



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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HANSARD

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1995

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Speaker: The Hon. Samuel Gargon

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MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Antoine, Hon. Silas Arngna'naaq, Mr. Ballantyne, Mr. Dent, Hon. Samuel Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Lewis, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Hon. Kelvin Ng, Mr. Ningark, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 20-12(7): Ministers Absent From The House

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Premier and the Honourable John Todd will be absent from the House today to attend the Nunavut conference in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Minister's Statement 21-12(7): BHP Environmental Assessment And Review And Slave Geological Province Regional Study

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, most people in the NWT and outside the NWT have followed with interest the various announcements about the valuable mineral deposits that have been identified in the area geologists refer to as the "Slave geological province." Generally there is consensus that some of the exploration activities will result in mines in the near future. The most likely is BHP's diamond exploration activity in the Lac de Gras area.

The potential for mines in this area has raised many questions about the impact of development of wildlife, water quality and traditional activities. There have also been many questions about the economic

opportunity development could bring to the north. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure this House that through the Department of Renewable Resources, this government is carefully monitoring the impact of this exploration activity on the environment. We are working closely with other government departments, DIAND, aboriginal groups and industry.

Mr. Speaker, over the past three months, two major initiatives have been announced that are directed at responding to environmental concerns. In December, the federal government announced the appointment of a four-member environmental assessment panel to review BHP's diamond mine project in the Lac de Gras area. At the same time the panel was announced, I and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development announced a major regional study of the environmental, social and economic issues related to mineral development in the Slave geological province. The partners involved in this study include government, industry, aboriginal groups and environmental groups.

I would like to take this opportunity to update my colleagues on both these initiatives. Mr. Speaker, the BHP diamond mine project is being reviewed under federal environmental assessment legislation. My department is currently coordinating GNWT participation in the review process. We are doing this through an interdepartmental working group which includes the departments of Economic Development and Tourism; Education, Culture and Employment; Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources; Health and Social Services; Justice; Safety and Public Services; and, Transportation. This working group will be responsible for developing GNWT input throughout the environmental assessment and review process which will include written submissions and formal presentations before the federal panel.

On the second initiative, the Slave geological province regional study, my department has met with each of the partner groups. Their response to this regional study has been positive. The first workshop for the regional study will take place on February 28th, March 1st and 2nd in Yellowknife. Representatives from industry, environmental groups, aboriginal groups and government will be attending the workshop. The objectives of this workshop are to develop terms of reference and goals and objectives for the study, to define the management structure for the study and to agree on the next steps in the study process. By working together, the concerns of all parties can be identified and addressed. This is the first step towards achieving a sustainable future for the area.

Mr. Speaker, it is our objective, in both the environmental assessment of the BHP diamond mine project and the Slave geological province regional study, to promote exploration and development of mineral resources in ways that provide lasting social and economic benefits to northerners while preserving the environment. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to update my colleagues on progress on both the BHP environmental assessment process and the regional study. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Arnnga'naaq. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ningark.

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ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Birthing Centre For Taloyoak

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as Members of the 12th Assembly we've talked a lot about strengthening our communities. We have talked about community-based approaches to problems. In my region, there is a community which wants to address an important problem. In my region, when a mother is going to have a baby, she must leave the support of her family and travel to Yellowknife to have the child. Expectant mothers are sent to Yellowknife four to five weeks before the baby is due. This separation from community and family causes stress for the mother, reduces the early bonding to family and is very hard on families left behind.

Mr. Speaker, the people in Taloyoak have come up with an idea which would allow mothers to stay at home longer and be healthier during their pregnancies. Taloyoak would like to establish a birthing centre. This birthing centre would provide enhanced prenatal care which would reduce the risk of birthing complications. It would also provide an alternative for those women who decide to remain in their community for childbirth. Not only is a birthing centre good from a social perspective; it also has financial benefits. The current four to five-week stays in Yellowknife are very expensive for this government. Although there is a cost to setting up and running the birthing centre, the total cost per mother will be much less than current arrangements.

The government has indicated that it is waiting for the results of the review of the Rankin Inlet birthing project before looking at Taloyoak. Mr. Speaker, the people of Taloyoak are ready to proceed with this centre now. I urge the Minister of Health and Social Services to work with the people of Taloyoak in making this birthing centre become a reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Pudlat.

Member's Statement On Reason For Absence From NIC Meeting In Iqaluit

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a Member's statement to tell you why I did not attend a Nunavut Implementation Commission meeting, which is being held in Iqaluit. I didn't attend that conference because there has to be a certain number of Members present to make a quorum. I feel to represent my constituents, I should stay here in Yellowknife to meet during the session. I just want to make sure that I represent my constituency properly.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Vulnerability Of NWT In Negotiations Regarding Quebec

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was quite disappointed with the response of the Premier to my questions yesterday on the government's preparation for the debate that is taking place about the possible independence of Quebec. Canada is rapidly changing as we know it. Social programs inevitably will be cut. The battle for the hearts and minds of Quebecers has been engaged. We know that the civil service will be cut dramatically and there is no doubt - - and the Finance Minister has warned us -- that over the next few years, the transfer payments are in jeopardy.

So what I expect from the government is leadership. I don't expect the government strategy to come out in

dribs and drabs in response to questions by Members. Presently, we are in the midst of very sensitive and fragile negotiations with the federal government on division. The aboriginal groups in the territories are in the midst of sensitive and fragile negotiations on self-government. The EARP panel is deciding the fate of diamond mining in the Northwest Territories. It is very important that the people of the Northwest Territories are kept fully informed on the drastic changes which will soon be upon us.

Quebec is one good example. If Quebec leaves, it not only affects the people of Quebec, it affects all of us here in the territories. One-third of the population of Canada live in Quebec. Will the remaining two-thirds be as willing to bankroll the north or will we be overwhelmed in the constitutional and economic chaos that will inevitably follow.

If Quebec doesn't leave -- I sincerely hope it doesn't and I don't believe it will -- there will still be drastic changes to Canada as we know it. If the federal government decentralizes -- and that is what Paul Martin is talking about; its authority in Health, Social Services and Education -- the central government becomes much weaker with less resources. We will find it more difficult to protect the north. If Quebec doesn't leave, inevitably there are going to be new constitutional discussions. Each province is looking after their own interests. For the first time ever, the province of Ontario is not looking from a national perspective. They are looking at it from their own perspective. We could be gobbled up by the provinces.

Members will recall the intense debates in the north about whether or not provinces could move into the territories. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BALLANTYNE:

We haven't discussed it since Charlottetown, but the reality is we are extremely vulnerable. The reason many of us worked hard for Charlottetown and the Charlottetown accord is because it did protect the Northwest Territories and the Constitution of Canada. There is nothing now that protects us. When we are carrying out these constitutional discussions here in

the west, the whole concept of division across the territories, it has to be done in the context of a country which is changing so rapidly that we aren't keeping up with it.

So I expect that this government should be very proactive. This government has a responsibility to lay out, in every forum and opportunity possible to the people of the Northwest Territories, those things which are happening in the country which are going to impact us, which will make our decisions tougher and are going to take away our choices. I also think

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we have a responsibility to tell the powers that be, whether they are Premiers or Cabinet Ministers that, whatever happens in southern Canada, it will have a dramatic effect on us. We can't just sit on our hands in the Northwest Territories.

I have said it before in this House and I will say it again: I hope to hear from government Ministers on exactly how we are going to deal with all of this. If we don't do something, it will inevitably be death by 1,000 cuts. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Baden-Powell Week

MR. WHITFORD:

I don't know if I can follow that, but good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the scouting movement originated in England back in about 1912. At that time, Lord Baden-Powell decided that there was a need for an activity for young people, particularly young men, based on honour and respect for each other and the world around them.

To meet these needs, he created the Boy Scouts. Very soon, it was very successful. Soon afterwards, young women also wanted to become part of the fun and the Girl Guides movement came into being. The organization grew and now includes Members in almost every country around the world. This week, and today in particular, members of the Guiding and Scouting movement celebrate the activities around February 22nd, which is the birthday of Lord Baden-Powell.

Mr. Speaker, not long ago, I, too, was a Boy Scout...

MR. BALLANTYNE:

How long ago?

