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**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20,
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Speaker: The Hon. Samuel Gargon

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MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Antoine, Hon. Silas Arngna'naaq, Mr. Ballantyne, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Hon. Samuel Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Koe, Mr. Lewis, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Ms. Mike, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Mr. Ningark, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. John Todd, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Before proceeding to orders of the day, I would like to advise the House that I have received the following communication:

"Dear Mr. Speaker: I would like to inform you and through you, the Legislative Assembly, that I have decided to resign my seat as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Aivilik effective immediately.

In making this decision, I considered it in the best interests of my constituents, who I thank from the bottom of my heart for giving me the opportunity of endeavouring to represent them. I also made this decision for the well-being of myself and my family, and I trust and pray that I will now be able to return to being a good husband and member of my community.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Respectfully, James Arvaluk, MLA, Aivilik"

In accordance with section 8(2), I have forwarded the resignation statement and affidavit to Her Honour, the Commissioner.

I would like to provide my ruling on the point of privilege raised by the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, on Wednesday, February 15, 1995.

Speaker's Ruling

In reviewing the unedited Hansard, the Member for Thebacha raised two points that she felt were of sufficient importance as to be impeding her ability to

serve her constituents. The two points raised by the Member are contained on pages 220, 221 and 222 of unedited Hansard. The first point raised, and I quote from page 221 of unedited Hansard:

"First, I feel, as an elected Member, the filing of a lawsuit against me results in my inability to discuss this matter, to express it in plain language. The bottom line is the effect may be to keep me quiet as a result of this sub judice convention."

The Member for Thebacha's second point is contained on page 222, and I quote:

"My point of privilege as an elected Member, I feel, is my fundamental freedom of speech to speak out on behalf of the interests of my constituents has been impeded upon as a result of the lawsuit filed by Mr. Morin. The possible effect of this lawsuit is that I could be constrained from speaking vigorously, as I have in the past, on behalf of my constituents of Thebacha on other issues lest I again be faced with another lawsuit."

The points and questions the honourable Member put to the chair would require me to rule on a hypothetical situation which, by tradition, the Speaker does not do. Also, if at this time I made comments on the question of the Public Commission of Inquiry or on any court proceedings, I would be, as indicated earlier, addressing a situation that is hypothetical as no proceedings have occurred in this chamber that could potentially infringe on any Members' rights.

I have carefully considered the two points of privilege and find that the Member for Thebacha, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, does not have a prima facie question of privilege as there has, as yet, been no limitation on her right to speak in the Legislative Assembly.

I would like to point out that the chair's responsibility is to maintain order and decorum in the chamber and to protect all Members' privileges including freedom of speech and enforcing rules and practices of the sub judice convention. I would also like to caution Members that freedom of speech does have limits, and I quote from Beauchesne's 6th edition, section 77:

"Freedom of speech does not mean that Members have an unlimited or unrestrained right to speak on every issue. The rules of the House impose limits on the participation of Members and it is the duty of the Speaker to restrain those who abuse the rules."

As I have indicated, there have been no proceedings within this chamber that would give rise to a point of privilege. Mahsi cho.

Item 2, budget address. Mr. Pollard.

--Applause

ITEM 2: BUDGET ADDRESS

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, today on behalf of my Cabinet colleagues, I am presenting, for consideration of the House, the

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government's fiscal strategy for the coming year and the budget that will be required to advance it.

I will begin by acknowledging the efforts of the Standing Committee on Finance, as well as other Members of this House, who took the time to provide us with their counsel.

Mr. Speaker, this budget tries also to take into account information derived from listening to Members as they expressed the concerns of their constituents by way of motion, question, petition or statement on the floor of this Legislative Assembly.

This is the fourth budget we have brought forward since forming the government in 1991. With each of these documents, we have sought to position the government to be able to provide good government within available financial resources.

Overall, this period has been extraordinarily demanding. We have encountered more than our fair share of challenges, yet, for all the adversity, we have tried to act responsibly and in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

Recent History

The fiscal challenges we face are all the more daunting in light of unilaterally imposed changes to the formula financing agreement by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, over the 1990-91 to 1994-95 period, the grant from Canada was \$540 million lower than it would have been without the federal changes. For this year alone, the amount of money we have foregone is estimated to be \$150 million.

Despite these reductions, we have continued to meet public needs. Over the past three years we have redirected some \$20 million to \$30 million annually, which allowed us to meet demand in high priority areas. We were able to allocate more funds to support foster parents, seniors and victims of violence, to meet health costs, and for student assistance and educational facilities. This has been achieved without significant tax increases.

Indeed, while the operational budget for social programs has increased by over \$50 million in the last three years simply to keep up with demand, the operational budget for government overhead has declined.

Mr. Speaker, early in the term of this government, steps were taken to place the territories on a sound fiscal footing for the long term. This process involved structural changes including, but not limited to, departmental reorganization and downsizing, and privatization of a number of government functions.

Many of these changes were recommended to us by the previous government through a report they commissioned called "Strength at Two Levels," sometimes, Mr. Speaker, referred to as the "Beatty Report."

That report, Mr. Speaker, served us well as a transition document. This government, in cooperation with all Members of the House, must ensure that a transition document exists for the next government. Not to impose our will upon them, Mr. Speaker, but to make sure that pertinent information has been compiled and is immediately available to them as they take office.

Mr. Speaker, in 1991, when we took office, trends in expenditure growth indicated that we would experience a \$50 million deficit for 1992-93. Through an aggressive approach to cost-cutting, we were able to revise this projection to a \$24 million deficit and by year-end, the accounts showed a small surplus.

For 1993-94, the government presented, as promised, a balanced budget. Unfortunately, the objective of a balanced budget was undermined by unexpected events. Three factors, Mr. Speaker, accounted for most of the \$35 million deficit that was posted for fiscal 1993-94.

One such factor was the federal government eliminated its funding for the construction of social housing, almost overnight. To make up for some of

the loss in federal funding, we had to inject \$10 million in unplanned spending into the 1993-94 social housing program.

Added to this was a bad summer for forest fires that resulted in a requirement for an additional \$9 million. Finally, a change in the accounting procedure for recognizing liabilities for employee benefits caused us to book an added \$14 million that we did not anticipate.

The 1994-95 Budget

In 1994-95, we maintained fiscal discipline, Mr. Speaker. We held the line on spending, negotiated hard at the collective bargaining table and introduced tax increases necessary to achieve a balanced budget. Members of the Legislative Assembly, along with management, teachers and non-union staff, accepted a zero per cent salary increase. Total budgeted expenditure growth was held below the revised forecast for 1993-94.

Despite this, we anticipated being able to meet increased demands for social assistance, to further extend school grades and to respond to the need for more municipal and community services.

Again, outside influences forced us to miss our budgetary objectives. The 1994-95 deficit is now expected to be over \$40 million, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through the perseverance of Minister Morin, other Cabinet Members, Members of the Legislative Assembly and our federal Members of Parliament, we were successful in obtaining some federal funding for construction of social housing.

However, to address the chronic shortfall in social housing, our government was pressured to find an additional \$17 million, or watch the Northwest Territories' vital social housing program be totally undermined.

In addition, another dry summer in 1994 contributed to a record number of forest fires. An unprecedented extra \$20 million had to be added to the firefighting budget.

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These two events alone account for almost all of the projected deficit for this fiscal year.

The Economy In Brief

Mr. Speaker, the economy performed well in 1994. Employment is expected to have grown by 4.3 per cent last year. This represents 1,000 additional jobs in the Northwest Territories. Many of these jobs can be attributed to the direct and spin-off effects of mineral exploration. This strong employment growth has fuelled retail sales that are estimated to have grown by over 16 per cent last year. These are clear signs of the high level of consumer confidence in our economy. Although overall economic growth was held back by a retrenchment in the expenditures of the three levels of government and weaker investment expenditures, final domestic demand nonetheless registered a growth of 1.4 per cent after adjustment for inflation.

Employment growth of two to three per cent can be expected to continue for the next three years, Mr. Speaker, and this rate of growth could be much higher if the current boom in mining exploration leads to the construction of new mines.

Investor confidence in the mineral potential of the Northwest Territories is now at an all-time high. In 1993, exploration expenditures more than doubled to \$76.8 million from their 1992 level and they are expected to have grown last year to \$87 million. As much as two-thirds of expenditures are related to diamonds. This bodes extremely well for an accelerated development of our mineral resources.

Mr. Speaker, for 1995, economic growth is forecast to be over 2.5 per cent and an additional 500 jobs should be created. And the good news is that the medium-term outlook is for continued sustained increases in economic growth and employment to at least 1997. The economic fundamentals are there and we must build on them to ensure the increase in our self-sufficiency.

Where We Are Today

Mr. Speaker, this government has gone through some difficult downsizing, streamlining of our operations and learning to do more with less. Along with other jurisdictions, we have been facing up to the new fiscal facts of life.

For all our efforts, however, we still face difficult issues -- not the least of which is the pending federal budget. We recognize the need for the federal government to address its fiscal problems. We also understand that achieving a better balance between federal expenditures and revenues requires belt-tightening by all Canadians.

The federal debt and growing deficits have very direct and damaging consequences for the north. The Northwest Territories, more than any other jurisdiction, depends on Ottawa for financial support. That is why part of our strategy is to reduce this dependency relationship.

The 1995-96 Budget

This year, Mr. Speaker, the federal government has indicated its intention to freeze the formula financing grant at last year's level. This means we will receive \$8 million less than if the grant had been allowed to grow according to the formula. Total revenues in 1995-96 will be only \$11.9 million higher than they were in last year's main estimates, despite the fact that we need to spend almost \$40 million more to meet the growing demands for social programs.

Mr. Speaker, the next decade will see a large number of young people looking for jobs and housing. To ensure we have the financial resources necessary to meet their needs, we have embarked upon another process of consolidation and rationalization.

We are actively pursuing alternative approaches to existing income support programs and health care delivery mechanisms. The government is encouraging people-oriented investment in education and training, but the fact remains that the existing social and health conditions in the north are not going to improve overnight. We will have to deal with these serious and persistent problems.

Choices will have to be made, Mr. Speaker. With the existing socio-demographic and economic factors, it will be very difficult to pare back on social spending. Savings from improved program and administrative efficiencies will not be sufficient to meet the needs of many of our communities. Many northerners will still require additional assistance in the areas of housing, education, medical care, training and employments.

And, Mr. Speaker, we cannot ignore the expenditure demands that result from the social problems that we face such as alcohol and substance abuse, a high rate of suicide and family violence.

