



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

7th Session

Day 12

12th Assembly

HANSARD

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27,
1995**

Pagination reflects print edition

Speaker: The Hon. Samuel Gargon

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1995

Page 309

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Allooloo, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Ballantyne, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Hon. Samuel Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Koe, Mr. Lewis, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Hon. Kelvin Ng, Mr. Ningark, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. John Todd, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Good afternoon. I would like to welcome some of the eastern Members back from the meeting in Iqaluit. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Ng.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 22-12(7): 1995 Canada Winter Games

HON. KELVIN NG:

Mr. Speaker, as Members know from the Member for Yellowknife South's earlier statement in the House, the 15th Canada Winter Games are being held in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

As we have done since the first games in 1967 in Quebec City, the Northwest Territories has a team participating in Grande Prairie. Our NWT team numbers 110 athletes, coaches and managers in the sports of badminton, biathlon, cross-country skiing, curling, figure skating, ringette, shooting, speed skating and squash.

Mr. Speaker, the games in Grande Prairie have reached their half-way point and our athletes in the sports of badminton, cross-country skiing, speed skating and ringette have now completed their competitions and returned home. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate these athletes, many of whom achieved their personal best and all of whom were true ambassadors for the NWT, demonstrating good sportsmanship and fair play. Particular recognition should be given to speed skater, David McCann, who had excellent performances and placed 12th in a field of 40 competitors in the 777-metre event in short-track speed skating.

Our government was represented, Mr. Speaker, by my colleague, the Honourable Richard Nerysoo, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, who attended meetings with federal/provincial/territorial Ministers responsible for fitness, recreation and sport, as well as meeting with Ministers from western Canada to discuss the Western Canada Games being held this summer in Abbotsford, British Columbia. While in Grande Prairie, Minister Nerysoo also had discussions on the Arctic Winter Games with Ministers from Yukon and Alberta and I look forward to providing information to Members on these initiatives later this week.

Mr. Speaker, I have provided to Members today, a list of all Team NWT members, by MLA constituency, and a copy of the NWT media guide publication with individual pictures and biographies of all team members. Please join me in congratulating those who have competed and in wishing good luck to those beginning their competitions this week in Grand Prairie at the 15th Canada Winter Games. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 23-12(7): Defence Of Extreme Drunkenness

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that on Friday, February 24, 1995, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General for Canada, Allan Rock, tabled amendments to the Criminal Code, providing that extreme intoxication which is self-induced is not a defence to crimes of violence.

---Applause

In doing this, the Minister of Justice is responding to widespread concern from across Canada, and certainly from the Northwest Territories, that was provoked by the Daviault decision of the Supreme Court of Canada. This case introduced for the first time into Canadian law, that extreme drunkenness in the nature of automatism and insanity, was a defence to assault; in that case the sexual assault of an elderly lady in a wheelchair. The results of the decision were widely criticized, particularly by women's groups, and, as a result, the Minister undertook a consultation with women's groups, representatives of the defence bar,

legal academics and provincial and territorial governments.

Mr. Rock has done what most of us advised him to do, and I congratulate and thank him for doing so. It is my hope that Parliament will also see the wisdom of this approach and pass the amendment as soon as possible. I am sure that the Minister realizes that even after this amendment is passed, there will undoubtedly be challenges to the amendment under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because the Daviault decision was based on an interpretation of section 7, which gives everyone the right not to be

Page 310

deprived of their right to life, liberty and security of the person, except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice. However, the argument against the challenge to the amendment will be that the removal of the defence is demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society and, as such, is protected by section 1 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Later in this session, I will be introducing a motion which will demonstrate the conviction of this Legislative Assembly that the defence of extreme drunkenness is a threat to the peace and security of our society, and particularly the women of the Northwest Territories, who are all too frequently the victims of assault committed in a state of extreme intoxication. Its removal, therefore, is clearly justifiable.

In passing such a motion, the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories will be doing its share to support and sustain this welcome amendment to the Criminal Code and protect it from challenges based on section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Madam Premier.

Minister's Statement 24-12(7): Minister's Absence From The House

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the Members that the Honourable Silas Arngna'naaq will be absent from the

House today to attend to personal business. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Extreme Drunkenness Defence

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall the Supreme Court of Canada brought down its controversial ruling on the extreme drunkenness defence. This judgment appalled many Canadians, including myself. However, at the time, it appeared that the court's direction that such a defence would only be appropriate in extremely rare cases would ensure that this defence would not be abused.

In the months since, however, a number of accused persons have tried to use this defence to excuse criminal behaviour. As a matter of fact, there is a trial going on right here in Yellowknife as we speak, in which a man accused of a vicious assault is trying to use this as a defence. Mr. Speaker, I think most Canadians and northerners will agree with me when I say extreme drunkenness is not acceptable behaviour and is especially not an appropriate defence for violence. I'm appalled that this defence is being used by more and more accused persons and I am especially appalled that this irresponsible notion has made its way into the courts here in the Northwest Territories.

The Government of Canada and the Justice Minister, the Honourable Allan Rock, agree that most Canadians find this unacceptable. On Friday, Mr. Rock introduced amendments to the Criminal Code which would restrict the use of this defence. Mr. Speaker, the amendments would introduce into the Criminal Code the concept of a standard of reasonable care. This standard suggests, and rightly so I might add, that it is unacceptable for someone to be in a state of self-induced intoxication such as they are unaware or incapable of consciously controlling their behaviour, to prevent them from interfering or threatening to interfere with the bodily integrity of another person.