MR. WHITFORD:

Quite some time ago. I was a Boy Scout. I believe the Scouts and Guides organizations are very noble institutions. They provide good, healthy activity for young people. They are good for the character and they help these children become better citizens by the camaraderie they establish, the challenges they face and the discipline they direct themselves towards. Mr. Speaker, as I came to work this morning, I had the pleasure of saying good morning to a young Brownie -- Mr. Kakfwi's daughter -- who was dressed in her uniform to go to school. I think Lynn Elkin-Hall has a Guide uniform on today at work. So these people are celebrating Baden-Powell day across the NWT.

We have many Beavers, Sparks, Cubs, Brownies, Scouts, Guides and even Rovers, Venturers, Pathfinders and Explorers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the leaders who take the time to help run this very valuable program. In Yellowknife, all members of the Scout and Guide movement will celebrate on Friday with a torchlight parade from the DND building to Northern United Place, followed by singing, skits and goodies, as well as a number of groups that have created window displays on Scouts and Guides in various businesses in town. With that, Mr. Speaker, I say to all the Scouts, Guides and their leaders across the Northwest Territories, enjoy Baden-Powell week.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Administration Of Proposed Gun Control Legislation

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the last few days, many Members of this House have risen to talk about the problems with the proposed federal gun control legislation. This particular legislation, Mr. Speaker, is 124 pages. So it isn't a small amendment that they are making to the proposed gun control legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk today about one of those problems which is included in the proposed legislation; that is, the administration of this particular act.

Mr. Speaker, under this act, any Canadian wanting to use a firearm will need to apply for a licence. Before a licence can be approved, there will need to be a verification process to ensure that the applicant does not break any of the rules such as those related to previous criminal convictions. There may be a payment process for licences to register a firearm. There will be a similar process of forms and payment. Certificates of registration need to be issued.

In many Canadian provinces, Mr. Speaker, people can easily travel to regional centres and it is easy for them to get to a central office to complete forms and to get to the banks to make the payments required. However, Mr. Speaker, this is not the case here in the north. Application will either have to be done by mail or there will be a need to create a bureaucracy in every community to handle licensing and registration. There is concern among many of my constituents that, not only will there be a lot of bureaucracy associated with owning and using firearms, but there may be a need for picture identification to get the registration certificate. This will be impossible, Mr. Speaker, in many of our northern locations.

At a time, Mr. Speaker, when Canada is struggling to control and reduce the national debt, it is surprising that the federal government would create an act like the one they are proposing. I believe there are large costs associated with creating the bureaucracy to both implement and monitor the licensing and registration provisions of the act alone. There is a provision in the act which allows the provinces to assume responsibility for the administration of the bill.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

The honourable Member for North Slave is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a provision in the act which allows the provinces to assume responsibility for the administration of the bill. If this

bill is passed, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage our territorial government to ensure that the federal government provides the administration of this act in the Northwest Territories as we discover how truly costly this act will be. Mahsi.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Importance Of Freedom Of Language In Justice System

MR. ANTOINE:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I would like to talk to you about is using our mother language. Today I would like to talk about the importance of one's culture. This government has talked a lot about the importance of languages and culture. On June 28, 1984, we passed the Official Languages Act (Translation ends) which created eight official languages, six of which are aboriginal. It is an indication of the many cultures here in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, in this day and age, there are still incidents which occur every day somewhere in the north where language barriers still exist. Mr. Speaker, one such incident has been brought to my attention and I feel it must be brought to the attention of the Legislative Assembly. This particular incident occurred when court proceedings were being held in Fort Liard. The circumstances surrounding this incident could have been a factor in this case. You see, Mr. Speaker, the court that was held in Fort Liard was held in the community airport hangar because of the lack of a community hall, and this will be the subject of another statement later.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, the facility was inadequate. Regardless of the facility, this cannot justify having an individual compromise his or her speaking the language with which they are most comfortable. Mr. Speaker, what has been most disturbing about the incident was the individual, Mr. Betsaka of Nahanni Butte, was outrightly denied his request to speak his choice of language without explanation by the presiding judge.

Mr. Speaker, the judge's decision to deny Mr. Betsaka's right to speak Slavey undermines the efforts of all who have worked toward enhancing the

justice system so all can be comfortable and all have the right to procedural fairness. Mr. Speaker, this case was heard by the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories, I believe, and the presiding judge's decision to deny Mr. Betsaka's request to speak Slavey, thus denying procedural fairness, resulted in a denial of natural justice. Now a new preliminary inquiry has been ordered for Mr. Betsaka.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Betsaka and all other aboriginal people who wish to speak their mother tongue in all Legislative Assembly and court proceedings must be assured that they can speak the language they are most comfortable with. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Tribute To Paul Andrew And Focus North

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I moved from the eastern Arctic to Fort Smith in 1972, Mr. Speaker, I was involved in the teacher education program. I remember looking at the list of people who were supposed to show up that fall and one of them never did, and I often wondered who he was. I met him many years later. His name was Paul Andrew. People said he would have been a wonderful person to have gone into the education system because of the kind of individual he was.

I'm now convinced, after watching Focus North for several years, Mr. Speaker, that, in fact, he probably is the best teacher in the Northwest Territories. I was fortunate enough to have watched Focus North a night ago in which Mr. Antoine, you, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Zoe were being interviewed and I was impressed by the fact that this powerful television medium

reaches so many people in their own language and that the way we learn about ourselves is probably best done through that program, Focus North. It has dealt with many, many important northern issues over the years. I have often wondered if it has been given awards for the kind of work it does.

Today, Mr. Speaker, although from time to time I have bashed the media and gotten upset -- not really upset, but annoyed -- about what goes on, I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Andrew and to the kind of work he does and particularly to Focus North for teaching us about ourselves. Thank you.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Lewis. Item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Member's Statement On Incident At Women's Federal Penitentiary In Kingston

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last night on CBC television, many Canadians saw video footage of an incident at the federal penitentiary for women in Kingston. The penitentiary holds the most violent and dangerous of women in the Canadian prison system. There have been problems of violence, fires and hostage-taking within the prison. However, none of this is an acceptable excuse for the use of the emergency response team in the prison on that April night last year.

Mr. Speaker, the disturbing pictures of naked women being surrounded and mishandled by male members of the emergency response team raises many questions. How could the warden, also a woman, have misled the public about the nature of this incident? Why did it take the release of this video before the truth came out? What types of systems do we have that consider it acceptable for men in full protective gear to need to subject women to the kind of humiliation and degradation that these women were obviously subjected to?

Mr. Speaker, this type of incident shows the worst face of our criminal justice system. While public inquiries are good, to get

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information to the public, this situation goes beyond this. There should be serious repercussions for both the warden and the men involved. It is also important, Mr. Speaker, that Canadians insist that we have proper policies in place in our prisons, policies which ensure that there is recognition of a difference in how emergency response teams are made up and used in women's prisons.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I have confidence that this government will never allow this type of incident to occur in our women's correctional centre in the north. But we must, as a Legislature, call for review of the policies which govern the administration of Canadian prisons to ensure this situation is never repeated in Canada. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mrs. Marie-Jewell. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ng.

Member's Statement Announcing Birth Of Custom Adopted Child

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud and happy to announce that my wife, Susie, and I will have a first-hand opportunity to experience the custom adoption recognition procedures of our government.

On Monday, February 13th, at 6:04 am, Bradley Trenton Akalukak Akhok was delivered at the Cambridge Bay Health Centre, weighing in at 7 pounds 10 ounces. The natural parents are Susie's younger brother, William Nakashook and Rosalyn Akhok. Both Susie, our children and I are extremely happy and excited on the addition of Trenton to our family.

Although it is customary to hand out cigars to celebrate the arrival of an addition to a family, I've decided at this time not to follow this tradition for a few reasons. Firstly, I do not want to be perceived as encouraging smoking by providing free cigars. Secondly, most people given these cigars waste them by throwing them away and not smoking them. Finally, I didn't think that the tax revenue from my cigar purchases would make any significant dent on the territorial or federal coffers.

---Laughter

However, having now said this, I recognize that that decision may open me to criticism from my colleagues and friends about being frugal, or the tightness of my wallet. I have instead decided, Mr. Speaker, to write a cheque in the amount of \$300 to the Canadian Cancer Society in lieu of providing cigars.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Member's Statement On Search For Moses Anautalik

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to express my sincere sympathy, with my home community of Baker Lake, over the tragic loss of a young but capable hunter, Moses Anautalik.