Mr. Speaker, public service expenditures account for one-third of the total budget. The government values its employees and acknowledges their dedication. However, whether through changes to wages and benefits or through reductions in the number of public servants, the wage bill must be brought down to protect those most at risk. Mr. Speaker, we are

committed to treating our employees fairly and it is our intention to work cooperatively with the unions -- be it at the bargaining table or in joint consultation -- to determine the most effective means to reduce wage and benefit costs.

One thing is certain, Mr. Speaker, just as other government bureaucracies are reinventing themselves in light of new fiscal realities, so, too, must ours. The status quo is history. The money is simply not there to perpetuate it. Rather than seeing inevitable change as a threat, however, we should view it as an opportunity to reprioritize, reorganize and renew our commitment to good government.

Mr. Speaker, while our 1995-96 budget proposes operations and maintenance expenditure growth of only two per cent over the 1994-95 main estimates, the government is obliged to forecast a \$14 million deficit for this fiscal year on its overall budget of \$1.2 billion. The grant from Canada, frozen at last year's level of \$876 million, will make up 72 per cent of forecast revenues. Other transfers from Canada are expected to increase by 10 per cent from 1994-95 and recoveries to fall by 14 per cent. Taxation and general revenues, which are expected to rise by four per cent in 1995-96, will make up the remainder of the government's revenues.

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Mr. Speaker, with our grant from Canada frozen this year and with further reductions likely for the following year, we must offset this shortfall.

Revenue Initiatives

Many fees charged by the government have not increased for some time. Cabinet has approved a number of changes to these fees that will come into effect during 1995-96. These revenue initiatives are estimated to generate \$10 million, once they are in place for a full fiscal year. Details on these initiatives will be provided by appropriate Ministers.

I will summarize some of the more significant changes:

- The structure of the mark-ups charged by the Liquor Commission will be revised;
- Liquor licensing fees and import fees will be increased;

- The Department of Economic Development and Tourism will raise some of its charges for services and start charging for other services;
- The Housing Corporation will adopt a new, more equitable, rent scale which ensures those who can afford to, will pay a more reasonable amount in rent;
- Business licence fees, professional registration fees and lottery licence fees administered by the Department of Safety and Public Services will rise to levels closer to those in other jurisdictions; and,
- Medical co-payment fees will increase.

Restraint Measures

Mr. Speaker, in order to maintain critical social programs in 1995-96, a thorough review of all existing operations has been undertaken. Its purpose is to ensure we can meet forecast expenditure growth in such key areas as education, social assistance, health and justice. Three committees have been established, each assigned a number of departments, which were grouped into three categories or, as we call them, "envelopes."

The three envelopes are social, resource management and government infrastructure programs. The "envelope" committees reviewed all existing programs and all new requirements, prioritized needs, proposed reallocations of funding and developed a coordinated plan of action for 1995-96. These proposals were then reviewed by the Financial Management Board in a series of meetings.

Mr. Speaker, decisions made at those meetings yielded reductions totalling \$36.7 million. This represents a four per cent reduction over the 1994-95 main estimates. Associated with these reductions is the elimination of 86 person years. The majority of the person year reductions will be accomplished by attrition. However, some limited lay-offs will be required and a number of positions will go from full to part time. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has also proposed a new approach in 1995-96 for the delivery of in-service training programs that will not affect the delivery of the programs, but will reduce the number of person years required by 98.

Mr. Speaker, \$16.8 million of the reductions will come from the social envelope which represents three per cent of the total envelope budget: \$6 million comes out of the resource management envelope, a

reduction of approximately four per cent; while the government infrastructure envelope will contribute \$13.9 million, or five per cent of the total envelope budget. The specific reduction measures undertaken by departments to achieve these savings will be explained during each department's budget review in committee of the whole.

In addition to these reductions, Mr. Speaker, there is a very real possibility that further cost cutting may be necessary over the coming fiscal year. We must await the outcome of the federal budget to know precisely where we stand.

New Spending

While restraint is, and must remain, our primary fiscal objective, the government also has a responsibility to ensure the needs of the most disadvantaged in our society continue to be met. This basic fact governed our decisions as to which existing programs to enhance, and what new initiatives to undertake. Mr. Speaker, this budget contains net expenditure growth of \$20.2 million. A total of \$16.5 million has been allocated to new initiatives and an additional \$40.4 million to meet growing demand within existing programs. And, as I mentioned earlier, \$36.7 million in expenditure reductions were identified through the envelope process.

Educational Initiatives

Consistent with our priority of ensuring northerners possess the skills they require to compete in the new economy, over \$6 million has been added to help school boards across the north cope with the challenges of tomorrow. A \$1 million increase in funding for Arctic College is also proposed, along with an additional \$3.8 million for student financial assistance. On behalf of Minister Nerysoo, I am highlighting a number of initiatives that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment will be undertaking.

To ensure that all Northwest Territories students, including those with special needs, are educated in regular classrooms with their peers, an additional \$930,000 will be provided for the inclusive schooling program. Mr. Speaker, this will raise the total amount allocated for the inclusive schooling to \$10 million in 1995-96, up from \$750,000 in 1985. As well, \$550,000 will be allocated to assist school boards to improve literacy and numeracy teaching skills.

Six million will be provided for the investing in people program, which is cost-shared 50/50 with the federal government. The investing in people program is a two-year initiative that began in 1994-95 to provide specialized counselling, career and employment development, life skills, on-the-job training experience and education to social assistance recipients.

While fiscal vigilance remains a priority, we cannot afford to be indifferent to the needs of future generations. These expenditures on education are vital to the future of our youth and, therefore, to the future of the Northwest Territories.

Health And Social Initiatives

Mr. Speaker, this budget also acknowledges the need to invest in activities that improve health and social conditions of northerners, both for today and for

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tomorrow. To address the increasing social assistance case load, an additional \$3.8 million have been allocated for social assistance payments. An additional \$1.45 million has been allocated to address the increased utilization of health programs by all northern residents.

I am pleased to announce, on behalf of the Premier, the Minister of Health and Social Services, a number of new initiatives in the health and social services field: to provide home support services and nursing services for the aged, disabled and chronically ill, \$1.4 million has been allocated to implement pilot projects for a coordinated home care program in the communities of Arviat, Rae, Pond Inlet and Tuktoyaktuk.

Community-based mental wellness pilot projects are under way in the Inuvik and Deh Cho regions. For 1995-96, \$250,000 will be spent on pilot projects in select communities in Nunavut. An additional \$200,000 will be made available to provide training programs in the prevention of suicide. One million has been included in the budget for a new Metis health benefit insurance program.

---Applause

Premier Cournoyea will provide further details of this program during the committee of the whole review of the 1995-96 budget for Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, in response to growing pressures on the justice system, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi, has

included an additional \$3.4 million to address deficiencies in policing, courts and legal aid, along with \$2.4 million for corrections.

In 1994-95, the Department of Justice undertook a detailed study of the corrections system and, as a result, it was delayed in finalizing its capital budget for 1995-96. The details of the budget are now being finalized and the government commits to presenting those details to the Legislative Assembly during this session.

Resource Management And Development

Mr. Speaker, the 1995-96 budget also acknowledges the importance of building on our economic strengths and preserving our assets. Mr. Todd, Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, has allocated \$650,000 for two three-person economic development officer teams to serve smaller communities where no economic development officer is present. This alternative delivery mechanism will better address the service requirements of remote communities, both in the east and the west.

An extra \$550,000 is also being allocated to the business development fund and small business grants program and an additional \$495,000 to the Northwest Territories Development Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, to ensure maximum long-term net benefits are realized by territorial residents, \$960,000 will go toward a coordinated approach to mineral development.

Mr. Arngna'naaq, Minister of Renewable Resources, has included \$225,000 to provide renewable Resources officers in the communities of Aklavik, Arctic Bay, Fort Providence, Holman Island, Tsiigehtchic and Baker Lake. A further \$225,000 has been set aside to assist communities to develop resource management plans for their areas.

In all, some \$7.8 million in new spending for resource management and development has been allocated.

Government Infrastructure

Becoming More Self-Sufficient

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that our best hope for the future is to become less dependent on the federal government. But, in order to reduce our dependency, we need to raise more of our own revenues, and, at the moment, we have a limited capacity to do so.

Besides a small tax base, we are hamstrung by federal policies that give us little incentive to aggressively promote economic development, and we have been living with a financing formula that discourages initiative or self-reliance.

Forging A New Relationship

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we need a new fiscal relationship with Ottawa if we are to become more self-sufficient. Currently, our best prospects rest with the responsible development of our vast oil and gas and mineral resources.

We have said before, Mr. Speaker, and we say again, that development of these resources must result in:

-training and jobs for northerners;

-work for northern contractors;

-joint venture and ownership opportunities for northern companies and development corporation; and,

-revenues for the Government of the Northwest Territories in order for us to continue to deliver programs to all of our constituents in a meaningful way.

But, Mr. Speaker, until responsibility for mineral and oil and gas development is devolved to us, we will be unable to exercise full control over development and its environmental impacts. We will be unable to guarantee maximization of socio-economic advantages for northerners.

Mr. Speaker, it is said that Finance Ministers, by statements that they make, set the tone that influences investment in their particular jurisdictions. Whether it is true or not in the north, I do not know. But, just in case there are investors or potential investors listening, let me be quite clear.

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We recognize and respect that shareholders in companies want a return on their investment. The people of the north are no different; they want a return on the depletion of their resources.

We recognize and respect that companies want some certainty if they are going to invest large sums of money in the north. Again, Mr. Speaker, we are no different; we want some certainty that northerners are going to benefit from large-scale developments.

We recognize and respect that companies require a regulatory regime that is clear, concise and fair. Again, Mr. Speaker, we are no different; we foresee regimes that are efficient, effective and orderly, regimes that respect traditional pursuits, protect workers' rights and safety, protect the environment and allow for profitable development.

To some, Mr. Speaker, it would appear that many of these things that I have mentioned are unachievable. Mr. Speaker, we believe that they are achievable and that, with communication, cooperation, understanding and goodwill, the north can be developed so that we can all be winners.

Devolution of responsibility for non-renewable resources must be accompanied by a fair share of royalty dollars. These dollars are necessary to assist us to become more fiscally independent. Without devolution, there is little or no fiscal incentive for the territories to promote development since all additional revenues will go to the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who say no to more devolution. There are those who say not at this time. While I respect those opinions, Mr. Speaker, I must point out that permits are being applied for and issued. Corporate dreams and aspirations are becoming reality. Development of the north, whether we like it or not, is taking place.

We must take control in order that decisions affecting the north, its people, its environment and its coffers, are made in the north.