In short, getting so drunk that you can't stop yourself from hurting someone or threatening to hurt someone

is unacceptable and the Criminal Code of Canada will reflect that fact. This is an important step, Mr. Speaker, and I applaud Mr. Rock for making this effort to ensure that this belief will now be incorporated into our justice system.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Whitford is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, colleagues, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, however, I still have some concerns about this legislation. When the amendment refers to consciously controlling one's behaviour, does that leave open a loophole where an unscrupulous accused could still find a way to get away with drunken violence? Could an accused find a middle ground between the standard of reasonable care and the early Supreme Court ruling that would enable them to get past this amendment? Finally, what if the Supreme Court rules that this amendment is a violation of the Charter of Rights of an accused?

This amendment is not a cure-all, Mr. Speaker. Violence, whether intoxication is involved or not, will continue to be one of the greatest threats against our society and our families. Even after this amendment is passed, we still have to teach our children that violence is unacceptable; that drugs and alcohol are not to be abused; and that families should be a safe place, not a place of fear or of violence. As leaders of our society, we, here in this House, have to provide impeccable examples to our neighbours. I hope that all of us continue to progress in this campaign against violence to help make our society here in the Northwest Territories a safer place for everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Lack Of Speech Therapy Services For School-Age Children

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the ability to communicate is crucial in our world today. You can't buy milk, meet a friend or share an experience if you can't communicate. Most of us communicate through the use of speech and language. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there are many young people in the

Page 311

Northwest Territories and in Yellowknife who have difficulty with speech and language. Without help, these children can face problems in school and ridicule of their peers.

Fortunately, there are trained specialists who can work with these children. Stanton Hospital has two speech language pathologists on staff. The problem is that these staff are expected to deal with all of the children with speech and language problems in the western Arctic. Speech therapy is not a matter of seeing a person once and sending them away with the answer. For many children, there is a need for regular therapy to work on the problem. As a result, the two pathologists just can't keep up with the workload.

In October, ordinary Members raised the concern that school-age children had been cut off from speech therapy services at Stanton hospital for close to a year. At that time, the Minister of Health and Social Services confirmed that her ministry was responsible for providing speech therapy services for school-age children. The Minister also said, and I quote: "The speech therapists we presently have are tremendously overburdened and not all students requiring speech therapy are able to be seen. I would like to confirm that we are doing everything we can to resolve that particular situation with the acknowledgement that we know we are understaffed in that area."

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Minister that they are understaffed. The Yukon government, serving the same population as Stanton, has six speech therapists on staff and also calls on a private clinic, as required. The Minister also said on Monday, October 31st, and I quote: "I will try my best to look at the resources we have during the next couple of months to see where resources can be deployed and where we can set priorities on areas of major concern."

Mr. Speaker, it is now February and there are still no services for school-age children needing speech therapy services through the Department of Health and Social Services. A small amount of funding was

supplied to local school boards but it only covered some training for teachers and a handful of assessments. There is still no therapy for these students.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honourable Members. Mr. Speaker, these children need help and waiting another year or two may cause irreparable damage to some of them. During question period I will be following up with the Minister of Health and Social Services on what progress she has made on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Funding Community Justice Committees

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to comment on and applaud the work being done by the community justice committees. There are about 38 community justice committees in the Northwest Territories. A majority of these are funded through contributions provided by the Department of Justice. These contributions are provided for community justice projects that promote and encourage the participation of communities in the justice system and the development and implementation of community-based alternatives to the formal justice system.

In this year's proposed main estimates, there are \$918,000 allocated to this program. On a straight-line calculation, this would mean that each community justice committee would get about \$24,000 each. But we all know that these contributions are not doled out that way. I also understand that a good portion of this money is used to administer the fine options program.

Mr. Speaker, there is an active community justice committee in Inuvik. In this current fiscal year, Inuvik has been allocated about \$18,000 for its community justice committee and I believe another \$24,000 for the fine options program. These funds are administered through an arrangement with Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre.

Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the committee members for most of the community justice systems in the north are volunteers. This is the case in Inuvik. There's a good cross-section of community people on the Inuvik committee. I wish to add that the only person who gets paid is the coordinator, who gets a nominal fee for work on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Speaker, there are many things that these justice committees do and don't get public recognition for. I'll save some of these comments for another Member's statement, possibly tomorrow.

Today I want to thank all of the people, not only in Inuvik but across the Northwest Territories, who volunteer their services to serve on the community justice committees. You are the real public servants. Mahsi.

---Applause.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Koe. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Mildred Wilke in the gallery. Mildred is the coordinator for the Kidney Foundation of Canada's fund-raising campaign that takes place beginning the 1st of March until the end of March.

---Applause

Page 312

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 170-12(7): Provision Of Speech Therapy To Students

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my Members' statement, for the western Arctic and Kitikmeot there are now only two speech therapists. Yet, the Yukon, which serves the same size population, has six speech therapists on staff. The Minister of Health and Social Services has confirmed that her department is responsible for providing these services, and last October she indicated that the department would look at resources to address the problem over the next couple of months. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask if the Minister has found a solution for providing speech therapy services to the many school-age children who need these services.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question 170-12(7): Provision Of Speech Therapy To Students

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, the issue of speech therapist is one that has been under discussion to find out how we can best provide the services, not only to Yellowknife but to other regions and communities of the Northwest Territories. It continues to be under active discussion to see where we can get the dollars that will allow us to provide more assistance in this area. I have not found a solution at this moment, however, I would like to indicate to the honourable Member that this subject is under active consideration. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 170-12(7): Provision Of Speech Therapy To Students

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. I appreciate the Minister's advice that she is still actively looking for a solution. I would like to point out that parents have now been waiting for almost two years for the government to identify this support for

school-age children. Children who were six when the problem first started are now eight. It's getting to be a more and more serious situation. Will the Minister provide a concrete answer for addressing this issue before the end of the Seventh Session?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 170-12(7): Provision Of Speech Therapy To Students

