



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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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 Cournoyee, 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. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Madam Premier.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 61-12(5): Minister Absent From The House

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEE:

Madam, Speaker, I would like to notify the House that the Honourable Silas Arngna'naaq will be leaving the House today after question period to attend the opening of the water treatment plant in Fort Providence. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Baffin South, Mr. Pudlat.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Relationship Between Housing Corporation And Housing Associations

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am going to be making a statement today regarding the relationship between the Housing Corporation and the local housing associations. I have been asked to bring up this subject by people in my constituency. A lot of times it appears that the local housing associations are mouthpieces for the Housing Corporation in passing on information that is unpleasant or controversial. While most of the

initiatives for change come from the Housing Corporation, the local housing associations often end up being blamed for controversial decisions such as rent increases and evictions. The local housing associations, at least in my constituency, are often torn between wanting to defend the local tenants and following the instructions of the Housing Association.

Madam Speaker, local housing associations need and want more real authority and powers to make decisions that affect their tenants, and not just to be the bearers of bad news for the Housing Corporation. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On GNWT's Response To Special Committee On Health And Social Services Recommendations

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, as the former chairman of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services, I rise today to welcome the government response to the recommendations made by that committee. That document, called Renewed Partnerships, was tabled yesterday. Madam Speaker, I only briefly reviewed the document but it appears to represent, at least to me, a significant improvement to what I've seen as previous responses to committee reports.

I note it is organized around themes and, in general, it appears to respond in a thoughtful and generally favourable manner to the recommendations made by the committee. In particular, I welcome the agreement to amalgamate the departments of Health and Social Services. I am also very pleased to hear that a community-based mental health pilot project will take place in the Inuvik region in 1994-95. I think it's important to note that the government plans to develop agreements to set up early intervention services for children and another plan for services to elders and the handicapped. Madam Speaker, these are long overdue.

We need more detail on many of the responses and I'm sure the government will have to answer many questions in the House on their response. But, it does appear to represent a positive outlook on

dealing with the very important issues highlighted by the final report of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. Madam Speaker, I hope we can all work together to make sure that both the final report of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services and the government response are more than just words and reports, but the key to real action in dealing with the important health and social problems in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Meeting Of Municipal Advisory Committee In Iqaluit

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker.

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Nay, nay.

MR. PATTERSON:

You're wasting my valuable time here.

---Laughter

On Monday of this week, I attended a meeting of the Iqaluit Municipal Advisory Committee with Mr. Robin Beaumont, administrator. Madam Speaker, I can only describe the tone of the meeting as that of tension and extreme frustration.

Members of the Municipal Advisory Committee are feeling a growing sense of frustration. I heard the following comments from advisory committee Members at the meeting: "I am extremely tired of this committee;" "our hands are tied;" "I hate the word recommend;" and, "Between Robin Beaumont and the Minister, there are too many layers of people concerned with process and not common sense."

Madam Speaker, one of the main sources of frustration is land. On February 2, after hearing from a local Inuk who wanted one lot to build a house this summer and who was told that there were no lots presently available, the Municipal Advisory Committee recommended to Mr. Beaumont that, in the short-term, a minimum number of lots be identified for ballot draw by March 31. So, people who want to build houses this summer and become taxpayers can be given lots so they can go ahead.

Madam Speaker, nothing has happened to date. Although we know there are leases that have expired and lots that should be available -- and we know that there are lots which could be developed with minimal cost which are near to road services and on flat land - - because there is no lands officer in the town of Iqaluit and because there's been no apparent action from Municipal Affairs in Yellowknife, there are still no lots available for people who are waiting to meet sea-lift deadlines to make commitments to build houses and to become taxpayers.

Madam Speaker, the land issue must be addressed urgently, and the Municipal Advisory Committee has asked the Minister of Municipal Affairs to come to Iqaluit on an urgent basis to meet with them and deal with it. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Closure Of Weather Reporting Stations

MR. ALLOOFOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to make a statement that has come to my attention, Madam Speaker, that weather reporting stations in the Baffin region will close April 1 to April 5. In fact, the contractors have been instructed by the federal government to cut off the power going to weather stations. This concerns me very much, Madam Speaker. Everyone knows the Baffin communities rely on airplanes for their food and transportation. The airplanes that are going into communities like Cape Dorset, Clyde River and Pond Inlet will not know how high they are flying, whether there are cross-winds, whether there is fog or any kind of information that is essential to the pilots.

Madam Speaker, if there is no reporting taking place, the pilots will not be knowledgeable about the barometers, therefore, they will not know how high or how low they are flying. I am concerned about the safety of my constituents during that transition period. I will pursue this matter in question period. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On The Rights Of Treaty People To Receive An Education

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Last week my colleague from Amittuq spoke about assistance for parents who send their children to southern schools. I also want to speak on that topic.

Madam Speaker, as people are aware, people residing in the western Arctic signed treaties with the Canadian government many years ago. One of the guarantees in these treaties was the right to receive free education, particularly for the status aboriginal people. When the Minister of Education responded to my colleague, he emphasized that the department was working to develop quality programs in the north. I appreciate those efforts.

However, some parents still feel that their children have different needs that cannot be met in the Northwest Territories. They may feel that their children would be better educated, for example, in one of the good native residential schools in southern Canada. According to our treaty rights, their children should be able to get that kind of education with the cost being borne by the government.

Madam Speaker, I believe that part of the problem results from the confusion between the roles of the territorial Department of Education and the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Elsewhere in Canada, Indian Affairs is responsible for implementing treaty rights, such as the right to an education, but in the territories, the department makes those rules and policies. Madam Speaker, the problem is when parents go to Indian Affairs, they are referred back to the Department of Education and the Department of Education refers them back to Indian Affairs. The ball is always bouncing between those two departments. That is where the problem lies.

Madam Speaker, I would like to encourage the Minister of Education to work with Indian Affairs to clarify their relationship concerning the education of the treaty people in the north. Parents have the right to get the best possible education for their children and the Department of Education should be helping parents with their decisions. Thank you.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Speaker would like to recognize two respected elders from Hay River, Lionel Gagnon from Hay River and Mrs. Beatrice Morin, the mother of the Honourable Don Morin. Welcome to our Assembly.

---Applause

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

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Member's Statement On Overburdening Cabinet Ministers

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, today I wish to speak about some of the concerns I have with the way duties are split among the Members of Cabinet. Madam Speaker, we could all tell during the Cabinet review last December that the residents of the Northwest Territories are fortunate to have several natural born leaders serving as Cabinet Ministers.

My concern, Madam Speaker, is that we may be overworking some of these talented Ministers. I know from my own experience that some of these Ministers take longer to respond to concerns and questions from the ordinary MLAs simply because they have too much on their plate. This, of course, adds up to more work for the ordinary MLAs because they have to write follow-up letters and do extra lobbying that might not be required if the burden of duties were spread more evenly.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the reasons for the east/west split on Cabinet. However, Madam Speaker, I am concerned about some Ministers who do not appear to be doing their homework. I feel that this lack of preparedness on their part may be causing resentment among the more conscientious Cabinet Ministers who see their responsibilities increase, but not their compensation packages.

Madam Speaker, some Cabinet Ministers are so busy that it is very difficult for them to attend important events in the Northwest Territories. I know that I have invited Ministers to attend important events in my constituency and that some Ministers have had to back out due to prior commitments. I can imagine, Madam Speaker, that they have had to decline invitations to important events in their own constituencies, also.

Madam Speaker, the smaller communities in the Northwest Territories appreciate visits from government Ministers. These visits make them feel like they, as a community, are part of the process. The process of government, Madam Speaker, is seen by a lot of communities as a strange animal that will only occur in the larger centres of the Northwest Territories.

Madam Speaker, I urge the Members of Cabinet, who perhaps do not have a full load, to buckle up and help their busier colleagues so that these Ministers can respond...

MADAM SPEAKER:

Mr. Gargan, I cut your Member's statement off prior to you finishing. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. GARGAN:

Madam Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to continue my Member's statement.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and honourable Members. Madam Speaker, I urge the Members of Cabinet, who perhaps do not have a full load, to buckle up and help their busier colleagues so that these Ministers can respond better to the concerns of ordinary MLAs and their constituents. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

MR. BALLANTYNE:

North Slave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

(Microphones turned off)

Member's Statement On Political And Economic Stability Of The North

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I have been redistributed.

---Laughter

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today I would like to make a few observations about the recent visit of the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, Mr. Irwin, to the Northwest Territories. Mr. Irwin was here for a short period of time, met with 13 or 14 groups and made commitments at each one of those meetings. I must say I was very pleased to hear of the commitment he made to the Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories. It was a commitment a long time in coming.

---Applause

Madam Speaker, I am struck with the level of passion, commitment and the speed of change that this Minister has demonstrated. However, I do have some concerns as to how these many bilateral commitments to a wide variety of groups across the territories will all come together at the end of the day.

I am sure that the Minister will acknowledge that north of 60 is very different from south of 60. The regions and groups in the Northwest Territories must maintain common bonds, strengths and unity. A fragmented north is a vulnerable north and could easily fall prey to the agendas of large governments and large corporations.

The government and the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories must continue to play an integral role in the negotiations leading to division and to constitutional development in the west. We must strive to be a unifying force in the Northwest Territories.

I personally believe that a strong central government, strong regions and strong communities will provide the political stability we need to provide for economic development and to solve the many social problems

we have in the Northwest Territories. I also strongly believe that there must be a coming together of public government and aboriginal self-government, if we are to prevent the western Northwest Territories from becoming balkanized and fragmented into irrelevance. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Madam Premier.

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ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Question 331-12(5): Premier's Actions To Protect Sanikiluaq In Great Whale Project

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Madam Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Pudlat on March 21. It is talking about the Great Whale/Sanikiluaq project as it relates to Sanikiluaq.

Madam Speaker, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs is currently attempting to obtain a copy of the agreement between Hydro Quebec and Makivik for our information. It is our understanding that the agreement is based on commitments under the James Bay northern Quebec agreement. Regardless of any arrangements through this or any other agreement, the Government of the Northwest Territories still has a legitimate right to argue that the environment and the residents of the NWT should not be adversely impacted by the proposed hydro project.

The Department of Renewable Resources is coordinating the GNWT's input to the environmental review process, however they have no control over the pace at which the review process proceeds. It is moving slower than anyone anticipated.

We are currently reviewing the environmental impact statement. The GNWT will argue that the document does not conform with the guidelines and must be rewritten to provide more relevant information on Hudson Bay and the Belcher Islands. The community of Sanikiluaq and the Nunavut Coalition-Keewatin have indicated that they will be taking the same approach.

We have also written to the federal Minister of Environment supporting Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated's request for the establishment of a Nunavut impact review board to review the project.

The GNWT continues to work closely with all groups to ensure that our actions support community concerns. GNWT representatives will be meeting with representatives from Sanikiluaq and the Keewatin in May to discuss our response to the review panels on the deficiencies of the environmental impact statement. The GNWT also continues to communicate with other intervenors in the process including the Crees.

Return To Question 253-12(5): Status Of Departmental Amalgamations

Madam Speaker, I have another return to oral question. I would like your permission to continue. This is a return to a question asked by Mr. Ningark on March 16, on the status of departmental amalgamations.

In order to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of government, a number of departments and programs were proposed for transfer or consolidation. The consolidations are some, but not all of those recommended by Strength at Two Levels.

These consolidations were announced in 1992 as one aspect of Reshaping Northern Government, which also included decentralization, privatization, reorganization of the central agencies and increased roles for MLAs in decision-making.

Of the announced consolidations and amalgamations, the following have been completed to date:

1992-93: Education and Culture and Communications; Government Services and Public Works; Justice and corrections; and, Intergovernmental Affairs and Aboriginal and Constitutional Affairs.

1993-94: Employment with Education and Culture; and, reorganization of centre.

In May 1993, mandates of central agencies were clarified to streamline decision-making and the central machinery of government, and to rationalize the roles of Comptroller General, the Department of Finance and the Financial Management Board Secretariat.

Further Return To Question 337-12(5): Policies Of NWTPC To Support Northern Businesses

Madam Speaker, I have a further return to oral question if I may proceed. This is an oral question asked by Mr. Ng on March 21 regarding the policy of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation to support northern businesses.

Madam Speaker, the Northwest Territories Power Corporation follows a tendering and contract policy that provides for a northern discount. Sound business practice dictates that support for local businesses that can provide the service for the corporation, leads to development of those businesses and an economy that can help to reduce the corporation's costs.

Other examples of the corporation's efforts to use local business include the use of standing purchase orders and local purchase orders to facilitate local purchases. The SPOs are set up at the beginning of the year for local purchases. These standing orders are set up with businesses that can provide the necessary goods and services. The SPOs are approved by the vice-president of operations.

Purchases against standing purchase orders and local purchase orders are monitored centrally by purchasing and finance. All other purchasing is handled centrally under the tender and contract policy. Madam Speaker, in turn, these operations are reviewed by internal audit. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Madam Premier.

Return To Question 405-12(5): Update On Negotiations Between CASAW And Miramar Con Mine

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Madam Speaker, I have a short reply to an oral question asked by Mr. Ballantyne on March 29, regarding the update on negotiations between the United Steel Workers of Canada and Miramar Con Mine.

We have been advised by federal authorities that the federal conciliatory officer assigned to the dispute will be in contact with both parties next week, so as to determine when they should begin and meet again. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Kivallivik, Mr. Arnagna'naaq.

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

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

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

REVERT BACK TO ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 62-12(5): Water And Sewage Services Subsidy Policy

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and Members, colleagues.

Madam Speaker, as Members know, changes were made to the water and sewage services subsidy policy earlier this month. This afternoon, I want to outline the background and basic features of the changes.