Moses set forth on a short hunting trip, but when storm conditions unexpectedly arose, he became the centre of a large search coordinated by the Baker Lake Search and Rescue Committee. As is often the case in crises, this crisis brought out the best in the residents of the Keewatin. The entire community of Baker Lake participated in the search for Moses by either physically searching, preparing food and support for those searching, soliciting cash donations to cover the cost of the search, and/or by praying for Moses' safe return.

When the community was exhausted yet unwilling to give up, people began arriving from Rankin Inlet and Arviat to assist with the search. The participation of searchers from these other communities boosted the morale of all those involved. And on behalf of all Baker Lake residents, I want to say thank you to these individuals.

Also to be commended are Robert Jaynes and the staff of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs emergency measures organization at the regional and headquarters level, the RCMP, Canadian Forces Northern Area, the GNWT's Department of Renewable Resources, the Rescue Coordination Centre of the Canadian Forces that sent

a twin otter and a crew from Trenton, Ontario to assist in the search, and all those individuals who contributed financially to keep this search operational.

I would like to thank the Northern stores and the Sanavik Co-op for supplying food. I especially want to thank Nunasi Corporation which donated \$30,000 to ensure that the search planes would be able to continue searching for up to an extra week after the RCMP had called off their air search.

Above all, however, it is the residents of Baker Lake who should be commended for their dedication and their willingness to search for days in the hopes of rescuing Moses.

Mr. Speaker, although this search ended tragically, it was a fine example of the kindness of people and the willingness of individuals, businesses and various levels of government to pull together in a time of crisis. This incident also highlights the need for emergency shelters on the tundra and for an official policy on funding once the RCMP have fulfilled their initial mandate. I spoke with Eric Anautalik, who is the brother of Moses, this morning and he once again expresses his appreciation to all those who were involved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Arngna'naaq. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Question 81-12(7): Request For High School In Gjoa Haven

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Ningark, the

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honourable Member for Natilikmiot, with regard to the request for a high school in Gjoa Haven.

The Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education plans to introduce grade 10 into Gjoa Haven in August 1995. There is space in the school to accommodate both the anticipated number of elementary students, as well as the number of students expected to attend grade 10 in August. The five-year capital plan

includes construction of additional space for the school in future years.

The Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education, together with the department, has identified the need for two staff housing units for the additional teachers needed in 1995. The Department of Personnel and the NWT Housing Corporation have identified six vacant housing units in Gjoa Haven which may be allocated to staff in the community. The Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education and the department will work to ensure that the allocation of two housing units for teaching staff in Gjoa Haven be given priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 84-12(7): Shortage Of O And M Funding For Recreational Facilities

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by the honourable Mr. Ningark on February 16th with respect to shortage of O and M funding for recreational facilities.

The operations and maintenance funding for recreational facilities is incorporated into the hamlet funding formula under the municipal operating assistance policy. This policy was implemented in 1992.

All municipalities are funded for utility costs for recreational facilities on the same basis as other public buildings. Funding for utility costs is based on an average of the last three years of actual costs.

Other operations and maintenance costs are funded under the hamlet funding formula at levels consistent with office building maintenance. In addition, salary subsidies are provided for a recreation leader and facility operator to assist communities in ensuring facilities are well utilized and properly maintained.

Several years ago, a study was done to determine if recreation funding was adequate in Coppermine and Cambridge Bay. The study revealed that the gap between costs and revenues, primarily composed of GNWT contributions, was not as large as generally believed. It is noteworthy that this study was undertaken prior to the implementation of the

municipal operating assistance policy, under which funding levels were improved.

The department is willing to look at specific cases and work with communities that are experiencing financial difficulties in operating facilities, but believes the funding provided under the various programs is sufficient to operate recreational facilities if the buildings are operated effectively and efficiently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. I would like to introduce to you Enzo Spennato in the gallery, to my right. Mr. Spennato is a trained dentist and is the principal in a dentist business in my riding.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 130-12(7): Status Of Study On Alternatives To Fund Education

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, last fall, the Minister wrote to boards and divisional boards of education advising that the government was reviewing options for financing local government and education. The Minister advised that they would be studying alternatives to the property tax system for funding of education. I was wondering if the Minister could provide the House with an update on progress on this study.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I might refer this to the Minister of Finance who can give you a response.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 130-12(7): Status Of Study On Alternatives To Fund Education

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that study is under way. Enid Slack from Ontario was hired to do the particular study, and I anticipate getting some early results in September, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members of this House may recall that I raised a concern in November of last year regarding the recent restructuring in the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I understand that a review of the reorganization is now taking place. My question is to the new Minister. Can the Minister tell the House who is participating in this review? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Ng.

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Return To Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Member is questioning who the consultants are speaking to, then they're speaking to senior managers of the department, some MLAs, some Cabinet Members, some community representatives such as mayors and senior administrative officers, the Association of Municipal Administrators and other stakeholders. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

MR. ZOE:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell us when he expects the review to be completed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's anticipated that a draft report will be available by March 15th, at which time there will be a final review by the steering committee before it goes to Cabinet, and hopefully can be tabled in this House in early April. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary. Since this review is being undertaken, could I ask the Minister if he could provide this House with the terms of reference of this particular review? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I'll make that available to Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

MR. ZOE:

Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can I also ask the Minister if he could tell us how much money is being spent on the contract with the external consultant we have hired for this review? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 131-12(7): Participants In Review Of MACA Reorganization

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have that information at hand, but I will include that information along with the terms of reference for the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ballantyne.

Question 132-12(7): Status Of Resources For EARP

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear today the statement from the Minister of Renewable Resources. Mr. Speaker, Minister Arngna'naaq said, and I quote, "it's our objective in both the environmental assessment of the BHP diamond mine project and the Slave geological province regional study, to promote exploration and development of mineral resources in ways that provide lasting social and economic benefits to northerners while preserving the environment." I could say it's a very good statement and I think it's very important that, as a government, we do promote mineral development because if we don't exploit our mineral resources, we're doomed to be a long-term welfare state, I believe.

My question to the Minister is, is the Minister aware that in the setting up of the EARP panel, there were unnecessary delays? Is the Minister satisfied that the panel has the sufficient resources to be able to carry out their work in the 18-months' time that has been allotted to them? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 132-12(7): Status Of Resources For EARP

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the resources that the panel will have, I believe that there are contributions being made by the federal government as well as by the Government of the Northwest Territories on support being given to the panel. I believe that the resources that they will have at their disposal will be sufficient to cover the work that they will be doing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 132-12(7): Status Of Resources For EARP

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you. I think we all agree, Mr. Speaker, that we want the panel to do a good job, to do a thorough job and to do an objective job within that time frame, because I think that time frame is long enough for them to achieve their review. My second to the question to the Minister has to do with the Slave geological province regional study. I think we all agree that that baseline data is necessary. My question to the Minister: do you think that there is enough of a distinction between these two studies, that they don't run into each other and that the Slave province study slows down the BHP diamond mine project study? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

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Further Return To Question 132-12(7): Status Of Resources For EARP

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the work that is being done by the environmental assessment review panel and the regional study that is being done by a consortium of groups will not hinder the process which the environmental assessment review panel is working on. There may be some insights that we'll

get from the regional study that will be done; however, I do not foresee that the regional study is slowing down the process of the environmental assessment review panel. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 132-12(7): Status Of Resources For EARP

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we all acknowledge the importance of both of these studies, and I think all of us are very strongly committed that any new mine uses the most modern environmental technology possible. I would like to ask the Minister if he will give an undertaking to do whatever he can do to ensure that both these studies are done in an objective, professional way and that they're not pushed around by ideological, political reasons by either the mining industry or by the environmental groups out there across the country. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 132-12(7): Status Of Resources For EARP

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that the panel that has been created has started work. I believe at the present time they have received the environmental impact statements and they are presently going into these scoping sessions which will identify the communities that could be affected by the project. The purpose of these scoping sessions will be to provide residents with an opportunity to learn about the project and the panel's work, and help to identify issues and receive public comments on the draft environmental impact statements or guidelines that have been created. I believe that the individuals who have been selected for the panel are going to be able to carry out their work without being pressured to go in whatever direction either the mining companies or the environmental groups or the governments would like to see them go in. I think they will be able to carry out their mandate in the period of time that that has been allotted, and will be able to give an objective report.

As far as the regional study is concerned, I believe the work that is going to be done by the regional study includes enough groups and organizations in the Northwest Territories and across Canada that they will be able to come up with information to assist any new development that will take place in the Slave geological province. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Dent.