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that I can provide an answer before the end of this session, although I don't know whether the answer will be a concrete one because I will have to get some explanation of what the honourable Member is advocating in using the word "concrete." Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Dent, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 170-12(7): Provision Of Speech Therapy To Students

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think by "concrete" I mean something that is firm. I would like a set regimen to be put in place, if I can answer the question, so that we know that these services can be provided to school-age children. Now that she knows the answer to what I'm looking for in terms of "concrete," will the Minister provide a guarantee to this House that she will answer the question before the end of the Seventh Session?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 170-12(7): Provision Of Speech Therapy To Students

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I intend to answer the question or attempt to address the issue and provide this House with as much as we can within the financial restraints in which we presently operate under. I will endeavour to do that. The Member may not have as concrete an

answer as he wishes to have, but he will have one, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. One of the Minister's initiatives, for which I support him, has been working with the aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories to try to develop a northern accord agreement; to develop an agreement and a text on an accord on oil and gas and mining. I understand that several meetings have taken place between the Minister's staff and the aboriginal groups. What is the current status of these discussions?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've had two meetings with the aboriginal groups that are directly affected by the development of a mineral accord and oil and gas accord. We've asked them to give us their input with respect to the language that they want incorporated into the accord. I believe we're supposed to receive that by the end of March. There's a further meeting planned in the next two weeks. They've formed a small executive group that's going to represent the interests of the aboriginal groups in terms of the language required in this new legislation. My optimistic side says that we're going to hopefully reach an arrangement that will be satisfactory to all of us, including the current public government, and move reasonably expeditiously to make an arrangement with the federal government for the transfer of this important responsibility which

Page 313

will then enable us to set the rules as to how industry, whether it's minerals or oil and gas, behaves in this part of the country. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Todd. Mr. Koe, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Have all the aboriginal groups been active participants in this process?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are all the aboriginal groups active in this process? The majority of the aboriginal groups are active participants in the process. I believe the Treaty 8 and the Deh Cho view themselves as observer status at this time, but they are attending the meetings and we are in formal discussions with them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. What does the Minister intend to do if not all the aboriginal groups are signatories to an agreement, if you come up with an agreement?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

My optimistic side says that we'll try to make an arrangement with the groups directly involved. Should we make an arrangement, then we'll be able to move forward in an orderly way with our discussions with the federal government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. When does the Minister intend to proceed with negotiations with the federal government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 171-12(7): Status Of Negotiations Re Northern Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the representatives who are involved in the process of trying to reach an appropriate compromise on the language that should be in the accord have agreed that they will try to reach an arrangement by the end of May. Should an arrangement be reached, we should then be able to proceed with discussions with the federal government on June 1st. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 172-12(7): Progress On Health Billings Dispute

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance. The Finance Minister's budget address reports that progress has been made on a number of outstanding problems, including the health billings dispute. As we all know, prior to and especially since 1988 when health care was transferred over to the Government of the Northwest Territories from the federal government for the administration of health services to treaty Indians and Inuit, there has been a dispute over billings for health services which were provided to treaty Indians and Inuit; as a result, this government has taken the federal government to court to try to settle this dispute. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance what type of progress he's

reporting to us in his budget address when he mentioned the health billings dispute. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 172-12(7): Progress On Health Billings Dispute

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, on or about April 2nd, hopefully the last round of negotiations will take place in Ottawa with our deputy minister of Justice, the principal secretary to the Premier and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Hopefully, a document will come out of that that can be initialled, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 172-12(7): Progress On Health Billings Dispute

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since this health billings dispute regards the health services that are provided to aboriginal people, mainly treaty Indians and Inuit, once this arrangement that the Minister of Finance is negotiating with the federal government has been accomplished, would this diminish the level of health care for treaty Indians and Inuit? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 172-12(7): Progress On Health Billings Dispute

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, as Members know, even though the federal government has not been paying all of the billings we have been sending them, we have not cut back on the health care that we have been providing to anyone in the Northwest Territories, and we don't foresee a cutback in the level of health care services for all the people of the Northwest Territories, even after we have settled with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 172-12(7): Progress On Health Billings Dispute

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Since this involves aboriginal people, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if aboriginal leaders are actively involved in these negotiations which deal with a crucial service to people they represent. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 172-12(7): Progress On Health Billings Dispute

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, hopefully, the Premier is going to be in the vicinity of Ottawa as soon as we get the document in its final form. The intention would be for the Premier or myself, if I have to go there, and Mr. Irwin to initial the document. The document would be brought back to Cabinet and to the Standing Committee on Finance and it would be communicated to the aboriginal leaders, who we have kept informed over the last two years with regard to this court case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 173-12(7): Time Frame For Agreement On Northern Accord

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. Mr. Speaker, in response to Mr. Koe's question, the Minister advised the House about negotiations amongst northerners to try to reach a consensus on a northern accord, and indicated that in June he hopes to start negotiations with the federal government on the northern accord. My question, Mr. Speaker, is what if a northern consensus is achieved but the federal government stalls the process? Does the Minister have a contingency plan to ensure that there are significant benefits for northerners with any

new mine opening in the NWT, in the event there is no northern accord?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 173-12(7): Time Frame For Agreement On Northern Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

We will put barricades on the road.

---Laughter

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good question. I think it is incumbent upon this ministry that we look at more than one option. Should we not be successful in reaching an arrangement, either with northerners or the federal government in terms of the orderly transfer of responsibility, it is important that we look at other options that may be available to us to protect the fiscal interests of not only this government, but aboriginal groups and, of course, employees and employers.

I've asked the Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to develop potential options that they think we can accomplish, should we not be successful in reaching an arrangement with the federal government. Some of these options could be a Benefits Act, or amendments to the Area Development Act which would give us some authority on how that industry behaves in terms of economic components to mining, or oil and gas, for that matter. We could look at possibly asking the federal government to transfer some of the programs: the geology program or the mine recorder's office, things like that, so we have some influence over how the industry behaves.