The subsidy program was introduced in 1987 because consumers were not getting equitable treatment in the municipal water and sewage rates charged to them. Often the rates they paid were far greater than the economic costs of providing water and sewage services in the community.

Municipal governments often chose to use their water/sewage rates as a key source of municipal revenue, because of the lack of comprehensive GNWT municipal O and M funding policies at that time.

The water and sewer services subsidy policy was created because of this to help make sure that basic services were provided equitably throughout the Northwest Territories by municipal governments at a price that residents could afford.

Until amendments to the policy were made earlier this month, it applied mainly in hamlets, charter communities and some settlements. The lack of coverage for residents of most tax-based

municipalities was raised as an issue by the NWT Association of Municipalities, the town of Hay River, the village of Fort Simpson and by the Member for Nahendeh.

As a result, changes to the policy now extend its provisions to all municipalities except Yellowknife. Yellowknife doesn't receive the subsidy because it gets municipal service funding under a three year block funding agreement.

In making the changes to this policy and extending the benefits of the subsidy program to the large population of residential and commercial users in the tax-based municipalities, it was necessary to balance equity and affordability of service costs with the realities of limited financial resources.

Even after the policy changes, the government will still be subsidizing, on average, 91 per cent of the cost of water and sewage services in hamlets, charter communities and designated communities.

The revised water and sewage services policy includes the following new rates for residential and commercial users:

- the subsidized residential and non-profit rate will be .33 of a cent per litre in all tax-based municipalities effective June 1, 1994;

- in Iqaluit and Norman Wells, that means an increase from an average of \$25 a month to \$37 a month for residential users of trucked services; and, an increase from an average of \$50 a month to an average of \$75 a month for residential users with piped services.

In addition:

- the subsidized residential and non-profit rate will be raised from .22 of a cent per litre to .27 of a cent per litre in hamlets and designated communities effective June 1, 1994;

- based on specific household accounts, some typical increases in rates per residential user in hamlets would be:

- from \$18 to \$22 per month in Chesterfield Inlet;

- from \$30 to \$37 in Aklavik;

- from \$37 to \$45 in Fort Providence;

- from \$25 to \$30 in Pond Inlet; and,

- from \$26 to \$32 in Pelly Bay.

- any additional annual increases will be subject to Financial Management Board review.

Madam Speaker, other changes affect the subsidized residential and non-profit rate in special service areas, mainly small areas outside the built-up areas of certain municipalities:

- the subsidized residential and non-profit rate for those locations will be increased from .33 of a cent per litre to .37 of a cent per litre effective June 1, 1994, with a further increase subject to Financial Management Board approval;

- the subsidized commercial rate in hamlets, charter communities and designated communities will also change. Effective June 1, 1994, 90 per cent rather than 100 per cent of water/sewage consumption by commercial users will be subsidized.

The subsidized amount will be reduced each year until 50 per cent of the consumption is subsidized at .44 of a cent per litre and the rest at the economic rate. Each yearly reduction will be subject to Financial Management Board review. This review process will allow the Financial Management Board to review specific cases, to avoid undue hardship.

Some examples of the immediate impact on commercial users would be:

- an average monthly increase of \$31 to \$39 for the Northern Store in Aklavik;

- an average monthly increase of \$19 to \$52 for the Northern Store in Chesterfield Inlet;

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- an average monthly increase of \$46 to \$66 for the Northern Store in Fort Providence; and,

- an average monthly increase of \$31 to \$58 for the Northern Store in Pond Inlet.

Madam Speaker, there have been questions about consultation with this House and with the municipalities on the changes to the water and sewage services subsidy policy.

On February 19, 1993, the Minister of Finance announced in his budget address that the government planned to adjust the degree of subsidization of commercial users in hamlets. And on November 24,

1993, my predecessor, the Honourable John Todd, made a return advising the Member for Nahendeh that policy amendments had been approved to extend coverage to all towns and villages, but that the financial implications of the policy amendments were to receive final review by the Financial Management Board.

In addition, during the seven years since this subsidy program was instituted, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has engaged in ongoing consultation with municipal councils and their administrations on items such as the objectives of the policy and program, the economic rates for water and sewage services in each community, and on establishing municipal water and sewage services rates by-laws.

Madam Speaker, municipalities are familiar with the workings and administration of the water and sewage services subsidy policy and program, including the fact that rate adjustments periodically occur. The systems are in place in municipalities for the rate adjustments to be made effectively. The subsidized rate increases are targeted to take effect June 1, 1994, to afford councils at least 60 days to amend their water and sewage rates by-laws and advise consumers.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, in attempting to address Members' questions about the policy changes on March 24, I stated that the subsidized residential and non-profit rate was not affected and that policy changes would take effect May 1, 1994. This information was not correct and the information I have provided today should set the record straight. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk.

ITEM 5: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 416-12(5): Social Services' Actions In Cases Of Child Sexual Abuse

MR. PUDLUK:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. A couple of days ago, on Monday, March 28, I raised the issue of child sexual abuse in a Member's statement. I have a

question related to that statement for the Minister of Social Services.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 416-12(5): Social Services' Actions In Cases Of Child Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. In answer to the Member for High Arctic, I would like to make a brief statement on sexual abuse because there are different types of sexual abuse that can be defined. It includes exposure to pornographic materials, exposures to flashers, inappropriate touching, oral sex and sexual intercourse.

It is important to remember that this type of abuse has different levels of trauma. The level of trauma is also affected by whether the incident, or incidents were one-time or ongoing. By law, sexual abuse must be reported by all persons when it is identified. The department provides counselling and support through contract services in each region. As much as possible, assistance is provided at the community level.

When a sexual abuse case is reported to Social Services, the steps that are taken are first that usually the RCMP does the investigation. Depending upon the findings of the RCMP investigation, charges are laid on the offender and the work begins by the social worker and sexual abuse specialist. This depends on whether the person who has been abused is a child or an adult. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Pudluk.

Supplementary To Question 416-12(5): Social Services' Actions In Cases Of Child Sexual Abuse

MR. PUDLUK:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question was really about those people who were sexually abused as children about 20 to 30 years ago and about the healing and counselling for those people. They are now adults. Abuse affects not only the child but the whole family. What program or support is offered to the family for coping with child sexual abuse? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 416-12(5): Social Services' Actions In Cases Of Child Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. In each region, we have mental health and sexual abuse specialists. They are available for survivors of sexual abuse who are now adults who were abused when they were children. Also, they work with the families to cope with the abuse and, often times, when the community makes this request, the specialist comes in town and tries to help out the community in getting a support group going for those who are the survivors and who are the victims. Thank you.

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MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 417-12(5): Training For Social Workers Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse Cases

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to follow up on the questions from my colleague from High Arctic, with a question to the Minister of Social Services. I know that in Renewed Partnerships: The Response of the Government to the Special Committee on Health and Social Services, which was tabled yesterday, that part of the recommendations or one of the responses to a recommendation regarding support for front line workers mentions that the Department of Social Services is developing profiles of all staff to identify their training needs and develop a training strategy, and the resources are being allocated to provide better training. Madam Speaker, working with children who are victims of sexual abuse is very difficult and very delicate. I was wondering if the Minister could advise us as to what training, right now, is provided to social workers who are dealing with these situations.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 417-12(5): Training For Social Workers Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse Cases

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. There was some training received a few years ago with in-service training with our staff through contract services through Arctic College, and, as a result, we ended up having one specialist in each region. Up to today, the training is still available when requested. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 417-12(5): Training For Social Workers Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse Cases

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Minister for that answer. Just for clarity's sake, my understanding from her answer is that there is no ongoing training program for workers in the field but, instead, they must specifically request training. Is that the case?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 417-12(5): Training For Social Workers Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse Cases

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

The department's plan also includes, along with Health, Education, Culture and Employment and Justice, the development of a strategic plan for community mental health. The process will involve various groups and agencies and communities in the development of the plan which will address, amongst other issues, child sexual abuse and how government as a whole can be more effective in dealing with devastating problems, so there is a plan and ongoing training for those staff who request sexual abuse specialists training.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 417-12(5): Training For Social Workers Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse Cases

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I understand that there is a training program being set up and I welcome that the training program will be available to more than just social workers; it will be available to community agency workers, as well. But what I am really trying to find out is, is there currently a program in the Department of Social Services which provides ongoing training to the Members of the staff? In other words, is there a program that, on a regular basis, provides training to the staff in each region, or do the staff members have to request the specific training?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 417-12(5): Training For Social Workers Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse Cases

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. There is no program within Social Services' training program. The training component part of it is a responsibility of Education, Culture and Employment.

To note, there was a workshop from January 31 to February 4 in Baffin on sexual abuse, with representation from Social Services, Justice Canada, RCMP, Health, Department of Education, Culture and Employment, territorial Justice and the Status of Women. A training subcommittee planned and facilitated a similar workshop in Rankin Inlet in March of 1993 for 51 professionals in the Keewatin region. The RCMP and departments of Education, Culture and Employment and Social Services will give \$90,000 to Baffin communities for the workshop that was held in Iqaluit.

So there are workshops that are ongoing in each region for sexual abuse and how to deal with sexual abuse. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 418-12(5): Support For Adults Who Were Sexually Abused As Children

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, further to Mr. Pudluk's and Mr. Dent's questions, I would like to ask the Minister of Social Services about another group that needs support in addition to children, and that is adults who are finally dealing with sexual abuse they may have suffered as a child. I think these people are being identified in connection with new investigations in the Northwest Territories about residential schooling experiences, and we are finding many people carrying scars and burdens of many years. I would like to ask the Minister, what support is available for these adults carrying these scars of sexual abuse they may have suffered as a child? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

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Return To Question 418-12(5): Support For Adults Who Were Sexually Abused As Children

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Like I said earlier, we have specialists who come in to the communities when they are requested, and they work with the group who are the survivors of sexual abuse in helping them out in starting their self-help group. Pauktutit has also started this healing process, as well, and that started this past winter when they met in Iqaluit. So there are agencies, along with our specialists, that can help and are available in each region. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 418-12(5): Support For Adults Who Were Sexually Abused As Children

MR. PATTERSON:

Madam Speaker, along with the Minister, I attended the Pauktutit annual general meeting, and there were a number of very emotional moments when adults, sometimes elders, made disclosures about

painful experiences they had suffered many years before. I think it's been pointed out in a recent letter to the editor in Nunatsiaq News that these kinds of disclosures can -- although they are helpful in themselves, if they are not followed up on -- lead to even more frustration and anxiety. So I would like to ask the Minister, given that these kinds of disclosures seem to be occurring more frequently and even publicly, and the latest example was the Pauktuutit AGM, is there a strategy within the department to respond to this apparently growing need? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 418-12(5): Support For Adults Who Were Sexually Abused As Children

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish the Member for Iqaluit, could provide percentages when asked. He uses the words, the growing need. With the information that I have been provided by my department, in 1991 the incidence of child sexual abuse between the ages five and eight was 23 per cent, and in 1992-93 it was down to 16 per cent. For ages zero to four, in 1991-92, the incidence was 15 per cent, and in 1992-93 it was 16 per cent. I'm talking about the reported cases.

In the age category 16 to 18, the incidence was 8.5 per cent in 1991-92 and nine per cent in 1992-93. In 1991-92 between the ages of 13 and 15, 26.5 per cent of children were sexually abused, and in 1992-93 the figure was 22.3 per cent. Between the ages of nine and 12, 27 per cent of children were sexually abused in 1991-92 and in 1992-93 it was 36.7 per cent.

I think it is important, when we talk about something as serious as this, that we have accurate numbers. I don't object to the wording that the Member used, but because of the nature of what we're talking about I think it is important for the public to know.

Since awareness was commenced about four years ago, we have had a snowball effect now that it is okay to talk about sexual abuse. It is out in the open. According to the stats that we have from two years ago, the numbers have not increased. Perhaps it will have increased for adult numbers for this coming year, but that is yet to be seen.

There is help available in each region, when it is requested. Specialists are available to help the communities get started with self-help groups, which our department is directing, so the communities can deal with some of the serious problems themselves, along with the help of the department. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 418-12(5): Support For Adults Who Were Sexually Abused As Children

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I don't think it would be fruitful for myself or the Minister to engage in a debate about one or two percentage points in the number of reported cases which indicate a trend, especially when we know that reported cases are probably only the tip of the iceberg. I guess I would like to get back to the theme of my question about adult survivors. I would like to ask the Minister another question. Recognizing that the problems of adults dealing with past abuse are quite different from the strategies used to deal with children dealing with past abuse, I would like to ask the Minister, is there in-service training and support now available for social workers for dealing with adult clients and their special problems? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Just before we go on, I want to caution Members not to be repetitive with their questions. I believe this same question was posed by Mr. Dent earlier on. I also want to caution the Minister about lengthy and detailed replies to the questions posed. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 418-12(5): Support For Adults Who Were Sexually Abused As Children

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. (Translation) As I stated, in the different regions there are professionals who can deal with people who have been sexually abused. These professionals are highly qualified and they work with the people who have past experiences with sexual abuse when they were children. I know in my community of Pangnirtung, there are a lot of people who have been supported by the elders' group, using the social worker in the community.