Question 133-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, an earlier question, which was answered by the Minister of Finance, really related to the study on alternatives to fund education because there is a concern in Yellowknife about equity of funding when it comes to education. Currently, only 75 per cent of the formula is allotted to the Yellowknife boards, so I'm hoping that issue will be addressed.

Another related issue, Mr. Speaker, is that Yellowknife gets no tax revenue for students who reside outside the city limits, which creates a really inequitable situation. So, in the interim, until the study that the Minister of Finance has said will be completed in September is done, will the Minister agree to ensure that both Yellowknife school boards get the full amount that the financing formula for schools would normally provide to the Yellowknife boards for those students who live outside city limits?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 133-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't agree that will happen. However, I will review the concern that the honourable Member has raised and see if we can deal fairly with the matter and try to respond to the concerns of the separate school board and Yellowknife District No. 1 as fairly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 133-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. I appreciate the Minister's positive response. Could he give a commitment that he will make this a priority issue and deal with it within the next two weeks?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 133-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not certain we can deal with it in the next two weeks. We will deal with it in the context of trying to respond to financial requirements for the upcoming school year. In that context, I'm not certain if we can resolve it in the next two weeks, but I will report back to the honourable Member about the issue. Again, I can't guarantee that there will be a satisfactory resolution but we will try to do the best we can in solving the concern the honourable Member has raised.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 133-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. I'm a little bit concerned. The Minister has just indicated that he will deal with this issue in relation to the upcoming year. I think the citizens of Yellowknife have a concern that they've been funding this and hope that the Minister will also consider the current year and perhaps even what should have been granted in past years. We'll be expecting that there will be some consideration for that. Could I ask the Minister to advise whether or not he will take a look at the past situation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 133-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot commit to the honourable Member in terms of retroactivity. What I can commit to the honourable Member is that I will make sure that the ongoing financing situation is responsive to the educational program needs of the students in this community. As is the case in other circumstances, we have made changes to school financing across the Northwest Territories. We believe it is much fairer than it used to be. If there are specific circumstances, as the honourable Member has raised, then we can now deal more appropriately with those situations because we now have, I believe, a fairer system across the board.

In terms of retroactivity, I can tell the honourable Member that I cannot guarantee that that will be dealt with but what I will address is the issue of how to address students from outside the municipality and whether we can provide the necessary financing for those students. I do want to raise one concern that I think the honourable Member should be aware of and that is, what effect this will have in other situations across the north, if any. That, in my view, is something that has to be dealt with. We will try to deal with it as fairly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 134-12(7): Policy On Use Of Aboriginal Languages In Court

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Justice. It is with regard to the Member's statement I made today where a Dene person was denied the use of his language in the justice system, in a preliminary inquiry. As a result, the Supreme Court ordered a new preliminary inquiry. What is the policy of the Department of Justice with regard to using aboriginal languages in courts? Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice if he could tell the House if aboriginal languages may be used in all court proceedings? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 134-12(7): Policy On Use Of
Aboriginal Languages In Court

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that this government, including the courts, have a policy to provide for full use of aboriginal languages. It is the right of aboriginal people, and any people, to use any of the official languages in the court system here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 134-12(7): Policy On
Use Of Aboriginal Languages In Court

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the case I mentioned, the point I raised is that the use of aboriginal languages is, as the Minister indicated, the right of aboriginal people in all government affairs and in the courts. Were there not court interpreters available at this court hearing? I guess the question is why did this happen? Was there not an interpreter available for this preliminary inquiry hearing? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, what I will do is take the question as notice in order to review the specific incident and also review the basis on which the decision of that particular judge was overturned. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 135-12(7): Export Of Bison South For
Auction

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Renewable Resources. Mr. Speaker, this

morning I brought up the case of five live wood buffalo being exported by the Department of Renewable Resources down south for the purposes of auction. I would like to ask the Minister if his department was able to stop this export of live wood bison south? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 135-12(7): Export Of Bison
South For Auction

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I approached my deputy minister this morning, my staff were on their way to bring in some trailers which were to be used to bring the bison south. We will be putting a stop to the transporting of bison at the present time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 135-12(7): Export Of
Bison South For Auction

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I thank the Minister for stopping the process. Mr. Speaker, can I ask the Minister if he can ensure that his department staff will undertake community consultation with regard to the exportation of live wood bison?

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MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 135-12(7): Export Of
Bison South For Auction

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the concern that the Member has raised, I have put a stop to the transportation of bison at this present time. I think that the direction the department was taking is the direction that we should take a careful look at. I have said that we should put a stop to this. However, we should continue to talk about it and see what direction we can take with it. One of the consultations that will

be made will be with the residents of Fort Smith.
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

Question 136-12(7): Birthing Centre For Taloyoak

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Subsequent to the Member's statement I made earlier, I will direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. In the absence of the Minister, since this matter is urgent, I will direct my question to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Mr. Speaker, when I talked about establishing a birthing centre in my area, I am not saying that expectant mothers should stay in the community. Quite the contrary, Mr. Speaker. I think it is very important that those expectant mothers with a history of complications, should continue to use the medical centre, here in Yellowknife. But for low-risk mothers, Mr. Speaker...The Minister has been advised by Taloyoak of the desire for a community birthing centre. Can the Minister give a date of when the community will receive notification of when the government will support this centre? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question was taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister of intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, on February 15th, I asked the Minister what he sees as the role of the Government of the Northwest Territories in self-government negotiations between aboriginal groups in the west and the federal Crown. Mr. Speaker, I have some

concerns with the answers he provided me. The Minister seemed to imply that the Government of the Northwest Territories has the same constitutional status as a province has. Does the Minister consider that the Government of the Northwest Territories has the same constitutional status that a province has, in the context of self-government negotiations with aboriginal groups? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, my statement was not intended to imply that the Government of the Northwest Territories has the same status as a provincial government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

MR. ZOE:

If that is the case, what does the Minister mean when he says that the Government of the Northwest Territories must be an independent party to all self-government negotiations affecting the Northwest Territories? Will this involve a Government of the Northwest Territories veto?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, provinces have status different from territorial governments. In fact, they are constitutionally-recognized governments. The territorial government does not have constitutional status. Having said that, it is the policy of the federal government that this includes the territorial government because we deliver programs and

services on their behalf. We are mandated to deliver programs and services to all people of the territories, including aboriginal people in certain areas. It is in the best interest of the federal government, ourselves and the public that we be a party to these negotiations. That is a very simple explanation, but that is one of the primary reasons for having us involved in the negotiations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding that our government doesn't have any constitutional authority to do this on their own. Is that what the Minister is saying? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, it is the policy of the federal government. It has been in practice already, for instance, in the negotiations with the Gwich'in on developing the framework agreement and will be included in other subsequent self-government negotiations that we will be a party to. We believe that that is the best way to proceed. We are, and have been, for instance, in the claims negotiations, part of the federal team in negotiations and in many cases have laid almost separate status in order to assist in expediting and balancing of the negotiations in the interest of the aboriginal people themselves. So the issue of self-government

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negotiations is going to affect the Constitutional Development Steering Committee process. It is going to affect the way in which the public, including the aboriginal people, will expect to have services delivered to them. So I think it is in the interest of everyone that the Government of the Northwest Territories be involved in those negotiations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

Supplementary To Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that a new federal policy with regard to negotiating self-government agreements hasn't been developed yet. I am curious as to why the Minister would be making those types of assumptions. I realize that it is based on previous policy from the previous government in power, but I don't know if that will be the case with the new policy with regard to self-government negotiations.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 137-12(7): Constitutional Status Of GNWT

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I don't take it upon myself to explain what the federal position is with regard to the negotiations. We have been pushing very, very hard to make sure that the federal government lives up to its red book commitments in delivering a new policy that would recognize the inherent right and come out with a clear policy at the earliest possible date. This would certainly clarify for everybody exactly what the mandate is for the federal negotiators when they sit down, and what the role of the Government of the Northwest Territories will be in those negotiations.

At this time, it is not clear at all what the status of the inherent right to self-government policy is with the federal government. The last I heard from the Minister's office is that, at best, he has a handful of speaking points to consider and it is nowhere near to having some recognizable shape or form. Having said that, it is our understanding that the federal government will continue to insist that under the present policy, the Government of the Northwest Territories will be part of the negotiations and it will be particularly important because we are negotiating self-government specifically with aboriginal groups in particular regions. The money and the programs that are involved are not in the hands of the federal government; they are presently in the hands of this government and it is our duty to make sure that the programs and services which are being negotiated do

not unduly undermine the quality of service that is presently provided or undermine the quality and level of service provided to other citizens of the Northwest Territories who are not a party to these negotiations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Lewis.

Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Renewable Resources, since we now have a Slave province regional study group, to whom does this study group report?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the regional study that is being conducted started in December of 1994. It will not necessarily report to any one group, I don't think, but it is being funded by the Minister of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Government of the Northwest Territories through the Department of Renewable Resources. The two governments have each committed up to \$750,000 per year for five years to do the study. They are also seeking the remaining third portion of funds they will require from other potential partners, who include First Nations, industry and environmental organizations. I don't know that there is one group or organization that they report to. But it will be something that will be made use of by industry and both levels of government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

MR. LEWIS:

I appreciate that the mining industry these days is very much involved in what we call environmental management. I would like to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, since it seems to me that this is a study group that has a long-range plan and which sometimes has to deal with immediate problems, and since at this moment there is a controversy about a 26-kilometre all-weather road which is still at the exploratory phase, as I understand it, between Koala Mine and Misery Lake, whether this regional study group has made any recommendations with regard to that road?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that this study will cover all of what is considered the Slave geological province. It is a regional study which will address the environmental concerns of industry, the various environmental organizations and our two levels of government, and set an environmental strategy for the Slave geological province which could be used by industry and by other interested parties.

The BHP Environmental Assessment Review Panel has a mandate which, I believe, will end after a period of...I'm sorry, I don't have the time frame at this present time. There are seven or eight steps that they will have to go through. At the present time, they are in their scoping session, as I mentioned earlier. They have hearings for that stage and will hold

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hearings for a number of the other stages whereby interested groups and parties will be able to make their presentations and make their concerns known. The BHP Environmental Assessment Review Panel is specific to the area where BHP exploration is going on so will likely take less time than the Slave geological study. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The regional study group is looking at long-range issues, the development of data and so on that will help everybody involved in the business. But there has been an application to build and I quote: "A permanent all-weather tote road." Now, as I understand it, the word "permanent" means that it is there forever, that's it, until you decide to get rid of it. So, since this is going to be there permanently, what is the position of the regional study group with regard to building something that is permanent without establishing whether it will have permanent good effects or permanent bad effects, even though, I agree, it is part of the exploratory phase, and not the development phase. What process is there in place to determine whether this permanent road will have any permanent effects?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that the application that has been made by BHP is at the DIAND office at the present time. It is still being discussed by DIAND officials as to whether this permanent road, as Mr. Lewis puts it, will be approved or not.

We are, as a department, taking a very close look and talking with BHP as well as to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs as to what impact these permanent roads will have. The roads that we are talking about are approximately 28 kilometres, and it is only in the area that BHP is exploring at the present time. I believe what is being proposed by BHP are gravel roads which will allow them to be able to transport themselves. It would be a one-lane road that goes from one site to two other sites in their particular area.

Mr. Speaker, we are, as a department, watching very closely to what is happening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

MR. LEWIS:

I think the public is very much interested in this issue, Mr. Speaker, and we wouldn't want the debate to get out of hand. I would like to ask the Minister, has the Slave province regional study group made any recommendations about how this should be handled, and whether in fact the Minister of DIAND has received such recommendations so that he can make a decision?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 138-12(7): Slave Province Regional Study Group

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the first meeting of the regional study took place in early February. The first planning workshop is scheduled, at the present time, for February 28th to March 2, 1995 here in Yellowknife. The objectives of this workshop will be to develop a common vision for the regional study, to achieve consensus on terms of reference and goals and objectives for the study, and to define the planning process and management structure for the study. So I don't believe that the Slave geological province regional study, at the present time, is in any position to be able to assess the proposals that are being made. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 139-12(7): Status Of Staff Housing Available For Purchase

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of DPW regarding staff housing. Mr. Speaker, recognizing some time ago this government determined to get out of staff housing and, if I recall correctly, all subsidized units for MLAs were given up a couple of years ago, and the GNWT had sold the house that the Premier had lived in. I believe civil servants were given a year to get out of subsidized housing units, or granted the opportunity to purchase the unit that they had lived in. I would like to ask the Minister, are there any more housing units made

available to individuals by the GNWT, excluding the Housing Corporation units? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of DPW, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 139-12(7): Status Of Staff Housing Available For Purchase

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Yes, there are, Mr. Speaker. I don't know specifically what those houses are or who is in them, but I will get that information, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell, supplementary.

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Supplementary To Question 139-12(7): Status Of Staff Housing Available For Purchase

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for clarification, will the Minister provide the information required to this House with respect to staff housing that still is made available?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

That's correct, Mr. Speaker. I'm taking the question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 140-12(7): Funding Provided To Students At Lester B Pearson College

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education and it has to do with education at the Lester B Pearson College out of Victoria, BC. Over the number of years since this college started, the Northwest Territories has been sending students down there and as a result of that we have a lot of

people who have gone through the program there, come back home and contributed to the society here in the north with their leadership abilities. We still have people down there in this college. I would like to ask the Minister of Education if his department has cut the funding for the support that this government has been giving to this college. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 140-12(7): Funding Provided To Students At Lester B Pearson College

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the House has approved the reduction in that support in the 1994-95 budget year. We would maintain those students who were there, but we would have to re-evaluate our participation role in that particular institution. So we have not cut all of it, but we have the approval of the Legislature to reduce our participation in that particular funding arrangement.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 140-12(7): Funding Provided To Students At Lester B Pearson College

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are students down there from my constituency who have received letters from the Minister indicating that their funding will be totally cut off, and the Minister just indicated that there is still some support. I would like to ask the Minister, historically, what type of support has this government given to this program in the past? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Speaker, that's a detailed question and I couldn't answer it in specific terms, so I will take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 141-12(7): Acting Premier

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Government House Leader who is acting Premier today? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 141-12(7): Acting Premier

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier asked me to look after the shop while she was away for a short time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, replies to budget address. Item 11, petitions. The House will take a 15-minute recess.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to call the House back to order. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 4-12(7): Report On The Review Of The 1995-96 Main Estimates

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Standing Committee on Finance is pleased to submit its Report on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Finance met in Yellowknife between January 9th and 31, 1995, to review the proposed operations and maintenance

main estimates of the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 1995-96 fiscal year.

As the committee chair, I would like to offer thanks to the Members of the committee for their effort and their contributions to the review. The committee would also like to thank the Cabinet Ministers and their staff for their cooperation, for the information they provided to the committee, and for their participation in the committee's review. All government departments were reviewed, except for the Ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, as the Minister responsible could not meet his commitment to appear before the committee. This ministry will be reviewed during the current session of the Legislative Assembly. Finally, the chair thanks the committee staff for their assistance in the review and in the preparation of this report.

Setting The Stage For Next Year And Beyond

The 1995-96 main estimates are the last estimates that the 12th Legislative Assembly will consider. The 13th Assembly will face very difficult challenges; notably, the preparations for division

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of the Northwest Territories, and the "new fiscal reality," where funds from the federal government will no longer be abundant or even secure. The Standing Committee on Finance recognizes that these challenges add greater importance than usual to the Assembly's consideration of this budget.

The standing committee has undergone a number of changes over the life of the 12th Assembly. Yet there are two themes which have recurred since 1992, and which were uppermost in committee Members' deliberations this year:

- Fiscal uncertainty, with its implications for transition planning, division and constitutional development; and,

- Commitment to social issues, and the implied interdepartmental cooperation necessary to exercise that commitment.

Fiscal Uncertainty

The Northwest Territories is far from being financially independent. Over 80 per cent of GNWT revenues come from the federal government, with less than 20 per cent being generated internally. The NWT simply

does not have the revenue base necessary to support all of the programs offered by the government.

While the government has announced the creation of a task force, which is to develop and report suggested taxation improvements, the fact remains that the possible revenue sources available to the government are limited compared to the revenue presently received from Canada.

Through the 20th century, the people of the north have been drawn into a state of dependence on government. The influence of non-native government has largely forced aboriginal people away from most aspects of the day-to-day life of their ancestors, towards a more "western" lifestyle, replacing nomadic camps and living off the land with wooden houses and store-bought food. Since the devolution of authority from Ottawa starting in 1967, northerners have come to rely specifically on the Government of the NWT for a whole range of services, including educational, health, and social services, as well as highways, municipal projects, and other services.