There are a few other more dramatic steps we could take, but at this time, I haven't completely concluded the research necessary to determine whether these steps would be appropriate or if we have to put them into effect. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 173-12(7): Time Frame For Agreement On Northern Accord

MR. DENT:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister's answer makes it sound like there may be some thought given to legislation. Given that this may be the last session of this legislature before the negotiations get under way -- and perhaps get stalled -- is the Minister planning to list the options along with potential legislation in the transition document that SCOF has requested Cabinet prepare for the next government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister Todd.

Further Return To Question 173-12(7): Time Frame For Agreement On Northern Accord

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would answer the question this way. First of all, I think this initiative is probably one of the most important initiatives that this government is taking at this time, particularly with the budget crunch that we're all facing, not just in the Northwest Territories but right across the country. If there is a requirement to do more with less, then we have to find new ways to generate revenues. I've said that on a consistent basis. You can't keep cutting and slashing things for people who need it the most. We have to find another way to find additional revenues to meet the basic requirements of our constituencies.

I would go so far as to say that if there was no arrangement, I would seek support for calling a special session of the Assembly to enact legislation as it was required. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 174-12(7): Coverage Of Chiropractic Services Under Health Plan

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister be able to advise this House whether or not chiropractic services are covered under the current health care benefits? Thank you.

Page 315

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question 174-12(7): Coverage Of Chiropractic Services Under Health Plan

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, no, they're not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 174-12(7): Coverage Of Chiropractic Services Under Health Plan

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister be able to advise if chiropractic services are covered under non-insured health benefits for aboriginal people?

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 174-12(7): Coverage Of Chiropractic Services Under Health Plan

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, not to my knowledge.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 174-12(7): Coverage Of Chiropractic Services Under Health Plan

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister be able to advise the House whether she could find out for sure whether they are covered or whether they are not covered under non-insured benefits and why? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 174-12(7): Coverage Of Chiropractic Services Under Health Plan

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased to provide that information.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

Question 175-12(7): Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works. A number of people are concerned, myself included, about the recent closure of the school in Lutsel K'e due to the suspected contamination problem with carbon dioxide. This problem obviously impacts on the students in several ways; it impedes their education. But it also involves the question of taxpayers' money when it comes to having to rectify this air quality problem. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister who is responsible for designing schools of this type, whether it was a private architectural firm or was it Public Works?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Government Services and Public Works, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 175-12(7): Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, that particular school was designed by Killick Metz Bowen Rose Architects of British Columbia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Whitford, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 175-12(7): Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Public Works if there are other schools of

similar design, by this firm, here in the Northwest Territories that may have the same problem.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard

Further Return To Question 175-12(7): Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, this school was designed with a natural ventilation system. To my knowledge, there are no other schools that were designed by this company with the same kind of natural ventilation system; although, I will admit there have been other schools in the Northwest Territories that have experienced bad air problems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Whitford, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 175-12(7): Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More to a local concern, I am especially concerned with the school at Range Lake which was recently opened last year, and there is a new school under construction as we speak, the new St. Pat's school. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not his department has taken measures to ensure that these schools are going to be free of this particular problem in the future.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 175-12(7): Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, in Yellowknife, the Department of Public Works does not manage the capital building projects for schools; that is done by the local Yellowknife boards. One thing we know for sure is that they will be built to code. If there is any assistance that we can lend them, we would be only too pleased to do so, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 175-12(7):
Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On this subject, in the news there was an amount quoted around \$200,000 to

Page 316

rectify this problem. I would like to ask the Minister, whatever it costs is the money going to come out of the territorial government's budget or is this recoverable from the designers of the school?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 175-12(7): Responsibility For Design Of Lutsel K'e School

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I doubt whether it is recoverable from the company, but obviously we will look at that. In all probability, one of the government departments will end up paying for any retrofit of that particular building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 176-12(7): Finalization Of New Formula Financing Agreement

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, for the last couple of years, both the Minister of Finance and the Premier have worked very hard in trying to get a new formula financing agreement. It is going to be key to the success of the next government if this government is able to achieve a reasonable formula financing agreement. So my question to the Minister of Finance is when does the Minister think he will be able to conclude a new formula financing agreement?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 176-12(7): Finalization Of New Formula Financing Agreement

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, if I might just break a little bit, I believe that it is Mr. Ballantyne's 50th birthday today.

---Applause

You see, former Finance Ministers do live to the age of 50, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, since before Christmas we have been in negotiations with the federal government with regard to a new formula financing agreement. They have made some suggestions to us. The Yukon and ourselves negotiate at the same time. Last week in a discussion with Premier Ostashek from the Yukon, he is having concerns about the issues that have been put before us by the federal government; we are also concerned. The two jurisdictions are going to get together to discuss these particular issues. If Mr. Martin can tear himself away from the budget round that he is going to do after he speaks today, we might be able to get to him some time before April or May. I would anticipate that we would see a conclusion of those discussions somewhere in August or September, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 177-12(7): Student Achievement Rates Across NWT

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education. I would like to ask the Minister, since the divisional board in the Sahtu have recognized that their students are several years behind where they should be, whether this is the only jurisdiction in the territories that has that problem.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 177-12(7): Student Achievement Rates Across NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, this is not the only jurisdiction in this country that has this particular problem. I want to implicate that, generally speaking, there is an acceptance that there is a situation with aboriginal communities right across the country that they find in terms of comparable educational standards; they are different and, in fact, lower. So there is an attempt on the part of the Ministers of Education across the country to try to find a way to address this particular issue. The western Ministers have been meeting and we are working on an effort in western Canada to try to develop a consistent curriculum for all of western Canada so that there is consistency in measuring the students that graduate from our schools.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 177-12(7): Student Achievement Rates Across NWT

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the 1970s, it was pointed out that if we made changes to the Education Act and gave people more local control, then a lot of these concerns would be met. A lot of that was done over the last dozen or so years, Mr. Speaker. So I would like to ask the Minister what is he proposing as a solution to this problem, which he has said is a problem in communities not only throughout the territories, but right throughout Canada as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 177-12(7): Student Achievement Rates Across NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. The issue is not simple as the answer has to be taken in the context of all those things that need to be dealt with. For instance, our colleague, Mr. Dent, and the Special Committee on Health and Social Services have pointed out on a number of occasions, there are some significant health and social issues that have to be addressed in the context of ensuring that students who are serious about their education have to have a

home environment and family environment that promotes their success. If we start at a point where there is no support for the children, then obviously we're going to have some very difficult situations.