As I stated earlier, each community, with the help of the social workers, should start a self-help group. We assist in that way, by using professionals to start up these groups for people who have been sexually abused as a child. Every time a community requests professionals, they are available.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

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Question 419-12(5): Services In Small Communities For Victims Of Sexual Abuse

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Social Services. Child sexual abuse is not something which happens in certain types of homes or certain communities. There are some services available to children and their families in our larger communities. However, in the smallest communities, support for people is limited or not there at all. My question to the honourable Minister, Madam Speaker, is how does the department ensure victims of sexual abuse and their families in our smallest communities receive adequate therapy and support? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 419-12(5): Services In Small Communities For Victims Of Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. There is no question that this is a problem. When the victim is a child and in the custody of the department, the focus is to attempt to have the child placed in a safe environment that meets the needs of the individual. In the smaller communities, if our worker is not trained to deal with sexual abuse, that is when our regional sexual abuse specialists are available, at the request of the communities, to help the family of the abused to deal with the trauma that occurs along with the horrible behaviour that is carried on in our society. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 419-12(5): Services In Small Communities For Victims Of Sexual Abuse

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The only person who is available in the community to help these people is the social worker. According to my understanding, in the smaller communities, the social worker is not properly trained to deal with the matter. There are no specialists in the communities. Would the honourable Minister ensure that we have specialists in the communities to deal with this matter which is unacceptable to our society? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 419-12(5): Services In Small Communities For Victims Of Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. With sexual abuse cases, there are certain procedures carried out. There is a protocol in the community. Like I said, the RCMP is often times involved in carrying out the investigation, along with the social worker or the school counsellor, including the nurse from the community. Depending upon the findings of the investigations, that protocol is followed. In each region, we do have sexual abuse specialists who are available to the communities who don't have the expertise. Either through the RCMP, nurse in charge or through the social worker, they are available at their request. Often, they come into the community to work with the family of the abused. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk.

Question 420-12(5): Follow-up Services For Sexual Abuse Victims After Court Case

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) My question is in line with the questions that have been asked. Madam Speaker, passing a sexual abuse case through the courts is all a part of the process, but there is still a healing process for the victim and their family. What kind of follow-up is done with victims and their families after court cases are finished? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 420-12(5): Follow-up Services For Sexual Abuse Victims After Court Case

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. After it has gone through the court system and after the family and the victim have gone through this process, the victim should ask for support. There are other people who can request this after the court case has gone through. For example, through the Department of Justice, the victims can apply for the victims' assistance program. So the support is there. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Pudluk.

Supplementary To Question 420-12(5): Follow-up Services For Sexual Abuse Victims After Court Case

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Supplementary, Madam Speaker. I am very happy to hear the response by the Minister of Social Services, in that there's a process for the victim and that there is a follow-up done. At what point does Social Services close the case of child sexual abuse victims? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 420-12(5): Follow-up Services For Sexual Abuse Victims After Court Case

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. They are done case by case because they vary from each other. If the victim was a child, at times the social worker will have to support the victim for a long time. Sometimes they are referred to another family outside of the family house. If the child is in temporary custody of Social Services, they are helped as long as the help is needed. They do go back to their families within the discretion of the court system. Or, if Social Services is not responsible for the victim after the court case, following the court procedure, usually at

three months is the point at which we close the case. It varies from case to case. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik, Mr. Koe.

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Question 421-12(5): Programs For Sexual Offenders Found Guilty And Incarcerated

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Not only do the victims of child sexual abuse need support, but there are those who commit the abuse and they also must be dealt with and, in some cases, helped to find ways of dealing with their problem and their feelings. I have a question for the Minister of Justice. What programs are available for people who are found guilty of sexual offences and who are incarcerated?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 421-12(5): Programs For Sexual Offenders Found Guilty And Incarcerated

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. There are a number of programs that are available to inmates in the institutions that we have. At the institution level there are programs available. Some of them are alcohol related, such as the program of Alcoholics Anonymous which is available to all inmates. There is an alcohol awareness program that is run by the Tree of Peace on an in-house basis. For those who are given leave to attend the Salvation Army program, they have an alcohol treatment program, as well.

On a professional basis, there is a psychologist who is available to do counselling on a one-on-one basis, as well as a program called an emotions at home program that is available for inmates to help them deal with the difficulties that they have, and to help them deal with trying to figure out why they act, feel and think the way they do. Specifically, in this case, in sexually abusing other people, especially children, there are none specifically for offenders who are considered mentally ill in the sense that they are labelled as paedophiles. That is, those people who are chronically in need of having to deal with and

have sexual contact with children. With those, we have no specific programs. They are considered extremely difficult to deal with and to treat. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 421-12(5): Programs For Sexual Offenders Found Guilty And Incarcerated

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. Often abusers are repeaters. Some people have a history of repeat offences for this type of criminal behaviour in the north. People, these days, tend to be very mobile. My supplementary to the Minister is, what process is in place and used nationally to make other jurisdictions aware of such offenders?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 421-12(5): Programs For Sexual Offenders Found Guilty And Incarcerated

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, there is nothing conclusive to report to the Members at this time, but we are looking at, as a council of Justice Ministers, ways to protect the public by alerting them that certain offenders are about to be released. There is some discussion going on at this time. We are looking at the question of how we can protect the public and whether it is in the public interest to make the release of certain dangerous offenders public and, if so, how it serves the public to do that and the best way to do that.

In fact, there's also discussion about whether certain people should ever be released at all, since they are considered untreatable and will be, for the remainder of their life, a possible high extreme risk to the public. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 421-12(5): Programs For Sexual Offenders Found Guilty And Incarcerated

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. I'm aware that in the past there used to be a system for alcohol abusers. I think it was called interdict list where people were listed who were abusers of alcohol. So, my question is, given the response the Minister just made that some are chronic abusers, will the Minister consider looking at developing some kind of process similar to the interdict lists that used to be posted? I'm not sure they are still available, but would the Minister look at such a process for sexual offenders?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 421-12(5): Programs For Sexual Offenders Found Guilty And Incarcerated

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, the incarceration of offenders under the Criminal Code for serious offences -- under which most of these types of offences would fall because of the length of sentence under the federal government that extend for more than two years -- automatically become a federal responsibility. I believe the federal government is looking at how to deal with repeat offenders, high-risk offenders and those offenders who are incarcerated who will be released at some time or other to the public.

During the last election, it was clear that the number one priority that the Canadian people have put on the justice system of Canada is to minimize the risk to the public of individuals who are offenders. They want Canada to look at the question of whether individual rights of people should be curtailed in the public interest. For instance, if there is a chronic abuser of little children -- someone who has been known to abuse or kill little children for sexual pleasure -- the question is should that person ever be released. And, if so, how that serves the public interest. We know, without a doubt, that it would only be a matter of time before they repeat the same offence.

The federal minister is looking at that question and has asked for some input. We are having ongoing discussions on that. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 422-12(5): Prevention Education Programs Across NWT

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is also regarding sexual abuse. I have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The high

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incidence of child sexual abuse is of great concern to all of us. One of the tools we can use in the fight against this type of abuse is prevention education. Children need to know that it is okay to say no and to understand what kinds of things are not acceptable, from either strangers or family members.

Some education districts, such as Yellowknife Education District No. 1, are offering excellent ongoing programs which help children prevent sexual abuse and recognize bad situations. Is this type of program offered across the NWT? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 422-12(5): Prevention Education Programs Across NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through you, I would like to thank the honourable Member for giving me an opportunity to respond to a question of this type. I want to indicate that the Northwest Territories school health program includes lessons on abuse prevention in grades one, two, six, seven and eight, and all schools are required to teach the program.

It is our practice and philosophy to use a holistic approach to teaching and learning and, for this reason, the health program includes lessons on decision-making, assertiveness, handling stress and other skills to help students deal with a variety of stressful situations, including possible sexual abuse.

I would also like to add that we are currently developing a handbook to help school personnel deal more effectively with child abuse. The handbook will include ways to recognize the symptoms of abuse, how to handle disclosures, how to report abuse and how to work with the abused child in the school setting. By helping the school personnel to deal with

child abuse, we are, of course, helping children. The handbook will be in place for the new year.

I want to indicate to the honourable Member, as well, that the handbook to help personnel is being guided by a very effective and committed inter-agency committee with representatives from Health, Social Services, Justice, the RCMP, and the NWT Teachers' Association. The feedback from educational boards and schools on the draft version of the documents has been very positive. This appears to be a much needed resource.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Pudlat.

Supplementary To Question 422-12(5): Prevention Education Programs Across NWT

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. Given the declaration against violence adopted by this Assembly, can the Minister commit to working with the divisional boards of education to ensure programs aimed at helping children combat sexual abuse are available for all NWT primary and elementary students? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 422-12(5): Prevention Education Programs Across NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Social Services, following up on the discussion of child sexual abuse. A couple of years ago, it is my understanding that the Department of

Social Services centralized the function of the child sexual abuse experts. It is my understanding that there were a couple of people in headquarters dedicated to that particular function and it was decentralized. I wonder if the Minister could tell us how many individuals now in the regions are used solely to combat child sexual abuse.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. We have sexual abuse specialists in each region. I think we have four or five mental health specialists in place who are also available, upon request by the communities. To my understanding, there are four sexual abuse specialists, if not five. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Supplementary, Madam Speaker. I thank the Minister for that response. Does the Department of Social Services have a comprehensive plan of action to deal with child sexual abuse in all its complexities.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. In my opening remarks I made just before we dealt with our O and M budget, I indicated that we are going to get four additional PYs that will be dealing strictly with human resources and the training needs that have to be assessed in the communities. This will come into effect. I believe we are in the stage of advertising for the positions. Once that is done, then

the selection of the applicants will take place. Once they are hired, they will assess how much training is required by our front line workers by region and by community. Thank you.

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MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. That doesn't exactly answer my question. I know it's been understood by this government and by Members that this problem is very serious. It's very complex. I think we have been aware of that for a number of years, and I think we have recognized, for a number of years, that it's going to take a multi-departmental approach -- cooperation between Education, Culture and Employment, Justice and Social Services, for instance. Now, my question to the Minister, as the lead department, has the department put together a comprehensive action plan that deals with this very, very serious subject in its entirety? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Those four PYs will be dealing with that, because, to date, we do not know how many of our workers in the communities would like to take the opportunity of getting some specialized training. Because they have families, often times they do not want to leave the community to receive the kind of training they require. What we plan to do -- this is just a general principle for the framework -- in the plan we have, which is not in great detail as yet, is that we will try and bring the educators closer to home rather than pulling our resources from the communities who cannot, for some reason, leave their communities because of their families or their families' sizes. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Item 5, oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Final supplementary. I take it then, that the department has no plan of action, so I would ask the Minister if she would provide to this House a listing of the specialists in the field of child sexual abuse, the community visits that they have had in the past two years, the training that they have received in the past two years and any reports that have been done for the department about the magnitude of this problem. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Mr. Ballantyne, your supplementary question is more appropriate under a written question asking for details. Would you like to rephrase your supplementary? Thank you.

Supplementary To Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I had hoped that the reply could have just been a yes. Again, I'll leave it to your good judgment, Madam Speaker, but of my question to the honourable Minister if she would provide these reports to the House, if that is not acceptable, I am more than prepared to do that in a written question, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 423-12(5): Number Of Employees Working To Combat Child Sexual Abuse

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Since my budget got passed not too long ago and these PYs I talked about can go ahead now, I will proceed with the general plans that we have in dealing with sexual abuse, including mental health. I will provide to this House the request of the MLA for Yellowknife North, hopefully, before we adjourn.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 424-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of The Closure Of Weather Reporting Stations

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I stated in my Member's statement, I had disturbing news in my constituency that the weather reporting station will be closing at midnight, March 31 until April 5, when our government takes over. Is the Minister of Transportation aware of this closure of the weather stations in Cape Dorset, Clyde River and Pond Inlet?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 424-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of The Closure Of Weather Reporting Stations

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think what the honourable Member is referring to -- I am sure he is -- is about the CARS program, which is...

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Microphone turned off)

HON. JOHN TODD:

...the atmospheric environmental service currently operates the CARS program in Cape Dorset, Clyde River and Pond Inlet, and it is, at the present time, on a 24-hour, seven days a week service. It's funded by Transport Canada. We were told several months ago that Transport Canada intended to discontinue the 24-hour, seven days a week service, and we are going to reduce it to five days a week, 24 hours a day; in other words, an eight hour day. I discussed this matter with the honourable Doug Young, who is the Minister of Transportation, in Ottawa two weeks ago and asked him if he was prepared to reconsider or look for an appropriate compromise. Our compromise was to ask if he would consider 70 hours a week and the reduction to be phased in over a period of time. I was told just a short time ago that the only concession we have so far is in Clyde River. Transport Canada has agreed to 65 hours a week over a seven day period. That is the latest I have with respect to this, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

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Supplementary To Question 424-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of The Closure Of Weather Reporting Stations

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am told the contractor has been instructed by the federal government to cut off the power going into the weather station at midnight on March 31. Why would they be instructed to cut off the power and the heat if they are merely reducing the hours? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Further Return to Question 424-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of The Closure Of Weather Reporting Stations

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, in Pond Inlet and Clyde River, the CARS program is located in the atmospheric environmental services buildings. The atmospheric environment services wants to transfer these buildings to the GNWT for the continued operation of CARS. I suspect that what we have got here is a delay in communications between the transfer from the federal government to the GNWT, Madam Speaker. I will look directly into the request as it relates to Pond Inlet and Clyde River, but I believe it is perhaps just an overlap, if you want, or a lack of overlap in terms of the transfer responsibility. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 424-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of The Closure Of Weather Reporting Stations

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I checked with the Minister's department to confirm what I was told by my constituents that they will not have a weather

station from midnight on the 31 of March until April 5, which is when the Minister's department will take over CARS. Because that period is a very important period, the planes will not be able to know how high they are flying, how low they are flying, what the conditions are like on the ground. It's going to be dangerous for airplanes, pilots and the passengers in my constituency. I wonder if the Minister would look at taking over the responsibility on April 1 so that service will continue to be provided to the communities. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 424-12(5): Minister's Knowledge Of The Closure Of Weather Reporting Stations

HON. JOHN TODD:

It was my understanding that negotiations were under way between the federal government and ourselves to take over this particular service in Clyde River, Cape Dorset and Pond Inlet, effective April 1. If there has been some change in that status, I will look into it immediately and try to get back to the honourable Member in an effort to ensure that adequate transportation services are provided in these communities as quickly as we can, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 425-12(5): Resolution Of Educational Issue For Treaty People

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Madam Speaker, earlier this afternoon I raised an issue pertaining to status people in the western Arctic. I would like to ask if the Minister could resolve this issue that I raised in my Member's statement. Prior to the next school year, I wonder if he could make a commitment to resolve the issue that I raised. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 425-12(5): Resolution Of Educational Issue For Treaty People

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I listened, with interest, to the honourable Member's statement. I thought it was extremely constructive. We will try to resolve the issue. We're doing research into the whole matter of educational services and the arrangements that were made for transfer resources. We will try to resolve that particular matter.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 425-12(5): Resolution Of Educational Issue For Treaty People

MR. ZOE:

Supplementary, Madam Speaker. I asked the Minister if he could commit to the House if he could have it done prior to the next school year, which means September, but the Minister didn't give us a time frame. I would like to ask if the time frame could be prior to the next school year. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 425-12(5): Resolution Of Educational Issue For Treaty People

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. We will certainly try to get it resolved by the next school year, however the whole issue is a matter -- as the honourable Member pointed out -- of a difference of opinion between two governments. If the federal government is not prepared to accept the responsibility that we feel they should continue to have, then it may become a much more difficult matter to resolve. If that happens, I will report back to the honourable Members and advise them of the circumstances, as to why we cannot resolve this particular matter before the next school year.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

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Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

MR. LEWIS:

Thanks, Madam Speaker. Yesterday, in the House, the honourable Minister agreed to strike an independent committee -- this is to the Minister of Social Services -- in response to a request by the Groenewegens and their conduct or respect of social service workers in Hay River. I would like to ask the Minister, could she elaborate on the details of this investigation, particular who would be involved and what time frame she expects it to take place within?