Meanwhile, Ottawa is finally coming to grips with the massive debt plaguing the federal government. They are looking everywhere for ways to cut spending, and grants to the NWT have not been and will not be exempt. There are tremendous economic and political pressures facing the federal government. The opportunity to increase revenues through higher taxes is sorely limited by economic conditions. So the federal government is forced to consider massive spending cuts as the primary way to balance the federal budget -- a budget where close to 30 per cent of expenditures go towards servicing the debt. As a result, the next Legislative Assembly and the government they choose will have to face the possibility of further cuts in federal grants to the NWT -- cuts that will force that government to make some very tough choices.

To date, the Government of the NWT has done well in managing their resources. Since the beginning of the 1981-82 fiscal year, the government has maintained a surplus financial position. In fact, the 1993-94 accumulated surplus of \$19.833 million was the lowest figure since 1981. This accumulated surplus is now gone. The NWT has, unfortunately, joined the remainder of Canadian jurisdictions in indebtedness. Granted, the deficit now is quite small compared to that of other jurisdictions and the current deficit position can be blamed more on unforeseen circumstances -- such as the extreme forest fire season of 1994, or the additional funding assigned to

compensate for the 1992 federal cuts in social housing funding -- than on the management skills of the government.

Balanced Budget Legislation

During the review of the 1995-96 capital estimates, the committee brought forward the idea of introducing legislation which would force the government to have balanced budgets. The committee recommended that the Financial Management Board "seriously consider...introducing...legislation that requires the government...to ensure that, on March 31, 1998, no deficit has accumulated." The intent of this legislation would be to ensure that the new territories to be created upon division would not be burdened by debt incurred by the outgoing territorial government.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. ANTOINE:

Committee Members were surprised that the Minister of Finance did not discuss this recommendation in his budget address. The committee still strongly recommends that balanced budget legislation be introduced in this session. Such legislation must address the issue of the government's accumulated deficit as of March 31, 1998, and must also contain sanctions to encourage compliance.

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Minister of Finance introduce legislation in the current session which would require that the government ensure that, on March 31, 1998, no deficit has accumulated; furthermore, that the legislation include sanctions which would encourage compliance with the legislation.

The Standing Committee on Finance feels very strongly that the passage of balanced budget legislation must be a priority in the current session of the Legislative Assembly, and that these important points must be included in the legislation. If such legislation is not introduced by Cabinet in a timely fashion, committee Members will introduce this proposed legislation into the House as a private Member's bill.

Mr. Speaker, since this document is quite lengthy, I would like to ask my colleague, Mr. Mike Ballantyne, to continue with this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ballantyne.

Transition Planning

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A positive legacy of the previous government was the Strength at Two Levels report -- he blushed modestly.

---Laughter

This report was used by the current government as the basis for many of the organizational changes that have taken place over the four years.

Anticipated federal cuts to territorial funding will provide a very difficult set of challenges to the next government. When those cuts arrive, the new government will have to be ready to deal with them. That is why the standing committee felt that it is critical that the current government also prepare a transition plan that will allow the next government to be prepared for a difficult future. The committee pointed this out to the Minister of Finance in our January hearings, and we are pleased to see from his budget address that he is considering this proposal.

Recommendation 2

Mr. Speaker, the committee recommends that the Cabinet prepare a transition plan which would assist the Cabinet of the 13th Assembly in the management of the affairs of the government; and further, that this plan should be completed in time for the standing committee to review it and report its findings to the Cabinet before the dissolution of the 12th Legislative Assembly.

Much of the difficulty in dealing with federal funding has come from the numerous financial disputes that have gone on between the territorial and federal governments. Disagreements over health billings, social housing funding, official languages funding, RCMP costs during the Giant Mine strike and other issues have all had a significant impact on territorial finances.

Well over a year ago, the standing committee strongly recommended that the government consider a "package" approach to negotiating with the federal government. Rather than attacking each funding

dispute individually, the government was advised to address all such issues, including negotiations for a new formula financing agreement, together.

After initial reluctance, the government accepted the proposal, and now the "package" approach seems to be paying off -- many of the disputes are close to being settled, and it seems Ottawa is taking our government, and our concerns, more seriously in financial discussions. Through the efforts of the Premier, the Minister of Finance, other Cabinet Members, and the Legislative Assembly, the federal government is more aware of the critical importance of this funding to the people of the north.

Mr. Speaker, if I could turn over the reading of this report to my colleague, Mr. Zoe.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Zoe.

Division, Constitutional Development And Fiscal Reality

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The standing committee's review was interrupted from January 18th to 22nd by the Western Arctic Constitutional Conference in Yellowknife and the Nunavut Leaders' Summit in Gjoa Haven. Committee Members attended both meetings, and spent considerable time discussing issues related to division and constitutional development.

Committee Members are concerned that a conflict will arise between the constitutional and self-government expectations of the people of the Northwest Territories, and the resources available for them to meet those expectations. The aboriginal peoples of the Northwest Territories have expressed a desire for self-government for quite some time now, but only in the last few years has the federal government taken steps to make that desire a reality. Between the creation of the new territory, and the ratification of the Nunavut land claim agreement, most of the self-government expectations of the Inuit of the eastern Arctic will be fulfilled.

In the western Arctic, there is much more work to be done. The land claim agreements signed by the Inuvialuit, the Gwich'in, and the Sahtu people are one step towards greater self-government. Other aboriginal peoples in the western Arctic, however, have positions on self-government that differ from

those reflected in the land claim agreements signed to date. The First Nations people of the Deh Cho and the Treaty 8 area are hesitant to even participate in the western Arctic constitutional process. They have expressed a desire to deal directly with the Crown as represented by the federal government. This complicates the concept many people have of a unified public government in the western Arctic. Therefore, it is important that the two processes -- western Arctic constitutional development, and direct self-government and land claims negotiations between the First Nations of the north and the federal government -- go forward together in an orderly way.

As has been discussed, the federal government is expected to cut expenditures across Canada, at a time when there will be additional funding required resulting from the federal government's commitment to division of the Northwest Territories in 1999. There is no doubt that two territories will need more federal funding than the Northwest Territories presently receives. The federal government has to live up to its commitment to provide sufficient funding for the two new territories.

The constitutional framework to be agreed upon by the people of the western Arctic, and the organizational model chosen for government in Nunavut, must take into account the fiscal realities of the 1990s. This will require that the services provided by government after 1999 be delivered more efficiently than ever before.

The standing committee recognizes that the decisions to be made about the future of the north must be made by all the people of the north. However, the Legislative Assembly has the responsibility to provide leadership in helping the people of the north make constitutional decisions which will allow the provision of necessary services to northerners in the most

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effective and efficient manner possible. Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn this over to my colleague, Mr. Dent, to continue.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent.

Social Issues

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in September 1994, the standing committee met to review the 1995-96 capital budget. At the time, however, committee Members acknowledged that many of the "big issues" normally dealt with in the O and M budget also had important implications in the capital budget. Therefore, our committee examined many of those issues in their report called Investing in our Future.

In that report, committee Members reiterated their desire to see education established as the government's most important long-term priority. Committee Members also noted that this government had to strike a better balance between economic development and social programs. The standing committee is concerned that the difficult social problems that northerners face must be addressed at the same time as the northern territories become more self-reliant and independent. Committee Members feel quite strongly that helping northerners solve their social problems -- inadequate housing, alcohol and drug abuse, family violence, high school dropout rates -- is the best investment the government can make.

In Investing in our Future, the committee identified three areas in which the government was recommended to place special emphasis:

- early intervention programs for children at risk, or with special needs;
- an interdepartmental model for providing school-based youth services (as recommended in the review of the 1994-95 main estimates); and,
- providing more resources to address the problem of family violence.

In the 1995-96 main estimates, committee Members noted the government's response to the committee's concern on social issues, and especially on the priorities outlined by the committee. As well, the Minister has informed the committee that additional funds will be identified for pressing social issues. The committee will wait for the details of that extra funding before we make our final comment on the overall government approach to social issues.

Of special note was the new emphasis on the concept of "envelopes," whereby government departments were grouped by their general function -- social programs, infrastructure, or resource management and development. This approach allows the government to examine its spending on a broader

basis than merely "department-by-department." With a stronger emphasis on the envelope concept, it is much easier to examine, for example, social spending versus infrastructure or resource management spending.