The other thing is that we need to accept that we have a numeracy/literacy situation in the north that requires upgrading.

Page 317

I want to indicate to the honourable Member that as part of our own budget there is an attempt on our part to begin to deal with those particular issues in terms of numeracy/literacy strategy.

The other point is that we have to provide a strategy for education which we approve in this House. I think it will lay out the groundwork and framework for which we must invest our resources.

The other point is that the Member provided information on the Education Act that's crucial. It requires us to change the way we do business in education, and the respect we also give to the students and the parents and our educators.

The issue is not simple. Our solutions cannot be based on one view, but that of the community participating. I think that the success...For instance, in Yellowknife, the involvement of the people of Yellowknife clearly shows that when the community takes the issue of delivering programs and services seriously, the quality of students are there. The fact is it depends on the support given. I think in our efforts, we're trying to ensure that occurs and we will continue to make every effort to respond to those needs.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 177-12(7): Student Achievement Rates Across NWT

MR. LEWIS:

As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, the Sahtu have decided that they're going to take the bull by the horns and they're going to try to solve this problem. Does this mean that the Sahtu is the only jurisdiction in the territories that has decided that they're going to make this an issue that they're going to grapple with, and will they be working alone in this or is it part of a bigger movement through the system?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 177-12(7): Student Achievement Rates Across NWT

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My belief is that it's a bigger movement. I think that we all accept that there is a certain deficiency in the standard of education. Let me also note the highlights and the positives. We've gone from a five per cent graduation rate amongst aboriginal people, to 12 per cent in five years. We're starting to move more students through high school.

The second point is that we have more students who are going further in school than ever before. We have more people returning to school and we have more students attending post-secondary institutions, particularly adults who have been out of the system for a long time. So I think we're creating an environment in the north in response to the work of the past Assemblies and to Members in this Assembly. So I think we've highlighted the importance of education.

In our budget it's clear, Mr. Speaker. I believe that approximately 25 per cent of the total budget of this government -- much higher than any other jurisdiction in the country in terms of percentages -- is for the development and education of our children and the people of the north. I think we ought to be complimented for that, despite the fact that there are some serious issues. I think we're making an effort, it's a cooperative approach. I just think that the Sahtu is going to take a serious approach to this issue, no different than any other region. In fact, many of the surplus dollars from those regions is going into the special needs programming area, and I think they should be complimented on that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 177-12(7): Student Achievement Rates Across NWT

MR. LEWIS:

Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he would confirm that in the tests that we have undertaken in the territories as part of a global Canadian survey, on an average of the territories, can

you tell me how far we are behind the rest of Canada in terms of levels in our system?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Education.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Speaker, that requires a much more substantive response that I can give at this particular juncture. You have to look at it in comparative terms. It's no different than the first exam that was written in math. It depends on where you measure. On the high-end, for instance in the math, we were comparable to the rest of the country. In the low-end we were comparable. It was in the middle where we had more serious problems. In fact, it's in the middle, between grades 8, 9 and 10, in that particular area that we had the most students dropping out. That is, in fact, a reflection of the situation. So in comparison, it's very difficult for me to say. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take the question as notice. I will make a statement on that particular issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 178-12(7): Premier's Knowledge Of Oil Spill In Repulse Bay

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm obliged to ask a question which, according to my friend from Repulse Bay, is an emergency situation. My cousin and my friend is here in the public gallery. He informed me that there is a major oil spill that occurred today in Repulse Bay. It's obvious that the spill has come from the NWT Power Corporation fuel tanks. Is the Premier aware of this major spill in Repulse Bay at this point in time? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 178-12(7): Premier's Knowledge Of Oil Spill In Repulse Bay

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I am not aware at this point in time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Ningark.

Page 318

Supplementary To Question 178-12(7): Premier's Knowledge Of Oil Spill In Repulse Bay

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier endeavour to find out right away and do whatever she can to contain the spill?

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 178-12(7): Premier's Knowledge Of Oil Spill In Repulse Bay

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I will do my best right away to find out the situation on the oil spill, what has been leaked, and ensure that the Power Corporation quickly moves into the normal procedures that they have to go into as part of the guidelines they operate under. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, under whose jurisdiction the Arctic Winter Games and the Canada Winter Games come. Mr. Speaker, parents of athletes participating in the Arctic Winter Games and the Canada Winter Games were concerned over the high costs of uniforms that are mandatory in order to belong to Team NWT. The cost, I understand, goes anywhere up to \$250 per outfit. In two cases that were brought to my attention, the people found it financially difficult to meet that cost. I understand that the department had a buy-back policy. In fact, you would rent the uniform for the period of time that you were needing it for the games and then your money would be refunded when you returned the uniform. But I learned subsequently that this policy had been

cancelled and I would like to ask the Minister why this policy was cancelled.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that the purchase, selling and holding is managed by Sport North on behalf of the government. The agreement was made where athletes had, at one point, an option of returning their uniforms, but it became an administrative burden to assess the returned clothing and give out the refunds for that. So at that time, the decision was made that athletes would purchase the clothing and not be able to return it. That is the current policy that is still in place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