Also, Madam Speaker, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to extend question period.

MADAM SPEAKER:

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Return To Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I did agree that the independent review would take place. The terms of reference has to be established for this enquiry. There is nothing much else to say, other than what I have already made commitment to in this House, yesterday. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

MR. LEWIS:

Thanks, Madam Speaker. I realize that the Minister has made a commitment, but things within government can drag on and on for a long time. When we leave, maybe next week, it won't be until the fall that we get responses to things. So I would like to

ask the Minister, can she provide us with some idea of a time frame by which this investigation will be completed?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have asked my deputy minister to act on it as quickly as possible, and try to get the investigation completed before this House adjourns. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

MR. LEWIS:

I appreciate that answer. That certainly gives some comfort to Members. I would like to ask the Minister, would she not agree that replacing the contractor, prior to the outcome of findings of such an investigation is a little bit premature, especially since you really don't know, in view of the present contractor's concerns about policies, procedures and so on, whether, in fact, this was a premature act if the investigation hasn't been completed yet?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I believe yesterday, when I was being asked about this contract being terminated, I did state that the interim measure that we are taking right now is placing the children in foster care homes. As Mr. Lewis knows, it usually takes more than a month to get the call for proposal for contracts in place. By the time we finally do find somebody suitable, it usually takes more than a month. So I think that is adequate time to get the investigation done before the contract can be

awarded to another or to the same person. There is enough time to get the advertisement in place, calling for contract, and get proposals in. That's not going to take weeks, it will probably take more than one month. So I think that's adequate time for the investigation to be carried out, and get the findings of the investigation that was being asked by the Member for Deh Cho. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

MR. LEWIS:

Due to communications, Madam Speaker, between the deputy minister of the Department of Social Services and the contractor whose contract was terminated, it was made clear that this contract was being terminated not because of any inability of the contractor, but because there was a bad working relationship. Does the termination of this contract mean that the guilty party in this work relationship was the contractor and not the department? Is this what we have to assume because this contract has been terminated?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Social Services, Ms. Mike.

Further Return To Question 426-12(5): Investigation Of Termination Of Group Home Contract In Hay River

HON. REBECCA MIKE:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Being responsible for the Department of Social Services, I certainly will not come to a conclusion. That's why I think we should have a private enquiry done on this, because it could be the contractor or it could be our department. That is something that has to be seen yet. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 427-12(5): Reason For Highest Rates For Water Delivery In Fort Providence

MR. GARGAN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I plan on leaving for Providence in a few minutes. I wanted to ask one question to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is with regard to the rates per litre for water subsidies. It seems out of the communities of Aklavik, Fort Providence, Pond Inlet and

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Pelly Bay, the residents of Fort Providence are going to be paying the highest, although Fort Providence would be considered, among all the five communities, as having the lowest cost of living. Further, Madam Speaker, Fort Providence is hit by the highest commercial rates. I would like to ask the Minister how did he manage to conclude that Fort Providence should be designated as the place that should have the highest rates for delivery of water?

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The examples that were used in the statement I made today were specific examples. How exactly it came to be that Fort Providence had a higher increase, I am not able to answer at this time. I will take the question as notice.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. Madam Speaker, my question concerns tender calls for rent supp requirements for the Housing Corporation for 1994-95 in the Baffin. I understand that first, the Housing Corporation put out all the communities in the Baffin to public tender. Then the corporation changed its process for some communities. I would like to focus on Pangnirtung, as an example of problems that I see with this.

My first question, Madam Speaker, is were the rent supp requirements in Pangnirtung initially put out to

public tender for 1994-95? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

MR. PATTERSON:

Madam Speaker, I understand that after having calls for public tenders in Pangnirtung, the Housing Corporation cancelled the public tender in favour of negotiating a contract with a certain local Inuit-owned company. Is that correct?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As the Member knows, and as all Members know, the aim of the consultation process we entered into with Members of this Assembly as well as with our community people -- and that has been encouraged by Members of this Assembly -- is that we should try to benefit the local people as much as possible by having dollars spent in their community. Consequently, in Pangnirtung, a rent supp program will be put out to local tender only. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know that we are now at the stage where we are going out to tender for local companies in Pangnirtung. I don't think the Minister answered my question. After cancelling the tender, was it not the corporation's decision to negotiate a contract with one company -- albeit a local Inuit company -- and were bidders not told that the tender was cancelled and there would be a negotiated contract with one company? Was that not step two in this saga? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As the Member is fully aware, having been on Cabinet before, the Housing Corporation cannot make that decision, to negotiate a contract with one community group. That has to be a Cabinet decision. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

MR. PATTERSON:

Well, Madam Speaker, my supplementaries are being used up because the honourable Minister, with respect, is not answering my questions. I didn't ask him what the process was, does Cabinet have to decide or does the Housing Corporation have to decide? I asked him what happened after the public tenders were cancelled. Did you not tell all the bidders that the tender was cancelled and that you were negotiating with one company? I would like to get your agreement that I should be able to ask that question again, because it wasn't answered. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Unfortunately, Mr. Patterson, the rules allow that one oral questions is to be posed along with three supplementaries. If the Minister doesn't answer

appropriately to a Member, it's not the chair's responsibility to determine what is appropriate or not appropriate. In the event

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that you wish to pursue further questions, that is your privilege as a Member under oral question period. As the rules are now, you are only allowed one question with three supplementaries. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 428-12(5): Status Of Tender For Rent Supp Requirements In Pangnirtung

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The only reason I talked about the process was to remind the Member that he understands the process. He asked me whether or not the Housing Corporation made that decision and it can't. If it was up to me and me alone, I would have negotiated with a local contractor in the community, by the name of EEPOW because of their past record, but it is not up to me and me alone to make that decision. It is a decision to be made by Cabinet.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 429-12(5): Status Of Correspondence From Kawtak Contracting Limited

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is directed to the same Minister with regard to contracting. The contractor under the name of Kawtak Contracting Limited is a mixture of southern people and also three local people in Sanikiluaq. I wonder if the Minister was given a letter from Kawtak Contracting Limited of Sanikiluaq? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 429-12(5): Status Of Correspondence From Kawtak Contracting Limited

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, we did receive a letter from this organization.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Pudlat.

Supplementary To Question 429-12(5): Status Of Correspondence From Kawtak Contracting Limited

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. What kind of answers can be expected for Kawtak Contracting Limited from the Minister of the Housing Corporation? As the NWT Legislative Assembly, we have always said that NWT companies and businesses would be given priority in contractual awards. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 429-12(5): Status Of Correspondence From Kawtak Contracting Limited

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. That letter requested a negotiated contract for, I believe it was rent supp or access units in Sanikiluaq. There are certain guidelines that communities have to follow, as well as the Housing Corporation. One of the major guidelines is it has to benefit local people and northern people. It has to hire 100 per cent local people, then northern people. Joint ventures with southern contractors, I don't think would be considered. So that would be one issue that has to be addressed, is that it has to be 100 per cent local and northern-owned, with the majority local-owned. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Pudlat.

Supplementary To Question 429-12(5): Status Of Correspondence From Kawtak Contracting Limited

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Madam Speaker. Supplementary to my first question. It doesn't appear that construction was included in the tendering of the

contract. I wonder if they were also included. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 429-12(5): Status Of Correspondence From Kawtak Contracting Limited

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. My understanding, from the letter, they are requesting a negotiated contract from Sanikiluaq and there are no other contractors in that community. They are the only local contractors. So they do meet some of the guidelines for negotiated contracts. But if they are in joint venture with a southern firm, south of the 60th parallel, then that portion would not meet those guidelines so it would be harder to agree to a negotiated contract with that type of company. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I understand, from the Minister's earlier statements, that the contract for rent supps for 1994-95 are Pangnirtung is being awarded by invitational tender to local companies because there are several local companies to Pangnirtung. I would like to ask the Minister how he is planning on providing rent supp contracts in Tuktoyaktuk, Cape Dorset and Pond Inlet for 1994-95. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. In Tuktoyaktuk, there has been a request for negotiated contracts. In Pond Inlet, there has been a request for negotiated contracts. In Cape Dorset, I believe there has been a

request for negotiated contracts there as well. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

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Supplementary To Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. If an invitational tender to local companies has been awarded in Pangnirtung, rather than a negotiated contract because there are several local companies in Pangnirtung, if there were one or more local companies in other communities, even where a request for negotiated contract has been made, would it not be fair to proceed by invitational tender so as to give each one of those local companies a chance to bid, as the Minister has done in Pangnirtung? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It would have been nice to be able to do business with a clean sweep across the Northwest Territories, but every circumstance is handled differently. Every community is different. Every community is developed to a different percentage. So in every case we look at it on a case-by-case basis. The final approval is up to Cabinet, whether to negotiate the contract or not. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

MR. PATTERSON:

So, Madam Speaker, is the Minister saying that for reasons of fairness, every local company in Pangnirtung is allowed to bid this year by invitation on the rent supp project? But, that same fairness may not be applied in another community where there are

several local companies interested in bidding on those same rent supp contracts in the same region.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I never said for reason of fairness. What I said is that every individual community has their own circumstances. I've gone through the consultation process with the Members of the Assembly. They are supported by their communities, their hamlets, whether or not to negotiate.

In Pangnirtung's case, they requested local tender only. So that's what I'm doing. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

MR. PATTERSON:

Madam Speaker, thank you. Is it not the case that what happened in Pangnirtung was -- and I was trying to ask this question earlier -- the Minister favoured one local Inuit-owned company with his announced intention to negotiate a contract, and another local Inuit-owned company protested and said this is not fair, we, too, should have an opportunity in fairness to bid on this contract because we, too, are local and Inuit-owned? Madam Speaker, is that not the situation that arose in Pangnirtung, that out of fairness to two local Inuit-owned companies, the corporation changed its plans and decided to do a local invitational tender for local companies for reasons of fairness and equity between those two similar companies? Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 430-12(5): Guidelines To Provide Rent Supp Contracts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have been aware of the one Inuit local development corporation that's owned 100 per cent by the Inuit of Pangnirtung. That's the carpenters, those people who actually work on the projects. They have an excellent track record from the access units last year. I met with them and I agreed that I wanted to see the training continued in Pangnirtung. So, I was going to recommend to Cabinet to negotiate a contract with them. It came to light later in the situation that there was another Inuit-owned company in the community that I did not know of, also a percentage owned by an Inuit businessman. Kenn Harper, or somebody like that owns a good chunk of that company. They want him to also bid on those rent supp units, so I gave him an opportunity to do that. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Speaker would like to recognize, in the gallery, the executive of the board of the NWT Association of Municipalities, representing the communities of Rae, Fort Smith, Cambridge Bay, Norman Wells, Yellowknife and also Coppermine and Hay River. Welcome to our Assembly.

---Applause

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

Question 431-12(5): Type Of Fencing For YCC

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister of Justice, under whose jurisdiction corrections falls. I have already discussed this with my friend for Yellowknife Frame Lake, in whose constituency YCC is situated. The department is planning to install a fence around the YCC compound. Presently, there is a short fence.

The story goes, Madam Speaker, that the fence is going to be 20 feet high and going to be equipped completely with razor wire all around the perimeters of YCC. Currently, there is only a holding area near the facility that has a 20 foot fence. I

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would like to ask the Minister whether it is accurate that a 20 foot fence complete with razor wire is going to be installed in the middle of the city of Yellowknife?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 431-12(5): Type Of Fencing For YCC

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, we have asked for bids to construct a 12 foot high fence with two strands of razor wire around the perimeter of YCC, those areas that are not fenced at the present time. So I understand that the tenders are in and we have yet to make a decision. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 431-12(5): Type Of Fencing For YCC

MR. WHITFORD:

I could hang my campaign material on the fence. Madam Speaker, I would like to know the reason for the installation of a fence around that compound. At the present time, there is a fence there and, in my recollection, Madam Speaker, there has only been one who has escaped over the fence in that area, and a 20 foot fence with razor wire did not stop him at the time. So I just want to know why they want to put a fence around in this practically residential area, Madam Speaker. What is the rationale for a fence around that area of that height and that level of security?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Microphone turned off)

---Laughter

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 431-12(5): Type Of Fencing For YCC

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, next Wednesday, Members of the legislature are invited to have lunch at YCC.