The 1995-96 budget for the social programs envelope, including the departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, Justice, and the NWT Housing Corporation, includes an increase of over \$36.6 million in capital and O and M spending compared to 1994-95, reflecting the increased importance given these issues by the government and the standing committee. Committee Members feel that the most important place for our limited resources is in helping our people to be independent and strong.

Interdepartmental Cooperation

Mr. Speaker, the "envelope" concept also suggests a future where different government departments can work better together. Too often, government programs suffer because competing departments worry more about "turf battles" than about efficient cooperation. But formally linking similar departments and considering them together on the Cabinet level could lead to better cooperation and increased efficiency.

The committee does have one significant concern, however, about the concept of interdepartmental cooperation. This concern also extends to the task that lies ahead for the newly amalgamated Department of Health and Social Services; that is, of combining their programs and resources at the regional and community level.

In the past, regional operations were controlled in the regions. Often, regional staff would look to the regional director for guidance, rather than to their departmental supervisors in Yellowknife. This has changed, however, and now most control of regional operations resides in departments' headquarters offices. Regional superintendent in departmental offices now look to Yellowknife for assistance. While this has its advantages, it can be counterproductive when departments have to work together in the regions. The committee strongly encourages the government to promote and facilitate interdepartmental cooperation in the regions. Local coordination of interdepartmental initiatives should be far more effective and efficient than any long-range supervision from headquarters.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to request that the committee chairman, Mr. Antoine, be allowed to conclude the report.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

Restructuring Initiatives And Employee Morale

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Over the term of this government, there have been a number of restructuring initiatives undertaken in the bureaucracy: Government Services and Public Works were amalgamated; the Executive, Finance, Personnel, and the Financial Management Board Secretariat were completely reorganized; corrections programs were transferred to Justice; Municipal and Community Affairs recently underwent a significant reorganization; and, most recently, the Departments of Health and Social Services were combined.

Many of these initiatives were taken in response to the Strength at Two Levels report, or to other recommendations such as those of the Special Committee on Health and Social Services. Others were intended to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of government bureaucracy. The committee notes with approval the government's efforts to streamline the operations of the government, and to improve the efficiency of the public service.

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However, committee Members have some concerns about the implementation of these initiatives. The employees of the public service are one of the most important resources available to the government. Yet, many of these restructuring initiatives have been implemented with poor communications to employees affected, and often with little evidence of an organizational plan. Government employees understand that such initiatives may lead to lay-offs or job reclassification. Committee Members note with approval that the workforce adjustment program is quite a generous one, and has made the task of downsizing much less difficult for employees. But it is critical that all employees be kept informed throughout the process, to avoid uncertainty, and the subsequent loss of morale.

The committee urges the government to exercise all due consideration and concern for public service

employees involved in restructuring or reorganization initiatives. The government is likely to downsize further in the future, and it is important that Cabinet approve improved policies and procedures in order to ensure that senior managers keep affected employees well informed throughout restructuring initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes my introductory comments on the Report of the Standing Committee on Finance.

Motion To Receive Committee Report 4-12(7) And Move Into Committee Of The Whole, Carried

Therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the report of the Standing Committee on Finance on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates be received by the Assembly and moved into committee of the whole.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. 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

Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would like to seek unanimous consent to waive rule 93(4) and have the report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Report 4-12(7) which we just presented, placed on the order paper for committee of the whole today. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Committee Report 4-12(7) will be placed in committee of the whole for today.

---Applause

Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committee on the review of the bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 10-12(7): Impact Of Federal Gun Control Legislation

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, February 24th, I will move the following motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 16: NOTICES OF MOTIONS FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 16: An Act To Amend The Retirement Plan Beneficiaries Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, February 24, 1995, I shall move that Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Retirement Plan Beneficiaries Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 16, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

Bill 17: An Act To Amend The Nursing Profession Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, February 24, 1995, I shall move that Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 17: MOTIONS

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

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS with the election of the Honourable Sam Gargan as Speaker and of the Honourable Kelvin Ng as a Minister, it has created vacancies on a number of standing committees;

AND WHEREAS it would be desirable to fill these vacancies;

NOW THEREFORE 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

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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.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96; 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 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; and, Committee Report 4-12(7), Report on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates, with Mr. Ningark in the chair.

ITEM 20: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that the committee consider these bills in the following order: Bill 6, Bill 14, Bill 9 and then Bill 8.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Do we agree then, that we consider Bill 6, Bill 2, Bill 9 and Bill 8, in that order? No? Did I get that wrong?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Microphone turned off)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We will consider, as recommended by Mr. Dent, Bill 6, Bill 14, Bill 9 and Bill 8, in that order. Is that agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Bill 6: An Act To Amend The Petroleum Products Tax Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act. Mr. Pollard, do you have opening remarks for the committee?

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the amendment to the Petroleum Products Tax Act provides that the purchase of fuel for resale outside the Northwest Territories is exempt from petroleum products taxes.

This amendment is necessary because the Department of Justice has advised that the current wording of the Petroleum Products Tax Act is unclear as to whether the purchase of fuel in the Northwest Territories for resale in foreign locations is taxable.

When a person purchases fuel in the Northwest Territories, the tax is collected by the vendor when delivered. If the fuel purchased is intended for resale in a foreign location, the imposition of the tax at the time of purchase in the territories could be challenged as being beyond the direct taxation authority of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The current administrative means of providing an exemption for fuel resales to offshore locations is administratively inefficient for industry and government and a financial burden to industry. A person must first pay the tax and then apply for a remission order which must be approved by Cabinet.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment also provides that sales between collectors are not taxable. Under the current administrative collection scheme, the government appoints companies to act as tax collectors. To charge a collector the tax at the point of delivery for resale to another collector would be a financial burden on a company that is acting on behalf of the government.

The amendment also provides that all references to the Comptroller General in the act be changed to the Minister of Finance. As well, references to the Commissioner are changed to the Minister of Finance. This amendment is necessary to reflect organizational changes in the Department of Finance and the Financial Management Board Secretariat.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, the amendment provides that administrative matters are the responsibility of the deputy minister and simplifies wording in the act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. On behalf of the Standing Committee on Legislation, Mr. Tony Whitford, do you have opening remarks?

Standing Committee On Legislation Comments

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, indeed, I do. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I am pleased to present the report on Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act.

Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee on Legislation has completed its review of Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act. The committee held public hearings in Yellowknife on Monday, January 9, 1995. Although public input was encouraged, there were no presentations made on this bill.

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Bill 6 proposes to amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act to clarify that a collector who delivers or sells petroleum products to another collector shall not collect a tax on the product. The bill also proposes to amend the provisions of the act that pertain to importers of petroleum products and the procedures for the export of petroleum products. In addition, a number of administrative changes are proposed regarding references to the Comptroller General, the Commissioner, the Minister and the government.

The committee is satisfied that the proposed amendments are required to clarify the taxation authority of the Government of the Northwest Territories with respect to petroleum products and improve efficiency in the administration of the act.

In addition, the standing committee passed a motion to amend Bill 6 by adding a clause to clarify that clause 4 of the bill does not apply to the Minister with respect to certain record-keeping requirements.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes the standing committee's report on Bill 6. On January 9, 1995, the committee passed a motion that Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act, be reported to the Legislative Assembly as ready for consideration in committee of the whole, as amended and reprinted. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Before I open the floor to general comments, I would like to ask the honourable Minister if he wishes to bring in his witnesses.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

If I might Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Do we have the blessing of the committee that the Minister bring in the witnesses? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Proceed.

Thank you. For the record, Mr. Minister, would you introduce the witnesses to the committee.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have Diane Buckland with me who is legislative counsel with the Department of Justice, GNWT, and Mr. Tony Dawson who is the director of revenue and asset management for the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The floor is now open for general comments. General comments on Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products Tax Act. General comments. Do you wish to go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Clause 5. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 5.1, as this is a reprint. Clause 5.1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Clause 7. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 13 of Bill 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 14 of Bill 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 6 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Bill 6 is now ready for third reading. Qujannamiik. I would like to thank the Minister and the witnesses. Thank you.

Bill 14: Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994

We will now deal with Bill 14, Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994. I believe Minister Kakfwi has the opening remarks for this bill.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The purpose of Bill 14, Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994, is to amend various statutes of the Northwest Territories in which errors, inconsistencies or anomalies have been identified and brought to the attention of the Department of Justice by members of the judiciary, Department of Justice staff, other government employees or private citizens.