MR. WHITFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I thought I heard the Minister say that the policy was still in place, or is it that they will not purchase the clothing back?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The policy currently is that Sport North does not purchase the clothing back from athletes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the Minister now. It has been brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker, that in some cases this can be financially difficult for some families. I notice, in looking at the names of the people who are participating, that sometimes there are two participants in the same family. At \$250 each, that is a lot of dollars. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he would consider revisiting the policy of buy-back in cases where it is necessary because of the financial situation the athletes may find themselves in. I don't think it is difficult to do. There are ways around it. I would like to ask the Minister if he would entertain reinstating that policy.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm aware of the concern of the high cost of clothing for athletes. At one time, prior to 1993, there was a government subsidy for athletes' clothing. That subsidy was taken away, hence the increase in prices for clothing. It is one of the things I will commit to taking a look at. There is also the possibility of looking at other paraphernalia, besides uniforms, which might be used to promote our athletes that aren't of such an expensive nature. That will be looked at as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that Sport North is financed, at least in part, through the Lottery Foundation. I think the amount of money that northerners contribute to this is commendable. I would like to ask the Minister, in his analysis of this, if he would re-examine the assistance that can be given to the purchase of these uniforms. It is enough to ask our students and young people to represent us, but to hit them with the high cost of uniforms is asking a bit

Page 319

much. I would like to ask him if he would consider having Sport North reintroduce the subsidy.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 179-12(7): Cancellation Of Buy-Back Policy For NWT Team Uniforms

HON. KELVIN NG:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we'll take a look at it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 180-12(7): Amalgamation Of H&SS At Community And Regional Levels

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. It is with regard to the amalgamation of Health and Social Services. I'm concerned about this amalgamation since the headquarters level has been amalgamated already and there are plans for amalgamation at the community and regional levels. I would like to ask the Minister if her department is doing the amalgamation at the community and regional levels at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question 180-12(7): Amalgamation Of H&SS At Community And Regional Levels

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of communities that we are working and having discussions with on how that could possibly happen. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Are there any further questions? Okay, we will take a break.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

I will call the House back to order. We are on 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. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table four documents. The first one is Tabled Document 24-12(7), an information note from the Department of Justice Canada on "Self-induced Intoxication as Criminal Fault," February 1995.

I also wish to table Tabled Document 25-12(7), a letter to the Honourable Warren Allmand, chairman of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs. It is a letter from myself dated February 24, 1995 concerning amendments to the Criminal Code and a new Firearms Act.

I also wish to table Tabled Document 26-12(7), a letter from the North American Hunting Club to Mr. J. Peterson, president of the Barrenland Caribou Outfitters Association with regard to firearms legislation.

Finally, I wish to table Tabled Document 27-12(7), a letter from J Group Company Ltd., Yellowknife, to the Honourable Allan Rock with regard to the firearms legislation.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to tabling of documents.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Thebacha is requesting unanimous consent to go back to item 14, tabling of documents. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

REVERT TO ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a number of documents to table, if I may. I wish to table Tabled Document 28-12(7), Peat Marwick Stevenson and Kellogg project report on the evaluation of appropriateness of the current fire suppression methodology, study eight.

I have Tabled Document 29-12(7), a copy of an opinion column, "Firefighting Aircraft Plans Expensive and Ill-conceived."

I wish to table Tabled Document 30-12(7), a copy of a letter addressed to myself from the former Minister of DPW, dated September 7, 1994.

I wish to table Tabled Document 31-12(7), a copy of the records of decision for the Executive Council dated August 10, 1994, with a copy of statement of requirements attached.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 32-12(7), a letter to Mr. Doherty dated October 5th from the Dene-Metis Holdings with an attachment.

I wish to table Tabled Document 34-12(7), a copy of a letter to Mr. Morin, Minister of Public Works and Services, from the Dene-Metis dated October 17th.

I wish to table Tabled Document 36-12(7), a letter to the former Minister of DPW from the Dene-Metis Holdings dated October 31, 1994.

Finally, I wish to table Tabled Document 37-12(7), a copy of a press released dated August 18, 1994. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motions for first

Page 320

reading of bills. Item 17, motions; Motion 10-12(7), Impact of Federal Gun Control Legislation. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 17: MOTIONS

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

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS a significant number of Northwest Territories residents possess firearms for the purpose of hunting, trapping and pursuing a traditional lifestyle;

AND WHEREAS the federal government introduced Bill C-68, An Act Respecting Firearms and Other Weapons, on February 14, 1995;

AND WHEREAS this proposed legislation would have a significant negative impact on many northern residents;

AND WHEREAS the concerns of the NWT residents were raised with the federal Minister of Justice, the Honourable Allan Rock, but ignored in the drafting of the proposed legislation;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the Legislative Assembly prepare a presentation to be made to the federal Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, chaired by the Honourable Warren Allmand, regarding the negative impact that Bill C-68 would have on the citizens of the NWT;

AND FURTHER, that the presentation be made to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs when it holds hearings in Ottawa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, most of the aboriginal people who are now Members of the Legislative Assembly know that when we were growing up, we were taught how to use firearms as soon as we were old enough to go out hunting with our parents, uncles, grandfathers and so on.

Mr. Speaker, over the past 10 years now, the animal rights activists have almost reduced our lifestyle to next to nothing. The federal government has done very little to help our native population in Canada. Mr. Speaker, it seems that the federal government is powerless to help us when it comes to protecting the interest of the native people against the animal rights activists.

Mr. Speaker, regulation upon regulation, in our jurisdiction, have been imposed upon the rights of the native people of the country. It is hard for native

people to go out after the polar bear, muskox, narwhals and walruses without having to be restricted by regulations, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our livelihood has been threatened by a number of endless regulations. This part of the country has been polluted from the pollution coming from the south. Now the federal government is threatening our lifestyle by putting more restrictions on our firearms we use as a tool. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Seconded, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak in support of this particular motion. There are several areas of the proposed gun control legislation that I have problems with. This bill, Mr. Speaker, interferes with the northern way of life. Northerners share what they have with each other and work together as communities. This also extends to our firearms. Shotguns and rifles are often lent from friend to friend, from family member to family member. Mr. Speaker, this bill will turn this simple gesture of friendship into a potential criminal act. In the north, people have close ties to the land. Many people from an early age learn about firearms and begin to use them often as part of hunting and trapping. It is part of their lifestyle, Mr. Speaker. This legislation is restrictive on young people using firearms. We will break the law teaching our young family members to hunt with us if this legislation gets passed.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation does not recognize the vast size and scattering of communities which make up the Northwest Territories. Rather than a made-in-the-north safety training program which recognizes the uniqueness of the Northwest Territories, this legislation lumps us in with the rest of Canada. The concept of trying to deliver a southern-style safety package across the north seems very expensive and next to impossible.

Fees, Mr. Speaker, will be required for both registration of all firearms and for individual licensing. Those in the north who live a traditional lifestyle and are likely to have a number of firearms usually don't have a great deal of disposable income available for paying fees. This is a concern which needs to be addressed in the setting of the fees.

One good economic opportunity in the north is outfitting, Mr. Speaker. Much of the business comes from other countries. This legislation even threatens to negatively impact on this industry, as there are increased restrictions on the transportation of firearms and ammunition. In fact, Mr. Speaker, ammunition in general is going to cause a lot of problems. In smaller communities when constituents call me, I go to the store here in Yellowknife and purchase ammunition and send it back out to them. With the proposed legislation, that will be a criminal act and I can be prosecuted for it.

Mr. Speaker, the penalties included in this legislation are very severe. While we all want to have penalties which discourage criminals, the scope of this legislation ensures that many innocent northerners will become potential criminals and subject to these penalties. This legislation has sections which will impact on the thousands of firearm owners in this country. I cannot even begin to imagine the bureaucracy which will be required for just licensing, registering and monitoring compliance. In this age

Page 321

of deficit slashing, it seems to be a huge potential expense we cannot afford.

When the federal Minister of Justice, Mr. Allan Rock, was here in the fall, Mr. Speaker, we all stressed that our concerns about gun control be adhered to. We raised a number of concerns, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe that he listened to our concerns. None of the issues we've addressed as being important to northerners have been addressed in this legislation. During our meeting with Mr. Rock, it was suggested that for the key areas of concern in the north, there be exemptions for Northwest Territories residents. This would simplify the administration of the act in the Northwest Territories for both the federal government and the residents. I again, Mr. Speaker, repeat the need for exemptions on key clauses of this bill for northerners and I hope that it is one of the messages we take to the committee reviewing this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this motion. I hope it will help send our message to the federal government and that, this time, they will listen. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called.

MR. ZOE:

Recorded vote.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Zoe is requesting a recorded vote. Mr. Clerk. All those in favour, please stand.

Recorded Vote

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Ningark, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Dent, Mr. Ballantyne, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Mr. Zoe, Mr. Koe, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Alloo, Ms. Cournoyea, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Morin, Mr. Todd, Mr. Nerysoo, Mr. Whitford.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those opposed? The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

---Applause

Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 19: SECOND READING OF BILLS

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

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 16, an Act to Amend the Retirement Plan Beneficiaries Act, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Retirement Plan Beneficiaries Act to clarify that it applies to retirement savings plans and to provide that it also applies to retirement income funds. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 16 has had second reading. Item 19, second reading of bills. Ms. Cournoyea.

Bill 17: An Act To Amend The Nursing Profession Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 17, an Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Nursing Profession Act to provide for the establishment of an educational advisory committee of the board of directors of the Northwest Territories Registered Nurses' Association. The education advisory committee will review nursing education programs and the Minister may approve such programs to allow a graduate of a nursing education program in the territories to be registered as a member of the association, without having to first be registered in another Canadian jurisdiction. This bill also provides for the establishment of membership examinations to be administered to applicants for registration. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bills 16 and 17 have had second reading and, accordingly, the bills stand referred to a committee. 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; 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.

Page 322

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that the committee continue consideration of Committee Report 4-12(7) and Bill 1, specifically to consider the budget of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Do we have the concurrence of the committee that we shall deal with Committee Report 4-12(7), Report on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates; and, Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96. Do we agree?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd, do you have opening remarks for the committee?

Department Of Economic Development And Tourism

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN TODD:

I do, Mr. Chairman. The opening remarks are somewhat lengthy as I thought that it was important to try to spell out as clearly as possible some of the important initiatives that this department has moved forward on in the last two years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Accustomed as I am to being brief, this is somewhat unusual.

Introduction

The details of the proposed budget for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism are in the documents before this Assembly. As I said, Mr. Chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to review highlights of the past year and address some of the major thrusts that we intend to take in 1995-96.

1994-95 In Review

There has been little fundamental change in the department's programs during the last year. The focus in the department has been on delivering existing programs more efficiently and more effectively.

Structural Changes

Over time, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism became a highly centralized arm of the government. Decisions were made in headquarters far from the client base in the communities.

To better meet client needs, the department was reorganized and structured to more clearly define roles and to facilitate decision-making by the regional staff who are closest to the clients. During the last year, organizational changes and new administrative procedures have been put into practice and solidified.

The roles of headquarters and field staff have been clearly defined. Regional staff deliver programs, headquarters evaluates, coordinates, analyses and assists. The two roles are quite different, but are not and cannot be exclusive. To ensure that the department works efficiently and decisions are formulated on the best knowledge base available, a senior management committee has been established. Regional superintendents, the deputy minister, assistant deputy minister and three headquarters directors sit on the committee.