---Laughter

At that time, you will have an opportunity to see the condition of the fencing around YCC, and you will note that last year, around this time, in response to some questions, we said that we wanted to complete the fencing because there was a problem, not so much from people inside trying to get out but people from the outside trying to get in to sell drugs, to place drugs on the premises that are used by the inmates. So it is not only from the inside trying to get out. We are trying to have some control for people that we don't want anywhere in the vicinity to curtail their movements. Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 431-12(5): Type Of Fencing For YCC

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just one more point for clarification. At the present time, there is fencing on at least three sides of the area, and I wasn't sure whether or not the Minister said that they are going to increase the height of the present fence or just install new fencing in the back areas that are not presently fenced. Is it going to be the same height all the way around the compound?

MADAM SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 431-12(5): Type Of Fencing For YCC

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, I am not certain that it is going to be uniform, since that area is not flat. There is an outcrop of rock in the back, for instance, and there, you know, the fence just hits the top of the outcrop, and there is little use in having a fence at 12 feet. Again, lunch next Wednesday, we'll take quick jog around the perimeter and we can all have a look for ourselves.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, oral questions. The honourable Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk, was next, but he's not in the House. Item 5, oral questions. Item 6,

written questions. Item 7, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 7: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 7-12(5): Employment in NWT Mines

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Madam Speaker, return to written question 7-12(5), asked by Mr. Pudluk to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources concerning employment in NWT mines:

Turnover rates for aboriginal or northern employees at NWT mines:

Nanisivik: 1993 turnover rate for northerners (defined as a person born in the NWT, and spending 75 per cent of life in NWT) was 30 per cent. Note: Turnover rates have been declining considerably over the last three years and are much less than the period between 1978 and 1990.

Polaris: The turnover rate for aboriginal employees in 1993 was 20 per cent. Due to base metals prices and economic conditions, three positions that were vacated by aboriginal employees during 1993 have not been filled.

Con: 100 per cent of employees are northerners, 1993 turnover rate was 10.5 per cent.

Lupin: 1993 turnover rate for full-time employees (meaning full benefits) from Cambridge Bay and Coppermine, 21 per cent. Note: The 21 per cent figure is influenced by the high turnover rate in entry level positions. The entry level positions tend to be in the mill, or as "buckers" (processing samples) where conditions are noisy, dusty and closely supervised. Some people are not prepared for this type of work. There is a very low turnover rate among the northerners who successfully

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worked their way up. There are aboriginal employees working at Lupin who were there when the mine opened and have moved up to the top level of miner positions.

Giant: no response yet.

Tremingo: no response.

Return To Written Question 23-12(5): Responsibility of Mines to Provide Adequate Fire Fighting Equipment

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

A return to written question asked by Mr. Lewis to the Minister of Safety and Public Services concerning the responsibility of mines to provide adequate fire fighting equipment:

Operating mines in isolated locations do have a responsibility to make appropriate fire fighting provisions at the mine site. The fire safety requirements in the current Mining Safety Act for mines which are not operating but are in a construction phase, such as the Colomac mine, are not as stringent as those for operating mines, and this anomaly will be addressed in the proposed new legislation.

The Department of Safety and Public Services ensures that mine sites have appropriate fire fighting capabilities. In February, when the last inspection occurred at the Colomac mine, the fire fighting equipment was in operating condition. The mine did not advise the mine safety division when the equipment ceased functioning.

This matter will be dealt with further by the mine safety division.

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. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 11: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Report On Bill 19

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Madam Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Finance has reviewed Bill 19, An Act to Amend The Tobacco Tax Act, and wishes to report that Bill 19 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole, and I request that this bill be ordered into committee of the whole for today. Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to place Bill 19 in committee of the whole. Are there any nays? Thank you. Pursuant to rule 70-5, Bill 19 will be placed into committee of the whole. Just Bill 19 for today. Thank you. Item 11, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 12, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Keewatin Central, Mr. Todd.

ITEM 12: TABELING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table, Tabled Document 64-12(5), the 1993 Annual Report of the Business Credit Corporation. 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. Item 16, first reading of bills. Item 17, second reading of bills. Item 18, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95; 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; and Tabled Document 2-12(5), Building and Learning Strategy, along with Bill 19, with Mr. Ningark in the chair. Thank you.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I would recommend the committee resume consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Report 2-12(5), specifically, to see if we can't conclude the budget of Public Works and Services and then move into the budget of the Department of Health.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Do we have the agreement of the committee that we do Public Works and Services and follow with Health?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Since we have some very interesting guests up there, we will take a 15 minute break and mingle with the guys up there and then come back. Okay. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

Department Of Public Works And Services

Accommodation Services

Line By Line

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The committee will now come to order. When we concluded, discussion on Public Works and Services was deferred. We're on page 10-12. Total O and M, \$40.710 million. Mr. Antoine.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

The Standing Committee on Finance recommended that the Department of Public Works and Services develop the office accommodation plan to most effectively and efficiently house the headquarters personnel. Further, the committee recommended that the cost-benefit analysis which accompanied the plan should be based on

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consideration of savings that could be achieved in the current commercial real estate market.

Mr. Chairman, the committee recommended further that this plan, along with the cost-benefit assessment, should be made available to the Standing Committee on Finance prior to the review of the department's budget in committee of the whole. Since this plan was not available when the Standing Committee on Finance reviewed the department's budget, this item was deferred.

The Standing Committee on Finance has since received the requested plan and some cost-benefit analyses. Committee Members are satisfied that this office accommodation plan for Yellowknife will house headquarters personnel efficiently and effectively. Committee Members understand that this plan must be approved by the Financial Management Board. Further, it is recognized that the implementation of the plan will require more funding than is currently contained in the budget for this purpose.

Committee Members anticipate that the Financial Management Board will approve the office accommodation plan for Yellowknife. However, if the Financial Management Board doesn't see fit to approve the plan, the Standing Committee on Finance will expect a briefing from the Minister which outlines the rationale for the decision.

The Finance committee is now prepared to recommend approval of this budget item and the 1994-95 appropriation for the Department of Public Works and Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Accommodation services, total O and M, \$4.710 million. Pardon me, \$40.710 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Back to program summary of Public Works and Services, page 10-9. Total O and M, \$127.154 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that this particular department is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Department Of Health

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The Department of Health. We are on page 14-10 of the main estimates for 1994-95. When we concluded this department, we were in general comments and it was deferred. Mr. Antoine, the Department of Health.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mr. Chairman, in our report on the review of the 1994-95 main estimates...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Antoine, perhaps we will ask the Minister if he wants to bring in the witnesses before you make your remarks on this department.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I request permission to move to the witness table and bring in witnesses, if I might.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we have the concurrence of the committee that the honourable Minister can bring in the witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Sergeant-at-Arms, please bring in the witnesses. For the record, Mr. Minister, would you introduce the witnesses to the committee?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on my left is Dr. David Kinloch, who is the deputy minister of Health and on my left is Darrell Bower, who is director of finance for the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine, you can now proceed.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In our report on the review of the 1994-95 main estimates of the Department of Health, we made the following recommendation regarding the Department of Health.

The committee recommends that the Department of Health develop a concrete plan for implementing the recommendations of the following groups:

-the Auditor General of Canada;

-the Standing Committee on Public Accounts;

-the Special Committee on Health and Social Services;

-the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards, and Commissions; and,

-the Standing Committee on Finance.

The committee further recommends that the department report on how they plan to improve policy development capabilities within the department. The committee expects the department to present its implementation plan as a prerequisite to the approval of the department's 1994-95 budget.

Mr. Chairman, on February 22, 1994, the Standing Committee on Finance received the Department of Health's response to recommendations of the Auditor General of Canada, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions. All of

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these responses were received late, contravening the rules of this House. These responses were tabled in this House yesterday by the Premier.

The first review of the comprehensive audit of the department was undertaken by the Auditor General of Canada in response to a Standing Committee on Finance recommendation. The comprehensive audit was conducted in late 1991 and early 1992. The Auditor General's report, which contained some 42 recommendations, was tabled on November 17, 1992. The Department of Health provided its response to this recommendation on February 22, 1994, to the standing committees' concerns.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts held public hearings on the matter of the Auditor General's report on several occasions during the early months of 1993. This committee tabled its report with 28 recommendations on March 24, 1993. The process of following up the Public Accounts committee recommendations began in August 1993, in preparation for the September 1993 committee meetings.

The Department of Health provided a status report on its responses just prior to the commencement of the September meetings. When departmental officials appeared before the committee, Members were informed that this was not the official or formal response to recommendations, but rather an update on activities taken. Department of Health officials said that the official response would be submitted to the committee by the end of September, 1993. However, Mr. Chairman, the Public Accounts committee did not receive the formal response from the Department of Health until about five months later on February 22, 1994.

The Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions, over a 14 month period in 1992 and early 1993, held public hearings and consultation processes with health and hospital boards and studied written submissions and other research material. The Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions tabled its report, complete with ten recommendations, on March 15, 1993. The final recommendation of this committee required the Executive Council to table a comprehensive response within 120 days of the presentation of the report to the House.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Health responded some 11 months later on February 22, 1994. In addition to the lateness, committee Members are very disappointed with the content of these responses provided by the Department of Health. The responses to each group were separate and no summary was provided. It appears that the responses to the various groups have not been coordinated by the department. Common issues or themes have not been identified.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, the responses demonstrate a lack of overall planning, coordination and monitoring in the department. Committee Members were disappointed to discover that, while mention is made in the responses of very strategic planning initiatives, no mention is made of an overall departmental strategic plan.

In addition to being late in responding to committees of this Legislature, the department missed many of the deadlines suggested in the recommendations and many self-determined deadlines. This would suggest that the department is unable to lay out a realistic plan of activities and stick to it.

For example, during the September 1993 Public Accounts committee review of the department, the deputy minister assured committee Members that the functional review, which had been initiated at the time, would be complete by the end of the calendar year. The department is now saying that the final report of the functional review will be provided to the project steering committee by March 31, 1994. No target date has been suggested for its completion.

A specific illustration of the department's difficulty with planning is provided by the response to the Public Accounts committee recommendation which suggests that the department prepare and update regularly a document which formulates, defines the rationale, purpose and substance of The NWT Way for health delivery. The response is, "In June 1993, a draft document was developed and discussed by board chairs, CEOs, the Department of Health and professional health organizations. The final draft is expected to be ratified through the MOU process. The current estimated completion date of the MOU process is December 1994."

Mr. Chairman, yesterday, the Premier tabled two additional documents. One was a response to the Committee Motion 9-12(5), to adopt recommendation 20 of the Standing Committee on Finance. Committee Members were not at all satisfied with this document. It provided no evidence that the department has started developing a cohesive approach to dealing with the recommendation of the Auditor General and the committees of the Legislature.

A second document tabled yesterday by the Premier was entitled Renewed Partnerships. This document was developed in response to Talking and Working Together - the final report of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. The Special Committee on Health and Social Services tabled their final report with 32 recommendations on November 18, 1993, and requested that the Executive Council respond within 120 days. The deadline has been missed by only a few days.

Mr. Chairman, although committee Members have not yet had an opportunity to thoroughly review the

Renewed Partnerships document, it appears to be a considerable improvement over previous responses to committee recommendations. The response was a collaborative effort of a number of departments and was developed within the context of a number of major government initiatives.

The specific recommendations are arranged around nine major themes which reflect the current priorities of government and concerns expressed by the special committee. Many of the responses contained target completion dates and some refer to the resources required to implement plans.

However, Mr. Chairman, it appears, after our cursory review, that even these responses fall short of the committee expectations in terms of a concrete action plan which clearly demonstrates a cohesive approach in delivery of health services in the Northwest Territories. While recognizing the need for consultation, the committee still expects the Department of Health to take a leadership role in the timely development of such an action plan.

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Committee Members recognize the effort that is involved in responding to legislative committees and the need to get on with the business of delivering health services to the citizens of the Northwest Territories. On the other hand, legislative committees and the public need assurance that the many important issues that have been identified will be addressed by the department and by the government in a timely and effective manner.

Therefore, the committee has structured a recommendation to the Department of Health in such a way as to assist the department and the government in focusing its efforts in the delivery of health and social services.

The recommendation also allows for consultation with health boards and other stakeholders. The Minister informed Members of the committee of the whole that he was unable to provide a plan to the Standing Committee on Finance during this session because it did not allow time for consultation. The Standing Committee on Finance understands that a meeting of board chairs and other stakeholders has been set for April 1994, in Taloyoak. Further, the department's responses to the Auditor General and the legislative committees indicate that most, if not all, of the major initiatives being undertaken by the department at this time will be discussed at that meeting.

By complying with this committee recommendation, the department will be able to provide some assurance to legislative committees and the public that issues and pressing concerns have been properly addressed.

Recommendation That The Department Of Health Develop A Two-Year Action Plan

The committee recommends that the Department of Health develop a concrete two year action plan which responds to the major issues raised in the reports of the Auditor General and the legislative committees. The committee further recommends that this action plan contain realistic milestone and target completion dates as well as the estimate of the resources required to implement the various elements of the plan.

The action plan should be provided to the Standing Committee on Finance no later than May 9, 1994. The department should be prepared to attend public hearings to explain this plan and answer questions about departmental responses to committee and Auditor General recommendations.

The committee recognizes that, during the life of this Assembly, a number of different Cabinet members have assumed responsibility for the Department of Health portfolio. On the other hand, there has been little turnover in the senior administrative staff of the department. When the Minister next appears before the committee to justify his action plan, Members will expect the Minister to explain why senior staff have been consistently unable to respond in a satisfactory and timely manner to the recommendations of the Auditor General and legislative committees.

Mr. Chairman, I have a motion now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Proceed with the motion. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, may we have a copy of those opening statements, please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine, I believe we have a copy here. Yes. It will be distributed right away. Mr. Antoine, proceed.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Committee Motion 41-12(5): That The Department Of Health Develop A Two-Year Action Plan, Carried

I move that the committee recommends that the Department of Health develop a concrete two-year action plan which responds to the major issues raised in the reports of the Auditor General and legislative committees. The committee further recommends that this action plan contain realistic milestone and target completion dates, as well as an estimate of the resources required to implement the various elements of the plan.

The action plan should be provided to the Standing Committee on Finance no later than May 9, 1994. The department should be prepared to attend public hearings to explain this plan and answer questions about departmental responses to committee and Auditor General recommendations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The motion is in order. To the motion. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Before we proceed with this motion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to have a copy of those opening remarks that the chairman made, because there are some points in the opening remarks that refer to the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe the copy of the statement is on the way. In order to accommodate the Premier, we will take a five minute break. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you.

----SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The committee will now come to order. I believe the statement by the chairman of the Finance committee on behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance has been distributed. There was a motion on the floor prior to the short break we took. I would caution the Members of the committee to be very careful in the choice of words they use, not to offend the Crown. Thank you. I know this is a big department with big concerns and it is pretty emotional, but be very, very careful about the kinds of words used in this committee. Use of such words in this committee is not appropriate.

Regarding the motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Madam Premier.

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HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, in the statement that refers to the motion, I think there is recognition that for a number of years the department has faced a great deal of scrutiny. Perhaps that's because this particular department is a department that takes care of a lot of sensitive issues that relate to our constituents.

There have been continuing requests for replies to reports of one committee after another, plus the Auditor General, including the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions. There are deadlines for requests for information and requests for responses to recommendations.

The motion suggests that the department should be prepared to attend public hearings to explain its plan and answer questions about departmental responses to committee and Auditor General recommendations. I would like to get clarification on the scope and design of how the department is to take part in these public hearings. Is it the Standing Committee on Finance that is going to be having these public hearings? What is the anticipated time that the department is going to have to spend in these public hearings? I would like clarification. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

To answer the question on who is conducting the public meetings, it will be the Standing Committee on Finance. We're looking at one or two days. We would like to get an action plan from the Department of Health by no later than May 9 and the Standing Committee on Finance is planning to meet the following week to look at the action plan and decide at that time the dates for a public hearing on this, perhaps in June. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We are dealing with a motion here and I would remind Members to stick to the principle of the motion. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, the motion indicates that recommendations from several other committees plus the Auditor General will become the framework of the public hearings that the Standing Committee on Finance will be holding. Will the Standing Committee on Finance be holding hearings on behalf of other committees of this Legislative Assembly? Is that my understanding? I'm not quite clear on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine, would you like to clarify this?

MR. ANTOINE:

The motion we're making is consistent with the recommendation we made when we started dealing with this department during the session. That is to have a concrete plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the following groups: the Auditor General of Canada, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, the Special Committee on Health and Social Services, the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions and the Standing Committee on Finance. These are the committees that this recommendation is making reference to.

These recommendations have already been made to the Department of Health. We would like to see a concrete action plan of how all these recommendations will be developed by the department. That's what we're looking for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Just a further clarification. I realize I am, as usual, concerned that we try as much as possible to respect the time set to respond to various demands from the standing committees, but previously it seemed to be that when the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions had a concern, we responded to that committee. Then, we made a response to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. But, this is an all-inclusive recommendation, taking in all the various committees. Some areas are not really financial matters, but deal with policy, scope and other questions.

I know Members realize how much there is to respond to. Is it the intent that all the recommendations from all these other committees be dealt with? Is this a different type of approach, where you are incorporating the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions with the Standing Committee on Finance? Is this a new approach, where all these different agencies and committees will be incorporated? I'm just trying to get some clarification.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the motion, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As legislators in this House, we have the responsibility to provide programs and services to everybody in the community. The recommendations that were made by the Auditor General and all these other committees were that the department see how they could better improve the financial administration and well as the delivery of programs. There are a lot of recommendations.

It is clear that people are concerned. The Special Committee on Health and Social Services toured around the north and have seen with their own eyes what is going on out there. As a result, they made recommendations. Likewise, MLAs are aware of the different problems out in the communities.

Yes, we are here to approve the total budget of the Department of Health. That's what we're doing here. With the money we approve, the programs and services will be delivered. It is a financial matter, no matter how you look at it. So, yes, we are looking at

all these different recommendations for financial reasons. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Premier, to the motion.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, what is being asked for is an action plan which incorporates questions raised by various, different committees of this Legislature plus the Auditor General to be prepared by May 9. I haven't counted all the recommendations, but I believe there are well over 150 altogether, that I can see. The desire is to respond effectively and not face the same criticism that we have received in trying

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to respond to a lot of other recommendations that the government has gone beyond the time frame that we would like to see.

This is an incorporation of all other committees. In previous recommendations, the normal procedure is that the various other committees ask for responses, they receive them and that is done with. But here you want us to incorporate all the various recommendations from the committees and the Auditor General. My concern is if it is possible to do all that, come back on May 9 and be prepared for public hearings. I know the Members can appreciate that a lot of time gets tied up in the overall presentation, supply of information, action plans, and responses to different committees.

I'm wondering if the date of May 9 is realistic, with the knowledge that the committee has and the concerns that they know are out there. I know that an ordinary MLA, just in dealing with their own constituency, can see similar problems. I'm just wondering if the standing committee, reflecting upon the magnitude of the concerns and the job the department has to do, thinks that May 9 is a realistic date? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All the responses to the Auditor General and the committees of the Legislative Assembly have already been made by the

department. We received them and we have an analysis by our staff of some of it. We also received the response to the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. In our report we talked about these responses and we said that the document Renewed Partnership was quite good. It showed some themes and some context.

There have been responses to all the recommendations already. We just wanted to know if the department could put together an action plan on how they could put all these different recommendations together. It seems to me that most of the work has already been done. It is just a matter of how the department wants to coordinate it together into an action plan. That is what we are requesting. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Madam Premier, to the motion.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, it's not that I'm questioning the recommendation or what was being asked for. It's just that the Member should understand that a lot of the recommendations from the various standing committees and the Auditor General, at times, conflict. There are some that would make a recommendation that's different than what another standing committee would do. So all those things have to be tied together.

As well, there is an intergovernmental requirement to try to put people together, because it's often not just the Department of Health that has to deal all alone. On some of the issues and recommendations, it requires the help of the Department of Personnel or the Department of Education, Culture and Employment or Social Services, because they cross-reference.

So it's just my concern that I wouldn't want us to be delinquent in terms of trying to meet that date. I just feel that the date...With the request and the work that has to be done to coordinate the intergovernmental activity, it might take some time to do. It's not only with all the recommendations because it's more than the Department of Health. If you take the references you have to the other committees, there are broader issues that impact on the Department of Health, and it would be difficult, I would say, with taking seriously all the recommendations, to pull it all together by May 9. I just want the committee to consider that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the motion, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. If there are conflicting recommendations, I am sure that the Department of Health has already identified those -- they should have -- and the cross-referencing and so forth.

With the interdepartmental concerns and intergovernmental concerns, there are areas and recommendations that may identify resolutions in that area, if the department could identify those.

I think the majority of the recommendations are to try to streamline the financial operation and to provide better programs and services to people in the community. I think the majority of those recommendations are those. If you could even identify those and identify the areas where you perhaps have conflicting resolutions.

Perhaps I don't know how the department works, but with the responses that we received, some of the responses were very good and some of the responses were not too good, and we would like to see if they could put together an action plan with that. I think the May 9 deadline could be reasonable to achieve. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the motion, Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Like the chairman of the standing committee said, some of the responses have been not too good, and sometimes, when they are not too good it's because there is not adequate time to deal with the issue and try to get the information to provide a good response.

The other thing that I want to bring to the attention of the Members, as well, is that we do have health boards, and it's fine to indicate that the department has an overall two year plan, but we also have to work with the health boards, because, in many instances, the health boards jealously guard their jurisdiction or their home plate, and so it takes us some time to try to work with them. So I just didn't want us to be in another situation where we are being accused again of not being able to meet the deadline. I know that the Member has said that they have travelled to communities and talked to health boards.

I think that, with the other people and the magnitude of the problems we do have, this is not an easy program to deliver and try to satisfy all of our constituents.

So the health boards have to be part of some of the answers so that the action plan could be presented, and I don't want us

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to have to do something so quickly that we have a not a good action plan. So that's just my concern. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the motion. I have Mr. Dent and Mr. Ballantyne. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One point I would like to make sure is brought to mind is that this motion says, be prepared to attend public hearings. The way I read that, it doesn't automatically mean that there will be public hearings. If the Standing Committee on Finance is satisfied with the action plan, then there may be no public hearings held. I don't think that it's ever been said that we've got a date certain that the public hearings will be held.

This committee, in particular, since this legislature has started has insisted that every department has to have a plan of action, a comprehensive plan for where it is headed in order to justify the expenditure of funds. It was a result of the recommendation of this committee, for instance, that we had the Minister of Education present his plan of action which was called, Towards 2010. It's not the first time that this committee has made recommendations that there be a plan of action, and I think that, if you check the records, you will find that we have made this same recommendation for all of the departments, including Health, previously. It is therefore our opinion, as Members of this committee, that this plan of action should be ready, and if there are problems, then those problems should be addressed or should have been in the process of being addressed or else we should have been talking about what those problems were, perhaps in the public forums, so that everybody understood what the problems were.

I think that the Premier has expressed concern about the scope of what an action plan might contain, but as our chairman has said, a comprehensive plan for

where a department is headed really does have to do with how money is spent, and that's what we are concerned about. We want to make sure that money is being spent effectively and efficiently, and without a plan of action, how do we know that that's going to happen?

If there's a problem with health boards, then let's deal with that. Let's talk about that in this forum, if that's where the problem is with getting things done. But, as the SCOF chairman has already said, much of the information is already prepared. It just hasn't been put together in a cohesive, comprehensive package that says, here are the steps we are going to take to achieve these goals and here's how long we will take to get them done.

I will take one just right off the top from Renewed Partnerships, the response to recommendation 16. We have three bullets in this document, which was tabled yesterday, which say that the Department of Health will support health and hospital boards to identify training needs and so on; in-service opportunities will be provided yearly or regularly and then talks about the Department of Social Services. Nowhere in here does it say what the time lines are. It doesn't say that we are going to try and accomplish these things in a certain period. That's the sort of information that the committee is looking for in a comprehensive plan of action. We want the responses that we have to date identified in a ranking of priority and we want to know where the resources are going to be found to put them in place and what the expected timetable is.

I've got to say, and I said it in my Member's statement earlier today, that the approach that we got in Renewed Partnerships, the document that the Premier tabled yesterday, was much superior to the response that we have received for any other recommendations coming from committees.

What we are asking is that we get the whole package put together around themes with an idea as to how we are going to accomplish these goals, and, to our way of thinking, this is something management should be doing at all times. This isn't something that's brand new. It's a management tool for somebody who is running a business, who is running a department, who is running government, to make sure that you do have a well thought-out plan of action for where you are going, where you are headed, and if you've got problems, then let's hear what those problems are and let's see if we can't deal with them.

But don't, after we've been asking for this plan for a long time, come back and say that it isn't possible because hospital boards are getting in the way. How are hospital boards getting in the way? If they are, then I want to hear that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the principle of the motion, Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Just to make a correction, I did not say the hospital boards are getting in the way. The fact is that the hospital boards and the health boards have...How they set their priorities and what they think is important at different stages. In coming up with a comprehensive plan, they have to be incorporated in that comprehensive plan, unless the Members are saying something different. I said, "It is difficult, from time to time, to try to get that working relationship and getting the answers or a consensus on the way a plan such as this would work positively in helping them do their work and vice versa." It is not that anybody is getting in the way. It is the consultive way we have to deal with health boards or any other board.

I would say it would be far easier to put together a comprehensive plan on some departments that are less painful departments in dealing with things that are very close to people and a very emotional part of people's lives. Other departments may have an easier job to put a comprehensive plan together. I am not trying to get out of doing something. I am just trying to bring to the attention of the Members to say, in their own mind, knowing and being fully knowledgeable about some of the things you have seen for the first time for some people, in other communities, the nature of this particular department and what it is dealing with.

If you are quite happy to say that, with those considerations, that this can possibly be done by May 9, perhaps you are a better judge than I am. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is in response to the Premier's comments. Perhaps the Honourable Richard Nerysoo had it much easier. I do think he

had to deal with elected education districts as well as appointed ones. I think

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the whole process is not one that is new just to the Department of Health in dealing with boards. I think that all or most of the departments of this government do have boards or agencies with which they have to consult, which have to be included in their plans of action. It would be difficult to imagine Renewable Resources not consulting with aboriginal groups or settlement groups when they are proposing changes to the Wildlife Act. This isn't something that is unique to the Department of Health. It is something that should have been ongoing. If there is something that is causing a unique problem, then let's hear about it here and let's talk about it. Let's see if there isn't a solution. But, to date, I don't know if we have publicly heard that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will give my perspective on this one. I look at it in a fairly straightforward way. The Standing Committee on Finance had requested of the department, near the beginning of this session, an action plan. The department, at that time, wasn't able to give that action plan, so we deferred this particular department to the end of the budget session. They are still not able to.