The departments responsible for the administration of the various statutes being amended by the Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994, have each reviewed and approved the changes to the statutes under their authority.

The changes proposed in Bill 14 are non-controversial in nature and usually consist of grammatical corrections to either the English or French version of a statute. Other changes have the effect of repealing certain provisions of the statutes that have expired, lapsed or otherwise ceased to exist. The amendments are of such a nature that the preparation and legislative consideration of individual bills to correct each act would be time-consuming for the government and the Legislative Assembly. In order for an amendment to be included in the bill, it had to meet the following criteria:

- a) It must not be controversial;
- b) It must not involve the spending of public funds;
- c) It must not prejudicially affect the rights of persons; and,
- d) It must not create a new offence or subject a new class of persons to an existing offence.

Mr. Chairman, in our view, the amendments proposed in Bill 14 meet those criteria. My officials and I will be pleased to answer any questions the committee may have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. On behalf of the standing committee who reviewed the bill, Mr. Tony Whitford.

Standing Committee On Legislation Comments

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I am pleased to be able to report on Bill 14, Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994. The Standing Committee on Legislation has completed its review of Bill 14, the Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act. The committee held public hearings on this bill in Yellowknife on Tuesday, December 13, 1994 and no presentations from the public were heard, primarily due to the nature of this bill.

Bill 14 proposes to make minor amendments to a variety of statutes all at once. It corrects a number of inconsistencies and errors that have been discovered in the statutes of the Northwest Territories. The bill also proposes to repeal a number of provisions of statutes that are redundant, have expired, or otherwise ceased to have effect.

In reviewing the Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, the standing committee was satisfied that the criteria set out by the Department of Justice for amendments to be included in this bill had been met. However, the committee would like to make a comment on an aspect of this bill, in particular, and all bills in general. Often amendments are proposed in the French text in a piece of legislation. In these cases, even though the changes are often small, it would greatly assist committee Members if the nature of these amendments could be explained, either in the bill itself or an accompanying document.

Mr. Chairman, this completes the Standing Committee on Legislation's report on Bill 14. On December 13, 1994, the committee passed a motion that Bill 14 be reported as ready for consideration in committee of the whole. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, the honourable Member for Yellowknife South. Before we get into general comments, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister Stephen Kakfwi if he wishes to bring in the witnesses.

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HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Please bring in the witnesses. Thank you. Mr. Minister, for the record, introduce the witness please.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me on my right, Mr. Richard Denis, the manager of legal translation, Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are dealing with Bill 14, Miscellaneous Statutes Amending Act, 1994. The floor is now open for general comments. Do we have general comments from the committee Members? Shall we go clause by clause.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed

---Agreed

Clause by Clause

Chairman (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 1.

Chairman (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Chairman (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 7 of Bill 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 16.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 18 of Bill 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 27.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 28.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 29.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Clause 31.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 32.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 33.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 34.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Clause 35.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 36.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 37.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 38.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 39.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. Clause 40.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 41 of Bill 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 42.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 43.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 44.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Clause 45.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 46.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 47.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 48.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Clause 49.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 50. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Clause 50 pertains to amendments to the Regional Councils Act. There are a number of amendments which affect my regional council. As Members know, there are a number of regional councils which aren't active or have been disbanded. I know, for instance, that the Baffin Regional Council is no longer functioning and in my region the regional council hasn't been receiving funding from our government for the last number of years.

I don't see why they are changing 9(b) by striking out "sub chiefs of Dogrib Rae Band in Rae Lakes," and substituting it with "Chief of the Rae Lakes Dene Band." I have problems with that, Mr. Chairman, because that regional council doesn't exist and here they are making amendments which have no meaning at this point in time. I wonder if the government has taken into consideration why these amendments are

going forward because this council hasn't existed for the last number of years. If they are going to make amendments then maybe they should repeal the regional council from my area.

Over the years, Ndilo, or lot 500, and Dettah have broken away from the Dogrib Regional Council. The government is aware of that but they haven't made any provisions to repeal that particular regional council. I wonder why they are only making these minor amendments which have no effect on the regional council in my region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, the changes, as we explained in our opening remarks, have to be non-controversial in nature so as to not involve the spending of public money. The Regional Councils Act the way it is does not reflect some changes that have been made. For instance, the band in Rae Lakes is no longer a sub-band; it is now a band on its own, so we're reflecting that. We haven't made any changes about taking out membership of the band in Dettah or Ndilo Council also doesn't function by itself, it's not functional any more. What I'm suggesting is why are they tinkering with making amendments to the Regional Councils Act. If they're going to make these types of amendments, then they should make those appropriate amendments where they can clean up the whole act rather than just making these minor adjustments which will have no bearing, for instance, on my region because my regional council is not functioning at this point in time; it hasn't for the last three years.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, it's very easy to resolve that because the Member is obviously unhappy with these proposed amendments and it is controversial, it no longer fits into our direction as we saw it. It is obviously controversial. So we're prepared, if the Member wants, to take out, for instance, under clause

50, subsections 8, 9 and 10 as they specifically relate to his constituency.

If he feels that all of the amendments proposed to the Regional Councils Act are controversial by nature and he makes his case, then we would be prepared to take the entire section of amendments out, even though it is far-reaching, it goes into the Kitikmeot, the Sahtu and a whole range of other areas. As I say, does the Member wish to make a specific suggestion to them? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. To clause 50, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I don't want to make our legal people do work for nothing. By making these amendments, we're making them do work for nothing because it's not going to serve any purpose. So I would agree with the Minister, because under this particular section, those three sections that he made reference to, I think, should be deleted; Sections 8, 9 and 10 in clause 50.

Committee Motion to Delete Subsections 8, 9 And 10 From Clause 50 Of Bill 14, Ruled Out Of Order

Mr. Chairman, I move that the portion reflecting subsections 8, 9 and 10 be deleted from clause 50.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Zoe, I'm informed by the Clerk that this is not the way we delete sections. Mr. Zoe, I rule your motion out of order. I'm informed that this is not the usual way of deleting clauses. Your motion is not the usual way of deleting subsections 8, 9 and 10.

---Ruled Out Of Order

Mr. Zoe, the chair is not clear what you're trying to do. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, could I request a time out so I could draft my motion?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we have the agreement of the committee that we shall take some time out until the motion is ready for presentation? Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, perhaps we could meet with the Member to draft it together since the amendment has to be done, in part, by myself since we need to make some technical amendments; for instance, in numbering the subsequent subsections.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, you're requesting a meeting during this break to talk with the Member. That will be up to the Member and you, as the Minister. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

I also need to know whether or not...I don't know if it could be done in 10 minutes or so, but we just need some advice on it from the staff here on whether we should defer this bill for consideration and come back to it later, or whether we have to start over again if we do that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We'll take a break and take it from there. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

We'll take a break. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Zoe, do you have a solution to your little misunderstanding or disagreement? Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, after serious consideration on this particular clause, I realize that the government is making only minor amendments in terms of making corrections to the appropriate name and so forth but the concern that I'm raising is of a broader nature. Mr. Chairman, these regional councils exist only on

paper at this time and that's the point I was making. In reality, they don't exist. I understand what the Minister is doing and the point that I was trying to make was that if they are going to make any changes to the Regional Councils Act, it should have been done right in the first place where these broader issues should have been addressed. Unfortunately, this was not the case. But after talking to a number of Ministers they assured me that the whole issue of the Regional Councils Act will be revisited. I wonder if I could ask the Minister, pertaining to clause 50, if they are going to make a commitment to making major amendments to the Regional Councils Act in the future.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe Mr. Minister is pointing out to another Minister. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, last week I was being questioned by Mr. Patterson about the funding issues for the regional councils and I think Mr. Zoe is correct; I mean, they're not operating in his area. In January, there was a motion in Baffin to dissolve that particular council there. South of the lake they're not working either. Maybe it's timely that we did look at the piece of legislation so I will commit to the House, to the Member, that we will look at the piece of legislation to see how it can be amended to suit the situation that exists today in the territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 50. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

In that respect, Mr. Chairman, then these minor amendments that have already been drafted, then they just take this section and put it in the Regional Councils Act so the work's technically done in terms of the legal stuff. I'll let this one go and I agree with clause 50. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. It seems that we have had a fruitful 30-minute break. Clause 50, agreed?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 51.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 52.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 53.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 54.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 55.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 56.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 57.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 58.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 59.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 60 of Bill 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 61.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: