and maintenance of government property and in other cases, have been found abandoned near our communities with no identifiable owner. In addition to our own government, federal agencies and northern private industry are participating in this program.

Approximately 76 tonnes of PCBs will be transported to Swan Hills for disposal over the next couple of weeks.

---Applause

Department officials are now notifying all territorial communities located along the transport route of the anticipated transport dates. This represents a significant step in managing PCBs in the Northwest Territories. The Department of Renewable Resources wishes to publicly acknowledge Public Works and Services, private industry and federal agencies for their participation in this program. We would also like to acknowledge the spirit of cooperation which has developed between this government and the Government of Alberta on hazardous waste issues. I look forward to its continuance for the benefit of all our residents. Thank you.

---Applause

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**MADAM SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Amittuq, Mr. Alloofoo.

#### ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement Re Congratulating Mr. Keyootak On Re-Election As President Of Baffin Regional Inuit Association

#### **MR. ALLOOFOO:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the Nunavut Caucus, I would like to congratulate Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak on his election Monday as president of the Baffin Regional Inuit Association.

---Applause

Madam Speaker, Mr. Keyootak has served the Inuit of Baffin Island for the last 12 years. I'm pleased he was able to retain his position as president of the important Inuit organization in the largest region of Nunavut. I would also like to congratulate the other candidates who also ran in the election for their participation in the political life of the Baffin region. I, and my colleagues in the Nunavut Caucus, thank Mr. Keyootak for his help in the past and look forward to continuing our long collaboration with him. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

#### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement Re Congratulating Mr. Keyootak On Re-Election As President Of Baffin Regional Inuit Association

#### **MR. PUDLAT:**

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. I, too, would like to congratulate Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak on his re-election as president of the Baffin Regional Inuit Association. I also want to make special mention of the twelve other candidates who were on the ballots. Even though they did not win, the fact that they made themselves available for public service is greatly appreciated. I am happy to see that the Inuit of the region were given such a high number of candidates to choose from for the president. Once again, congratulations to Pauloosie Keyootak and I encourage the others to keep working to keep the Baffin Inuit Association strong. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

#### **MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Enforcement Of Laws For Environmental Protection

#### **MR. ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. In late 1990, the 11th Legislative Assembly passed two very important bills. The first bill amended the Environmental Protection Act. The Minister of Renewable Resources at the time said that the purpose of the bill was to amend the act in such a manner that it was enforceable. The bill included such measures as raising maximum fines for discharging contaminants to \$1 million for repeated offenses.

Later in the same session, the Assembly passed a private Member's bill, the Environmental Rights Act. This act allowed private citizens to lay complaints about environmental damage with the Minister of Renewable Resources and the Minister would then be required to act on the complaint.

Together, these two acts gave the Northwest Territories the appearance of having some of the best laws in the country for protecting our environment.

But, I have to question this image. Soon after the Environmental Rights Act was passed, two Yellowknife residents laid a complaint related to emissions of sulphur dioxide and arsenic from Giant Mine. The Department of Renewable Resources completed their report which showed the level of emissions. Specifically, some of the tests in 1992 showed that northerly winds would raise sulphur dioxide levels in downtown Yellowknife above the limits for desirable and acceptable levels according to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

While the environmental health directorate in Ottawa does not feel that these levels represent an imminent health hazard, they do have an adverse effect on northerners' health. As the directorate stated, "These levels of sulphur dioxide can lead to mild reversible respiratory effects in sensitive individuals, particularly asthmatics." I know of at least one Yellowknife resident who suffers severe asthma attacks when she is downtown and the winds blow from the north.

Also, arsenic is a chemical which is known to cause cancer and the directorate said that, "Exposure to arsenic should be reduced to the lowest possible level." It appears that Royal Oak Mines are not interested in voluntarily reducing their emissions. After the department's report was released last year, Royal Oak disputed the figures in the report and stated that installing cleaning technology in their roasting stacks would be too expensive.

Madam Speaker, I'm running out of time and I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statements.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The great step forward in environmental legislation that was seen in this House in 1990 will be a wasted step if the government does not use legislation to protect our environment. Why say we will fine offenders up to \$1 million if we don't even lay charges. For that matter, how can we lay charges when the government has not developed enforceable guidelines and limits?

Polluters in the north will continue to pollute as long as they think nothing will happen to them. The whole

point of these acts is to make sure that something will happen to polluters who don't clean up their act. I suggest that as long as the government does not work with industry, environmental experts, health professionals and the scientific community to develop clear, enforceable, regulatory guidelines, the Environmental Protection Act and the Environmental Rights Act

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are not worth the paper they are printed on. I urge the Minister of Renewable Resources to use these laws the way they were intended, to persuade polluters to reduce or eliminate their pollution, and I urge him to do that in this case by immediately developing specific guidelines on sulphur dioxide and arsenic emissions. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Economic Benefits And Environmental Protection From Diamond Mining

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Over the past few weeks, we have heard speeches from both sides of the House on how we, as a government, must take control of the mineral resources of the Northwest Territories from the federal government if we are to have any hope of realizing any economic benefits from the diamond trade.

Madam Speaker, this government must ensure that economic benefits remain in the north as much as possible. However, Madam Speaker, having some say in the mineral policy in the Northwest Territories and ensuring economic spin-offs for residents are not the only responsibilities we, as a government, have. We must ensure, Madam Speaker, that the land is not scarred forever because of the exploration of minerals. We must make sure that caribou migration is not adversely affected. We must make sure, Madam Speaker, that this great land we call home is left as close as possible to its natural state for the future generations.

Madam Speaker, in this sluggish economy I realize that many people are very excited about the potential economic miracles about to occur in the Northwest

Territories in diamonds. But I urge the Members and the government to temper this excitement with a little bit of foresight. Long after the diamonds are gone from the ground, people will still want to use the land to hunt and fish. We, as a government, must remember one important thing: this is our responsibility to ensure the maximum economic benefits for the development of such as the diamond play, as it is our responsibility to ensure that the land remains as close to being undisturbed as possible. We also have a responsibility for future generations. We have to make sure that the proper environmental reviews and studies are done. Mahsi cho, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Changing Upcoming Territorial Election Date

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to speak about an issue dear to all our hearts: territorial elections. Madam Speaker, historically NWT Legislative Assembly elections have taken place every four years during the fall season. This 12th Assembly was elected October of 1991; the 11th Assembly, October of 1987; 10th Assembly, November of 1983, and so on.

However, on April 1, 1999, there will be the creation of two new territories as a result of the enactment of the Nunavut Act. This means that an election for the Members of the Nunavut Assembly must take place before April 1 of 1999. Ideally, the Members for the new western territory should also be elected around the same time.

Based on past historic election time frames, this Assembly would dissolve in the summer of 1995 with an October 1995 election of the 13th Assembly. This would leave the 13th Assembly with a maximum mandate between October of 1995 and March of 1999, of less than three and a half years.

Madam Speaker, as we all know, the next Assembly will have the monumental and historical task of working out the fiscal and administrative framework to support two new territories in 1999, over and above the already difficult task of governing our existing

territory with limited and diminishing financial resources. In recognizing the heavy workload required of the next Legislative Assembly and their reduced term as a result of the requirement for at least one and probably two Assemblies to be established by April of 1999, I wish for Members of the 12th Assembly to consider holding a spring 1995 general election in order to allow a full four year term for the next and last NWT Legislative Assembly as we know it.

Madam Speaker, this Assembly has the authority to decide on an election date. I hope we can seriously consider using our authority for the benefit of all northerners by allowing the next Assembly a full four year mandate in order to ensure the fair and smooth establishment of two new territories in 1999. Qujannamiik.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Controversy Over "The Diamond Empire"

**MR. LEWIS:**

Madam Speaker, I'm in receipt of information from Ecology North. On March 14, Mr. O'Brien, director of Ecology North, received a letter from the law firm, Fasken Campbell and Godfrey, indicating they have been retained by De Beers to inform Ecology North that its public showing of the film The Diamond Empire on March 15 could result in a claim for damages from De Beers.

The company claims the film contains material which is a subject of dispute between De Beers and the British Broadcasting Corporation. They claim it relies on inaccurate, incorrect and false research, often supplied by disruptive and dubious sources. It alleges by defamatory inference that De Beers uses disreputable and illegal methods to make their control over the diamond market. It alleges by De Beers conduct during World War II denied the United States access to required quantities of diamonds for its war efforts, it alleges that De Beers exerted pressure to effect the closure of a diamond mine in Arkansas for improper purposes, and it goes on with other claims against this particular film, The Diamond Empire.

Madam Speaker, this film has already been broadcast on our local cable network. Although the information from De Beers claims that this film has not been shown in Britain and in Australia because of the concerns expressed by De Beers, and the fact that anybody who shows it would be liable for damages, it seems now that since this information is on the record and in the local newspaper, and since I've made this statement about concerns in the House, that northern people being wise and not country bumpkins will look at it and make up their own mind. We have all had a history of, in fact, being quite immune to propaganda. Thank you.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement On Importance Of Education

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to welcome a group of students from the Chief Jimmy Bruneau School in Rae-Edzo...

---Applause

who, with their teacher, Mr. Gerry Moran and their two guidance counsellors toured the Legislative Assembly this morning and are currently in the gallery watching the proceedings of the House.

Madam Speaker, the North Slave region has begun negotiations to settle regional land claims which involve development of self-government institutions. We are developing strategies to develop long-term employment and better social economic conditions through our regional industrial strategy. What this process really involves is a commitment to bring about a greater degree of political and economic self-reliance for the Dogrib people. This is a very challenging situation, and that is why it is so important for our young people to complete school and thereby prepare themselves with reading, writing and mathematical skills required to effectively participate in the challenges ahead. If our young people do not complete school, how can we ever hope to manage and control our own affairs? We will continue to rely on educated people from southern Canada.

Madam Speaker, this is the challenge we face at home. However, Madam Speaker, if we look outside our region to southern Canada and even further to the rest of the world, it is clear that a much higher percentage of the new jobs being created in a more competitive, technology-driven economy require higher education and skill levels than was previously the case. Many of the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in manufacturing and the resource sector have been disappearing at a rapid rate over the past two decades. This concerns me very much, Madam Speaker. What these trends suggest is that our aboriginal labour force, with its generally low education levels, will be particularly disadvantaged in the new global economy.

Madam Speaker, in the context of our adult population who has dropped out of school, we have a tremendous challenge ahead from the perspective of upgrading and training. Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, colleagues. Madam Speaker, we want educated Dogrib people managing and building the institution that will bring the Dogrib people a greater degree of self-reliance. If the Dogrib people are going to reach out to the world outside of the territories and Canada and feel secure and confident in their abilities, then we must commit ourselves to educating our young people and ensuring that our adults commit themselves equally to upgrading and training. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement Re Congratulating Junior Curlers Attending National Championship

**MR. KOE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my congratulations to two Northwest Territories curling teams which will be representing the Yukon and Northwest Territories at the Canadian

junior Pepsi curling championships in Truro, Nova Scotia.

---Applause

Madam Speaker, on Saturday, March 19 and throughout the following week, these teams will be curling against other provincial champions. The Canadian champions will be decided next Saturday on March 26. These champions will represent Canada at the world junior curling championships in Bulgaria some time in April.

Madam Speaker, I have a lot of personal interest in this Canadian national event because three of my children will be participating.

---Applause

My son, Kevin, is the skip of the junior men's team and he is supported by his brother Jamie, and Mark and Kevin Whitehead. George Gibson is the coach of this team. Tara Hamer is skipping the junior women's team and she is supported by my daughter Kerry, who will be playing third. The team also includes Kim Barraclough and Sheena Yakeleya. This team is coached by Ernie Comerford.

Madam Speaker, history will be made at these junior nationals because I believe it is the first time that three curlers from one family are going to be participating in this event. So at this time I would like to advise this House and my constituents in Inuvik that I will be away from March 17 to March 25. My wife and I will be in Truro, will be cheering loudly and providing support to these curlers. So please join me in congratulating these Northwest Territories champions and wishing them well next week. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

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Member's Statement On Iqaluit Municipal Election

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, later today I will be tabling a letter written by the chairperson of the Municipal Advisory Committee for the town of Iqaluit, Mr. Robert L. Hanson, dated

March 8, to the Honourable Silas Arngna'naaq, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs recommending that municipal elections be held as early as May, 1994, before most people start leaving for holidays during the spring and summer months. Mr. Hanson also noted that this will be the same month that an election for the Inuit Tapirisat's presidency is taking place. The letter also notes that by that date the current administration should have had the opportunity to review municipal programs and evaluate senior staff as approved by the committee. Further, the committee members recommend in their letter that Robin Beaumont, municipal administrator, remain in Iqaluit until the municipal election is over and a senior administrative officer has been appointed by the elected council to ensure a smooth transition.

Madam Speaker, I am also aware that the municipal administrator, appointed by the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, who also advises the Minister and works closely with the Municipal Advisory Committee, is advising that there yet remains to be a great deal of work done before a municipal inspection team can be sent in. I am impressed with the capabilities of the members of the Municipal Advisory Committee and Mr. Beaumont. I am sure they can do what is necessary to be done before an election is called in May if they are given encouragement to do so by the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Beaumont has correctly advised the Municipal Advisory Committee that the sole criteria for calling new municipal elections is the favourable opinion of the Minister of MACA, though the Minister has already indicated to this House that he will be relying on advice from the Municipal Advisory Committee and the municipal administrator, and hopefully from the MLA for Iqaluit.

It is now over four months since the elected council was dissolved. Clear advice has now been received from the Municipal Advisory Committee. Later, I will be following up with the Minister to ensure that municipal elections are called sooner rather than later in Iqaluit. Qujannamiik.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Member's Statement Re Congratulations On Securing Agreement For Disposal Of PCBs

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Department of Renewable Resources, the former Minister and the present Minister, in their diligent efforts in securing the agreement between the province of Alberta and the Northwest Territories for the disposition of hazardous waste. We know that this has been a long-outstanding issue in the territories and it has affected every constituency as far as what to do with material that is a hazard to the land and people. It has been stored in various places across the territories. Here, in Yellowknife, I think we have quite a depot. With this agreement, we will be able to remove this. I guess it would be relatively small amounts in comparison with what Swan Hills is capable of disposing of. It is good to see there is this relationship between this province and territory to assist each other. It is very expensive for us to develop any kind of disposal equipment in the territories. It just shows that with the proper effort, there can be cooperation on something as important as this. So I would like to extend to the staff and department congratulations from the people in Yellowknife on this major achievement. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS**

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. For a number of years there have been concerns raised about the poor level of coordination between territorial and federal programs. It has resulted in people wishing to access funding being directed from program to program. There have also been problems with the Economic Development officers, themselves, being unaware of these programs, again causing confusion for clients wishing to access some of these programs. I would like to ask the Minister what he has done to ensure better coordination between the many economic development programs that are available to make it easier for individuals and northern businesses wishing to access these programs?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I didn't understand the question. What programs? Does he mean the programs within the department, federal government programs, programs that relate to EDA or ED&T? I'm more confused with the question than I am with the answer.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Since it is not the chair's responsibility to interpret questions, I'll ask Mr. Ng if he could possibly repeat his question and request the Minister to carefully pay attention. Thank you.

---Applause

Question 298-12(5): Coordination Between Territorial And Federal Programs

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is very apparent, Madam Speaker, from the Minister himself being confused that there is a problem out there with the public being confused.

---Laughter

---Applause

My question to the Minister, Madam Speaker, is, there are federal government programs, there are territorial government programs and his department steers individuals wishing to access those programs.

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How is that coordinated to determine which program that individual would be directed toward? That's the question. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 298-12(5): Coordination Between Territorial And Federal Programs

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Touche, I guess. Madam Speaker, as the honourable Member knows, with our new approach to the



department in terms of giving regional authority to the superintendents, ultimately it trickles down to the community economic development officers, and we're hopeful that will bring about more decision-making at the regional and community level.

The authority that we're giving to the regions is also for the EDA program which I think there has been considerable complaint about. We're confident that the coordinated approach of accessing programs outside of the territorial jurisdiction is there with the new responsibilities we've given to the regions and will ultimately give to the economic development officers at the community level. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 298-12(5): Coordination Between Territorial And Federal Programs

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I understand that his department has addressed some of the programs internally regarding where individuals can access these programs. But, my question is in relation to the federal programs. We have the community economic development organizations up in our areas right now. Does his department interrelate with that federally-funded agency to coordinate these programs? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 298-12(5): Coordination Between Territorial And Federal Programs

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Now I understand, Madam Speaker, thank you.

---Applause

It takes a while, but the penny dropped. Anyway, there are ongoing relationships between the regional superintendents and the CEDO operations that I believe the honourable Member is talking about. In his area there is a bit of a history of an environment of less cooperation in the past. I'm reasonably confident in my recent discussions with that particular group and my previous discussions of some months ago in

Spence Bay, that we've resolved some of the personality and process differences. Now, there's a fairly reasonable working relationship between these two groups.

The other area of concern that I know has been expressed by others is about accessing federal CAEDS money. We haven't had much success in that area but we are working very aggressively to get the department responsible for CAEDS to recognize that we need a closer and more productive relationship in accessing these dollars as well. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 298-12(5): Coordination Between Territorial And Federal Programs

**MR. NG:**

Thank you. I would like to ask the Minister, then, would he say that the economic development officers in the regions have an understanding of the programs that are available and how these programs work together? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 298-12(5): Coordination Between Territorial And Federal Programs

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I think there's an understanding in most regions, the way I understand it anyway. There are a number of programs outside of the department and if you cooperate and coordinate, you can get significantly more leverage. For example, another program that is working very well in the regions is the community futures program. There is one in the Baffin, Keewatin and in the Inuvik and Hay River area. It is my understanding that program works very closely with the department in trying to put lending and grant programs together.

Certainly, if there are some specific problems with respect to the honourable Member's region, I would only be too happy to address them. But, the new senior management team that determines policy and direction are the superintendents. They and the

deputy minister are closer to the field than anybody. They are very much aware of the need for us to look outside of the limited resources we've got to bring about greater economic growth in these communities. I'm comfortable that they are aware. If there are specific instances, I would be only too happy to address them. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 299-12(5): Percentage Of ED&T Budget Devoted To Small Business Grants

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. The heart and soul of the territories' economy are the small businesses. Small grants which help buy a new sewing machine, a kicker or keep one family self-reliant and off social assistance are key to our economic development. The Minister has indicated that this program is in the hands of the regional staff, making them more receptive to local needs. What percentage of the total grant pool for Economic Development is devoted to small business grants?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

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Return To Question 299-12(5): Percentage Of ED&T Budget Devoted To Small Business Grants

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I stand to be corrected, but that is the \$5,000 grant program that we've talked about, which, as the honourable Member has said, is to assist the small entrepreneur if he's fishing or other small business. I believe it is around the \$900,000 or \$1 million mark at this time. I could get the actual number for him later this week, but I believe it is in that range.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Madam Speaker, there has been an awful lot of discussion regarding the community classifications for Economic Development funding. The Minister is on record in this House saying that the emphasis will be on providing funding for business in Level II and Level III communities.

Madam Speaker, this tends to encourage an isolationist approach to economic development and has caused problems for businesses in level I communities, especially for aboriginal people in communities like Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik and yes, even in Yellowknife, to take advantage of these programs. In view of the apparent problems with community categorization, is the Minister willing to consider other options for determining funding availability or eligibility, by business size perhaps, instead of by business location?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I find this question almost hypocritical. The reality is, whether the honourable Member likes it or not, the policies of this department were determined by previous Cabinets and previous MLAs on the principle of the extent of unemployment and the need in Level II and III communities for some economic activity.

---Applause

They don't have the ability, as they do in a community like Yellowknife, where the business community is fundamentally supported by the people who come in from the communities of the Northwest Territories. Where would the hotel industry be in Yellowknife if it weren't for northerners coming to Yellowknife? Where would the taxi business be? The Level II and III communities, in my eyes and in my department's eyes, are the priority and I intend to stay the course. Thank you.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Hear, hear.

---Applause

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Is the Minister then saying that he does not feel that aboriginal people in level I communities deserve any support for starting new businesses?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I personally never discriminate in relationship to race when it comes to the department. What we are discriminating on, if anything, is unemployment. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. My colleague from Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan, mentioned a program in a question before to the Minister which involves a \$5,000 grant to people who are unemployed and wanting to get into business. Is that program available to residents in level I communities?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I believe it is, but again I could stand to be corrected. I would like to point out that the focus of the department in some of its programs is in level II and III communities. That's based on policy and it was agreed to by previous governments.

I would also like to point out, it would be interesting to see...If the diamond exploration took place, for example, in the Northwest Territories, what community would benefit the most? What economic benefits would be derived to Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove or Chesterfield Inlet? Where would the net effects come? That's what we're trying to do here. We're trying to find a way and means to support those communities that need the support the most. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My final supplementary to the Minister, I don't think that anybody would disagree with the emphasis being on providing employment where it is needed the most. I don't think anybody in the House would disagree that level II and level III communities have the greatest needs. But the problem has been that there is still a need in level I communities. There are still some

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people who can't access the funding from the banks, and still some people who need the assistance of the department with putting their proposals together. What I'm asking is, will the Minister take a look...and the Minister has pointed out that it was this Legislative Assembly that set the priorities, but that came as a result of a Minister taking the initiative and presenting the proposal to this legislature. What I'm asking is, will the Minister re-examine the situation and see whether there isn't some way that small businesses in level I communities, or people wishing to start small businesses in level I communities, can't find easier access to assistance from his department?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 300-12(5): Community Classifications For Economic Development Funding

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I'd be foolish to say no. Of course we will look at it. The reality is that some of the programs that we have can be accessed by level I communities. The business loan fund can be accessed, some of the grant systems can be accessed, CAEDS funding can be accessed, EDA money can be accessed. What programs is the honourable Member talking about? All I'm saying is, the emphasis historically has been on the level II and III communities. Small businesses can access the Government of the Northwest Territories business loan fund, CAEDS program, EDA. But, yes, we will review it and let the honourable Member know what conclusions we come to.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 301-12(5): Assistance To ED&T Regional Staff On Expanded Roles

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, as well. During the Fourth Session of this Assembly, the Minister announced that there is restructuring of his department. What this did was place more authority in the hands of the regional staff. However, with every change in the way programs are being delivered, there is a need to train and refresh the frontline workers. I would like to ask the Minister, what has the department done to assist the regional staff to carry out their expanded roles? Mahsi.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 301-12(5): Assistance To ED&T Regional Staff On Expanded Roles

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

There are several things we've done or that we're doing. We are providing, for example, at the regional level more resource staff that we're taking out of headquarters and putting into the regions to assist in the new expanded financial authority as it relates to loans, grants, et cetera. The regional superintendents are now meeting -- because I've insisted upon it -- every three months to make sure that the changes that we've put into place are going into place. During these meetings, it's like a training seminar, I think, and we're moving fairly aggressively to bring the superintendents and ultimately their staff up to date on the programs, the money we have and the new programs that are coming. So there are certain steps taking place. We are adding some new resources. And I'm reasonably confident that in the next six months we're going to be able to demonstrate a more effective way of delivering the programs than we have in the past. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 301-12(5): Assistance To ED&T Regional Staff On Expanded Roles

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. The other people who should be aware of the new regional emphasis of the changes in the department are the public and the business community. I would like to ask the Minister, how has the department informed the users about the changes to the department? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 301-12(5): Assistance To ED&T Regional Staff On Expanded Roles

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I don't think we've had any formal campaign to advise the business community and others, the public at large, about the changes we've made. I guess that through announcements such as in the Legislative Assembly and through Minister's statements we've tried to communicate it. It may, in fact, be a weak part in this strategy, and I would certainly be prepared to look at it. But in terms of formal advisement, I don't think we've done anything with respect to that. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 301-12(5): Assistance To ED&T Regional Staff On Expanded Roles

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Thank you. This change has happened during the last couple of months. Has there been any change in the level of interest expressed in the programs since the restructuring took place? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 301-12(5): Assistance To ED&T Regional Staff On Expanded Roles

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I did recently travel through Iqaluit on my way back from Ottawa, last week. I met with the superintendent of Economic Development, Ms. Katherine Trumper. Ms. Trumper has had a long history with the department. She is the superintendent there. I asked her how she felt the new programs and new authority were going, from a bureaucratic perspective. She indicated to me that she thought morale was at its highest at the regional level, that there was a significant increase in interest, certainly from Baffin Island, and that she felt that with the new financial authority she had been given allowed her the ability to move much more quickly in responding to the clients.

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It appeared -- and it's early to tell because we've only put this thing in place in mid-December -- that client satisfaction which was a unique thing in Economic Development, appeared to be on the rise. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 302-12(5): Businesses Purchased By NWT Development Corporation

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is again for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Madam Speaker, most northerners are aware that the NWT Development Corporation has purchased some northern businesses which were in trouble. I was wondering if the Minister could provide us with the names of a few of the larger businesses which the NWT Development Corporation has purchased in the last couple of years?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 302-12(5): Businesses Purchased By NWT Development Corporation

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I'm doing this all from lack of looking at the notes, but I could provide the honourable Member with a complete list if he wants. For example, Fort Resolution Sawmill would be one. I would have to check with my colleague, but I believe the Fort McPherson Canvas is another one. The fish and meat processing plant in my own constituency of Rankin Inlet was originally run by the government many years ago. The arts and crafts centre in Pangnirtung is another one. I could give the honourable Member a complete list, but at this point I don't know whether that would satisfy him or not. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 302-12(5): Businesses Purchased By NWT Development Corporation

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think I can get the details at another time. A question now for the Minister, as I understood it, the NWT Development Corporation was created in part to provide an independent body to stimulate business development. However, it seems in many cases the major focus on the corporation to date has been to buy out NWT businesses which are close to failing. Is the Development Corporation meant to operate like a business, with a focus on profit, or is it meant to operate as a social welfare organization, supporting enterprises which cannot make a profit, but which provide employment?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 302-12(5): Businesses Purchased By NWT Development Corporation

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Speaking personally, as the Minister responsible, it is my belief that the NWT Development Corporation was originally set up with the principles of trying to create employment in the areas where there was high unemployment. It was recognized early on that one of the failures in a number of businesses in level II and III communities is the inability for them to access capital and to service the debt. The principles of the Development Corporation are to provide the capital infrastructure on the short-term to avoid that heavy administration expense of interest payments and debt, and once we get it viable, to transfer it over to an independent group. That is my understanding, in a nutshell.

Originally there was a need to create some economic activity that would create jobs. There was a recognition that these jobs would have to be subsidized, whether it was in front-end capital expenditure or in short-term job expenditure. In other words, "x" amount of dollars for "x" amount of jobs. The overall goal is if we are successful in making the operation viable, we would be able to transfer that back to a Development Corporation in a community or some individual entrepreneurs. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 302-12(5): Businesses Purchased By NWT Development Corporation

**MR. DENT:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. For greater clarity, is the principle to, at the end of the day, have a self-sufficient operation? The Minister has mentioned that one of the goals was to provide employment and that there might be a need for subsidy. The question I am asking is, is one of the principles in the operation of the Development Corporation that there should be continuing subsidies? Or, is the object to eventually get away from providing subsidies?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 302-12(5): Businesses Purchased By NWT Development Corporation

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

In an ideal world, we would like to get away from subsidies. I think it was recognized and is currently recognized by the federal government. What choice do we have? Do we destine people to be recipients of social assistance or do we find them ways and means in which to make people become productive citizens? It costs some dollars on the front-end, as I indicated earlier, in perhaps subsidizing some of the operations and maintenance costs and the capital costs. I think it was recognized that some of these enterprises may not be viable. Part of our policy is we are prepared to subsidize wages to a certain level because it is better than having people on social assistance. As I said, in a perfect world, you would like to think we can move forward and make these operations viable. But a perfect world is when we all die and go to heaven. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 303-12(5): NWT Development Corporation Funding Available

**MR. ZOE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, there is an old saying, "It takes money to make money."

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**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

(Microphone turned off)

---Applause

**MR. ZOE:**

Madam Speaker, if the Development Corporation is truly to assist the northern economy, it needs money to do it. What amount of money does the Development Corporation have for new investments?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 303-12(5): NWT Development Corporation Funding Available

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

When it was originally put in place, it had a \$10 million budget. Like all other governments across the country, we are under fiscal restraint. I have recognized that and the Finance Minister has my cooperation in trying to find ways and means in which to keep our fiscal position in reasonable order. Therefore, we have had to reduce the amount of money that we have been accustomed to accessing. This past year we had \$6 million in investment revenue in 1993-94. In 1994-95 it goes down to \$5 million. At the present time, our accessibility of investment capital is very limited because of the reduction in the overall capital requirements of the corporation. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 303-12(5): NWT Development Corporation Funding Available

**MR. ZOE:**

Madam Speaker, the Minister beat around the bush to give me that eloquent answer. I asked for a specific amount. I would like to know how much money is available through the Development Corporation for new investments. I didn't get a dollar amount. I would like to pose that same question to the Minister.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 303-12(5): NWT Development Corporation Funding Available

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

There is that old saying, "You can't see the bushes for the trees." The current commitments the Development Corporation board of directors have made leaves them very little flexibility in looking at any additional new ventures that have come forward. My understanding is the Development Corporation has somewhere in the region of \$18 million worth of

proposals on the desk. But, at the present time, the fiscal position of the Development Corporation is minimal.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 303-12(5): NWT Development Corporation Funding Available

**MR. ZOE:**

Madam Speaker, if the government is dedicated to economic development, why is there such a small amount of money available to new businesses?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 303-12(5): NWT Development Corporation Funding Available

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I don't want to be misunderstood. There are commitments on the table that the independent board of directors reviews and makes decisions on. I am told the financial commitments they have will eat up the overall budget that we have been provided through the capital process. If we could get more money we would be able to do more things. But we are all under the fiscal restraint gun and the Development Corporation is under the same gun. It is trying to do more with less. It does have proposals on the table that will eat up the majority of the current funding that is allocated to this Development Corporation. I don't have the specific number that is left over at this time. I am not trying to evade the question. I am just saying the board of directors have approved projects within the fiscal constraints they are operating under.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 304-12(5): Impact Of NWT Development Corporation Involvement With Patterson Sawmill

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, who is responsible for the NWT Development Corporation. Within the last two years, the NWT Development Corporation bought the Patterson Sawmill in Hay River for approximately \$1.4 million to \$1.7 million. At that time, Members were told the number of board feet that was required to make this sawmill viable would come from the Cameron Hills area. But now trees have been taken from the Deh Cho region. The people in the Liard area are now in a logging pilot project and may want to develop their own business eventually. What impact will the Development Corporation's large investment in the Patterson Sawmill have on any investment assistance requests from Liard businesses for logging operations? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 304-12(5): Impact Of NWT Development Corporation Involvement With Patterson Sawmill

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

The short answer is none. As the honourable Member has indicated, we are currently doing an experimental project in the Liard area. I believe the logs are going to BC because that is the closest place. This is a pilot project. Certainly, if we find -- between ourselves and the Department of Renewable Resources -- significant viable timber, we would take and intend to take a hard look at perhaps putting in a mill in that area, so we would increase the economic activity and perhaps more importantly -- to myself, anyway -- jobs for the people in that area. I would say in simple language, I don't see the Patterson Sawmill having significant impact on the Liard area. We are working very closely with that community. We are optimistic, as we must be in today's world, that if we find the appropriate type of lumber

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and sales to match, that we will put some kind of facility in there that will increase job opportunities for the Liard and that area of people.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 304-12(5): Impact Of NWT Development Corporation Involvement With Patterson Sawmill

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. What is the current financial and operational status of the Patterson Sawmill? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 304-12(5): Impact Of NWT Development Corporation Involvement With Patterson Sawmill

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I know it is operating today, but I don't have the financial position at my fingertips at this time, Madam Speaker. I would certainly be willing to provide that to the honourable Member. It is currently operating right now, the same as the one in Resolution. Again, I don't have the fiscal condition of it, but I could certainly provide that information to the honourable Member. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is again to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. I would like to ask him if he could clarify for us what exactly the mandate is of the Business Credit Corporation? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**HON. JOHN TODD:**



Thank you, Madam Speaker. Perhaps I will just stay standing.

---Laughter

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Laughter

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I want to assure my honourable colleagues that I am standing.

---Laughter

The mandate of the Business Credit Corporation, as far as I'm concerned, is to provide business loans and grants to all businesses across the Northwest Territories. I indicated earlier on when I got this portfolio that I saw it as an institution that must be prepared to take greater risk, less collateral and not act like a banking institution. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister how well he feels the Business Credit Corporation is fulfilling its mandate? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. To be candid, one of the things we sought the Business Credit Corporation's cooperation on was giving the superintendents greater fiscal authority for the loan and grant funds. That money comes from the Business Credit Corporation. With all due respect to the board of directors and the chairperson, they were very cooperative in recognizing that, due to their

centralized location and the fact that they had to pull their directors together on a regular basis, that this move to putting more loan money in the hands of superintendents would complement and add to their reference. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Minister has mentioned he is trying to get them to increase their risk and maybe lower some of their security requirements to try to allow for more funding to be available to businesses under the Business Credit Corporation. I would like to ask if he's done anything to change that mandate, structurally, to allow for that? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I think it's important to point out that I cannot interfere directly in loans or loan applications. My job is to establish public policy; the job of the board is to enact it. I've instructed the board that, as long as I'm the Minister, the public policy is to make higher risk decisions, require less collateral, and not to ask in a manner in which conventional banks do. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ng.

Supplementary To Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**MR. NG:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, then, if he's requested this of the board, has he had

any response from them with regard to possibly increasing the risk level for the loans? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 305-12(5): Mandate Of Business Credit Corporation

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

It's basically a philosophy, I think, more than saying increase the loans to five, ten or 20 per cent loss, or whatever. I'm confident that in my discussions with the board of directors of the Credit Corporation, in which most regions are represented, that they recognize the need for the Credit Corporation to be a little more aggressive in their lending practices. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my question would be to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Just prior to the Arctic Winter Games, we were treated to a fashion show of the clothes created for the NWT team. Some of the articles were created by established northern businesses such as the Jessie Oonark's Arts and Craft Centre. However, with the support of the government, a sewing company was created in Rankin Inlet to make the jackets for the games.

Due to the high subsidy provided for jackets, making these jackets provided short-term employment for the Rankin Inlet seamstresses. However, the games are over and there is now a sewing company in which the government has made a substantial investment. The government should not make this investment without full knowledge of the long-term plans of this company. What will these seamstresses be doing now that the jackets are done?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Mr. Gargan, I would like to ask you to rephrase your question. For one thing, the seamstresses are not under the responsibility of Mr. Todd. The questions posed to Ministers should be as a result of the

responsibilities of their departments. Would you like to attempt to rephrase your question? Mr. Gargan.

Question 306-12(5): Viability Of Rankin Inlet Sewing Company

**MR. GARGAN:**

Just to rephrase it, I think the Minister is aware of the jackets that were made by the Rankin Inlet seamstresses. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the viability of the company now?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 306-12(5): Viability Of Rankin Inlet Sewing Company

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I think it's important to point out that this company was not put in place specifically to sew these jackets. There is an NWT Development Corporation company called Ivalu Fabric Arts & Crafts, which is a sewing centre operating out of Rankin Inlet, which has a series of arctic clothing that it makes and sells. It has sales in that respect. It formed a joint venture with some others to bid the Arctic Winter games clothing. It was fortunate enough, when the decision was made to give the work out, that they did acquire, with this joint venture company, the contract to make the jackets. The company, Ivalu Fabric Arts & Crafts' long-term ability to produce jobs, et cetera, was not contingent upon the Arctic Winter Games jacket contract.

However, it did add to increasing, I believe, four or five additional employees in that company for that specific project.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Gargan.

Supplementary To Question 306-12(5): Viability Of Rankin Inlet Sewing Company

**MR. GARGAN:**

So, Madam Speaker, for clarification, this joint venture was created long before there was a need to create these Arctic Winter Games jackets.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 306-12(5): Viability Of Rankin Inlet Sewing Company

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Ivalu Fabric Arts and Crafts was created over a year and a half ago and the key, instrumental person at the time was Bernadette Makpah, who was actively involved with a group of ladies in town in designing new, modern and contemporary Arctic clothing. It was put in place, I believe, close to a year and a half ago. Again, I would stress, that operation, Ivalu Fabric Arts and Crafts, did a joint venture to bid on some of the Arctic Winter Games clothing. So, the Arctic Winter Games jackets were an add-on, if you want, to the revenue base of Ivalu Fabric Arts and Crafts. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 307-12(5): ED&T Role In New Initiatives

**MR. LEWIS:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is not clear what the mandate of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism is after the recent changes and the creation of the Development Corporation and the Business Credit Corporation. The two biggest economic initiatives, in mining, for example, and Mr. Kakfwi's with Renewable Resources, are in different ministries. This department doesn't seem to be really involved. What is the role of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in the north, bearing in mind that many of the huge economic initiatives are really not within the scope of this department?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Return To Question 307-12(5): ED&T Role In New Initiatives

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

I suppose, if I had my druthers, I would see it being called the Department of Small Business and Tourism. I believe that the role and responsibility, given the

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fiscal conditions in the department and the resources we have -- the honourable Member is correct, they are limited -- and when you look at mega projects similar to diamonds, et cetera, that it is small change in the requirement, if we are going to assist in the service of that industry. I see the Department of Economic Development and Tourism as assisting small business in a variety of programs that we are all aware of, whether it is loan programs, plan programs, individual support at the community level, et cetera. So, in simple language, I see it in that light. I see it as providing support to other departments and coordinating with other departments some of the larger issues. For example, in the metal exploration that we have all been talking about, there is a role for it to play along with the departments of Transportation; Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and Renewable Resources as well. So, that is the way I view the department at this time, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 307-12(5): ED&T Role In New Initiatives

**MR. LEWIS:**

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Minister has correctly identified that there is a big difference between economic development and business development. I would like to ask the Minister, since he does recognize the importance of business development, in what way does he ensure that the support that is given to business development relates to these other huge initiatives which are not within the Department of Economic Development and Tourism?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 307-12(5): ED&T Role In New Initiatives

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Unless I am wrong, there is only one really enormous mega project currently facing us and that is the mineral exploration, and, frankly, I have said publicly and I will say it again, it is somewhat overwhelming when you recognize the size of it. For example, I was told by the industry, when I was in Toronto, that one diamond mine would bring in revenues of half a billion dollars and expenditures and servicing those revenues would be somewhere in the region of \$200 million. So, we are having to make an adjustment to this. We are all having to make an adjustment, whether you are the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources or the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, as to how we comprehend and deal with this issue. Frankly, at this stage of the game, we are still struggling with it. What role do we have to play in this mega project that is staring us in the face, if you want? There are no easy answers to it. We are trying to develop, as I believe my honourable colleague said the other day, some kind of overall blueprint and plan for how we are going to look after the interests of northerners, whether it is in the economic field or in the education and training field, et cetera. But, let nobody misunderstand, if these projects or any one of these projects should take off, we are talking mega projects to the tune of close to half a billion dollars in revenues. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 307-12(5): ED&T Role In New Initiatives

**MR. LEWIS:**

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. There are very large projects, I mean not just in terms of billions and billions of dollars, but projects that are meaningful to people. We have talked about the fur industry. We have talked about things that may not amount to billions of dollars, but things that we see as having significance for our people such as hydro development and so on. So my question is regarding the work we did in the last Assembly, the problem of getting an economic blueprint or an economic development plan for the Government of the Northwest Territories, not one department but the whole government. Is there anything ongoing right now to develop such a plan for the Government of the Northwest Territories, not just one department?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Further Return To Question 307-12(5): ED&T Role In New Initiatives

**HON. JOHN TODD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think I have said, on a number of occasions while I was on the other side of the House, and I have said as a Minister, that I view the territorial budget, for example, as an economic instrument, whether it is in the delivery of health services, the delivery of education services, et cetera. It has an economic impact on everything.

We are attempting to provide a coordinated approach in terms of how we expend our money, and I think it is there. Mr. Morin's initiatives, for example, with the business incentive policy or Economic Development and Tourism getting behind the small entrepreneurs in their requirement for bid-bonding or support services in developing small businesses, et cetera.

I believe there is an overall approach to economic development, but I think it goes beyond just the department. It is an acceptance that the role of the government is to ensure that maximum dollars that are spent by the government are in the hands of northerners, one way or the other. Each of us provides departmental support to make sure that happens.

On the larger issues, whether it is the fur strategy or whatever, we are intimately involved with Mr. Kakfwi's department in assisting him in the marketing strategies, et cetera, with respect to the collection of that fur. In education, we work closely with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in trying to find ways and means in which to encourage the development of programs that will assist entrepreneurs.

So I believe that we do have a strategy that is in place, and the department has a very limited role as a department. But in the role of the Minister, I see my role as trying to coordinate economic activities within all the departmental responsibilities. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 308-12(5): Decision On Placement Of Inmates

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question, Madam Speaker, is for the Minister of Justice. I believe the Minister of Justice is aware of the case of four of my constituents in Taloyoak who were committed to stand trial at a preliminary hearing held in their home community on February 21, 1994. They were ordered to be held in custody until the trial. My question to the honourable Minister, Madam Speaker, is what factors are taken into account when corrections officers decide where a person should be sent when they are remanded in custody? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 308-12(5): Decision On Placement Of Inmates

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, the four inmates that the Member is concerned about were moved to Yellowknife en route to Iqaluit. It was felt, and it is still felt, that as far as the cost is concerned, there was very little difference, at least originally and even after the change in travel, of transportation between their community and Yellowknife and return. The total cost of taking them from their communities and Iqaluit and taking them home. The cost is not much different. The guiding principle we use in placing inmates is to try to place them in a facility that is culturally most relevant and, in these cases, none of the inmates were enrolled in any specific programs prior to them being held in Yellowknife and Iqaluit and, at this time, are engaged in some programming in the correctional facilities in Baffin. All of the inmates in the facilities in Iqaluit are Inuktitut speaking people and most of the staff are fluent in Inuktitut. So it was felt that in the interest of programming and placing inmates in the most culturally fitting environment, Iqaluit would be the place and that has been the reason for the location. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 308-12(5): Decision On Placement Of Inmates

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Communicating with inmates in Iqaluit, at least two of them, they indicated over the phone that they wanted to be closer to their lawyer in Yellowknife and they also indicated the program is very good in Iqaluit. We hope that they will have taken the AA program when they get out of the correctional centre and have more control over their personal life. How come these other things were not taken into consideration by the correctional staff? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 308-12(5): Decision On Placement Of Inmates

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

The six individuals included two young offenders. It was felt that in their case, Iqaluit provided the best opportunity and setting for counselling and programming. The assessments are done by staff. It is felt the decision that was made, judging from the response and success to date, has been a good one. The indications are that the programming efforts that have been made with regard to these two are quite successful.

The other four were adult offenders. One had already been sentenced. One is an inmate who was sentenced who still has an outstanding charge. Two of them are in remand and they will be there for some time while they are awaiting trial. Again, it was felt while Yellowknife may be more appropriate for family contact and that families have greater occasion to frequent Yellowknife than they would Iqaluit, coming out of those regions and there were other people some of the inmates would be in contact with, it would be more convenient for them to be located in a place where they have access to these contacts. The kind of staff we have in Iqaluit outweighs the possible benefits of placing them in Yellowknife. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

Question 309-12(5): Overcrowding Of Baffin Correctional Facility

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to pursue with the Minister of Justice the situation concerning Mr. Ningark's constituents now in the Baffin Correctional Centre in my riding of Iqaluit. I appreciate the Minister's use of the excellent facilities in Iqaluit. Is it not true that, at present, the Baffin Correctional Centre is experiencing severe overcrowding? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 309-12(5): Overcrowding Of Baffin Correctional Facility

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Yes. At any given time both facilities do, but the one in Yellowknife experiences overcrowding at all times. At this time, that includes the correctional facility in Iqaluit.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 309-12(5): Overcrowding Of Baffin Correctional Facility

**MR. PATTERSON:**

I understand, Madam Speaker, that conditions are so crowded at the Baffin Correctional Centre that inmates are virtually sleeping in the hallways. Is it not true that at the moment, at least, the Yellowknife Correctional Centre is not in a crowded condition. There is room in Yellowknife at this moment. Is that not true? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 309-12(5): Overcrowding Of Baffin Correctional Facility

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, my information as of today, which might change tomorrow, is that Yellowknife

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is overcrowded by, with regard to the number of beds, by two. Iqaluit by four. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 309-12(5): Overcrowding Of Baffin Correctional Facility

**MR. PATTERSON:**

I guess that points out the need for new capital facilities, Madam Speaker. There does seem to be some misunderstanding about the criteria used for what seemed to be arbitrary decisions about moving prisoners and escorts at considerable expense. Would the Minister be prepared to review the guidelines that are in place, especially with regard to cost, to decide how inmates are moved from one institution to another? Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 309-12(5): Overcrowding Of Baffin Correctional Facility

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I would be prepared to make available to Members some of the guidelines we use in considering the transportation and placing of inmates within our facilities and review the same myself and ask for comments from Members if they have specific concerns in this area. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Time for question period has lapsed. Item 6, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Lewis.

**ITEM 6: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Written Question 18-12(5): Information On Each Business Taken Over By The NWT Development Corporation

**MR. LEWIS:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Will the Minister of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism please provide a list of each business taken over by the NWT Development Corporation and for each business provide the following information:

-How many jobs does the business provide?

-What is produced?

-What are the production levels?

-Who is the marketing agent?

-Is the business in a profit position?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 6, written questions. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

Written Question 19-12(5): Operating Guidelines For The NWT Development Corporation

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have two written questions, also for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

Would the Minister responsible for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism please provide all relevant documents which describe the objectives, mandate, terms of reference and policy guidelines, legislative or otherwise, for the Northwest Territories Development Corporation?

Written Question 20-12(5): Provisions Of The Mechanics And Liens Act As It Pertains To Leased Land

A separate unrelated question, Madam Speaker, is it the policy of the NWT Business Credit Corporation.

Would the Minister responsible for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism please provide the following information to this House:

Is it the policy of the NWT Business Credit Corporation, in representing the corporation's interests, when a business to which a BCC loan has been extended fails, to take the position that where a building owned by the business is on leased land in the NWT, the provisions and remedies of the Mechanics' Liens Act do not apply?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**ITEM 7: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Return To Written Question 5-12(5): Status Of GNWT Leased Units

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

Madam Speaker, Return to Written Question 5-12(5) asked by Mr. Gargan to the Minister of Personnel concerning the status of GNWT leased units.

The GNWT leases 739 staff housing units. There are 76 units which have been vacant for more than two months. Under separate cover, I have provided all Members of the Legislative Assembly with a list of these units, their locations and the names of the owners.

I am not aware of any cases where employees have vacated leased units, specifically due to high rent. Any vacant units we have are a result of vacant positions or where we may have a surplus of units.

Once the present round of sales to employees is completed, we will be doing an inventory assessment in each community. Once the assessment is done I will be sharing the results with individual MLAs. If there are any units that are no longer required for staff housing, the MLA will assist me in coming up with a plan to dispose of them.

**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 Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

**ITEM 12: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**

**MR. ANTOINE:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table, Tabled Document 38-12(5), a copy of a letter that was sent to

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Ecology North from lawyers of De Beers and a press release from Ecology North. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to table, Tabled Document 39-12(5), a letter dated March 8, 1994 from Robert L. Hanson, chairperson of the

Municipal Advisory Committee for the municipality of Iqaluit to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Item 12, tabling of documents. Item 13, notices of motion. Item 14, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 15, motions. Sorry, did you have your hand up for notices of motions for first reading of bills, Mr. Kakfwi? The honourable Member for Sahtu.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Are we still under motions?

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 15, motions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**ITEM 15: MOTIONS**

Motion 21-12(5): Tabled Document 3-12(5) "Tradition And Change: A Strategy For Renewable Resource Development In The Northwest Territories" To Committee Of The Whole

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to move my motion.

WHEREAS, the document, Tradition and Change: A Strategy for Renewable Resource Development in the NWT has been tabled in this House;

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

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that Tabled Document 34-12(5), Tradition and Change: A Strategy for Renewable Resource Development in the NWT, be moved into committee of the whole for discussion.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Your 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 15, motions. Item 16, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

**ITEM 16: FIRST READING OF BILLS**

Bill 10: An Act To Repeal The Metric Conversion Act

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that Bill 10, An Act to Repeal the Metric Conversion Act, be read for the first time.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Bill 10 has had first reading.

---Carried

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; 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. Whitford in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

The committee will now come to order. We have a number of items for consideration. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**



Mr. Chairman, we would like to deal with Tabled Document 11-12(5).

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Does the committee agree that we deal with Tabled Document 11-12(5), First Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner of the NWT for the Year 1992-93?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

Tabled Document 11-12(5): First Annual Report Of The Languages Commissioner Of The NWT For The Year 1992-93

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

The committee agrees. Mr. Gargan, did you want to say something before the break?

---Laughter

**MR. GARGAN:**

I want to thank the Members.

---Laughter

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

We'll take a 15 minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

The committee will now reconvene after a short break. Does the committee agree that witnesses be called to appear before the committee?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

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---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

We have agreement. Sergeant-at-Arms, will you escort the witnesses please. We now have the witness before the committee and the witness needs

no introduction. For the record, it is Ms. Harnum, the Official Languages Commissioner for the NWT. I would like to welcome you to the committee. Bienvenue. General comments. We are dealing with Tabled Document 11-12(5), First Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner of the NWT for the Year 1992-93. General comments? Mr. Gargan.

General Comments

**MR. GARGAN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to follow up on the events of February 16, regarding the invitation to the law faculty. I realize that the Languages Commissioner cancelled her engagement with the Francophone community in order to attend to the urgent issue about the problems in Saskatoon. I'm just wondering, have you since resolved that issue in Saskatoon?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I've talked to the person who extended the invitation to me a couple of times on the phone. There is an interim solution, but they still have a standing offer for me to go talk to the law faculty at some time, if I can. As I mentioned before, when I appeared, it was because of the comments that I made at the linguistics rights conference in Ottawa that they had asked me to come and explain those same things to their faculty. They would still like to have me come sometime, but that's perhaps not the only solution. I've told them that they can discuss it with the department as well.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

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

**MR. GARGAN:**

Since the Languages Commissioner has referred to the situation in Saskatoon as a problem, Mr. Chairman, they have an ombudsman in Saskatchewan too. I'm just wondering whether she has tried to maybe resolve the issue through the ombudsman in Saskatchewan? Have you looked at that or whether that could have been addressed by a phone call, for example?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I believe that the ombudsman in Saskatoon for the province of Saskatchewan would deal with matters dealing with the Saskatchewan government and this was not so much related to that as it was to the NWT students who were there and our own Department of Education. The reason they asked me to go was because I was able to explain a lot of the difference between aboriginal languages and English which might cause problems for students, problems for people understanding each other. It was because of the background that I have in those particular languages that they wanted me to come and explain where some of the differences lie between the languages.

Instead, I sent them papers that I had written explaining some of those things and, as I've said, I've talked to them on the phone. But, I don't think the ombudsman in Saskatchewan would be an appropriate person to deal with that particular situation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. General comments, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

How do you deal with interpreters? In Fort Providence, for example, we have a court circuit that comes every other Thursday. I'm sure it's like that in every other community. How do you deal with the requirements for interpreters in that situation? Or, at the nursing station or with the RCMP?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

My role is simply to deal with complaints or inquiries about those sorts of situations. Our office does not organize any of the provision of services. That is up to the language bureau or the Department of Justice, court services. They call and arrange for interpreters for the court circuits. For the RCMP, if the GNWT interpreter was there and available, they would interpret for them. Certainly, they would for any

government department, if they were there and available. The RCMP being a federal institution, the GNWT doesn't necessarily have to provide services to them.

If the RCMP couldn't use the services of the GNWT interpreter or if any of the other government departments wanted the services of that interpreter and they were busy with another assignment, it is my opinion, as Languages Commissioner, that the territorial government has an obligation to make those services available. If they don't have a staff member to do that then they should be providing a contract interpreter.

I know most of the time that is arranged for, but there are some times when they can't find a contract interpreter either and sometimes some assignments or meetings have to be rescheduled because they couldn't find an interpreter. I tried to find interpreters for a meeting a couple of weeks ago for the South Slavey and I couldn't find any so we almost had to cancel the meeting because of that. We ended up resolving it in the end. It is a GNWT obligation, if it is a GNWT service to the public, that they must provide those services. But, it is not our office that makes those arrangements. We would deal with it if there was a complaint about it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

It certainly is pretty clear, then, that you are aware of where you do draw the line with regard to the areas for which you are responsible and of where you are not. You have just used the example of the RCMP being a federal agency and that you don't really have to do it.

Where do you draw the line with regard to other jurisdictions, then? I will use the example, within our own territory. You say the RCMP is a federal responsibility, but in Saskatchewan it is the Saskatchewan government. So how do you distinguish between where you draw your responsibilities or where they

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stop? It seems to me, in the Northwest Territories, federal agencies are not your responsibility. I would think that the same thing applied with regard to the Saskatchewan government.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

Part of my role as Languages Commissioner is the promotion of official languages, and one of the areas that I consider my responsibility within that promotion is to help people understand the needs, any problems that arise and any possible solutions.

Even for the RCMP, if they were to call our office, or if somebody complained to me about interpreting services not being available to the RCMP, I can tell them that it is not necessarily my jurisdiction, but I can offer them some solutions. That is basically what I was asked to do with regard to the Saskatchewan issue. For example, we have dealt with the RCMP, and we have provided them with some ideas on how to provide interpreting services.

I did receive one complaint particularly about an incident with the RCMP, and I was able to explain to the complainant that according to the NWT Official Languages Act, the RCMP didn't have obligations to provide service in aboriginal languages, as this one was dealing with an aboriginal language. But there were some other language rights or legal rights that they had under the Criminal Code, so I was able to explain those to them and provide some ideas for a solution.

So part of my role, I think, is to help people understand how they can solve some of their problems, even if it is an institution that is not obligated by our NWT Official Languages Act.

A lot of people call me for information about what the obligations are, what law the obligations arise from and how we can go about solving this problem, because a lot of other institutions don't have that kind of expertise.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. General comments. We are dealing with Tabled Document 11-12(5). Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

I know that your report itself doesn't specifically address the task force on aboriginal languages and the time frame on what should be established even within the RCMP and that. But I am just wondering

whether you look at this document and determine whether it fits within your mandate to pursue those timetables to ensure that whatever is required to be established should be? Would you consider that your responsibility since you did say that you do have a broad mandate, as you put it?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

The task force on aboriginal languages was a direct result of the GNWT signing the Official Languages Act in 1984. They immediately established the task force on aboriginal languages in order to determine what the priorities were for the public, and they did wide consultation across the NWT, so that document does represent the needs as they were expressed by people in the communities.

I do use that document quite a bit. I refer to it quite a bit. Some of the things that are in there have been implemented. Some of them are still in the process of gearing up. But I do make reference to it quite often.

I believe it was the Member for Deh Cho who asked in the last session or the session before for an update from GNWT on the implementation of the recommendations from the task force and also on the recommendations from the circumpolar conference on literacy. There was another aboriginal languages conference, as well. I believe that the Member asked for that, and I am not aware that there was an update provided other than a two-page update that was provided by the Government Leader some time ago. But I think it would be appropriate to ask them for an update, perhaps, on where some of those recommendations are and what implementation has taken place.

I am aware of some of them but the problem for me is that, because I am outside of government, I am not always aware of all the activities that are going on in every department. We try to keep on top of it as much as possible but we only have three staff in the office, and there are many departments, so we don't know exactly what is going on in every department and how many of those recommendations have actually been implemented until somebody brings a complaint situation to our attention and we look into it, or if I happen to notice something myself and I look into it.

But, as some of those recommendations were to take place within two, five or ten years, it is perhaps time to look at those recommendations and find out whether or not they have all been implemented. It is ten years now since that task force was done.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. General comments. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

In the report, you have touched on about 28 complaints. Maybe there are more, but you have done it on the basis of different sequences of complaints, but it looks like there are 28, anyway. Maybe there are more. I would like to ask you whether or not those complaints are mostly central complaints, meaning maybe Yellowknife and Iqaluit, or regional -- Fort Simpson, Fort Smith or maybe Inuvik -- or are the majority local complaints? Have you broken down the categories of complaints in order for this Assembly to determine whether...I have been making statements about this whole aboriginal languages thing being top heavy, but you could correct me and you could also prove it by the kind of statistics that you are keeping with regard to the complaints. Do you have any breakdown of the number of complaints that you have received and under what category?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

The report that is tabled here is now a year old. It only goes up to last March. In that time period -- I started in the beginning of February in 1992, so that was all of the 1992-93 fiscal year plus February and March of the year

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before that they were all together -- we opened 187 files. That means that 187 instances occurred where somebody either complained about a situation or asked for information.

Some of those files contained four, five or six different issues. Since that time, we have now decided to give them each a different file number so it is easier for us to keep track of, so of those 187 files, we had more than 250 complaints and inquiries.

In the annual report, in the chapter on complaints and inquiries, chapter five, you will see that it is broken down by general subject area of complaint, but there is a file number listed with each one of those complaints that are reported. You will see that some of them have only one file number. Some of them have up to 10 or 15 file numbers. That means that those 15 files all related to the same subject. So we reported them all together as generally this is what we did on that particular issue, and some of them come up again and again and again so it wasn't worth writing 15 different items with the same complaint.

We are now heading towards 450 files. I think it is 430 as of today, so it just shows the numbers of incidents that occur in our office where people call. They either ask for information, or they raise a complaint about a service not being available or they don't think their rights were upheld - those sorts of things. So we have to investigate all of those.

Sometimes we find that the complaint is not founded. Sometimes the person making the complaint is in error. They misunderstood something or they think something is not available, but they didn't ask the right person, that sort of thing. Some of them are resolved very quickly. Others we find require a specific interpretation of a section of the act and we have to spend quite a bit of time on some of those. Those are the complaints that are quite a bit lengthier in the report.

During the first year, 1992-93, when we were first setting up the office, we went through about three different systems of keeping track of all the complaints and inquiries, cross-referencing everything and tried to find a system that worked well. Finally, towards the end of that year, we found a system that we think is now working quite well. During the first year, we didn't enter all the data about which language or which community the complaints dealt with. But, I can tell you, just off the top of my head, that they come from everywhere. They're not just from Yellowknife, Iqaluit, or Inuvik. They are from all over the place.

This year, now that we've got the computer system set up, we'll go back and enter the language and the community that the complaints came from right from the beginning and for certainly all the new ones we've dealt with this year. We'll try to do it for all the ones before that. That way, we'll be able to provide statistics. I did say in this first annual report that we weren't able to provide statistics because we didn't have all the information put into the computer in the

first year. We had to experiment with a couple of different systems so by the time we wrote the annual report, we didn't have all that information compiled for 1992-93.

But, since that time -- as I have said, it is a year later now -- we do have all that in place now and we are able to provide some statistics. We have to calculate them now, based on the information we have in the computer. That will be in the 1993-94 report. I can just tell the Member that, yes, they do come from everywhere. They come from people in government offices, members of the public, native organizations, federal government institutions, universities, many, many different bodies. We try, as much as possible -- if it's not within our jurisdiction or if it is not something we have information about -- to help the person find a solution or find someone to help them resolve the situation or give them the information they need. I hope that answers the Member's question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

I guess it was before that, that I was looking at. You say that GNWT employees complained that they didn't know much about the guidelines for communication. You have numerous complaints that you don't have information on the Official Languages Act. There are native organizations complaining about one week of recognition of French but only one day for recognition of aboriginal languages. You have numerous GNWT complaints about the kind of courses that are offered in Arctic College. You also have complaints about the Secretary of State.