We must not cause a future government to look back and wonder why we did not seize the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, although I have spent a considerable amount of time talking about mineral and oil and gas development, this government is committed to improving the economic outlook in other sectors of the economy as well. We will continue to assist hunters and trappers. We will continue to assist the tourism industry. We will continue to assist small businesses through our grant and loan programs.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier and Members of this Cabinet have undertaken a series of discussions with the Prime Minister, senior Cabinet Ministers and federal officials. We have stressed the need for a new relationship between our two levels of government.

We have acknowledged the fiscal realities confronting the federal government and indicated that, by becoming more self-reliant, we can be part of the solution. We have stated to them that it is in our mutual interest to start doing things differently.

To this end, and with advice from the Standing Committee on Finance, we have sought to resolve a number of outstanding federal/territorial issues so that we can move on to more substantial long-term matters.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that progress has been made on a number of these outstanding problems, including the health care billings dispute, official languages program cutbacks and responsibility for police services.

We are not working with Canada to develop the tools we need to reduce our dependence on the federal government and to generate real wealth in the north that benefits all Canadians.

More specifically, we require a new formula financing agreement that will allow both Canada and the Northwest Territories to meaningfully share the risks and rewards of increased economic activity. We want a formula that encourages and rewards initiative rather than complacency.

We need to ensure that the interest of major stakeholders, including the emerging Nunavut territory and aboriginal claimant groups, are protected in discussions leading to devolution. In the final analysis, all parties, including the federal government and industry, are seeking through devolution to establish a climate where key investment and resource management decisions can be made in an environment of certainty.

We need a reform of federal income support programs that allows us more flexibility to encourage residents of the Northwest Territories to become more individually self-sufficient. This flexibility is essential to the development of northern solutions to northern problems.

We need to intensify cooperation with the federal government to improve the efficiency of program delivery in the north. One example would be allowing the Government of the Northwest Territories to deliver, on behalf of DIAND, the infrastructure required for the new territory of Nunavut. This would make use of our existing expertise in building

infrastructure in the north and would avoid duplication of existing administration.

Mr. Speaker, we are asking Canada to acknowledge the need for investment in essential infrastructure that is critical to non-renewable resource development. Improved transportation and communication links among our communities will lower the cost of living and doing business in the north, providing significant fiscal and social benefits.

We must not limit our infrastructure focus to gravel or asphalt. We have to get our minds around the potential of the new information highway.

These knowledge based technologies can open up previously unavailable opportunities to northerners. The information highway can overcome permafrost or seasonal shipping or any other physical barrier that has traditionally cut us off from the rest of the country and give us new access to the wider world. The north must be actively involved in the information highway's planning and implementation.

We are mature enough to recognize that self-sufficiency means more than just wresting financial concessions from the federal government or

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substituting our decision-making authority for theirs, in terms of how to slice up the financial pie. It is also about how to create a larger pie and share it more equitably.

Self-sufficiency also means becoming more accountable for the consequences of the decision we take -- or those we fail to take -- to improve the quality of life for all northerners.

It means having an agenda and the discipline necessary to see it through. It is about making choices in times of diminishing resources -- not just about where we need to spend, but also where we need to cut to meet that agenda.

Mr. Speaker, the choices are stark. We can ignore the ominous rumblings from an increasingly indebted south, cross our fingers and hope the pain they inflict won't be too great. Or, we can move forward.

Realistically, the status quo isn't an option. Not only because the south is increasingly unwilling and unable to provide us with the resources we need, it's more because the status quo has condemned -- and without change will continue to condemn -- far too

many of us especially our young people to a marginal existence.

That is why we have patiently and consistently made the case that we want to build a stronger northern economy, one which will create new jobs and business opportunities and, in doing so, reduce our dependence on federal transfers. We have demonstrated clearly that growth in the north benefits all of Canada, as much in the south as in the territories.

Until these discussions begin to bear fruit, however, we continue to face a challenging fiscal situation. Our revenue growth will be severely restricted, and spending decisions will become more difficult.

Conclusion

Mr. Speaker, developing a budget that is fair and balanced is a tightrope act each year. Each year the expectations raise the rope higher and yet the safety net seems to continually shrink.

We have again tried to walk the straight and narrow with this year's budget. We have sought to be fiscally prudent and, at the same time, compassionate about the impacts these measures will have. We have tried to focus on meeting the real needs of today, keeping in mind the likely demands we will have to confront tomorrow.

The times are changing, perhaps too fast for some and too slow for others. But change is our new reality. The task now is to make the most of our traditions while we capitalize on these transitions and forge a better tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, our job, as Members of this Legislative Assembly and as residents of our communities, is to take the next necessary steps to ensure we achieve progress along this promising path.

We must work, closely and cooperatively, toward our common goals: improving social conditions for our citizens, reducing our dependence on the federal government and beginning to realize our enormous potential to become more self-sufficient. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Item 3, Ministers' statements. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM 3: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 19-12(7): Heritage Day

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Canadians celebrate Heritage Day each year on the third Monday in February. Heritage Day gives us an opportunity to celebrate who we are and reflect on how our diverse cultures have shaped Canada and Canadians.

The idea for Heritage Day originated with Heritage Canada, a national, non-profit organization. Heritage Canada promotes activities on Heritage Day by producing a poster and educational booklet which centre on a particular heritage theme. This year, on February 20th, the theme is the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

Across Canada, museums and other heritage institutions will host special events which will focus on the end of the war and how far we have come as a nation in the past 50 years.

Schools, museums and historical societies in the Northwest Territories have received information from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to assist them in planning activities. Mr. Speaker, in Yellowknife, the city's Heritage Committee is preparing a newspaper insert with historical information. The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre's theme for Heritage Day is the role of aviation during and since the Second World War. The centre will hold special Heritage Day activities and encourage students from Yellowknife Education District No. 1, who have the day free from school, to participate in them. Buffalo Airways will be working in partnership with the centre to celebrate Heritage Day by providing a tour of their facilities.

Mr. Speaker, as Canadians we share a rich history and a magnificent natural environment. I encourage all northern residents to take time on February 20th to celebrate our heritage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Ministers' statements. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 4: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Presentation Of National Fair Play Award To 1994 Junior Men's Curling Team

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one year ago, the Members of the Ordinary Members' Caucus shared with our colleague, Fred Koe, the exaltation and excitement as the NWT junior men's curling team, which included his sons, ably curled its way into the final at the Canadian National Junior Men's

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Championship. Media reported the final game on CBC sharing...(inaudible)...as the game stayed a close contest into the last end. When the final rock was thrown, we shared the thrill of near victory.

However, Mr. Speaker, the victory slipped away in a manner which would have brought grown men to tears, and which had us shaking our heads in disbelief. It was then that those four young men -- Kevin Koe, Jamie Koe, Mark Whitehead and Kevin Whitehead -- showed us what fine people they are. All of them, and in particular their skip, Kevin Koe, accepted the judge's decision with grace and dignity seldom seen in the win-at-all-costs sporting arena.

As northerners, we were all proud of these young sportsmen. It is therefore with great pleasure that Members of the Ordinary Members' Caucus would like to congratulate Kevin Koe's junior men's curling team on the recent announcement that the National Fair Play Award would be given to their rink this year. Mr. Speaker, the award is given to a team that has exemplified outstanding sportsmanlike behaviour. We can think of no team better to receive this award.

To Kevin, Jamie, Mark and Kevin, congratulations. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Lewis.

Member's Statement On Timing Of Next Election

MR. LEWIS:

Mr. Speaker, on the weekend, I talked to constituents and other Yellowknifers while I was shopping. People in this city, Mr. Speaker, are sick and tired of so-called consensus government. All MLAs sense it, and some

Members are urging others to call a snap election hoping to cash in on this public disenchantment.

Mr. Speaker, no election, whenever it is held, will overcome the inherent weakness of our present system; a weakness which could be fixed if there was the political will to do it. Rather than tackle the structural impotence, Mr. Speaker, Members would prefer to gamble that the next time around will be better.

There's no guarantee that anything will be improved following a snap election, Mr. Speaker. The idea that the electoral process will bring about our salvation is absolute nonsense. The faces may change, but the complete lack of accountability between elections will remain. Instead of Joe Blow being bowled over, it will be Joe Blow's replacement worker.

I argued two years ago, Mr. Speaker, that there should be a spring election for very good, solid, practical, fiscal reasons. It would give a new government enough time to put a budget together before the winter session. That was not favoured by MLAs, and they argued against my wonderful reasoning that our act provides for fixed elections every four years and the public mandate is absolutely clear in the law. The public fully expect an election next fall and potential candidates are already making preparations with that in mind. If we wanted a spring election, we should have made that clear this summer and done it for good solid reasons. Any move to have a spring election very soon would be seen as opportunism and an attempt by MLAs to catch the opposition with their pants down and would be seen by many of the people in Yellowknife as complete sleazy tactics.

In my opinion, that strategy will backfire and the people who will suffer most are the present incumbents. The mess, if there is a mess, is, after all, the creation of the people who sit right here. The time would be better spent redeeming ourselves rather than gambling on another swift throw of the dice. I look forward with great anticipation to a debate on this subject in this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Whitford.

Member's Statement On 15th Canada Winter Games

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This will also be a good news statement, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, I was at the airport seeing off some of our NWT athletes to compete in the 15th Canada Winter Games now being held in Grande Prairie and in Jasper concurrently. Over the next week or so, there will be some 3,000 athletes from across Canada joining in the winter-type sports for gold, silver and bronze medals. We, as parents, hope that some of the athletes are there for the competitive challenge that these events will allow. We won't be able to win all the medals, Mr. Speaker, but the athletes intend to put their best foot forward. I heard some on the radio this morning talking about challenging themselves to do their personal best and that is to be commended. The NWT team will be competing in most of the winter games, including skiing, speedskating, short and long distance speedskating, rifle and air pistol shooting. I was only able to watch a short segment of the opening ceremonies on the television on Sunday that saw the Prime Minister coming in on a chairlift and the Alberta Premier being carried in on a dog team to the arenas and, Mr. Speaker, it was quite an opening ceremony. Most of all, we, here in Yellowknife, are particularly proud to have young Jamie Wainwright carrying the NWT theme colours into the Grande Prairie arena leading the athletes from across the Northwest Territories.

The NWT starts its competitions today and I would like to wish them all the best of luck for good, clean and safe competitions. While we all hope for gold, we must hope even more for good sportsmanship first and the medals will follow. We all know that our young people will not let us down; they will make us very proud of them. Good luck to them.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Pudluk.

Member's Statement On Rebecca Mike's Appointment As Nunavut Caucus Chairperson

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Nunavut Caucus, I would like to advise Members of the Legislative Assembly that Ms. Rebecca Mike has been chosen as the new chairperson of the Nunavut Caucus. This appointment was made necessary following Mr. Allooloo's resignation from the position on February 6th. Members of the Nunavut Caucus would like to take this opportunity to

acknowledge Mr. Allooloo's contributions over the past eight years and thank him for his efforts in support of the aspirations and needs of the people

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of Nunavut. Members of the Nunavut Caucus and I am sure, all Members of this House look forward to a continued cooperative approach to addressing the issues relating to the realization of Nunavut, under the able and dedicated leadership of Ms. Mike. I would like to thank her for accepting the position and wish her every success in our future endeavours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Congratulations to you, too, Ms. Mike. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Zoe.

Member's Statement On Ultimate Removal Package In Collective Agreement

MR. ZOE:

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have, over the past year, listened to rhetoric and posturing from both the union and the government over contract talks. It is normal that tough positions have been adopted by both sides; however, with the aid of mediation, the impasse can be resolved with no disruption of services to the residents of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, it is my position that collective bargaining is a necessary and democratic process, however, perhaps it is time that the union let go of certain benefits for both economic and moral reasons.

Let me first say that I admire the union for agreeing to the principle of affirmative action. As the aboriginal population of the Northwest Territories becomes better educated and skilled, there will be more opportunities for them in the territorial public services. However, Mr. Speaker, when I examined the collective agreement currently in place, I did see areas that are no longer appropriate. Let me explain. For example, is it really fair for an aboriginal or long-term northerner to work all their adult life for the Government of the Northwest Territories and not reap the same benefits upon retirement as a southerner who retires or quits after 10 years of services?

This, currently, is the way things are as a result of the collective agreement's ultimate removal package. Mr. Speaker, the so-called ultimate removal package has to be rationalized. Twenty years ago, it may have

been necessary to offer such expensive benefits to attract qualified candidates to the north. Mr. Speaker, I do not think this is the case today given the large supply of educated and skilled southerners currently unemployed or underemployed in southern Canada.

It is also not a fiscally-proven benefit. Mr. Speaker, it must be remembered that once we, as government, pay for the ultimate removal of an employee to southern Canada, that person is no longer an economic benefit to the territories. What I mean by this is that unlike southern jurisdictions, the majority of the retirees from the Government of the Northwest Territories do not stay in the north. As a result, our government loses a portion of its tax base and our local businesses lose consumption dollars. Mr. Speaker, I've noticed over the past several years that more of the people who we originally hire from the south have decided to stay in the north after retirement and I applaud their decision.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I want to be on record as supporting the government's efforts to modify this outdated element of the collective agreement. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. I would like to remind the Members to try and stay within the two and a half minutes. I have yet to learn how to cut off Members with the buttons here so could I just ask the Members to stay within the rules and seek unanimous consent to conclude your statement. Thank you. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Koe.

Member's Statement On Proposed Firearms Legislation

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's been a lot of reaction to the proposed Bill C-68, the new firearms legislation. At this time, I would like to make some comments on this bill. The federal bill, as introduced, has very honourable intentions and those intentions are to try to stop criminals from using firearms in the commission of a crime. There are many other aspects of the bill that, in some respects, can be supported such as the registration of handguns and the registration of other fancy weapons that are used for purposes other than for hunting or subsistence gathering.

My own opinion is I am opposed to the current bill because it will severely restrict the abilities of northerners to continue what they do daily; that is, to hunt and trap and use weapons for subsistence gathering. I'm totally opposed to the aspects of the bill which include the annual registration, the inability to lend weapons to friends who are in need and the inability to leave weapons in your boat, sleigh, or cabins unattended. Under the new legislation, these are perceived as criminal acts and I'm totally opposed to those aspects of the bill. I just wanted to make my statement on that today. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Dent.

Member's Statement On Minister's Interpretation Of Criticism Of Bill 5

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I may be the person with whom you can practice finding the button for appropriate time this afternoon. I don't know if I can speak quickly enough to get it all in in two and one-half minutes. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday we were discussing Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Maintenance Act, in committee of the whole. As I indicated then, I support the bill because it provides some protection for people in common-law relationships that they have not had since a court decision in 1991.

In the course of discussing the bill, I pointed out that, in my opinion, the bill does not address some concerns, and expressed disappointment over what I saw as shortcomings in the bill. Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed that the Minister of Justice seemed to take my criticism of the bill personally and said I should accord him respect because he is proposing the legislation. Mr. Speaker, my criticism of the bill had nothing to do with respect for the Minister and I sincerely regret that I would even have to say that.

Every Member of this House has the right and responsibility to point out concerns over the shortcomings of legislation under consideration and should not, when doing so, have to be concerned about whether a Minister will take that criticism personally. During discussion, I was very careful to point out that because Bill 5 will improve the

situation over what it is now, I will support the bill. I never did criticize the Minister, only what I see as shortcomings in the bill.

I make no apologies, Mr. Speaker, for pointing out that this bill in many ways reflects a philosophy or moral position taken by the government. The Minister, on Thursday, stated that families and societies want people to get married. That is a moral statement. Whether it is accurate, I don't know, but these days it may not be. It certainly is the philosophy reflected in Bill 5 since that bill does not provide the same level of protection to common-law couples as a marriage contract would. Since this is a government bill, I would argue that this must be the philosophy of the government.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. The Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake is seeking unanimous consent to continue his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honourable Members. Mr. Speaker, the two-year limitation on action also reflects a philosophical decision. The Minister said, on Thursday, that when a common-law relationship breaks up, at least one of the parties would end up looking for another relationship quite quickly and that it would be difficult to strike up another relationship and give certainty to that one if there are still possible outstanding legal or financial obligations that would have to be fulfilled.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would argue that reflects a philosophy and there could be a lot of discussion about whether that philosophy is accepted by a majority in our society. Does the Minister think it is wrong for me to point out that in Saskatchewan there is no two-year limitation on action; in fact, there is no time limit at all? Rather than taking my comments on the bill personally, I had expected that he would at least attempt to provide me with arguments as to why certain decisions were made or, if he thought my concerns could be addressed other ways, to let me know that.

The goal should be to have the best legislation protecting the most people possible. Mr. Speaker, concerns expressed by ordinary Members should not just be dismissed out of hand as showing no respect for the Minister. At no time have I heard how this legislation will provide relief to those who were left with no protection immediately following the court decision in 1991. The two-year limitation means people who left relationships between 1991 and 1993 have no recourse. That certainly was a policy decision, which is reflected in the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, later today we will probably give Bill 5 third reading. Let me say again that, because it allows improvement over the current situation, I will be voting in favour of the bill. I still think there are some issues which need to be addressed. The Minister did say there are other amendments, other proposals which are going to come forward in a larger package as part of family law reform and I only hope that some of those proposals will deal with the shortcomings I pointed out. I hope, too, that comments made by ordinary Members will be taken constructively and not considered personal attacks. I will repeat, Mr. Speaker, the goal should be the best possible legislation protecting the most people and I'm not sure we get that if ordinary Members are not able to point out concerns we have with proposed legislation without Ministers taking our criticism as personal attacks. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement On Proposed Firearms Legislation

MR. ANTOINE:

(Translation) Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I will be saying this in my own language. On February 14th, the federal Minister of Justice tabled new legislation for controlling firearms. If it is passed by Parliament in Ottawa, it will change the law and require everyone in Canada to register their firearms. It will bring very harsh penalties into effect for everyone who is found guilty of violating the new regulations.

These new regulations may have been designed to meet the needs of people in southern Canada, but they will have a very negative effect on traditional

lifestyles in the north. If we continue to use our firearms the way we do now, we will be breaking the law and will be treated as criminals. This is not right. The federal Minister of Justice, the Honourable Allan Rock, came to the Northwest Territories last year and many people told him that firearms are important to us. He said he would listen and would consider the needs of the aboriginal people. Now it is clear that he did not.

Our government has been trying hard to oppose this new legislation and I think the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi has been doing a good job in taking our message forward. I also think that our federal Members of Parliament, the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrews and the Honourable Jack Anawak, have been working hard to deal with this issue but right now it seems that the federal government is only interested in trying to satisfy residents of big cities in southern Canada. (Translation ends)

I am more or less outraged and unhappy by these new federal firearms control proposals. I regard them as yet another assault on our way of life and as an offensive slap in the face to traditional aboriginal ways and northern lifestyle. Despite the best efforts that have been made by the Ministers of Justice and Renewable Resources and despite the advice the Honourable Allan rock received from northern

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leaders, the federal government has demonstrated its unwillingness...

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Your time is up.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The honourable Member for Nahendeh is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Antoine, you can complete your statement.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Despite the best efforts that have been made by the ministers of Justice and Renewable Resources, and despite the advice the

Honourable Allan Rock received from northern leaders, the federal government has demonstrated its unwillingness to take our concerns over national registration systems, firearms storage and safety training seriously.

It is now clear that the so-called consultation process was merely a public relations exercise, and that the federal Minister of Justice has a serious credibility problem in dealing with northerners on this issue. I believe that we must act swiftly to express our opposition to these new and unfair regulations.

I agree that the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee that will be reviewing this new legislation should be invited to the Northwest Territories. But that will not be enough, we need to be heard on their turf as well. We need to appear before the committee when they meet on Capital Hill so that our voices cannot be simply dismissed as distant regional concerns.

We need to inform the Ottawa media and the southern public about the implications that this regulation carries for aboriginal people. I simply cannot believe that the rest of Canada is as nearsighted or incapable of understanding our aboriginal way of life as Mr. Rock and his bureaucrats.

If necessary, we need to fight in the courts to protect our aboriginal rights to pursue traditional hunting activities. Mr. Speaker, through all these efforts, northerners will need to work together, east and west, large communities and small communities. I find some room for hope in the observation that a few months ago, the federal government was pursuing another policy on cruise missile testing and that was offensive and wrong. Our opinion on that subject was finally heard and the federal policy was modified, only because we stood together and spoke out to confront the southern bureaucrats who wanted to disregard our beliefs. That same unity is needed now if we are to effectively oppose this inappropriate and damaging federal legislation. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Nerysoo.

Member's Statement On National Aboriginal Achievement Awards

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was reading, Mr. Speaker, a newspaper entitled "Native Journal" and I know that many Members of this House have spoken quite articulately about the whole issue of youth and the support that we, as the Members of the Assembly, should try to provide to our youth.

Last year, as most Members know, there was the establishment of a national aboriginal achievement awards; our Premier was a recipient of one of those awards. But this year in 1995, the national aboriginal achievement awards will include a new category and that is the youth award. The intention is to choose one individual who would be entitled to receive a \$5,000 scholarship that will be bestowed upon an aboriginal youth of Inuit, Metis or First Nations ancestry between the ages of 15 and 21.

I think that it is important for all of us, to at least make some effort -- particularly those who have made comments in this Assembly and for those who are in the communities that wish to support their young people -- that we make every effort to provide a submission to this particular award because I think that it is incumbent upon all of us to at least try to provide additional financial support wherever it is possible. Nominations for the awards include such categories as arts and culture, academics, education, business, community development and public service, environmental and land management, indigenous harvesting, health and medicine, heritage and spirituality, law, media, communication, science and technology and last, but just as important, sports.

Mr. Speaker, we recognized, a few minutes ago, the distinguished contribution of a young team of which one of those individuals could possibly be a recipient of this particular award if we took the time to make a presentation to the group that is going to make the final decisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Pudlat.

Member's Statement On Proposed Firearms Legislation

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regard to the issue of gun control, we have been discussing this issue and we talked about it further last week. With regard to the bill, the federal Minister met with us and it seemed like he had understood fully our concerns. Has he done anything to solve these problems, these issues and concerns that we have? With that, Mr. Speaker, we already have a law in place and we are happy with the law. People are not misusing it and abusing it.

But, Mr. Speaker, our constituents will not be able to understand fully, right away, if the bill is put into place. The current law that we have right now, people understand it fully and they try and comply with it to the best of their ability. And we try and keep up with registration whenever it expires. So, with that, Mr. Speaker, we have grave concerns for this new bill. Especially for northerners who are subsistence harvesting.

It will be difficult for our people to try and comply with this law, especially when there are animals and other things that come into our communities that endanger the public. So, we try and keep our guns under control and we try to store them properly, according to the law. If there are any other provisions in the new law that we have to comply with, it will be very difficult for us because we are unique. We have to think about this further and try to solve some of the problems, the issues and the concerns that we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 4, Members' statements. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

ITEM 5: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two returns to oral questions.

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Further Return To Question 89-12(7): Wood Cutting Permit In Fort Smith

First, asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on February 17, 1995 with regard to a woodcutting permit in Fort Smith. A copy of the free timber cutting permit has been provided to the honourable Member as

requested, as well as information on the investigation that was conducted.

Further Return To Question 94-12(7): Shortage Of Muskox Hides For Constituents

The second return, if I may, Mr. Speaker, is a return to an oral question asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on February 17, 1995 regarding a shortage of muskox hides for constituents. Both the departments of Renewable Resources and Economic Development and Tourism have advised Mrs. Dube of sources for muskox hides. These hides are available from the organizations that conduct commercial harvests. Because the hides belong to the organizations and not the government, Mrs. Dube will have to negotiate terms for purchase of the hides with them. The Department of Renewable Resources will provide Mrs. Dube with a list of organizations that will be conducting commercial harvests of muskox this spring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, oral questions. I'm sorry, back to item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 6: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce Mr. Jack Walker, president and major shareholder in the Yellowknife Inn and other investments in the city of Yellowknife.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Antoine and then Mr. Zoe.

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 103-12(7): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Justice. I would like to commend the Minister, Mr. Speaker, for the lead role that he has

been taking in responding to the new federal firearms legislation that I believe is inappropriate and damaging to aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister has indicated that this offensive draft legislation will be reviewed by the House of Commons Justice and Legal Affairs Committee which is chaired by the Honourable Warren Allmand, I believe. He has also indicated that he will be inviting this parliamentary committee to hold hearings in the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister advise the House whether he also plans to make funding and technical assistance available for northern organizations and individuals who wish to make presentations to the federal committee? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 103-12(7): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, we have first to look at the committee chaired by Mr. Allmand; to either write him or speak to him directly, which I am suggesting to my staff right now that I would like to do. Secondly, with that, to confirm that they will in fact come north to hear concerns and views of all the people of the Northwest Territories. If we can, once that is confirmed, then for myself to consider whether there should be some concerted effort to help interested groups prepare presentations and be assisted with that by the government. So that would be considered once we've addressed the initial part of the work. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 103-12(7): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to hear that the Minister of Justice will be taking a proactive role in trying to get the committee to hear the views of northerners first hand. However, it is true that comments made to a federal committee in Yellowknife may not attract the attention of southern Canadians in

Toronto or Montreal or Vancouver or any other cities down south. Has the Minister given consideration to making a formal representation, either to the Minister or to the federal Justice and Legal Affairs Committee in Ottawa itself, so that southern Canadians can fully understand the implications that these new firearms regulations have for our culture and our traditional lifestyles? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 103-12(6): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be reviewing our previous presentations to the Minister, Allan Rock, and his department officials. We will be preparing, once again, through the committee for the possibility of making yet again other presentations on behalf of the government and this Assembly. Whether that would happen here in the Northwest Territories or in Ottawa remains to be seen. But, yes, we are considering the suggestion made by the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 103-12(7): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Last Friday, the Minister indicated in his statement to the House that there may be grounds for regarding the new legislation as an infringement on section 35 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This is the section of the Canadian Constitution that protects aboriginal rights. Can the Minister indicate what work has been carried out in the Department of Justice to explore the

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constitutional implications of Mr. Rock's new firearms proposal? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 103-12(7): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it was our initial view that there could be a basis to challenge the legislation because it seems to fly in the face of what was ruled by the Supreme Court in the Sparrow case. Basically what was said there was whatever laws or regulations are made by governments to regulate the aboriginal people's right to pursue their traditional lifestyle, that it should be the least restrictive and least intrusive measures taken if they had to. For instance, in the call for safety. This legislation is proposed legislation. It is not law yet so we have nothing to challenge in a court of law. But if it should become law, then it may very well be that someone, perhaps ourselves or some aboriginal group, would put into the courts a challenge based on the Sparrow case. This is, by our initial review, very, very intrusive. It is unduly intrusive and unduly restrictive on the aboriginal people's right to hunt and to pursue their traditional activities.

That's basically where we're at. We haven't done extensive research into that legal question, but that's the initial opinion that was brought. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 103-12(7): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi once again, Mr. Speaker. Final supplementary to the Minister of Justice. I am pleased to see the level of coordination that the Minister has been able to achieve with his counterparts in the Yukon, Alberta and Saskatchewan, in expressing opposition to this inappropriate legislation. However, I'm sure that our agenda has been made clear to them as northerners. It's very different from some of these lobby groups acting on behalf of gun collectors and maybe some sport hunters in southern provinces. We have sport hunters up here as well, but in the southern provinces...Can the Minister advise the House how future decisions will be made on future joint positions taken by the NWT, Yukon, Alberta and Saskatchewan? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 103-12(7): Assistance To Northern Presenters Re Proposed Firearms Legislation

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, we have regular communications between other governments and other Ministers from other jurisdictions across this country on a range of issues; for instance, on the proposed amendments to the Young Offenders Act, family law reform and other pieces of legislation plus proposed federal legislation. Often we are asked to consider taking joint or common positions with regard to specific issues. We don't always do it but we are often asked and sometimes we ask ourselves, for instance, to ask other governments to become allies with us on certain issues. In the end, it's a political decision that we make. For instance, in this case, there is a possible legal question to be brought by the provinces with regard to whether or not the federal government has the constitutional right to propose this law since the provincial governments feel that constitutionally it's their jurisdiction that should be handling firearms and the regulation of them. We are not an active partner in that strategy but again, on the aboriginal rights issue, there may be other provinces that will decide. They haven't decided at this time but they may very well decide to take an active approach to that question.

It's a flowing kind of development and we often poll our own counsel depending on what we think would be in the best interest of this government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

Question 104-12(7): Status Of Community Transfer Initiative

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. Over the past several years, there was a lot of hype, excitement, and discussions about community initiatives transfers. To my knowledge, so far we have agreements in place in the communities of Cape Dorset and, to some extent, Inuvik. Can the Minister very briefly inform us as to what the current initiatives are under the community initiatives transfers program?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 104-12(7): Status Of Community Transfer Initiative

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I think the biggest issue that we are going to deal with in the community transfer initiative is the one that arises out of Cape Dorset, where we have moved to transfer a number of different areas to the community but, because of rules regarding the budget as they're passed now, the community doesn't feel that they have the power, capacity, authority, or the flexibility they need to maximize the benefit from the transfer. We will be, for instance, proposing that we give the community of Cape Dorset more of a block funding approach; that is, we give them, and have already given them, transfer of certain programs and services but it's sort of line by line. They don't have the power to manage it in the best way that they think. That is the biggest question we had. I think Members know that we were considering whether or not we should pass some legislation, start drafting legislation that could be used for this purpose. At this time, we think that it's not necessary but we will be proposing in the budget to pass funding for Cape Dorset that would give them the ability to exercise the management of the funds allocated under those programs in the best way that they think.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Koe.

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Supplementary To Question 104-12(7): Status Of Community Transfer Initiative

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, there was a lot of hype and a lot of excitement about transferring responsibilities from government agencies to communities. I'm not sure if that excitement is still there, other than in the two communities that have agreements. Can the Minister explain or let us know what are the people who were working on the community initiatives transfer doing now? Are they still focusing on trying to get agreements with other communities?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 104-12(7): Status Of Community Transfer Initiative

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The staff that are assigned to work on community transfer initiatives, of course, are still working to meet the objectives that we have set out for ourselves. Communities are continuing to request assistance to begin work towards transfer agreements. These requests come sometimes with only a modest amount and sometimes up to the range of \$100,000. To date, we've given out almost \$650,000 to about 14 communities to help them with research and preparation for transfers. There is still a lot work to be done. We've also begun work on preparing for discussions on how community transfer initiatives could and should work with the beginning of negotiations in the self-government area. There is a lot of work to be done and it's still continuing at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Lewis.

Question 105-12(7): Reason For Increasing ED&T Service Charges

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Appreciating these tough fiscal times, governments have to get revenue. I note in the budget speech, Mr. Speaker, that there are several initiatives. I've got no problems with the mark-ups on liquor and liquor licensing, Housing Corporation proposals to raise rents of those people who can afford it, and perhaps when I understand it better, even the cost of health and some fees being increased.

However, since the Minister has indicated that the big challenge ahead of us is, in fact, to develop our economy and, he says, to become more self-sufficient in this budget, that we must aggressively promote economic development because we have to get more self-reliant, why is it that he is, in fact, increasing charges for Economic Development and Tourism services and also including extra costs for those services and even including increased costs for business licences and professional development fees? Those are the things, in fact, that will help us to

promote our economy. These seem to be contradictory. Why has he done that?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 105-12(7): Reason For Increasing ED&T Service Charges

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that was recommended to us from the envelope committee and it was pointed out that we have been falling behind over the last few years in the fees and services that we charge in the Northwest Territories compared to the fees and services that are charged elsewhere in the country. We were looking for revenue so we took the recommendation and put it in the budget, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 105-12(7): Reason For Increasing ED&T Service Charges

MR. LEWIS:

Mr. Speaker, are there some increases, then, to costs to businesses that have been decided upon but are not included in this list of six revenue initiatives that Members should be made aware of?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 105-12(7): Reason For Increasing ED&T Service Charges

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, there may well be and as I said in the budget, Ministers, as they bring their budgets forward, will expound and expand upon, if necessary, the list that I read out into the House today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 105-12(7): Reason For Increasing ED&T Service Charges

MR. LEWIS:

The Minister will know that I have a lifelong interest in economic matters. Is there a proposal, as far as the Minister is aware, to increase stumpage fees, for example, that will have a tremendous impact on the renewable resource of ours in our lumber industry? Because that's one of the fears that I have; this bludgeoning industry, in fact, is going to have its fees doubled. Is that one of the proposals that isn't in this list of initiatives?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 105-12(7): Reason For Increasing ED&T Service Charges

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, it is one of the things that the Department of Renewable Resources is looking at, yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Dent.

Question 106-12(7): Tabling Of Special Needs School Survey

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. On Tuesday, October 18th, Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister about a special needs school survey that had been recently done. The

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Minister had spoken about it in answering a previous question. I asked the Minister if he would be tabling that survey in the House. His response was that he would ask his colleagues whether that information could be made available. So I would like to ask the Minister now if he has consulted with his colleagues and if he is now prepared to table that report.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

Question 107-12(7): Confiscation Of Polar Bear Meat

MR. NINGARK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq. In 1994, there were some people who harvested female polar bears in Pelly Bay, and then they confiscated the polar bear hides. That was okay, Mr. Speaker. The only problem we have is that the meat was also confiscated by Renewable Resources. I think there were over five people who hunted polar bear in the Repulse Bay region. I just want to ask, through you, Mr. Speaker, whether this is according to the act where they have to confiscate the meat as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 107-12(7): Confiscation Of Polar Bear Meat

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question that Mr. Ningark is asking, I could respond to him to say that currently in wildlife legislation, the females that are harvested, if they go beyond the quota by harvesting too many females, they have to confiscate the hide. I have to find out from my officials if the meat should not have been confiscated, as well. Perhaps, if the polar bear had a collar, it would have been tranquilized. I believe that's the way the regulation reads, but I don't think it was the intention, or it wasn't right of them to confiscate the meat as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 107-12(7): Confiscation Of Polar Bear Meat

MR. NINGARK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people who harvested males, neither the meat nor the hide was confiscated. They don't have permanent employment. Perhaps if Renewable Resources or the wildlife officers could apologize to the people for confiscating the meat from the polar bear. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 107-12(7): Confiscation Of Polar Bear Meat

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

(Translation) Mr. Speaker, I will look into the events that happened at that time that the Member is talking about. In a letter we will include why the meat was confiscated. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Pudlat.

Question 108-12(7): Use Of Funds From Cutting Back GLO Positions

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, but I will ask the Minister of Finance. I made a Member's statement last week and asked questions last week with regard to the GLOs. Tomorrow the GLOs will have to sign some kind of an agreement to be laid off or to work on a half-time basis. They're going to have to work only half a day and make half-day wages. What happens to the money that they were getting when they were working full time? What happens to half of the money now? Where does it go? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 108-12(7): Use Of Funds From Cutting Back GLO Positions

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, any savings that we make on whether it's cutting back programs or reducing spending in any particular area, the money remains with the department that would have been expending the

money. In this particular instance, it was developed in an envelope, Mr. Speaker, and that money is the savings or part of the savings that we're trying to achieve this year to bring our deficit into line. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 109-12(7): Amount Of Post-Secondary Incentive Loans For TEP Students

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had a question for the Premier, but I'll go ahead with the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, recently I've received correspondence from aboriginal residents of the Northwest Territories who are attending the University of Saskatchewan, taking the Indian teachers' education program. They've expressed concern with regard to not being considered for the post-secondary incentive loan program. Although the students in the Northwest Territories do receive the post-secondary incentive program, the students from Saskatchewan from the Northwest Territories do not receive it. Can I ask the Minister how much this grant is, with regard to the extra incentive funds available to northern students? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

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Return To Question 109-12(7): Amount Of Post-Secondary Incentive Loans For TEP Students

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, it's an incentive loan and if the program is not completed, it's repayable, I believe. It's also needs assessed, based on the student.

The other component to it is that it was a decision that was made on a policy basis that this particular program would be only applicable to students who were part of the community teacher education program. It was just a continuation from primarily the last government, with a view that we were proceeding to 50 per cent teachers in our system.

I'm aware of the letter. I did write back to them on February 15th. I was advised that I was not prepared to answer, but the fact was I did answer. The unfortunate thing is that, based on the financial situation of our government, we don't see an opportunity to increase.

However, as I indicated on that particular issue, unless we see a student-by-student concern, it would be very difficult for us to say we can respond to more funding or no funding. And so, what I have asked on Friday, is to have one of my staff members actually meet with the students to see whether or not there is a situation where there is a significant requirement, whether or not our present programs would be able to address some of their concerns.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Marie Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 109-12(7): Amount Of Post-Secondary Incentive Loans For TEP Students

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could I ask the Minister, recognizing that it's an incentive program and determined on a needs assessment, can the Minister give us some ideas with regard to whether or not there is a cap on this particular incentive loan or is there a set amount that is placed aside under policy by his department for such a loan? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 109-12(7): Amount Of Post-Secondary Incentive Loans For TEP Students

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

I believe there is a cap, I am just not totally certain about the amount. I will get the information more specifically for the honourable Member.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of the Housing Corporation. Last October, I asked a written question regarding the amounts of arrears owed by people to the Housing Corporation and I received a response from the Minister's office and, as of March 31, 1994, the amount of arrears owing to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation was approximately \$6.9 million. A lot of these arrears may be current and collectable, but I am sure there is a lot of it that is long-outstanding and uncollectible. I am also aware that many of the arrears on the books are owed by people who are either deceased or have moved out of the country. So my question to the Minister is, what action is the department taking in trying to collect these outstanding rental arrears?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working with the local housing authorities to try to collect the arrears that are collectable. We are also coming up with a new collection policy that will be taken to Cabinet, hopefully, by the end of March so that we have a new collection policy to collect arrears and also a policy to write off arrears because at present we are not allowed to write off those arrears. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Part of these rents, as I had mentioned, are long outstanding, probably could be written off, especially if the person who owes the money isn't around any more. You mentioned that it is a problem for the housing associations so I assume that these outstanding rental arrears -- \$6 or \$7 million worth -- have some impact on the daily operations of the housing associations. So my supplementary is, what direct impact is there on a local housing association if they don't collect the rent or the rental arrears?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding of the impact on the local housing authorities, at the present time, there is no impact on them. We have a new agreement signed with some housing authorities that if they collect the back rent, then they would get to keep a percentage of it. But at the present time, it doesn't have an impact on them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Are these housing associations supposed to be self-sufficient? Is that in current policy that the revenues that they generate go towards offsetting their expenses, or are they still receiving huge contributions from the Housing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

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Further Return To Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They are still receiving huge contributions from the Housing Corporation. The rents can nowhere near pay the O and M cost of running the rental stock in the communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The Minister mentioned that there is some work going on towards preparing a policy for writing off these uncollectible arrears. How soon does the Minister expect this policy to be ready?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 110-12(7): Collecting Arrears Owed To The Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully by the end of March. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 7, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another question for the Minister of Education regarding the student post-secondary incentive loans for the teacher education program. In reviewing the information that I have received, Mr. Speaker, these loans have been granted to people in the north. I wonder if the Minister could advise this House as to possibly how many loans were granted or -- if I may rephrase that, Mr. Speaker -- what was the range of the amount of dollars extended for these loans granted?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the honourable Member for the question. The loans range from \$5,000 to \$12,500 per year and the amount is based on the individual's years of experience in the education field. The loans are remissible upon completion of the program and continued residence in the Northwest Territories, and if the student completes less than 60 per cent of the program or,

upon completion, does not reside in the Northwest Territories, their loan is completely, fully repayable.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, could I ask the Minister if he is aware of how many students in the Northwest Territories are granted the opportunity of post-secondary incentive loans?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date, the incentive loan program, is provided to residents in the teacher education program and, in some cases, the school community council programs. The loans have been provided to almost 180 students currently enrolled in the Northwest Territories campus and community-based programs.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing the Minister did indicate that he would be sending one of his officials to meet with the students enrolled in post-secondary education with regard to the teacher education program at the University of Saskatchewan, and recognizing that there are only eight students who are registered in this particular course and we are currently allowing for an additional 180 students to be considered for such a program, would the Minister reconsider, within their policy, a decision to extend this benefit to students who are attending the University of Saskatchewan? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Speaker, no. The fact is that we are going to no longer continue with the program, despite its success, because of the financial situation that we, as a government, find ourselves in. The other concern that we have -- and I think the honourable Member raised this point with me some time ago along with other Members, is with providing the same kind of incentive program for students in other programs, whether or not they were in social services or the business administration program in the Northwest Territories. If we were to provide that, that would be a very significant financial burden on this government. It would cost this government more than the dollars we have in place.

So, what we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is reviewing the whole student financial assistance program, with a view to improving it to respond to some of the issues that the students in Saskatchewan have raised, some of the students in Yellowknife have raised and students in other post-secondary institutions have raised. That review is under way at this particular time and we will be consulting with the students and Members of the process.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing that the teacher education program in the north only allows for a certificate once students have completed that program and recognizing that the University of Saskatchewan Indian teacher education program allows for a degree, I would like to ask the Minister -- if they are reviewing the program, and taking into account the government's intent to get as many aboriginal teachers in the north as they can by the year 2000 -- if he would reconsider looking at this program and allow this inequity to be eliminated for

the aboriginal residents attending the University of Saskatchewan?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 111-12(7): Amount Of Student Post-Secondary Loans Issued

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Removing the program itself removes the inequity. The review of the student financial assistance program may identify areas where we can be more helpful and supportive in providing post-secondary financing without it being identified as unfair or unequal. In that context, we are reviewing the manner in which we are providing student financial assistance to students.

The other thing the honourable Member has raised which has not been considered -- and I mentioned it earlier -- is dealing with the issue on a student-by-student basis. I don't personally know the files of the individuals. The staff may be able to identify those areas where present programs can be applied to students. There are some situations where students are not taking advantage of existing programs or are not aware of existing programs. I can advise that, in some cases, students were not aware that they had an opportunity to access our child care program, for instance. They were not knowledgeable about additional housing allowances where economic circumstances require more funding.

Unless we deal with them individually, it makes it very difficult for me to say that we are unable to respond to the concerns. But I do want to say to the honourable Member that it is our intention to address some of the concerns. If we can't then, obviously, we'll have to advise the students that we're unable to at this particular juncture. But I will have a staff member meet with those particular students.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

Question 112-12(7): Assistance With Income Tax Forms In Regions

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the honourable Premier of this

government. During my recent visit to Gjoa Haven, one of the concerns that was brought to my attention regarded income tax forms and UIC forms received by recipients in small communities across the territories. The concern being that most of the recipients are not able to read English. Sometimes very important information ends up on the shelf or in file 13, never to be seen again. One of the solutions that was brought to my attention at that meeting was perhaps that the federal government should provide PYs in each region to help those people who need help. My question to the honourable Premier is would the Premier undertake to contact our federal counterparts to see if it is possible to have manpower in each region under the payroll of the federal government? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 112-12(7): Assistance With Income Tax Forms In Regions

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I have done is discuss with my colleagues ways and means to solve the problem. Certainly, it is a federal responsibility and I will follow up on the suggestion and the concerns the Member raised. I haven't done all the work that is necessary but I will convey the message very seriously on behalf of the people having difficulties. I will try to get some response out of the Minister in Ottawa in a week's time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

Question 113-12(7): Establishment Of Heritage Day In NWT

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment made a statement on Heritage Day, because Heritage Day is being celebrated today in many places across Canada. In the Northwest Territories, we have many different heritages and cultures; a lot of diverse cultures. Over the years, I'm sure there have been numerous requests from different groups and organizations to designate a day in a year to celebrate their achievements. I'm just wondering what initiatives the Minister is undertaking to establish

a heritage day in the Northwest Territories as a recognized holiday.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 113-12(7): Establishment Of Heritage Day In NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I'm just trying to think, Mr. Speaker. We haven't taken the initiative to the point of it being a holiday. I think what we need to do is take advantage of a day like today, which is Heritage Day in much the same way as the Yellowknife school board who identified it as a day for students to participate in a heritage event. The communities and school boards can review this matter and expand the nature of the day that has been identified. But we have not identified a day in the year as a holiday. That point has been made to me before and I'm not certain we could afford the holiday, without it being part of an overall plan for the school year.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Koe.

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Supplementary To Question 113-12(7): Establishment Of Heritage Day In NWT

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, there have been requests: specifically, the Metis for a Louis Riel day; the Gwich'in have indicated they would like a holiday for the anniversary of the signing of their agreement; and the Inuvialuit also. I wonder what the Minister has done with requests such as these, specifically where they are asking this government to designate a day for these groups to celebrate their achievements. Is anything being done with regard to these requests?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 113-12(7): Establishment Of Heritage Day In NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The problem with trying to deal with the requests that have been made points to the very question the honourable Member raised. Each group wants a specific holiday and the problem is not that Members here don't want to recognize the invaluable contributions of those groups and people, but if you start identifying days which are separate, then there would be more than just one day. The point I was trying to get at is that we have identified Heritage Day in Canada and the thing now is to take advantage of that, even to the point where the school boards can identify it as a part of cultural event that includes the Metis and, in the case of the Gwich'in, the Gwich'in and the community in that surrounding region. It could be a much bigger event than just simply the matter that has been identified by the federal government and we need to work together to make certain that we can respond to the requests that have been made by the Metis Nation, the Gwich'in Nation, and other aboriginal organizations. I am prepared to work with them to see if we can bring together some consensus on this particular issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 113-12(7): Establishment Of Heritage Day In NWT

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Just following up on that, then, and going back to my original question, will the Minister also be investigating the possibility of setting a date specific, this day in particular, the third Monday in February, as a holiday in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 113-12(7): Establishment Of Heritage Day In NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we need to discuss that particular matter. One has to recognize what it is in terms of cost to government to allow our staff off during that particular time. It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, but the Government of Alberta, despite their efforts to recognize today as one of those days, is, in fact, moving to identify, I believe, the third Sunday in every February as Heritage Day so that they don't lose money in terms of expenditures. I will take into

consideration the comments of the honourable Member and hopefully we can get some resolution, but it is a cost factor and that should be considered.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 114-12(7): Consultation Process Re Proposed Hangar Facilities In Fort Smith

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, last April, in 1994, the Dene-Metis Holdings of Fort Smith sent a letter to the committee of deputy ministers which reflected a meeting in the fall of 1993, which was basically about the need for Dene-Metis Holdings to become involved in the development of proposed hangar maintenance facilities. Then, in July, another letter was sent to the then Minister of DPW requesting negotiations to start which, apparently, they have never received a formal response to. However, Mr. Speaker, the Dene-Metis learned through discussions and news releases that the NWT Metis National Assembly in Fort Norman would be given the entire project for the provision of operation, maintenance, and service for the CL-215, birdogs and heavy land bases. I would like to ask the Premier what intergovernmental and external consultation process was used in the formation of the government action plan to obtain services for the operation and maintenance of the CL-215s, heavy land-based water bombers and birdog aircraft in carrying out its mandate to fight forest fires? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, the question is relating to specific correspondence, I will take the question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question is taken as notice. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Pudlat.

Question 115-12(7): Reason For Increase In Housing Rental Rates

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister for the Housing Corporation. Right now, they are reviewing the Residential Tenancies Act. We have heard that they have not revised any of the policies regarding the housing cuts...In my constituency, there are a lot of people who don't have a job and there are also some people who work, too, but they're in grave danger if the rates are to be increased. I'm sure some of the rates will be increasing dramatically and they'll probably increase again in the future. What is the real reason behind the increase in these rates? With the cutback with financing for houses, is it because they have had major cutbacks from the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 115-12(7): Reason For Increase In Housing Rental Rates

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The main reason for the new rent scale is that the old rent scale hadn't

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been revised since the early 80's. The new rent scale is fairer to all NWT residents. Also, it was very clear from the federal government that if we did not adjust our rent scale, then they would adjust their transfer payments to us by cutting them back. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Pudlat.

Supplementary To Question 115-12(7): Reason For Increase In Housing Rental Rates

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As people from the east, it's very hard to try and find resources to keep our houses warm, especially when we don't have any trees. We all know that it's very difficult and it's very hard to find finances and there are people who would like to own their own houses and there are other people who are encouraging them to try and find their own housing. With all the cutbacks, there

are people without any jobs and it's even harder for us right now to try and be on our own. Has there been any consideration as to how the people will be able to have their own fuel subsidies? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 115-12(7): Reason For Increase In Housing Rental Rates

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the new rental scale the cost of electricity as well the cost of fuel, water, and sewer are all built into the new rental scale so no client has to pay more than 30 percent of their income. The lower-income people are getting an even better break under the new scale than they did under the old scale because it starts off at six percent. There's also a cost of living adjustment in the new scale so that the communities with a higher cost of living get a subsidy for the higher cost of living. I feel that the new scale is a lot better and it will help those people out who are of the lower income bracket. Those people who are living in public housing who are higher income and can afford to own and

operate their own home, there are many programs with the Housing Corporation that are available to assist them to own their own home. If seniors get into their own homes, then there is also a fuel subsidy program available from this government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 116-12(7): Power Rebate For Senior Citizens

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation whether or not there has, at any time, been consideration to give senior citizens a rebate or a deduction for seniors who own their own home on their electricity bills? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 116-12(7): Power Rebate For Senior Citizens

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, not to my knowledge.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 116-12(7): Power Rebate For Senior Citizens

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Premier advise this House what the process would be in the event that such a rebate, deduction or subsidy is considered for seniors? Would it have to go through the PUB or would the Premier and the Power Corporation's officials consider such a subsidy? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 116-12(7): Power Rebate For Senior Citizens

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that such a subsidy would not have to go through the PUB, although in the end the Public Utilities Board would deem it as a non-accountable expenditure so that would make a difference on their bottom line. The only subsidy that is available, is available to all residents of the Northwest Territories, based on the rate that is established in Yellowknife. Any extra subsidy would have to be considered by the board of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, if they were going to do it themselves. If the government was going to do it, then it would have to be considered by Cabinet through the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question period is now over. Item 8, written questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

ITEM 8: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 7-12(7): Firefighting Aircraft Project Offered To Fort Smith Dene/Metis Holdings

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question for the Premier regarding the heavy land-based water bombers birdog aircraft and carrying out its mandate to fight forest fires:

1. What specific criteria was used to rationalize offering the entire project to Dene-Metis Holdings Limited?
2. What specific public policy was used to legitimize the government making the offer to Dene-Metis Holdings Limited?
3. Were there any efforts made to evaluate Dene-Metis Holdings Limited's human and fiscal resource capacity prior to Cabinet's decision to offer Dene-Metis Holdings the complete project?
4. If so, was such an evaluation presented to Cabinet as part of the background information used to support the decision and, further, if it was not, what critical information would have been incorporated into a decision paper which would have given Cabinet sufficient confidence that their decision was the most appropriate decision?

Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, replies to budget address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of standing and special committees. Item 14, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 15, tabling of documents.

ITEM 15: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 20-12(7), a letter from the Honourable Allan Rock, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada to the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, dated February 14, 1995 with regard to an act respecting firearms and other weapons. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 15, tabling of documents. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table Tabled Document 21-12(7), a resolution passed by the Dogrib Tribal Council in Wha Ti on February 15th with regard to Dogrib spirituality, school program prayers and the proposed Education Act. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Item 15, tabling of documents. Item 16, notices of motion. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 16: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Motion 9-12(7): Appointments To Standing Committees

MR. LEWIS:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, February 22nd, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the honourable Member for Baffin Central, Ms. Rebecca Mike, be appointed as a permanent Member of the standing committees on Finance and Public Accounts, and as an alternate Member of the Standing Committee on Agencies, Boards and Commissions. And, further, that the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mrs. Jeannie Marie-Jewell, be appointed as a permanent Member of the standing committees on Legislation and Public Accounts and as an alternate Member of the Standing Committee on Finance.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 16, notices of motion. Item 17, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 18, motions. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 18: MOTIONS

Motion 8-12(7): Permanent Display Of A Y Jackson Collection

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS, in 1949 the then deputy minister of the Department of Mines and Resources, Dr. Hugh Keenleyside invited A Y Jackson to do some sketches in Yellowknife, Port Radium and the surrounding countryside;

AND WHEREAS, with the assistance of Eldorado Mining and Refining Limited, A Y Jackson was able to return to the north to undertake his works;

AND WHEREAS, in subsequent years, A Y Jackson also travelled the barrenlands to outside Coppermine and around Great Bear River, Hunter Bay and Dease Inlet;

AND WHEREAS, at the opening of the exhibition of A Y Jackson's paintings on October 22, 1953 held at the Art Gallery of Toronto, the then Governor General, the Right Honourable Vincent Massey said: "You will recall he was one of four to form that group of artists which, during a spirited chapter in the history of Canadian art, taught Canadians to perceive the peculiar beauty of their own country. Alex Jackson is not only a great Canadian painter, he is a great Canadian, and a legendary figure in the Canadian scene."

AND WHEREAS, Eldorado Mining were happy to have made a contribution to the works of this great Canadian painter, the company's board of directors was pleased to support the collection known as the Eldorado Collection to find a new home in the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS, this new Legislative Assembly building could provide a permanent home so that the public can experience the A Y Jackson legacy and enjoy this truly northern asset;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that this Legislative Assembly request the Premier and the Executive Council that immediate arrangements be made to transfer, on permanent loan, the entire government's collection of A Y Jackson's paintings and sketches for permanent display in the Legislative Assembly building.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To explain why we should support the motion -- and I believe the motion contains most of the reasons, Mr. Speaker -- I should give you a little bit more background. During A Y Jackson's life, he led a group of Canadian painters called the Group of Seven, Mr. Speaker, which broke away from the tradition that it was only by copying

European methods that painting could really be developed.

Although he spent time in Paris before the First World War, learning technique and colour, it wasn't until he began to paint the Canadian wilderness that a Canadian style of painting evolved. He was drawn to the most remote parts of Canada. He first visited the Arctic in 1927 and revisited the north in each of the following decades until his death in 1974.

In 1967, the northern paintings by A Y Jackson were transported from Ottawa to the territorial government in Yellowknife. I talked to John Parker two weeks ago and he recalls looking after the paintings on the plane ride carrying the first group of Northwest Territories employees north; the ones who had been in Ottawa. There was no place in Yellowknife to keep or display these paintings at that time, so he made himself the unofficial keeper of the paintings and has looked after them well ever since.

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While he was Commissioner, he also acquired more northern paintings by Jackson and added them to the collection. In 1988, as has already been pointed out, Eldorado Mining donated nine northern paintings to the northern heritage centre in Yellowknife. Thus, the Government of the Northwest Territories now owns the best collection of A Y Jackson northern paintings in all of Canada.

It was always the plan to give these paintings a permanent home in Yellowknife. Now that we have a Legislative Assembly building visited by some 2,000 people every year, there's good reason to keep the collection together so they can be enjoyed by both residents and visitors alike. Our present Commissioner, Helen Maksagak, was gracious enough to lend A Y Jackson paintings from her office to the Legislative Assembly building during our recent Speakers' conference. The reaction from these leaders across the country was very positive, indeed; they were very impressed. And I know that many other Members of the Assembly have also become interested in the Group of Seven because of the explosion to this painter.

I urge Members to support the motion to place the entire collection on permanent loan to this Legislative Assembly building. This building is a fine place to house the work of a man who has been well described in the quotation by Governor General Vincent Massey in 1953. I urge Members to support

the motion to honour the work of a great Canadian painter by hanging his work in this place of the people. This would make this building an even greater tourist attraction than it already is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Whitford, do you wish to add...Are there any other Members who wish to speak to the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

---Applause

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Bravo!

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 19, first reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 19: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 1: Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 19, first reading of bills. Mr. Pollard, your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 1 has had first reading. Item 20, second reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 20: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 1: Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of the Northwest Territories to make operations and maintenance expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 1 has had second reading and, accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee of the whole. Item 21, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Limitation of Actions Act; Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act; Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Dental Mechanics Act; Bill 9, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act; Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act; Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act; Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act, No. 2; Bill 14, Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994; Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act; and, Committee Report 2-12(7), Report on the Legislative Action Paper on the Office of Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories, with Mr. Whitford in the chair.

ITEM 21: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The committee will come to order. When we concluded on Friday, we were dealing with Bill 15. I would like to ask what is the wish of the committee today. The chair recognizes Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that committee consider, in the following order: resume consideration of Bill 15 first, then perhaps consider bills 11, 12 and 10.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have agreement. It's agreed that we will continue with Bill 15, first, when we return from our short break.

---SHORT RECESS

Bill 15: An Act To Amend The Elections Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Before we broke, the committee had agreed that we would continue with Bill 15. I would like to ask Minister Pollard if he would like to bring in witnesses and move to the witness table. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

With the committee's permission, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree that the Minister bring his witnesses to the witness table?

AN HON. MEMBER:

We don't have a quorum.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have enough to start with. Come on in, Becky, we need you. Mr. Minister, for the record, would you please introduce your witnesses to the committee?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have with me Mr. Mark Aitken, legislative counsel; and Mr. David Hamilton the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. Welcome, gentlemen, to committee of the whole. Before we proceed, I have reviewed the unedited Hansard, and it appears that we have a motion on the floor. The motion was made by the honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson, and was ruled in order.

Committee Motion 21-12(7): To Defer Consideration Of Clause 3, Bill 15, Defeated

The motion before the committee was, and I quote, "that we defer clause 3 at this time." The motion is still on the floor for debate. Therefore, to the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Question has been called. Mr. Koe. Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed to the motion? Thank you. The motion has been defeated.

---Defeated

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 16.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 27.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 28.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 29.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 31.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 32.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 33.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 34.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 35.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 36.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford): Clause 37.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 38. Minister Pollard.

Committee Motion 22-12(7): To Renumber Clauses 38 To 41 Of Bill 15 To Clauses 39 To 42, Carried

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that clauses 38 to 41 of Bill 15 be renumbered as clauses 39 to 42 respectively, and that the following be added after clause 37:

38. Subsection 181(3) is repealed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have a motion on the floor. The motion appears to be in order and is,

at present, being circulated for approval. To the motion. The motion appears to be in order. The chair recognizes Mr. Pudluk.

MR. PUDLUK:

These seem to be in English, French, Inuktitut, but no Gwich'in.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Pudluk. Are you looking for Gwich'in? There hasn't been a request for it. Are you looking for Gwich'in in the text, Mr. Pudluk?

MR. PUDLUK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If there is a motion or an amendment, maybe next time it should also be translated into Gwich'in. It's just a reminder. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Pudluk. To the motion. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Chairman, could I get some clarification? Not being on the Legislation committee, could I get some clarification with regard to what is subsection 181(3) that they're repealing?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Mrs. Marie-Jewell, your comments weren't picked up, the microphone was turned off. Please finish what you were saying.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I just indicated, Mr. Chairman, that I can't seem to find subsection 181(3). When you look at clause 38, it refers to subsection 198(2), referring to being repealed and the following is substituted. This motion placed on the floor is asking that clause 38, subsection 181(3) be repealed. Can someone explain to us what this clause states? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mrs. Marie-Jewell. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the researchers from the Standing Committee on Legislation pointed out to us an error that we had made in the legislation after the bill had been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation. To specifically answer the Member's questions, subsection 181(3) provides that the chief electoral officer shall publish a summary of an additional return made under subsection 179(4). The problem is, Mr. Chairman, that clause 37(c) of Bill 15 repeals subsection 179(4) and then there would be no provision for the additional return in the Elections Act. It was picked up by the researchers in the Standing Committee on Legislation and pointed out to us that there needed to be a motion to amend. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Mrs. Marie-Jewell, does that answer your question?

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I understand what Mr. Pollard is saying but either I'm not looking in my book correctly or I'm misreading under clause 37 of the bill, which is basically page 9. It refers to section 179. On page 10, under section 38, it refers to subsection 198(2). Basically, this motion is stating clause 38, subsection 181(3) being repealed. Could I get clarification of that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mrs. Marie-Jewell. We'll ascertain from the Minister whether or not that's correct. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, these are technical amendments to the bill where we had made an error. In order to get those technical amendments explained, I'll ask Mr. Aitken to explain to the committee. Thank you.

MR. AITKEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If Members look to page 10 of the bill, they will see in paragraph 37(c)...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

It has been brought to my attention that there is a motion on the floor and during that time the witnesses are not allowed to speak to the bill. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, as I said before, this motion amends the bill to add a new clause repealing subsection 181(3) of the Elections Act and that particular subsection provides that the chief electoral officer publish a summary of an additional return made under subsection 179(4), but clause 37(c) of Bill 15 repeals that particular subsection. Therefore, if we didn't make a change there would no longer be any provision for the additional return. This motion corrects that, Mr. Chairman, and it also renumbers existing clauses 38 to 41 as clauses 39 to 42 and inserts the new clause as clause 38. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

---Carried

Clause 38, agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

As amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 39.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 40.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 41.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 42.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The bill as a whole, as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does this committee agree that Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, is now ready for third reading, as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, is now ready for third reading.

Mr. Pollard, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the committee to thank you and your witnesses for your assistance to the committee. You're free to go.

This committee had originally agreed to go from 15 to 11, 12 and 10. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

I shall rise and report to the Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Item 22, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 22: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 15 and would like to report progress, and that Bill 15 is now ready for third reading, as amended. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. Do we have a seconder? Mr. Antoine. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM 23: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 2: An Act To Amend The Apprenticeship And Trade Certification Act

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Hay River, that Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 2 has had third reading. Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Kakfwi.

Bill 3: An Act To Amend The Judicature Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 3 has had third reading. Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Kakfwi.

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Bill 5: An Act To Amend The Maintenance Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Hay River, that Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Maintenance Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 5 has had third reading. Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Kakfwi.

Bill 7: An Act To Amend The Co-operative Associations Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Co-operative Associations Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 7 has had third reading. Item 23, third reading of bills. Item 24, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 24: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there is a meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance immediately after adjournment and also a meeting of the Nunavut Caucus immediately after adjournment today. There are meetings tomorrow morning at 9:00 am of Caucus and at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, February 21, 1995.

1. Prayer
 2. Ministers' Statements
 3. Members' Statements
 4. Returns to Oral Questions
 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
 6. Oral Questions
 7. Written Questions
 8. Returns to Written Questions
 9. Replies to Opening Address
 10. Replies to Budget Address
 11. Petitions
 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
 13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
 14. Tabling of Documents
 15. Notices of Motion
 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
 17. Motions
 18. First Reading of Bills
 19. Second Reading of Bills
 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
- Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96
- Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Limitation of Actions Act

- Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act
- Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Dental Mechanics Act
- Bill 9, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act
- Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act
- Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
- Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act, No. 2
- Bill 14, Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994
- Committee Report 2-12(7), Report on the Legislative Action Paper on the Office of Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories
- Committee Report 3-12(7), Report on the Review of the Legislative Action Paper Proposing New Heritage Legislation for the Northwest Territories

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 21st at 1:30 pm.

---ADJOURNMENT