The feeling of our department is that there are still unresolved issues between the Standing Committee on Finance and the Department of Health. We think it is responsible to try to conclude the business of the budget before March 31. We think it is responsible to try to conclude the budget of this department before March 31. Rather than drag this out for the next two weeks, force the government to vote supply, force the department to vote supply, or hold the department at some sort of ransom, we thought a reasonable way was to give the department an extra six weeks.

They will appear in front of us again. We will take up this unresolved issue. I don't see it as a big deal. I think it is a responsible way of handling a difference of opinion. It shouldn't be viewed as a total condemnation of the Department of Health or of the Minister. There are some questions that we want answered. That is what it is. We also want to do the

responsible thing here and do our duty in getting this budget concluded. I just hope people don't over-react to what the Standing Committee on Finance is asking for here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. The honourable Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

This is generally a different form. By and large, the Cabinet, when the standing committee report comes up, we sit back and say it is a recommendation. I think this is very serious, the job we have to do in Health. I don't think you can compare that to the Department of Public Works or anything else because this is life and death. I don't want you to take it as a question of the motion that is put forward. I just wanted some clarification. I didn't realize that I raised the arguments I did, because I had thought that the leading in comments, that much of this information has come out because of the concern that, when Members, sometimes for the first time, travelling to some of the other communities other than Yellowknife, saw many things that should be addressed. I feel that it is in our interest to do the best we can. If you feel that the issues are as serious as they are and that we can come up with an action plan by this date, I just did not want to disappoint you. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I think that every department is unique. I don't think we should compare with each other. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

---Carried

General Comments

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

General comments. Department of Health. We are on page 14-10. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we get into details, I have some questions which relate to the definitive objectives of the department. I was wondering if I could ask those.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Yes, go ahead, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that one of the definitive objectives listed is to develop service standards for both air medevac carriers and medical escorts. As the Minister knows, this has been a concern of mine for some time. I understand that draft standards have been printed. I also understand that they have been sent out to some of the people in the field for comment or consultation. I was wondering if we could ask the Minister if he could tell us to whom these draft standards have been sent and what the timetable is for getting comments back and the further timetable for moving forward with the proposed regulations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The two documents Mr. Dent mentioned have gone to the boards at the present time. Medical professionals also have some input into the documents. I gave them to the boards on February 1 or 2 of this year. They are to be discussed at the next meeting, which was to take place in your constituency of Taloyoak in April. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The second part of my question is, what is the expected timetable for getting the comments back from those groups and where does it go from there?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to back up a little bit and I hope Members will bear with me. I'll use the example of the western Arctic and the Kitikmeot and perhaps you can see where the medevac and the standards fit into this overall plan.

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If we look specifically at Inuvik, we have a hospital there that is able to deliver a certain level of care for people. It handles certain emergencies and does certain procedures. Patients flow from another community, say Tuktoyaktuk, into the Inuvik hospital and if they cannot be treated there, they would be forwarded to Stanton, which can do more work than Inuvik. Theoretically, if that patient can't be treated in Stanton, then that person would be forwarded to the Royal Alec, which is the hospital in Edmonton that we are presently making arrangements with to handle people from the western Arctic and from the Kitikmeot.

How do we decide to move that patient? There has to be a certain level of care that we're confident is available at all times in Inuvik and if it's not available for a particular time, we have to know that it's not. There has to be an assessment made of the patient who is in Tuktoyaktuk and if he or she should be sent to Inuvik. If he or she cannot be sent to Inuvik and it is Stanton, then we have to look at the amount of care that is going to be delivered at Stanton and whether they can handle the emergency. If that hospital can't handle the emergency, then we know that we want to send it on to the Royal Alec.

There needs to be communication from the nursing station, the health centre, the physician who's attending this person to some person who says that case has to go to this particular location. Once that's been done, then we have to transport that person. In order to efficiently transport that person, we don't want to be first flying that person to Inuvik and finding out that he or she should have gone to Stanton and then finding out that Stanton really shouldn't have had the patient and the patient should have gone to Edmonton. That is wasting a lot of time. In many instances, in emergencies, there's not a lot of time that can be wasted.

So, we now need to put together a plan that works with the flow of the patients from the small communities into the regional hospital, into the larger regional hospital and then into the southern hospital.

That has to work hand in glove with the medical requirements. It also has to work with what we perceive in the Northwest Territories as a logistical problem -- it sometimes becomes a political problem, and it is certainly is an economic problem -- on how you decide which carrier is going to get the medevac.

Just recently, we've had at least three or four Lear jets coming in from Edmonton. I'm going to try to find out why we are using planes from south of the 60th parallel when there are certainly planes in the Northwest Territories -- at least all the air carriers tell me there are. So, what the boards and I have agreed on -- and this is just the one thing we've agreed on at the present time -- is that we will try to base aircraft regionally. I don't know how we'll do that. We're certainly not saying that all the medevacs will come out of Yellowknife or Iqaluit. We're saying that we will deal with medevac aircraft on a regional basis.

Now we want to work the boards and see what their suggestions are. They know their areas best. Cost is a big consideration, too. We don't want a Lear jet delivering a patient who could have been handled much better, size-wise anyway, in a King 400 and when time wasn't of the greatest essence, it was just getting the patient in stable condition to another facility. That's where this issue fits into the plan. It is the orderly flow of patients, when they have to go from their home community to another community -- be it Inuvik, Edmonton or Yellowknife -- for treatment.

Mr. Chairman, as I said, we've only agreed so far on doing it on a regional basis. The next thing we'll have to decide is if a plane is out of a region and there's another one required -- and that happens quite regularly -- how we backfill that aircraft and where it comes from. That leads me to believe that we're going to have to have some sort of central despatch system. If you look at the situation where you may have a physician in a central location saying the best place for this patient is this place, we would want to say that because this is the best location, the closest aircraft to you that we have an arrangement with is here, and that aircraft is available because it is on a ready board.

That's what we're trying to do, to work out these arrangements with the boards. Logistically, it's hard to do. We're changing things that have been in place for a long time. In many instances, it's changing some of the physician's views because they are so used to doing things in a certain way. It's going to take some time. I anticipate that we will be able to say that we've reached an arrangement on how to do

that some time this summer and would look for implementation some time later on this year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the detailed answer. I got the timetable. My question also had to do with the consultative process, and what the next steps were. Is there going to be further consultation, other than with the boards and the medical profession? For instance, are you going to table the draft standards in the House so that it is available for the public and air carriers to make comments on, too?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, when I said that I hoped that some time in the summer we would have a plan, I suggest that then we will go to the carriers. I have promised all the carriers I have spoken to and I've promised MLAs in this House that we will not make another move after coming up with how the boards and the Department of Health want to handle this, without sitting down and talking to the carriers.

All carriers in the Northwest Territories, as far as I'm concerned, will be eligible to come to a meeting and discuss with me what we are trying to do. They may want to suggest to us some of the ways they could support each other if we are going to go on this regional basis, simply because there will be times when there won't be enough aircraft in a region. After having talked to the carriers about the logistics and the standards that we are asking for in aircraft, then I would suggest to the carriers that they may want to make recommendations on a process to acquire those services from northern companies.

Mr. Chairman, I may not take their recommendations, but as they are the transportation specialists, it would be only right to give them a chance to say collectively what they would

propose to meet our objectives and to feel they're being treated fairly in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister confirming that air carriers will be able to make some comment and I understand fully that the Minister may not accept all their comments. What about MLAs and the public? Will they have a chance to make a comment somewhere along the line in this process?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, if we're successful in having some arrangements between ourselves and the boards by the summer and in sitting down with the carriers and getting their input, then it would be my intention to place before this House in the fall session the plan about how we intend to go about seeking aircraft services in the Northwest Territories. Members could then comment and give me their considerations of our suggestions. In the latter part of the year, then we would either go to tender, proposal call, or whatever falls out of the consultative process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically on the air medevac carriers policy, how did we come up with standards that have gone out in the draft right now? Was this done as a comparison to other jurisdictions? Did we, for instance, contact STARS, the shock trauma air rescue people in Alberta, and ask for their advice, or did we talk to other jurisdictions? I am just wondering how it was that we actually came up with the draft standards that are now under consideration.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct. We looked at other jurisdictions, namely Alberta and BC, although we did look further afield as well. We have consulted with Public Works, which is responsible for air charters, formerly Government Services. We talked to medical experts. We have had some considerable documentation from St. John's Ambulance on problems that they have experienced. I had asked for other problems that they have had, so we were fairly well aware of the problems that we were experiencing. We put that together with what other jurisdictions had done. We talked to the professionals about when speed is important or when room to manoeuvre on an airplane and get around a patient is more important. From that, we came up with the standards that the Member is in possession of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the department have in-house anybody with qualifications to evaluate these standards or are we relying basically on the other jurisdictions? If not, was there ever any consideration given to the department hiring a consultant who may be involved, for instance, with STARS, or is a commercial pilot or aircraft engineer, to advise as to whether or not the standards are logical and make sense?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I have taken it as far as I would like to go right now without consulting or getting the feedback from the hospital and health boards. I think it is a reasonable document. They may suggest that, ultimately, we have to get some further expertise. I am certainly expecting some constructive criticism from the industry when the standards are placed before them. My nervousness about bringing in some southern expert who has done this before is that we will get an imprint upon ourselves of some other jurisdiction, whereas, I think in the Northwest Territories, there is already much knowledge within this government with regard to aircraft. There is certainly enough expertise around in the industry so

that, as we get into late summer, and the industry sees what we have placed before it, if there are concerns or technical considerations, then, at that time, Mr. Chairman, I will consider bringing in a technician to straighten the thing around. I don't think there is a need for it at the present time, though. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. General comments. The honourable Member for Kitikmeot, Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What is the status of these memoranda of understanding between the department and health boards? I understand there is a meeting planned in Taloyoak in April. Prior to this, when they had their initial meeting, what are some of the outcomes of the discussions of that initial meeting? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I think the boards wanted to take the memorandum of understanding away. It was agreed that we would deal with it in April. At that time, I am expecting some concrete results and some decisions to be made.

Mr. Chairman, I am hoping that this memorandum of understanding, that previous Ministers have worked on, will be the solution to the problem that exists between the Department of Health and health and hospital boards at the present time. They merely see us, at times, as a funding agency. We just pay the bills. Through no fault of their own, they have become very independent, so they only look at their own particular region, their own particular area of the Northwest Territories. I am trying to convince them, as have previous Ministers, that we are in this together. There is only a certain amount of money that is available in the Northwest Territories. If one region overspends, then it is really taking money away from another region. If one region does something differently, where it may be the same common treatment or service that is available across the Northwest Territories, then that one region

that is out of step is really affecting everybody in the Northwest Territories.

I am hoping that we can come to some terms in this memorandum of understanding to collectively say, "This is how we regard each other. This is what the Department of Health does. This is what we accept the boards will do." Other boards will say, "We understand that all boards are going to do things in this particular fashion." If we are successful in that, Mr. Chairman, then I think many of the problems that are perceived out there right now will go away. If we are not successful in reaching that kind of accord, then we will have to take another look at it. I am hoping to have something fairly certain by April, when we sit down with the boards, and to have that put in place as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In that initial meeting with the people from the regional health boards, are there any major issues that have come forward at that time that might jeopardize the possibility of reaching a mutual agreement with these MOUs? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, Ms. Mike started this process of the board chairs and their staff getting together. I think the meeting that I held in February was only the second time that it occurred. I think this process is to try and get boards to understand us and to understand each other. Yes, there were some problems that came up. One of them was that one of the boards wanted to do some movement around of people and PYs. They were told that has to go to the Financial Management Board, as does any department in this government. One of the boards was quite upset at the fact that we would eventually come to this House, or through the government to this House, to sort of sanction or say no to the particular changes that they wanted to make. So, yes, there are some fundamental problems on what boards feel they should be allowed to do and what the policies of this legislature and of this government are. So, yes, there were a few problems. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. The chair recognizes Mr. Ng.

MR. NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On another matter, on dental services in some of the communities, in basing some of the dental professionals in the communities or in the regions, I would like to ask the Minister about the status of implementing that throughout the NWT this stage. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, we have just now received the new agreement from Canada about what they will pay in that regard for the next year.

So, again, we are running into a little bit of a difficulty in one of the regions whereby one of the boards is overspending in the dental area. It's becoming a problem simply because those particular funds flow from the federal government, and when we are overspending in one particular area, we are either taking away from other areas in the Northwest Territories or we are forced to pay with our own money for fees that are really the responsibility of the federal government, and yet the federal government does not agree with the level of services that is being provided by a particular board. So in one instance, it hasn't worked out as well as we would have liked, although we are trying to correct that at the present time.

With regard to other dental services that are available across the Northwest Territories, dental therapists are in just about every major centre now, and although that's working for us, what we are now finding is that we are not getting to these children until they are in school, and by then, some of the problems that they have with their teeth are really starting to affect them. So we are now looking at how we can get to those children before they become school age. Those kinds of things are available in communities at the present time.

As far as the other areas of actually basing dentists, or, to raise another two issues that have been very difficult to handle, those of periodontic and orthodontic services in the Northwest Territories, we are going to

be addressing that issue fairly quickly by employing an orthodontist to look into what exactly is required in the Northwest Territories and how can we best meet that demand. I have to tell you, though, that the department and I still share the concern about the amount of dental problems that we have in all of the communities, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. General comments. The chair recognizes the Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am glad the honourable Minister informed the committee that regional boards have their own little plans and do their own thing. I guess we realize that the comprehensive plan of the department would curtail, if you will, the problem. It may not be able to eradicate the problem, but, to a degree, it will help to solve some of the problems.