Since this was concluded in 1993, I would think a lot of it has to do with the delivery of programs and clarification. What are we looking at with regard to aboriginal people's complaints? Do you run into a situation where you don't understand an aboriginal person when they file a complaint in their own language or whatever the case? Those are the ones, the grassroots complaints, I'm more interested in. Out of 250 complaints, a lot of them must have been people in Yellowknife trying to get information or trying to clarify their own department's mandate with regard to official languages.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Chairman.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I just got a promotion.

---Laughter

Thank you. I would say that the complaints and inquiries that we deal with come from everywhere. I'm sorry I can't provide stats on exactly whether the complainant or the inquirer was an aboriginal person or not. We didn't take count of that. In the first year, I particularly made a point of trying to travel to some of the communities so that I could get in touch with people. People would approach me everywhere, as I did, even when I was in airports, or staying overnight in hotels or having lunch with people. I was constantly asking people what was going on in the communities and what were their major concerns.

So, I had a lot of contact with people at the grass roots level and some of the complaints came out of a visit to a community, just because it was the first year of the office and I wanted people to know that there was such an office. I actively sought out people to find out whether there were any complaints and to tell people that there was now a process for dealing with that. Sometimes, it involved sitting down with somebody that spoke another language, having lunch with

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them, and talking about things in their community. I did that quite a few times when I was travelling.

The phone also rings a lot. As I said, we are almost reaching 450 complaints and inquiries. We just calculated the other day that we had about 500 working days since the office opened. So, that's almost one a day, at least. Some days we get three or four or five and other days we don't get any, but then we're doing on the other ones. They come from all over. People stop me on the street. They write, they phone. We're getting them from all over. Quite a few of them do come from people who are trying to find out their rights and obligations under the act, that is true, but they come from all different communities. I wouldn't say that most of them just come from Yellowknife.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Well, I just can't see how you ever find the time to travel with all the complaints you get. One of the things that aboriginal languages have is syllabics. I can remember as a young person, my grandmother reading me stories in syllabics. Tom Sawyer was one of them. Now, in most of the western Arctic at least, terminology is done by roman orthography. I would like to ask how important are syllabics to you and whether you're doing anything to revitalize it or preserve it? I see you as one individual who is supposed to be the protector and to make sure that the aboriginal languages never, ever die. But I see syllabics in the western Arctic as being extinct. How are you dealing with this?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

It has been awhile since I read my first report, but in the complaints and inquiries chapter, I think there is some information there about complaints that were received that Dene languages material was translated into roman orthography rather than syllabics. When I received those complaints, I addressed them to the official languages unit and asked what was the government policy on using syllabics for Dene languages. It had been my understanding that the GNWT had discouraged the use of syllabics for a number of years. Being fairly familiar myself with the syllabic system -- I've even worked with Dene syllabics a little bit -- I realize that the existing system doesn't have a symbol for each sound that can be made in the language.

There was a lot of discussion about whether or not we should try to revise those old Dene syllabics so there would be a better system, so they would better represent the sounds of the language or whether we should try to get all people to use roman orthography, which was developed so there is one symbol for every sound. I wrote a letter to the official languages unit and we talked about it quite a bit. I made them aware of the fact that a lot of people, especially older people, want information translated into syllabics and not into roman orthography for Dene languages. The reply was that GNWT does not actually discourage the use of syllabics for Dene languages and if someone were to apply for funding under one of their community grants to do some work in Dene syllabics, they would consider it. They are not opposed to people using it, but it is not the system they are teaching in the schools because they feel it is not an adequate

system. As a linguist, from my point of view, the existing system is somewhat inadequate, although older people have used it for a long time to communicate with each other.

I had a number of complaints or inquiries about syllabics for Dene languages. We addressed it to the official languages unit. For those people who did make the requests, I informed them that if they wanted to make a request to Education, Culture and Employment for a community grant to do some work on Dene syllabics, they could do that.

I do receive a lot of complaints about the fact that there are many Dene translations done using roman orthography. People cannot read them. There are lots and lots of papers being produced, but no one can read them. So that is another thing I have mentioned in my recommendations. We really need to look at what our method of implementing these official languages is. Are we really meeting the need? From my perspective, I get a lot of complaints that there is too much time spent, by Dene translators, doing written material when people cannot read it. Many older people have told me if you are going to write it, then do it in syllabics so at least we can read it. But as far as I know, none of the Dene translators read and write in syllabics, at least not to the extent that they would be able to do translations in them. So that is an area I have brought to their attention. As I said, it is not my role to be able to take any of those actions to implement the program. I am not the government. All I can do is make the recommendations and push and encourage them to do that. But I am not the one who puts the program in place, it is up to the government to decide what they will do with that. It is something that is still an issue that needs to be addressed. Years ago, when I worked in Culture and Communications, I wrote a proposal for the then assistant deputy minister to do research on the Dene syllabics so we could at least document them and find how out many people read and write them. I was told at that time, there were some historical documents people had kept, for example, diaries that people have kept for many years and they are written in syllabics and nobody else can read them. It is important historical information and it would be really useful if we could translate them. The people who wrote them generally are unilingual, they are written in syllabics and very few other people can read them so it would be a lot of information that would be lost if the syllabics are not learned, at least to the extent where we can use those

resources and transliterate into roman orthography or put them onto tape.

So I support people using syllabics if that is the way they can communicate. The most important thing is that people can communicate. One of the things that bothers me when we talk about people who are literate in Dene languages and maybe ten per cent of the population -- it is hard to say right now -- who we don't include who are literate in syllabics. They are literate too, but in a different system. So when we are looking at Dene literacy, we should take a count of that as well. It is an issue that needs to be looked at more closely. As I said, there have been a few people who have contacted my office and said they would like to see materials in syllabics and I referred them to Education, Culture and Employment for the community grants available if they want to hire someone to do some translation or minutes of meetings using syllabics. That is about all I can do in my capacity. We don't have the funds for someone to do the research or to deliver the program and

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services. My job is to bring these situations to the attention of the government and to try to encourage them to take action to meet those demands.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

You keep referring to the official languages unit, whatever that means, but you are narrowing your broad interpretation with regard to what your responsibilities are. You said you refer some of the things you do to the government. What is the official languages unit you keep referring to?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I am really glad that you asked that question because I think there is a lot of misunderstanding about it with the public and even people in the government. My job, under the Official Languages Act, is to try to help resolve complaints or inquiries about the government. The official languages unit is in the Government Leader's office. We would have to ask exactly how many staff, there may be five, at the moment. I think

there are two permanent and a few that are funded under the Canada-NWT agreement. That unit is responsible for overseeing the implementation of official languages in each government department. They put together all of the funding proposals from each department to be submitted to previously the Secretary of State, now Canadian Heritage. They assemble all of those proposals and get back to the departments to ask them to justify their actions, et cetera. They put together the negotiating package and go to Canadian Heritage to do the negotiating. I have no part in any of that. My job is to see those services and obligations are carried out.

They also provide advice to departments on policies that they require for implementing the Official Languages Act. They oversee the spending of the money that has been received under Secretary of State agreements for the last ten years. Once it is received, then they oversee the spending of that. Those are the kinds of activities. It is a central unit that is in the Government Leader's office that is part of the government. It is their responsibility to make sure the obligations under the act are met.

My job is to act as the appeal court. If someone feels they are not being treated fairly or the government is not providing a service they are entitled to then they come to me and say, I went to this government department and I don't think they treated me fairly, can you help me. That is my job. We don't provide the services. We tell the government you are not meeting your obligation or we think you might be able to do something better here. So we try to help people resolve those problems and try to make suggestions even to government departments to say here is something you might want to try. But it is not our office that actually delivers the service. The services are delivered by GNWT and their institutions and our office is to resolve complaints that people have about those services or programs.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Mr. Chairman, we did hire the Official Languages Commissioner. We have much say in the direction that she should be taking. I think you should be able to ask us. We have a situation with regard to roman orthography and syllabics. I think we should have more money to look into syllabics as an alternative. If you told me that today, I would support it fully. I'm not

hearing it, though. I would have liked to have the whole question of syllabics in the western Arctic looked at. I'm requesting that. I want to see whether or not there is a possibility of having syllabics in the western Arctic preserved and even enhanced. I don't know whether I can make a recommendation suggesting that, but I certainly would like to see you looking into it.

The other thing is, according to the United Nations, they are suggesting that approximately 50 out of 53 aboriginal languages will die or disappear within the next ten years. I don't know whether you're an expert in that area or not, but what if those languages die? Perhaps you have an answer. If not, then I'll accept that, too. My big concern is that if out of 53 languages, we anticipate 50 of them will disappear, we should be concerned. People are not going away. It is not because all of a sudden one tribe has become extinct. It is because of outside pressures. Maybe you could enlighten me on why so many aboriginal languages are now disappearing?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner, I hope that question is in your scope of research.

**MS. HARNUM:**

This first annual report is probably much bigger than I expect to do again for an annual report. The first part of the report looks at a number of issues. One thing we wanted to do was provide statistics for those people who need it. Any information that we could provide that would definitely show people statistics that prove that these languages are disappearing. We gathered as much information as we could. Since this report came out, other people have come to us and asked if we know about other sources of information. We are glad to find those out. But, all of those sources of information confirm the same conclusion, aboriginal languages are dying.

The situation here in the territories is not a lot better. If you look at the statistics in chapter one, you'll see that the aboriginal languages, despite all our efforts, are still declining. Now, they're not declining as fast as they are in the rest of Canada. We've done some comparisons to show that, compared to the Canadian average for aboriginal languages, the territories is better off. But, the trend is towards a decline. We wanted to put that information in there so that people who needed that kind of statistical information to

convince them would say, all right, now there is some proof.

The other thing we included in there is some rationale about why we care. Why do we even bother? It is interesting, in the position I'm in, how many people come to me and ask why we are spending all this money on aboriginal languages and French, and why we don't just take the money and teach everyone to speak English to get rid of the problem. They see it as a problem. I have a big problem with that sort of attitude because I believe in human diversity. I think our world would be a terrible place if everybody was the same. I happen to believe in human beings being able to be different, one from the other, and language is only one of those many different

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aspects. I wholeheartedly support people trying to maintain whatever language it is they want to express themselves in because I think that's very important.

When you take a language away from somebody or away from a community, you take away a whole way of thinking. This is one of the things I talked a lot about in my presentation in Ottawa, which is why they asked me to go to Saskatoon to make the same sort of presentation. I have lots of examples to show from my own research where there are differences in the way people think. The language reflects that. Did they think differently in the first place and therefore, the language developed that way, or were they taught that language, and therefore they started to think in a different way? It is sort of a chicken and egg argument. It is hard to know which one came first.

The fact remains, people think differently and they behave differently in social contexts within their families and communities, based on the way that they think and the language they use. I wholeheartedly support people expressing themselves through whatever language they choose. Part of what we did in this report is to provide some rationale because I do, as I said, have many people coming to me saying, why not take all of that money and teach people to speak English and get rid of the problem. There are lots of countries, as we said in the report, where all the people speak English, but they are still fighting with each other, killing each other. So, I don't think getting rid of language differences is going to solve many problems.

I don't know if that's an answer to your question but those are the kinds of things we mention in the report



about why we're trying to preserve these languages and why we feel it is important and what happens when you lose all of these languages. I'm trying, at least to the best of my abilities, to do what I can to help change people's attitudes. That is one of the biggest things we have to do so that people feel positive about wanting to learn another language or wanting to maintain the languages we do have. That's why we wrote quite a bit in the first annual report about those sorts of things.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

I guess my whole language is part of aboriginal culture but it is also part of a nation. In order to consider yourself a nation, you've got to have your own language, culture and history. I think that's what aboriginal people hope can survive. I've always said that putting aboriginal traditions, customs and laws into the existing white laws takes it out of existence for the aboriginal people. What I see happening is that, more and more, we are putting ourselves into this big pot that is causing us to disappear. I'm sure you realize that. I don't know how to deal with it. You haven't really answered my question on the whys, but I see that as one of the whys for language disappearing. It is because we are legislating ourselves out of existence. I don't know whether or not other Members in this House realize it, but I certainly see it. It is right in front of me. It is happening and I'm partly to blame for being so blind and not recognizing it.

I would hope that in your next report, you will be able to say something more about the whys in more detail. My last question was referring to that, but I think you've touched on it a bit. One of the attitudes is why don't we just spend more money on English as opposed to aboriginal languages and get rid of the problem. In your study, the survey of the policy section of GNWT departments, you indicated that there is a lack of awareness about official languages and that the GNWT has to do some work to develop an awareness and support a framework for the initiative. I ask, how would you propose that the GNWT go about increasing this awareness surrounding the official languages, or do we still have an attitude out there, even in the public service, that it is really an I don't care attitude and it is your problem, you deal with it sort of thing?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

One of the studies that you referred to in the annual report -- actually, we did two studies with employees.

One was where we contacted the policy sections of each department and asked them what policies they had in place for implementing the Official Languages Act. This was done almost immediately after I started my job. It was shortly after that we received our direction from GNWT that we weren't allowed to talk to the employees, so then we had to direct everything through the deputy ministers, but we managed to slip this one by before this change in policy came about.

We talked to people in the policy sections and we said, are you aware of the Official Languages Act, do you know that it exists, do you know what provisions affect your department and do you have any policies for implementing it?

In talking to all of those people - the report is in chapter six in the special studies report - it showed that some people cared a lot, some people didn't care at all and a lot of people were confused. Maybe they had heard that there was an Official Languages Act, but they weren't sure what was in there. They weren't exactly sure what their own obligations were as employees. Most of them said they don't have policies within their department for the implementation. So one of the things that we have pushed really hard for within government departments is to say, what are the policies within the department for implementing the Official Languages Act? So we have followed up that way, and by doing that policy section survey, we sort of brought the Official Languages Act to the attention of all of those policy sections.

The other thing that we did was that we sent out 5,000 questionnaires to government employees asking them, did they know that there was an Official Languages Act and did they know what obligations there were, what were the official languages of the NWT and that sort of thing, and the report of that study, again, is in chapter six.

We found again that a lot of people said they had some awareness but they were not really specifically aware of what that means for me in my job. Does this document have to be translated into eight official

languages, or what is this about 11 languages; I thought we had eight? But I say, no, there are 11. We have eight, but don't forget Inuvialuktun, Innuinaqtun and Slavey comes in at least two versions, so we have 11. People are still not really clear on exactly what it means. How do we get information out to the public? How do we manage in an

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office where we have got one or two staff in the region but we have got four languages spoken in this community? How do we deal with that? There are still a lot of things that employees have questions about and the public has questions about, so by sending out 5,000 questionnaires to government employees, we made them start thinking about the Official Languages Act.

So that was part of our public information for employees within the government, and then outside of the government, we have done lots of things on radio and lots of interviews on radio. We now have a major public information campaign going on. All of the rights that are in the Official Languages Act have now been translated in three radio spots in every official language, 11 languages, and they will be playing on the radio for this next month because it is Aboriginal Languages Month and French Week from the 20 to the 26. So all the rights that people have under the Official Languages Act are now going to be on the radio in every community in the territories to let people know what their rights are under the act.

We are sending out information packages to all of the schools. I think all of the MLAs received them. If you haven't received it yet, it is in your mail.

So we have done a lot to try and get people to think about the fact that there is an Official Languages Act and to start asking questions. What does that mean? What does that mean for me as an employee and what does that mean for me as a member of the public?

So we do get a lot of people calling because of that public information that we are sending out. They will call back and say, what exactly is this all about or do I have a right to this or that, so then we explain in more detail to people.

So that is basically what we have done to try and inform people about the Official Languages Act.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. General comments. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

You touched on a nerve of the government and they probably don't appreciate the kind of response you are giving, mainly because it has a lot to do with government and aboriginal people. But I appreciate your response and your openness to it.

I guess I would have to say, in conclusion, that basically the reason the aboriginal languages are at such a weak point in their history is because of the attitudes. A lot of it has to do with attitude. I don't even know if the government is the right body to be delivering that program, in the first place.

The other thing is that you did mention in chapter five that there were 250 complaints. I saw you in Fort Norman when you were there. Am I part of that 250? Am I one of the 250 complainants, or was it more of a consultation, because I did talk to you. I don't know whether you classified me as complaining or maybe you were just talking with me, consulting. I don't know how much of this is consultation and how much of it is actual complaints.

Yes, I do have copies of the stuff with regard to the month of March being designated as Aboriginal Languages Month. You have come up with this thing. I also got your postcard, too.

The last time that you appeared, it seemed to me that you were broke, and I am just wondering, did you refer this to the official languages unit to get extra money to develop these? How did you manage this?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Madam Languages Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I think if you understood that we were broke at the time that I last appeared, that must have been a misunderstanding. We are still within our budget and we have a few dollars left. It is very difficult at this point of the year to figure out whether you have \$1,000 or \$2,000 left, because some bills haven't come in.

But we got a good deal, shall I say, on the postcards. It was something that we had to do. We felt that it

was really important that we do some public information, and it is part of our budget to do that, to actually make some sort of information items that help people think about official languages. So these were not an expensive item. As you can see, they are not big and glossy, so we were able to get quite a few of them done.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

(Microphone turned off)

**MS. HARNUM:**

Yes, they are colourful. Our logo is about the only colour there.

So it is part of our mandate to do that kind of promotion, and we have it within our budget to do that.

No, we weren't broke the last time that I came to speak. We are barely within our budget but we are juggling it and I think we will still come out either a few dollars over or a few dollars under.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

I don't have any questions. I just wanted to conclude by saying that as an aboriginal person I do have grave concerns about my own language as well as the other ten languages in the Northwest Territories that are under assault. I feel that we have to do more. I also feel that maybe it's time we looked at whether the government delivering that program is really the best solution to preserving our own languages.

The other thing is with regard to syllabics. I still have an interest in that area. I would still like to see it survive and be

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encouraged so that people might even be...I know Helen told me all her scores in that area, too, but maybe she could travel to other communities to do that sort of thing. I'm always interested in that area but I don't want to see ten years from now that aboriginal languages are just a memory. I'm afraid they will be if we continue. I totally agree with you when you say that all aboriginal languages are on the decline. In the north it's at a slower pace but it's still

declining. You, as the Languages Commissioner, should seriously look at whether we're doing justice by providing that program or whether we should allow the aboriginal people to take that responsibility to ensure that the languages are preserved.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Any further general comments on the Languages Commissioner's report from the committee? I guess it's everyone's responsibility to try and ensure the survival of the languages. As a legislature, I think we should try to use the languages in the House at every opportunity but we tend to forget to use our own language in the House. I'm one of those guilty ones. I remember when I was campaigning one of the things I said I would like to do was to ensure that the language of the native people - Inuktitut language -- that I would enhance it in the House but I don't use it most of the time. Any other general comments from the floor? Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

Thank you. One of the observations that I want to make with regard to the comments today are the general type of responses we're getting with regard to questions. In the work that the Languages Commissioner does, a lot of it would be in the area of administration and dealing with specific complaints, issues and incidents that arise in the course of the work. I'm concerned about the kind of comments that have prevailed this afternoon about how lots of people are saying this, lots of people are saying that, lots of people were calling, we're running into a lot of people at airports, we did a survey of government staff, a few thousand and a lot of them said this, a lot of them said that. It seems to me, if there are comments being made by the public then they should all be documented and there should be some substance to it because either there's substance to it or there isn't.

All of us know we're in the business of testing public opinions. It's an observation, I am making, of how fragile it is to say, everybody I talk to is saying this. You know, at some time or other somebody is going to ask you to substantiate that. What is the motivation behind saying these things? If there is some motive for it then surely there's some need to substantiate it. I'm concerned because for the last hour or so I was listening to Mr. Gargan questioning the Commissioner and the responses are riddled with generalities and yet, for instance, you're trying your best to summarize what you thought resulted from the survey of thousands of civil servants and government workers.

You make no reference to how you break down the survey. Almost frivolously you say well, lots of people said this and that and I was just wondering about the necessity for it.

The other comment I had and it's one that is a concern to myself and perhaps to other Members...I would think it is because the questioning in the appearance you had in the committee of the whole was regarding your travel and I think the appearance you had before that as well. Which is fine but I know that a Minister recently resigned or left office as a result of his responses to enquiries about his travel and how clear, straightforward his responses were to questions. Just recently, another Minister was asked to account for his travel, very specifically, on a recent international trip. I wonder whether the Commissioner had reviewed Hansard from the last time she was in the House? Did she look at the responses you gave at that time and whether you thought the responses you gave at that time were okay and the way you rationalized your decisions needed any further clarification? I ask that because it's a question of judgement here and we've been going on that for quite some time because of the question of accountability. You're not accountable to anybody specifically but you're accountable to everybody in particular. It's a curious situation to be in, to say the least but I would say, first of all, that we should go on the assumption that you are no less accountable than Ministers for decisions you make. I was concerned about the judgement call you make in making decisions. For instance, you accepted an invitation to speak at a function. I don't know how long that invitation was held in good standing or what the rationale was for accepting the invitation in the first place. Then it appears you accepted another invitation to speak at a university function later on shorter notice. I don't know how much notice you had, if it was a matter of a few hours or a few days. The question of judgement comes in. I am wondering why so late in the life of this invitation, you would choose to suddenly cancel it and defended the decision here saying it wasn't important. It really had nothing to do with aboriginal languages. What was the reason you accepted the invitation in the first place? What was the basis on which you accept or reject invitations to speak? I suppose people give some status to the office you hold. I don't know what it does to people to wonder whether to invite you any more to functions if they don't know whether you are going to honour the invitations or belittle them later if you find it inconvenient to fulfil them.

I know in one instance there was a reference that it was a long weekend and it is personal time. Again, that was a long-standing commitment. I must wonder why on a Thursday or Friday you would suddenly decide you don't want to do it any more because it is cutting into family time. What is the criteria to accept or reject invitations? Was it really the conflict it appeared to hold at the time in you trying to respond to what you thought was a rather more relevant issue at a university campus? I accepted that when you were speaking about it last time, except later you went on to say the urgent situation was with a student. Then you said when the invitation to speak at the university was cancelled, you decided not to go. It was two different things. At least it was jumping out at me, out of the Hansard. If it was so urgent, I think Mr. Gargan asked, why wasn't it urgent enough to finish it, especially if you also cancelled the speaking engagement you held here in Yellowknife? I notice no one is complaining about it from the Francophone community, that you decided that the invitation wasn't very important. Maybe they share your point of view, I don't know. It is still a question of credibility of the invitations you accept or reject. I don't know whether the reason you cancelled the invitation was because you decided it was frivolous and it wasn't worth coming back to Yellowknife for, since no one, including yourself, thought it was important and because you didn't want to commit your weekend time to this type of appointment and you had personal plans you wanted to do instead. Those are the things I am not clear about. As I say, we are all asked to be accountable in this House about

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the things we do and the answers we give. So that is the first comment I have and you can respond to them if you want or you can ignore them. I am not sure other Members in this House share my view. When we are trying to answer questions, there is some commitment, especially if we have specific responsibilities, to give some substance to the answers we give. I didn't find that in the responses you have given to Mr. Gargan.

Secondly, there is the question of other points of accountability. There are questions about your accounting for your reasons for travel and cancellation of commitments in the last appearance you had in this House. That was a question of judgement in my mind. I am a little bit uncomfortable with this. By everyone's admission, including ours, yours has been a job that has required a tremendous amount of judgement simply because it was an

operation to set up a very new function that none of us have any experience in and we are still feeling our way around. The issue of judgement has to be unquestionable. I find that it is falling short of the mark on that. So if the Commissioner wants to respond she can, if she doesn't, that is fine.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Madam Commissioner, would you like to respond?

**MS. HARNUM:**

I would like to thank the Minister for his comments. Your first remarks were suggesting that we didn't back up a lot of the general statements that we tend to make about things we find out from the public. I invite you to look at chapter six where there are statistics. These are all the replies to the employees' survey where we received 1,305 surveys. They are all calculated and entered into the computer. Anyone is welcome to look at those stats in the computer. There are no names attached to them. All of the original questionnaires are stored in boxes and we didn't ask for people to put names on them either, so it doesn't reveal any confidential information. But all of those statistics are in the computer and they are all analyzed in chapter six. So the general comments that I am making are not just general impressions that I have gained, they are statistically backed up.

The same is true with the comments about aboriginal languages declining. Those are all backed up by the statistical analysis we did in chapter one. They are not just general comments and they are not just a feeling that I have. These are actually things we have been able to research, document and put into numbers as much as possible.

As far as complaints and inquiries, in chapter five, for each one of them I can be held accountable. The file number is right there. I cannot give you the name. The act says I cannot reveal confidential information that comes to my attention. So I cannot tell you who the person was that gave me that complaint, so we replaced their name with a file number. All of the file numbers are right there. If any of the MLAs are interested in coming to the office to see that we have those files, they can. I cannot allow them to look into those files, but they can see that those things exist. We cannot let people look at the names on the files because I am bound by the act not to reveal those confidential details.

I don't think I have anything personal to gain from the comments I make. Why would I say that aboriginal languages are dying or declining? What personal gain could I get from that? What personal gain can I get from the fact that I report that 85 per cent of the respondents to our employee questionnaires said they want language training? What personal gain can I get from that?

I'm simply a spokesperson for all these people who are providing this information to our office. We pass it on to the government in this report and in the form of correspondence and discussions we have with them on an ongoing basis. This is available to the public too, so they can use this information to back up the things they think or feel or help them change their opinions about things if they think there is nothing that proves this or that. We tried to break down, as much as we could, information we received so we could show the actual instances of people saying these things. The actual number of employees who reported this and that.

That's why we put 11 months of work into this report because we analyzed all the files we have in our office, everything we have in the computer. So, if I did make general comments, it was simply because I wasn't flipping the pages in the book to look for specific numbers, but they are there. I'm not sure if I could provide any further information to back up any of the general comments I made, but I think that maybe most of what is required is actually there in the report because the numbers are reported wherever we could report them.

With regard to my judgement in this position, it is true, this was a totally new position. Nobody has ever been an ombudsman in the territories before. I was given the job of trying to find out what this position is, and what it should be. In order to do that, I consulted with a lot of other people who have had similar roles and I've used the advice that they've given to me to make judgements. I've used advice from various Members. A couple of Members have talked to me about things they think I should concentrate on or directions I should take. I appreciate that very much.

But, the other thing that you'll notice I asked for in my first recommendation is that there be a standing committee on official languages so that this problem of accountability can be addressed on a regular basis. This is so that I do have some feedback from Members on a regular basis and so that they can provide some direction to us and so that we can keep the legislature informed, as well, about the issues

we're dealing with, if our office is running into some problems.

I think it's a really difficult thing right now. This is the first report of a Official Languages Commissioner or of an ombudsman to this legislature and you'll have to expect that it is going to be critical. It's not all critical, there is some good stuff in there, too. But, it is my job, under the act, to deal with

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complaints, to take all actions and measures within my authority to resolve complaints. That means that my position was set up so that I would deal with those things and bring them to the attention of the government.

When I make a judgement call, for example about this particular travel incident, I was asked not to speak about official languages but to speak using one official language, which I happen to know. The speech I was making was not about official languages. I asked if I could even speak about them, to say we have an Official Languages Act here with eight official languages, and that sort of thing, and I was told, no, they would prepare the speech and I could just read it in French. I had accepted that invitation, begrudgingly. I said, no, at first a couple of times and finally said, yes, because they didn't have somebody else to do it. When they accepted it, it was simply to read the speech in French. I still haven't even seen it. I never saw the speech I was supposed to read so I don't even know about the content, but it wasn't about official languages, it wasn't on their agenda.

When I was asked to deal with a situation that, in my mind, dealt with a problem that involved languages and NWT languages, I felt that if I could contribute anything to that situation -- and they indicated to me that it was quite urgent and they set the date -- I said yes. I think that's more important than reading a speech in French that doesn't deal with official languages. Other than the fact that I speak another official language, I wasn't doing any promotion or explaining to people about the official languages or that sort of thing.

When I was asked to deal with a problem situation, to me that was a higher priority and that's why I made the judgement I made at that point. To me, if I get a complaint, I have to deal with them as quickly as possible. Sometimes, I don't know what the complaints are until I have a chance to investigate them, so I have to deal with them as quickly as I can.

That's why I made the decision I did at that particular time. I don't know if there is any other information I can provide to the Minister, or if that answers his question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:**

The Commissioner was responding to my first observation or first area of concern which was simply on the nature or wording of her response to questions. My point was simply that if you are in fact the languages auditor for this government, then even in your oral responses, you should try to be precise and substantive in your responses. You tell us that it is all in the document and that the statistics are all in the document. That's not good enough, is the point I was trying to make. If you've done substantive research and you've got substantive information to back up the comments you make, then I, at least, do not want to accept comments like a lot of people said this to me at airports and a lot of people said this in response to a survey, those sorts of comments. That's the point I was making.

I should tell you that I always thought the report would be critical. It has to be. That it is, doesn't phase me one bit. I have no judgement call on the report, itself, either as an MLA or as a Minister. The job is, much as you say, as an auditor. You call it as it is and there is a call to be as specific and clear as possible, so Members know exactly the nature of the situation as you describe it. I don't want you to feel that my comments have anything to do with the fact that it is critical. That has nothing to do with it. I understand what you said in the beginning and the last time you appeared, it is all confidential and there is a need to remain confidential. I wasn't asking for specific names, I was just suggesting even when you do surveys and work that is confidential, there is some way to give substance to the comments you make. That is what I was asking for.

On the last point about the responses to Mr. Gargan's questions last time around regarding your travel and the cancellation of invitations, your responses remain largely unchanged since the last time you were here. My concern is still the same. What sort of judgement do you exercise where you end up in a situation where you have held an invitation in good standing, in your mind, if you were going to say then it has to be a definite no, you cannot give a begrudging yes and

then flip it into a no later on. It is compounded by the fact, in this case, that you blew it on both occasions. You gave up your invitation in order to deal with an urgent situation in your mind in another part of the country, only to find when you turned down this invitation, the other one was withdrawn from you as well, leaving you in Edmonton with nothing to do except make personal plans for the weekend. I find it as a very bad example of judgement. I don't know if you own up to it, other Members share that as well or if that is acceptable. I am just drawing attention to the fact that I have a concern about it. Maybe some of us are less accountable than others, but I don't buy it. We are all paid by the public and accountable to the public, in some form or other. I don't know why we cannot just get the real reasons behind the decisions that were being formulated that week. It is a messy sort of a situation that resulted in no happy endings for anyone. Those are the only comments I have, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Madam Commissioner, would you like to respond to the comments made by the Minister?

**MS. HARNUM:**

I don't know what else I can say except that when I did cancel that invitation, it was very unusual. I don't make a habit of doing that. I don't know if there are any other invitations that I have cancelled and that one was the exception to the rule. If I made a judgement error at that point, then I apologize to everyone who was involved. I thought at that time, given the facts before me, that I was dealing with the

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more urgent situation and that was what I felt I should do at that point. But I don't make a habit of cancelling engagements that I have agreed to attend. Maybe I did make a judgement error at that time. I apologize if I did. I have already apologized to those people who were involved. I don't know what else I can say about it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

I have Mr. Nerysoo on my list.

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted some clarification. I know my colleagues, Mr. Patterson and

Mr. Ballantyne, when we were first dealing with the matter of the Official Languages Commissioner, it was always our expectation, and one of the reasons we had a difficult time in trying to locate the Official Languages Commissioner, was that of the Official Languages Commissioner being quasi judicial. In other words, being able to make judicial rulings. I have read the report and I have been criticized in some ways for raising some concerns and speaking to the issue. But I really want to ask you what judicial rulings have you made this year in terms of the application of the Official Languages Act? Have you made any?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

If the Member is referring to judicial decisions, meaning have we had any court rulings about the Official Languages Act, no we haven't. We hope that we would never have to go to court to get a court ruling or a judicial decision. I have made a number of decisions myself in a quasi judicial capacity where I have felt there were certain obligations of GNWT or programs and services that were not adequate. Those have all been brought to the attention of departments.

You can see in the complaints and inquiries chapter, chapter five, all of the things that were brought to the attention of government departments. Some of them were resolved very quickly with the department as soon as we brought it to their attention. Others we had to spend a few months working on and in one case, over a year, in doing legal research to find out whether or not there was a violation of the Official Languages Act or any other act or regulation related to the status and use of official languages. Where we think there is any breach or action that doesn't meet the spirit and intent of the act, which is to preserve, promote, develop and enhance all of these languages, then we point it out to government departments. So I have made quasi judicial decisions in all of those cases to bring them to the attention of the department, so the department can take some action to resolve them. I think we have had good cooperation from a lot of the departments, from every department actually. Because our office was involved in quite a few cases, we managed to find a solution.

There are a few issues, maybe three or four, that are more serious that we are looking at where there may

be a violation of the act or some other act or regulation. We don't jump to that conclusion hastily. All of those have been documented. They have all been addressed to the territorial government. So those are the kind of things that if, with my legal counsel and after a lot of research, we decided there is a breach of the act, we would bring it to the attention of the government right away.

There was one case where we did this year. That issue is still outstanding. It is back in my ball park now and I have to decide what I should do about it. As far as judicial decisions, in my capacity, I make a decision quite often with legal counsel. Is this a violation of the act or of any other act or regulation relating to the status and use of official languages? Quite often we find that it's not, per se, a violation but it's not really in keeping with the spirit and intent. Then we'll encourage the department to do something to deal with the situation. Those are the kinds of decisions that I've made in my capacity. I would decide, if someone brings a complaint to me, whether to proceed or whether I should investigate at all. Those are the kinds of decisions that I've made.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Nerysoo.

**MR. NERYSOO:**

Thank you. Maybe that's the problem, I think, because I don't think the Commissioner really understands the whole interpretation given to quasi-judicial. I would like to know what hearings and what proceedings where representatives both for legal counsel from the government or legal counsel from the complainant, appeared before the individual or for that matter had representation to, in fact, have a hearing. When did that happen?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Madam Languages Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I don't have any authority under the Official Languages Act to hold hearings. My legal counsel has said that there are no specific provisions in there. Also, I discussed that with the Department of Justice, with the former deputy minister, and he said that when the act was drafted they felt that in this jurisdiction those provisions which do exist in the federal Official Languages Act were not adopted into our Official Languages Act because they did not feel

that they would be required here. They thought because we were a much smaller jurisdiction we would be able to mediate solutions rather than going to a public hearing.

We have had a number of meetings with deputy ministers where I've have had my legal counsel advise me, they've had their legal counsel advise me, and then I met with the deputy minister and we discussed those legal opinions from our point of view. We go back to our own legal counsel again after the discussions and these are ongoing all the time. Those are the kinds of hearings that I have with deputy ministers. I don't have public hearings because that's one of the things, actually, that's in my report. I'm asking this legislature what is that authority? It says for me to take all actions and measures within my authority, but the authority and the actions and measures that are within that authority are not specified in the act. I have some differences of opinion about what exactly those actions should be.

In the federal act, as I said, there are specific provisions that say that the Languages Commissioner has the authority to hold public hearings, to subpoena witnesses and to demand documents. With the GNWT, I can't even talk to employees, I can't go into a government office and I can't demand any document. Many times I've been told I can't have documents. Those roads are blocked. I haven't tried the road of trying to have a public hearing, but I have met on a regular basis with deputy ministers and with the official languages unit to bring all

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of these things to their attention. Those are the quasi-judicial hearings that I have. They are with the deputy minister with my legal advice, his legal advice, or her legal advice. Then we resolve it at that level.

I would prefer that we be able to mediate solutions on a smaller basis like that rather than get into the expense of full-blown hearings. The dynamics that can play out if I were to have public hearings and subpoena witnesses and demand documents...I don't want to see those sort of dynamics have to be resorted to. I would like to be able to continue the kind of dialogue that we have where we can sit down with the deputy ministers, both of us have legal counsel either there or we've already consulted them before we meet, and then we discuss the issues. I prefer that informal method of resolution of conflicts and it was my understanding, in talking to the former



deputy minister, that that was the intention of the act. That's the way I've tried to implement it in my capacity.

I did ask the Legislative Assembly in one of my recommendations to clarify what that authority means. Does it include holding public hearings, subpoenaing witnesses, demanding documents, entering government offices? That's what the federal Languages Commissioner does, that's what other ombudsmen do. It's in their acts. Our act is silent in that regard and it has caused me some problems. It will continue to cause problems for whoever is in this position until those things are clarified.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Minister Nerysoo.

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm raising these questions as a Member of the Assembly. For clarification, so there's no confusion, no judgements have been made other than the comments of individual decisions and while you've received legal advice; there's been no, what you might say, challenge to that legal advice. No one has been allowed to challenge the advice you have been given. Therefore, no one has been able to question the advice that you have been given. The role, in my view, you've taken it from what I would have thought it would have been and that is quasi-judicial, to that of basically an administrative management ombudsman. In other words, just a position of someone who tries to resolve and mediate problems. Is that really what you're saying?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Madam Languages Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

Yes, I have to say that I see the role of an ombudsman as basically a mediator to help parties come to an agreement. They mediate solutions, they don't impose solutions unless...If my legal counsel suggests that there is a breach of an act then I have to say to the government there is and if they say there isn't and we cannot come to an agreement and a solution that works for the complainant, then I have the obligation or the right, the duty, under the act to take the government to court. I would hope that we would never have to do that.

As far as challenging the legal advice that I receive, I always bring my point of view, based on my legal counsel, to those discussions with the deputy ministers who bring their advice from their legal counsels to those discussions. Therefore, we are constantly challenging each other back and forth. Letters are written about the information and our points of view, our legal opinions on this and that, back and forth and it all goes to the official languages unit. Yes, there has been that avenue of challenge to the opinions that I've received and likewise for GNWT to say this is how we interpret it and when they respond to me then I say well, I don't see it that way based on my legal advice and this is what I would suggest. I don't see the role of an ombudsman as a heavy hand. That is a last resort.

In talking with other ombudsmen at the National Ombudsman Conference in Toronto in November, where there were ombudsmen from all over the country and also from other countries, they have said even the federal Languages Commissioner's office which has existed for 25 years, they very, very, very rarely ever go to court. The federal Languages Commissioner's office has gone to court maybe five times in 25 years. It's the very last resort if you cannot work out a solution. I don't want this role to be that. I see it as trying to be the mediator who tries to help the parties come to an agreement. If we cannot come to an agreement, if appropriate action isn't taken, it says in the act I can then go to court. I don't want to use that as the method of coming to an agreement. I think it would be costly and it would cause what I would think would be like a backlash against the implementation of official languages. It's not my role to try and get people to be defensive about trying to implement it or to make people feel that I'm forcing it on anybody. My role is to try and get people to understand why we're doing this and how we possibly can do this reasonably, given the dollars and the manpower that we have, to try and get people to come to some reasonable solution, without spending a fortune to go to court or hold public hearings that would cost a lot of money and may, in the end, not resolve things any better than some informal approach might have done. I prefer that avenue and I think, just in talking to other ombudsman from around the country -- not just from Canada, but from other jurisdictions -- that is the way an ombudsman is meant to operate. I've adopted that practice.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Minister Nerysoo.

**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Well, the job has been done very differently than what had originally been perceived. The problem I have with the comments you are making is that, at some time, you have to make the decision between the two legal arguments. It is not simply a matter of you giving a legal opinion and saying, you believe in the researcher. You have to make the judgement about what has been presented to you, either from the government or from an individual who is laying a complaint, and your legal advisor. Then you should make a decision based on it.

My concern with your response is that you're listening only to those people who have given you legal advice in your office. I would really be careful about that. Well, I'm going to ask you the question, then. When have you disagreed with legal arguments? You are shaking your head, saying no. When have you disagreed with the lawyers providing advice to you on the matter of the interpretation of the law? When have you told them and written to them, advising them that their interpretation of the law is not according to what your interpretation is?

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I feel some obligation here that I can't breach confidentiality about things I talk to my lawyer about and the advice they give me. However, I have on a number of occasions, when they have given me an opinion, gone back to them and said I was not sure I was satisfied with their opinion and that they should do some more work on it. Or, I've taken that opinion - as I've said -- and sat down with the deputy Minister and have said, from my point of view, and with my legal advice up to this point with the work we've done, this is how I see the interpretation of the act.

Sometimes the deputy minister has come back to me and said, we don't see it that way. This is the way we understand it. Then, I'll go back with that to my legal counsel and we'll look further into it. They may raise some other issues and we'll research those again. So, there's this play back and forth. But, I have, a number of times gone back to my legal counsel and said this is a preliminary opinion, now go further into this and look at this angle or this angle. I might say

this department raised this point of view, based on their legal advice, let us consider that. There is dialogue back and forth between myself and my legal counsel and the deputy ministers and their legal counsel constantly. We trade opinions and determine that if we look at it one way, it comes out with this conclusion and if we look at it another way, it comes out with another conclusion.

In doing that, we learn from their advice and they learn from our advice and the end result is that we can, hopefully, come to some reasonable solution. There is one matter that is pending -- as I said -- where I feel, from my legal advice, that there is a breach of an act dealing with official languages. I have gone back to the Department of Justice a number of times with this. It has been going on for about a year and a half, back and forth. The last advice they gave was they think there may be an error in the act, so I'm going back to them again saying, if there's an error in the act, what are you going to do about it? There's that give and take all the time. So, as far as challenging the opinions that I'm receiving in my office, I think we do that constantly.

I don't simply say, this is the advice of my legal counsel and your legal counsel says differently and I'm going to take you to court to see who's right. That's not what we're trying to do. But, I have, as I said, gone back to my own legal counsel a number of times and said that I think there is more to look at in particular instances. I have said to look at it from other angles, consider the GNWT point of view and we're doing that all the time, back and forth.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments on the Languages Commissioner's report. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Maybe just to follow up a bit on Mr. Nerysoo's questions. Under the act, section 34 refers to any kind of disclosure with regard to client confidentiality. It doesn't refer to the actions you take. I don't know whether this is the legal opinion you got, but I see this as a situation where a complaint has been made and the section where the individual is involved is eliminated but the context of the complaint shouldn't be confidential.

You said that you couldn't discuss it because of confidentiality but do you see this as the

interpretation? You don't expose an individual's name, but it certainly doesn't stop you from exposing the contents of the complaint, right? Am I correct?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Madam Languages Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

In chapter five of the first annual report, we reported all of the complaints and inquiries that we had completely resolved. They are finished. We are not in the process of dealing with those any more and those are the ones I report each year, the ones that are complete because the other ones are still under investigation. We don't know whether they're actually valid yet or not. We don't know whether there's any violation. We don't know if we have all of the information and we're still looking into them, so I can't really report them.

But, for each one of those, the details are there. I think we wrote enough detail without going into so much detail that we would just bore everybody with every single step we took. It is volumes, every single step we've taken on every complaint and inquiry. But, there, we've revealed the details of the complaints and inquiries that we do get and we generalize them in such a way that sometimes two or three specific complaints will fit together under one particular subject area. So, we've put together some of the specific details there.

Normally, when I'm dealing with a complaint, I don't reveal the identify of the person who has made the complaint to me. I think that's one of the things that's really important about our office. However, there are a few times where we have had to because it was very specific. We had to make reference to a specific document that was used in court, of a specific person's job that was going to be moved or rumoured to be moved. Then, we had to look specifically at an individual. Those become much more delicate cases to deal with. It is better if I can deal with it and not reveal the identity of the complainant but there are a few times when I have to do that in dealing with the department, in order to rectify the situation. I only do that with the consent of the individual. They know I'm going to be discussing their particular case with the department.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Just one final point and, again, it is with regard to a letter I wrote to you. I'm not going to keep this confidential. I would like to read it anyway, for the record, and it is with regard, again, to your invitation to speak with the law faculty of the University of Saskatchewan.

The letter goes on to refer to the section of Official Languages Act, which you referred to, which provides that you cannot disclose information that comes to your knowledge in the performance of your duties and function.

I also went on to say that I have some difficulty, and this is where - again, I had legal advice, so this was done on the basis of advice from a lawyer - I had asked you a question, and today is the 16, too, one month later, because I have some difficulty with this explanation and would ask, what duty or function were you performing at the relevant time, given that our Official Languages Act cannot purport to bind the province

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of Saskatchewan or the University of Saskatchewan? Since you keep referring to lawyers giving you advice, why is it that you haven't responded to my particular letter?

Not only that, but have you, in fact, sought legal advice as to whether or not you really have jurisdiction to go into those areas such as Saskatoon?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Madam Languages Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

With regard to the letter I received from the honourable Member just before the last appearance, I believed that when I appeared in the Assembly last time that I answered the same questions that were in the letter. So, if the Member would like a written reply, I can provide that, but I thought that I had answered those same questions when I appeared before. That is why I didn't send a written reply.

It does say, "To take all actions and measures within the authority of the Languages Commissioner with a view to ensuring recognition of the rights, status and privileges of each of the official languages and compliance with the spirit and intent of this act in the

administration of the affairs of government institutions, including any of their activities relating to the advancement of aboriginal languages." So I felt that in this case it was my role to assist in advancing an understanding about aboriginal languages in this particular case as this university, because it has an agreement with the GNWT Department of Education because we don't have university education here, therefore, these students are there as NWT students, is almost as an extension of our own education system. If I could play a role in promoting an understanding about languages there, then I felt that this was a role that I should play and that I should at least try to make a contribution to that particular situation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Gargan and Mr. Patterson. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Yes, Mr. Chairman, without violating the confidentiality of the individual, what section of the act has been violated that you felt that you should go to Saskatoon to address it?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Languages Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

There is no particular section that I would point to and say, this is a violation of this particular section. What I also deal with are inquiries for information, and, in this case, it was information that would help students from the NWT to perhaps perform better, or whatever, in a particular setting where they were being dealt with by an outside institution who didn't understand the situation. They were asking for my advice. Is there anything that we can do to improve this particular situation?

So, in that capacity, it was not necessarily a complaint that there was a breach of an act, except maybe you could say, students who speak all official languages should have equal opportunity for education in all government institutions, equality in all the government institutions. Just because you speak another official language as your first language doesn't mean that you should be put at a disadvantage. If there is another institution that is having a difficult time understanding what that disadvantage might be and they ask me to try to explain, then I feel that it is part

of my role to do that, just as a matter of promotion for understanding to help people understand the situation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

General comments. Mr. Patterson. (Microphone turned off)

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

(Microphone turned off)

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Mr. Gargan, go ahead.

**MR. GARGAN:**

...in Edmonton. Mr. Chairman, I have students who go to school in Edmonton. I have students who go to school in Saskatoon, too. I deal with them all the time through the phones, and I was always able, by talking with them and talking with the appropriate Minister with maybe six dollars worth of phone calls, to do that. I mean, what makes it so different, because I know the number of students, and we don't have that many in Saskatoon, either. So I really find it difficult that we would be put in a situation of covering a cost to have you address people in Saskatoon, let alone students in Halifax and the States. But where do you draw the line with regard to the amount of money that you are going to spend on individuals or several people at the exorbitant cost that it is going to cost you to do that? Because I feel that, as important as it is for myself to address my own constituents' concerns, I have always been able to resolve it. I really find it hard to support or even justify how it is possible for you to sit there and say that what you did was right and that it doesn't matter how we look at it, that maybe we are talking from both sides of our mouths, if you want to call it that. But I find it very difficult, Mr. Chairman, to look at a situation in which - under what section have you been saying that you have been travelling? You have interpreted a section. Which section was that?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):**

Thank you. Madam Languages Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

There are a couple of things. First, I would just like to say that when I did accept the invitation to go to Saskatoon, I was not making a special trip just for that. I was on my way back from another trip, and I

would have been passing through Edmonton so it would simply have been the expense from Edmonton to Saskatoon and back. That would have been the only additional expense to deal with that particular one. That was one of the reasons I cancelled the engagement here, I didn't want to come all the way back here and then get another ticket to go back down there if they wanted me to come and speak to them. I thought it was more financially responsible to not come all the way back here and then buy another ticket to go back down. Whether I should go back down, is another question. I made reference to section

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**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

I have one final question then. Since there was a speaking engagement, I would presume then whether it was that day, a month from now, would not have made a difference. It is a question that when you passed by, you probably could go in and talk to the classroom. Since it was on the weekend, how did you manage to receive the message of cancellation or did you actually miss your engagement?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I am not sure I understand the question. How did I receive notification that they cancelled the meeting in Saskatoon?

**MR. GARGAN:**

(Microphone turned off)

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Mr. Gargan, for the record, I have to hear what your response was.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Mr. Chairman, the Official Languages Commissioner said she was travelling back and presumably she didn't receive any messages until she was on the

ground or settled into the hotel in Edmonton. At what point in time was the cancellation made or did you actually miss your appointment?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I wasn't notified until the Friday, which was November 12, that the meeting was cancelled for the following Monday. I called the university on Friday to ask them about the arrangements for the meeting and that is when I was told that it was cancelled.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Gargan.

**MR. GARGAN:**

Then you did receive a letter on November 15 confirming that?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Gargan. Madam Commissioner.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I didn't receive a letter until after I came back to Yellowknife. So I didn't receive a letter on November 15, no.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. Mr. Patterson.

Motion To Extend Sitting Hours, Carried

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I begin, I would like to move we extend hours to conclude this item.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you. There has been a suggestion that hours be extended beyond 6:00. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Patterson.

**MR. PATTERSON:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I guess I have to say I am participating in this session this afternoon with somewhat of a heavy heart. I think the great expectations and hopes we had and put together this whole regime of aboriginal languages and a Official Languages Commissioner, are somehow not working out. I am not quite sure why. But I sense a real frustration on many counts. I know there has been good cooperation in some respects which I am pleased with. It is also obvious that some departments of government are not being cooperative with the Official Languages Commissioner and her office. It doesn't take much understanding to note a sense of frustration on the part of some MLAs. I suspect that this is also difficult for the Official Languages Commissioner herself.

Mr. Chairman, I think we all very much want this to work. Maybe we should be patient because it is new and we are breaking new ground. I think the time we have taken on these issues is a demonstration for our support for official languages and our great interest in finding out what is going on. But I think we have some problems that have to be dealt with. I would have hoped, for example, that the Official Languages Commissioner would be able to meet regularly with the Premier, not with one of her staff and would perhaps be better respected by some departments. I am not sure why that is not happening.

I also have an alarming feeling, and I know I have been satisfied from Ms. Harnum that legalistic approaches are to be avoided at all costs -- I have heard her say that when I have asked questions initially -- but it seems to be coming up all the time that the lawyers are taking over. Legal opinions are going

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to be relied on to determine issues. Frankly, I think this is a very human issue, it very much involves people who work in a small government and a small legislature. I really would have hoped that problems that arose could be solved by people with goodwill and open communication, rather than making lawyers rich no matter how good they are. One thing that has alarmed me about the tone of this discussion is that it has been very legalistic. I guess I'm not one to talk, I mean I've been part of that profession and I don't mean to condemn my own kind, but I don't think this is the place for legal analysis. I think language and culture is a very human, emotional, passionate, spiritual issue. I hate to see the lawyers getting more involved than is necessary.

Mr. Chairman, we obviously have another serious problem with the method of accountability and the method of reporting on the part of the Languages Commissioner. This is something that she has obviously addressed in her report. This format of committee of the whole, however effective it is for some things, is clearly not the way to do it. It's an awful, painful, formal process and clearly we've got to do something about that. I think there's been some thought given to that.

I think that part of what we're wanting to do is what every senior officer of the territorial government should welcome and I'm sure this includes the Languages Commissioner, is kind of a performance review. Now I know she doesn't work -- the office is independent and she doesn't work for an employer in that sense -- but I think that there should be some method of saying you're on track on this and you're not on track on this. Every manager and every senior functionary welcomes a chance to get constructive criticism. This forum isn't working. It's too formal and maybe there's an attitude of defensiveness. I think it's not the kind of place where we can expect someone to say, "I made an error in judgement, I've learned and it won't happen again." It hasn't happened here and I don't think it's going to happen. It may be the forum that has resulted in a tense atmosphere. We want an atmosphere of constructive criticism and openness on all accounts.

My concluding comments, Mr. Chairman, are that -- and I'm not going to invite a response as these are just comments -- what we certainly need to first of all do is tackle the reporting relationship that we all agree needs to be addressed and probably was overlooked by those of us who participated in drafting the bill. It has clearly taken on an importance of its own in light of all the questions that have arisen. I want to say that I'm just a little bit disappointed that we're not talking about the fundamental questions of the future of aboriginal languages in the Northwest Territories; we've been sidetracked from that discussion by and large. That has to be fixed up. Once we deal with the reporting relationship, and maybe I shouldn't be calling it a reporting relationship as it implies a lack of independence, but the relationship between the Languages Commissioner and the legislature. Once we've tackled that issue, then perhaps we can move forward and continue the real issues we all care about. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. General comments. Mr. Ningark.

**MR. NINGARK:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I agree with Mr. Patterson, my colleague, that any new initiative requires some planning, some very, very hard work, dedication, and also talking with different people, especially those who have been there before and who know the area. I think that's what the Languages Commissioner has done according to the information she provided to the Members of this committee.

Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned earlier, I think the languages issue is the responsibility of each and every Member of this House. It's first for those with a native descent. We have not, in the past, really utilized the language that we speak. I'm one of those people who should have used the language more, especially when the program is televised throughout the territories when young people are watching. Elders are watching. Elders are the proponents of the usage of the native language which is very important to all the people. When we put the Languages Commissioner in the position where she's not doing enough for the language, I think we of all people should be the ones to practice it, try to promote it and retain it for the benefit of our own people.

Mr. Chairman, we've hired the Languages Commissioner for a number of years now. Although it may not be the choice of each and every Member of the legislature, I think we have to live with it. If we are not satisfied, give her time maybe and then perhaps the third time she appears before the committee, we'll have more concrete facts. If we are not satisfied, then we can try to do something about it. I'm sure that each and every Member of the House committee has many things they want to talk to her about, but I'm sure the legislature is not the only forum we can talk to her about our concern. If each individual Member wants to talk to her then I'm sure she would be more than happy to comply. I have taken the time to really talk to her. I know where she works, I know the phone number. I'll have time to talk to her about my concerns and concerns of the people that I serve. I think the report she compiled, given the time frame that she had to put it together, is quite remarkable, Mr. Chairman. I wish that she could do more for the people. Like Mr. Gargan and other Members, I would like to see the languages survive.

As a legislature, the highest form of government in the system, if we do not try to help the people that we

serve and the Languages Commissioner to try to ensure the languages survive in the next few years then we're really going to have problems. In my own area, a Nunavut organization is working very, very hard in this area. I know the Inuit Cultural Institute is working equally hard and I know each and every community education council is putting information together, they have materials in your community. That's not enough, however I think it's also the responsibility of the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and also the responsibility of each and every Member of this House. I am hopeful that next time we have the Languages Commissioner up here before the committee that at least she'll be able to satisfy some of the Members who have some concerns. Like Mr. Patterson suggested, this is pretty new ground. Give her time to try to put it together and by the next meeting we have with the Languages Commissioner, we'll know if, in fact, the Languages Commissioner has done what she was hired to do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark. General comments. Mr. Nerysoo.

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**HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:**

Thank you. There were a couple of remarks made and I want to conclude by making a statement about the presentations that have been made. The Commissioner indicated to us that a lot of the information that had been requested by Members of this Assembly was confidential. I read the legislation but I do want to read one thing about this particular forum here because I think many of us don't realize the extent of the power of this committee, or for that matter, committees of the House.

While I agree, and have read the legislation on confidentiality, I want to say that in *Erskine and May*, it indicates to us that, "A witness is bound to answer all questions which the committee sees fit to put him, and cannot excuse himself, for example: on the grounds that he may thereby subject himself to a civil action; or because he has taken an oath not to disclose the matter about which he is required to testify; or because the matter was a privileged communication to him; or where a solicitor is called upon to disclose the secrets of his client; or on the grounds that he is advised by counsel that he can not do so without incurring the risk of incriminating

himself; or exposing himself to a civil suit; or that it would prejudice him as defendant in litigation which is pending, some of which would be sufficient grounds to excuse him in a court of law. Nor can a witness refuse to produce any documents in his possession on the grounds that, though in his possession, they are under the control of a client who has given him instructions not to disclose them without his express authority."

That, in my view, gives this House very significant authority, in spite of the law and the section that the Commissioner has been reading. I think she should have her legal advisors, if they're giving her advice, review that section and ensure that in future, when there are appearances before this committee, the appropriate information that is requested is, in fact, provided to Members of this House. The Assembly has very significant power and I would just caution Members when confidentiality is used, that it be used carefully. I would suggest, as well, that this power I've read be used carefully. But, I just wanted to point it out.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. General comments. Mr. Lewis.

**MR. LEWIS:**

I tried to check to see if there was any other Member who wanted to make comments of a general nature and I didn't see a hand go up, Mr. Chairman. I would like to respond to the whole issue of process, especially to Mr. Patterson's comments about the forum, when much of the work that we need to do could be best done.

Committee Motion 21-12(5): To Refer Tabled Document 11-12(5) To The Standing Committee On Agencies, Board And Commissions, Withdrawn

Mr. Chairman, although I don't want to cut anything off, I would like to try a motion. I move that the report of the Official Languages Commissioner be referred to the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Lewis. We need the motion in writing and translated. We have a motion made by Mr. Lewis and we're going to have it typed up, translated and circulated. This will take a few minutes, so we'll take

a short break until such time as the chair calls this committee back to order.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

The committee will come back to order. Prior to the break, there was a motion which was, I move that the report of the Official Languages Commissioner be referred to the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions. The motion was made by Mr. Lewis. The chair recognizes Mr. Lewis.

**MR. LEWIS:**

In the interest of progress, Mr. Chairman, I would like to withdraw the motion. I believe we are close to concluding this item.

---Withdrawn

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Mr. Lewis. Mr. Lewis has withdrawn the motion. All general comments have been made. Does the committee agree that this matter is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:**

Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the witness for her appearance before the committee, for the long period of time that she had to spend here answering our questions. With that, you are now excused, with our thanks.

**MS. HARNUM:**

I would like to thank the Members for the opportunity of answering questions. I think it is a really important process. As was said, this is a new experience, both for this legislature, for myself and for all the people in the NWT to have an ombudsman. It has been a difficult two years and I hope in the next while we will be able to resolve some of the issues I have raised in my annual report. There are 30 recommendations there. Some of them I have directed to the Legislative Assembly and I hope that I will be able to get some direction on those. I invite any of the Members to



contact me on an individual basis. I have written letters a few times inviting comments from Members. I would be glad at any time to talk to them about any concerns they have about our office. Thank you again for the opportunity of speaking here.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):**

Thank you, Madam Commissioner. This concludes the matter before the committee of the whole at this time. What is the wish of the committee? The motion was to extend hours until the conclusion of this matter, so now I will rise and report to the Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Item 19, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**MR. WHITFORD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled

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Document 11-12(5) and would like to report progress and Tabled Document 11-12(5) is concluded. Madam Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. Is there a seconder for the motion. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

Item 20, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Hay River, Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 20: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 8: An Act To Amend The Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act

**HON. JOHN POLLARD:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin Central, that Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

**AN HON. MEMBER:**

Question.

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

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

---Carried

Bill 8 has had third reading. 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, meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, at 10:30 of the Ordinary Members' Caucus and at 12:00 noon a Caucus meeting with the Metis leaders. Orders of the day for Thursday, March 17, 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
  - Motion 22-12(5), Setting of Sitting Hours by Speaker
16. First Reading of Bills
17. Second Reading of Bills
  - Bill 10, An Act to Repeal the Metric Conversion Act
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), Report of the 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 34-12(5), Tradition and Change, A Strategy for Renewable Resource Development in the NWT, February 1994
19. Report of Committee of the Whole
20. Third Reading of Bills
21. Orders of the Day

**MADAM SPEAKER:**

Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 17 at 1:30 pm.

---ADJOURNMENT