On a different issue, Mr. Chairman, about a week ago, I brought the matter up of an incident that happened at the airport with a mother who was carrying her deceased child. I have more information on this but I will not bring this matter here at this point in time.

Subsequently, the nurse at the hospital indicated to the 7:30 am CBC news, Monday, March 21, 1994, that the hospital was in the process of having a meeting with Social Services, the airlines and Status of Women to try and put a procedure in place so that this kind of incident will not happen again. My question to the honourable Minister of Health is, Mr. Chairman, when is this meeting of such a group going to take place? I hope it is very soon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Minister Pollard.

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HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, this is one area where I would like to point out that it's not the responsibility of the Department of Health. This is a Stanton health board responsibility. They were handling it in what I thought was a very professional fashion. I heard the Member

say that he was happy with the fact that it was going to be addressed and it was going to be addressed with the airlines, Social Services, Status of Women, et cetera. I don't have an update on whether or not that meeting has taken place. I trust that Stanton has done the meeting. I anticipate that as soon as they have reached an accord, they will advise us because they are aware of the interest that we have shown in this particular area.

In another way, Mr. Chairman, we are looking at this particular aspect, not only of this person at this particular hospital, but in general, the handling of deceased people across the Northwest Territories. That's what the department is looking at and that's why we're keen on finding out the protocol that's being worked out by Stanton so that we can incorporate it into our overall look at the kinds of facilities that are in communities, the cultural way that people grieve, the things that they do culturally when a person has passed away and at the physical requirements in communities.

We have had a rough cut right across the Northwest Territories right now to see what services are available. We have discovered that, well, in this particular instance, maybe we weren't, at Stanton, explaining to mothers exactly what the rules and regulations were with regard to the aircraft and so on and so forth.

We have discovered that, in many instances, the government has given its jurisdiction to the handling of the dead to the municipalities and hamlets and that there are different procedures in different parts of the Northwest Territories.

So that's the overall picture that we are looking at, and, to answer the Member's question, as soon as Stanton gets back with the protocol that they've worked out, we'll incorporate it in our study and provide the answer to the Member, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. General comments. The chair recognizes Mr. Zoe, Member from North Slave.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, while we are on the definitive objectives, it is of great interest that I read last year's definitive objectives and the status of those particular objectives. Last year, Mr. Chairman, the

Mackenzie regional health services were developing a health service planning strategy for the Mackenzie region. I understand that a consultant was hired to identify options and strategies to address the steps required so that an effective health planning strategy can be developed. Could I ask the Minister where that's at now? Has that been developed already?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, we were just trying to remember the name of the person. We know his first name is Mark. The work is under way, at the present time, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ZOE:

So, obviously, the plan for the Mackenzie region is not developed because we are still waiting for the consultant to say what should be part of the strategy. That is the way I read your notes that were provided to us. Am I correct? Mr. Chairman, I want to know how long this sort of thing takes? This was last year's definitive objective. Surely, they must have concluded this report and started to work on their health service planning strategy for the region?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, can I just get this straight? Are we talking about the planning for boards in that area? Is that the question I'm being asked?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Last year, one of the definitive objectives was to develop regional health service plans with the Inuvik regional board and with Mackenzie regional health services. You gave us a status report on last year's definitive objectives to indicate where you had completed them, partially completed them and so forth. In that response from your department, it indicates that you hired this consultant to identify options and strategies to address the steps required

so they can do this health planning strategy for the region. I'm asking where is it now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, the MRHS, with Stanton, have used departmental support to develop an effective health planning strategy for Yellowknife and area. A steering committee of Members from MRHS, SYH and the department have been formed. Mackenzie Regional Health Services has the lead. We've hired the health consultant and the objective is to identify options and strategies to address the steps required to do so, so that an effective health planning strategy can be developed. That's where we're at with it at the present time, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, since this definitive objective was not completed last year, shouldn't it be included in the 1994-95 definitive objectives? We are half-way through, I guess. I'm just asking why it isn't part of your definitive objectives? It appears to me that the work isn't complete yet and we're abandoning it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, Inuvik is a little bit further down the road with theirs, but both of them are covered under definitive objective number two in 1994-95, which is to produce community health profiles for the Northwest Territories communities. Seeing as they started in the 1993-94 main estimates, the work is under way and it is not normal to carry them forward into the next year. But, they are being monitored under the community health profiles for NWT communities. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, one of my favourite subjects with health is the Dogrib regional health board that we have been asking for, for a number of years. When are we going to see a resolution to the outstanding issue that we have here in this area? I think most Members are aware that the Mackenzie Regional Health Board doesn't have board members. It is currently administered by the Department of Health. When are we going to come to a satisfactory resolution to this whole issue?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in recognition of the fact that Deh Cho and the Dogrib Nation didn't have independent representation, they were both invited to and both had representatives attend the last board of chairs meeting with myself. They had full status at that table. The department may be the administrator of Mackenzie regional health services, but certainly there was independent representation at that meeting and they later participated with myself and all the board chairs when we discussed the Tobacco Tax issue.

As far as I'm concerned, we're on the way to forming those boards now. I say boards because I think the preference at the present time is to have two boards, although my preference, Mr. Chairman, is to have one. I don't have to tell people here that there's also the issue of Sahtu. The people of the Sahtu have said they want...

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Microphone turned off)

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

I'm hoping this will be resolved very quickly and we could possibly talk about forming one board. I should point out that the other issue we're dealing with is the make-up of the Stanton board. That board will, very shortly, have appointed to it all the board chairs from the western Arctic and Kitikmeot so that there's representation from the boards on the Stanton Hospital and it will deliver a majority of services to it.

The other issue is Lutsel K'e and they will be addressed through the Stanton board, simply

because that's where they draw their services from. In Hay River, there will be some changes in the board there. By the time we get around to working things out with the Dogrib, Deh Cho and Sahtu, we'll be able to say some time this year that the fledging board will be up and running. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, the reason I'm raising all these outstanding issues is because they have impact on a number of initiatives the department is currently doing, particularly community health profiles, human resources and so forth. Since the 12th Assembly started, we've had no board members on the board. The budget from last year indicates that the Mackenzie Regional Health Board is developing a health service planning strategy for the Mackenzie region. How could they be doing that when we have no board members there? I don't know who is developing all of these strategies. I know they hired a consultant to identify options, but I don't know who is formulating the strategy for the Mackenzie zone. I assume it is the department itself.

The departmental people we have are not aware of exactly what is happening at the field level, in particular the smaller communities. That is why I am questioning the whole area of board membership, particularly the Mackenzie Regional Health Board. Without that being resolved, we can't do other things because the communities want to have input. I realize what the Minister indicated earlier when he said that, because there is no chairman of the Mackenzie Regional Health Board, he invited a representative from my region to attend the chairman and CEO's meeting that they had. I appreciated that because we wanted to have input. Nevertheless, that doesn't solve the problem. We still have that problem. It has to be resolved quickly. Without that being resolved, then other things can't happen.

My region has been pushing me to have our own board, like we do with our education board and everything else that is at the regional level in the North Slave riding. I am sure my colleague for Nahendeh is considering that because he raised it a number of times too, that his region has been asking for a similar board. I think that whole issue has to be resolved as soon as possible. I know it has been

difficult for the Minister and his officials to deal with, but if he doesn't resolve that it has a ripple effect on everything else that the department is trying to achieve. I can't see the department going ahead with all of these other initiatives without the board issue being resolved. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, if I can get the agreement of Deh Cho and the Dogrib Nation that they will form one board, I can do this thing very quickly, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do feel that the MOU is a pivotal issue. I am one of the people who had the pleasure of working on that for a while. I shouldn't say pleasure. I know it is a frustrating experience. I was being a little ironic there, perhaps. I always thought, when that process was initiated, that the division was simple. The department's role was territorial-wide planning, policy, legislation and financial dealings with Ottawa, and that the boards could carve off and very usefully deal with the day to day administration of health services in their region.

I felt that if the boards basically could be given more freedom and flexibility to do that day to day work and perhaps the department could not keep quite such a close watch on their day to day responsibilities, correspondingly, the boards could agree that the policy, planning and territorial-wide financial issues and accountability of the Legislative Assembly would be a matter for the Minister of Health, with which they need not interfere. That was how, in my simplistic mind, I saw the MOU working out.

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I haven't been briefed on all of the good work I know that has been done on that MOU over the last number of months. There have been consultations and meetings. Is that the general tenor of the MOU? The boards will have a clear authority carved out to deal with the day to day issues in their region and perhaps

some more flexibility and autonomy than they now have, but they will in turn agree that the Minister has the duty to do territorial-wide policy, planning, legislation and the big picture budget issues. Is that what we are aiming for with this MOU as it is being developed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are anticipating a definition of desired roles, responsibilities and authorities of each body, the identification of changes possible within existing directions by Cabinet and FMB, the identification of existing statutory and other barriers to desired changes, development of a process for future efforts and the prioritization of areas for consideration. Yes, we want to mark turf out. The boards are wanting to mark their turf as well.

The difficulty that I have, at times, Mr. Chairman, is that, ultimately, the people of the Northwest Territories collectively, the Government of the Northwest Territories, on behalf of those people, pay the bill. If you have a board that goes out and does something that it believes it should do and it just says, well, send the bill to the Government of the Northwest Territories. In many instances, we are delivering the program on behalf of the federal government, who will only pay for "x" amount of procedures or "x" amount of days for a certain number of people and for a certain number of times per year for a procedure. That is where the difficulty comes in. If you are going to do the paying, you want to say what it is being spent on.

I think that our concern is not the delivery of health in the regions. I think the boards are doing an excellent job in delivering. We get some complaints, but I want to be able to say to Members, when there are complaints about health in a particular region, go and see the health board. Don't ask me any more because we have an agreement that that is their balywig. At the same time, I want to be able to try and encourage the boards to be responsible with the funds that they are spending and have them spend them in an economical way, and to take into consideration that they are in this together. There is only one pot of money and there is only one person paying and that is the taxpayer, and to be cognizant of that.

I believed, at times, that health boards have used the health system as a means of, in some instances, economic benefit to communities. I don't think we can look at health that way. I think we have to look at health as delivering to the people of the Northwest Territories a health care system that addresses their needs and ailments and, at the same time, it is done in a reasonably responsible fashion by spending as few pennies as possible. Mr. Patterson is right. It is a question of turf. That is the issue that we have to stake out with the boards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. General comments. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I expect that the April meeting between the Minister and board chairs is important because this issue has been around for some time. I think that Ministers' goals about getting it resolved have not been met. I realize it takes two to tango on this issue. I would like to ask the Minister, does it appear that the boards are as anxious to resolve this issue as the Minister, the department and various committees of this legislature? Are they taking this next meeting seriously and does it look like everyone will be there to address this important issue?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I believe the boards are taking this issue seriously. On February 1 or 2, I told them we would meet in April in the Kitikmeot. I sent the letters of invitation around. So far, I've had two takers and that is Deh Cho has agreed to come, the Dogrib Nation has agreed to come, and some of the other boards are having scheduling problems. The issue is too important for me not to go ahead with the meeting, so I'm now suggesting to the boards if they can't be there themselves as chairpersons, then they could send a representative from their board. If we're forced to put this back into May or June, I'm going to be sitting before this legislature again in September saying I haven't gotten anywhere with the boards. So I'm trying to force the issue with the boards and say, let's get together and do this thing in April, and roll up our sleeves, make some arrangements, if we can't make some arrangements, let's agree to disagree. I

guess I will then have to find another way to do it.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. General comments.
There are no further general comments. Is the
committee prepared to go into detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Detail is located on page 14-10. Administration, total
O and M, \$11 million. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I'm not trying to be obstructive, but I
think there are some important questions that should
be asked in the line by line detail. So recognizing that
we're almost at 6:00 pm, I move that we report
progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. We have a motion to
report progress which is not debatable. The chair
recognizes there is no quorum. We will sound the
bells. The chair recognizes a quorum. We have a
motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is
not debatable. All those in favour? All those
opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I shall rise and report progress to the Speaker. At this
point in time, I would like to thank the Minister and his
witnesses for assisting us in the matters before the
committee. We look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

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MADAM SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 19: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, while
you were away your committee has been considering
Bill 1 and would like to report progress with one
motion being adopted. Madam Speaker, I move that
the report of the committee of the whole be concurred
with.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Item 20, third reading of bills. The honourable
Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 20: THIRD 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
third time.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had third reading. Item 20, third reading of
bills. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

Bill 12: An Act To Amend The Wildlife Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Wildlife Act, be read for the third time.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Bill 12 has had third reading. Item 20, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Hay River, Mr. Pollard.

Bill 18: Write-Off Of Debts Act, 1993-94

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Baffin Central, that Bill 18, Write-Off of Debts Act, 1993-94, be read for the third time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER:

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

Bill 18 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, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and

Commissions immediately after adjournment. Meetings tomorrow at 9:00 am of the Special Joint Committee on Division, at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus, and at 12:00 noon of the Nunavut Caucus. Orders of the day for Thursday, March 31, 1994.

1. Prayer
 2. Ministers' Statements
 3. Members' Statements
 4. Returns to Oral Questions
 5. Oral Questions
 6. Written Questions
 7. Returns to Written Questions
 8. Replies to Opening Address
 9. Petitions
 10. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
 11. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
 12. Tabling of Documents
 13. Notices of Motion
 14. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
 15. Motions
 16. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 21, An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act, No. 2
- Page 964
17. Second Reading of Bills
 18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95
 - Committee Report 2-12(5), Review of the 1994-95 Main Estimates
 - Minister's Statement 5-12(5), Session Business

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

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

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 31 at 1:30 pm.

---ADJOURNMENT