Through the senior management committee, the needs in the communities drive annual plans, policy development and, more importantly, budget decisions. This management structure ensures that decisions made and actions taken are based on detailed knowledge of conditions in the communities.

Program decision and expenditure authority have been delegated to regional superintendents. Most expenditure decisions are now made at the regional level.

The structural changes are working. There has been a noticeable change in client satisfaction with the department. The most dramatic visible change to date can be seen in the delivery of the business development fund. With delegation of authority to the regional level, more contributions are being processed at the regional level: 97 per cent to date this year, compared to 54 per cent in 1992-93. The average number of days required to make an approval has fallen from 58 days to 28 days during the same period.

We are looking forward to continuing improvement in client services in this particular field.

Information And Communications

A delivery mechanism and people to deliver programs are in place. To ensure that residents of the Northwest Territories know about our programs, two staff members in the department, one in Nunavut and one in the west -- have been dedicated to community relations. They will be visiting communities to meet with the department's client base: community groups, aboriginal groups, business organizations, business people and would-be entrepreneurs. The department has long recognized the need to reach out to the aboriginal community.

Not only will the community relations staff make sure people are aware of the department's programs and services, they will also provide feedback so programming can be improved.

Programs

Although the department's programs are fundamentally unchanged, that side of the department has certainly not been ignored:

Page 323

-Extensive work is being done to determine if the programs are doing what they are supposed to do, if

we are getting good value for money, and if they are appropriately targeted.

-We have looked at the fishery and the fish freight subsidy and have done extensive work towards developing a fisheries strategy. The Parliamentary Committee on Fisheries and Oceans has recommended that the federal government wind down the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation and make marketing of freshwater fish from the NWT a territorial government responsibility. The federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has until July to respond. Until it is clear what direction the federal government is going to take, it would be premature, at this time, to conclude a comprehensive fisheries strategy. For the present, existing policies and programs will be maintained. When the federal government responds to the recommendations, we will consult with the fishermen to determine what has to be done next.

-The business development fund is being evaluated. We have to determine if it is doing what it is supposed to do and how to improve our investments in the Northwest Territories business community.

-Cost-benefit analysis is being done to determine if we are getting the best value for money. Members have already seen the initial results of this when the parks and visitors' services capital budget was reviewed last fall.

-The tourism sector is viewed to be one where there is good potential for growth and the creation of jobs. Analysis is being carried out to determine where funding can best be placed to get the best return. What do tourists want? Where do we advertise to get the best return on investment?

Regional Planning

In 1995-96, the department will start to facilitate the development of opportunities I have already identified in the plans that are complete.

1995-96

Structural Changes

During the next fiscal year, additional structural changes will be made in the department to improve program delivery.

There are two assistant deputy minister positions in the department. At present, only one position is filled. As I indicated to the Standing Committee on Finance, the vacant position will be filled this coming fiscal

year. One assistant deputy minister will operate in the east, the other in the west. The incumbents will focus on respective area issues as well as the orderly division of the department in 1999.

Residents in the east and the west are faced with different opportunities and constraints with respect to developing their economy. To make better use of skills and experience, superintendents in the east meet as a group, as do those in the west, in order to share ideas on responding to economic opportunities and circumstances. These exchanges are expected to continue into the future.

We are going to try to better utilize staff in the coming year. Last year, seven person years were transferred from headquarters to regional offices to aid in the better delivery of programs. This change has made a difference but additional staff redeployment is required.

The department has economic development officers in some communities that are not large enough or busy enough to warrant a full-time person. We often find ourselves in a situation where staff are not available in other areas to provide departmental services or assist communities in taking advantage of opportunities that arise. To make more efficient use of staff, the department will establish an itinerant EDO service. These staff members will provide services to communities that are too small to warrant full-time staff and will also respond to special needs. They will be able to assist with the development business plan, as well as assisting clients during start up. There is a need for aftercare. The itinerant EDOs will be able to respond.

Programs

During the coming year, the department will continue to apply cost-benefit analysis to programs to ensure we are getting the most for our money. Programs will be evaluated and adjusted, if necessary, based on the findings that take place.

1995-96 Program Highlights

Business Development

In order to develop the northern business community, particularly in the smaller centres, there is a need for funding, a need for business infrastructure and a need for business management skill development. It is our intention to enhance all three during the next fiscal year.

-Business Development Fund. Services and programming for business will be improved with the proposed expansion of the business development fund. The fund is consistently oversubscribed. This program is a primary tool for job creation. We are proposing to increase the fund by \$550,000.

-Mortgage Investment Corporation. Progress is being made toward the establishment of a Mortgage Investment Corporation which will put badly-needed capital into the economy. I had hoped progress would be faster but it is a complex undertaking. Cabinet has approved the development of a legislative framework, including a legislative proposal for Cabinet approval for inclusion on the legislative agenda.

Page 324

-Business Service Centres. In smaller communities, there tends to be a shortage of commercial space. In order to alleviate some of the pressure, business service centres are being developed at Pond Inlet, Coppermine and Cambridge Bay using EDA funding. These facilities will provide desperately-needed commercial space for new entrepreneurs at subsidized rents and include provisions for services such as bookkeeping, secretarial and reception services.

-Small Business Management Training. In order to improve the skills of the northern business community, the three Nunavut regions jointly allocated EDA funds to Kakivak Association of Iqaluit to develop and test deliver in Nunavut communities six business management training modules. These were developed by Nunavut experienced trainers and address specific needs of Nunavut's future business managers. Development of all modules is now complete and some test delivery is planned to proceed in the next few months and continue in future years. Following test delivery and refinements in the coming year, it is hoped these modules will be adopted as standard courses in business management training in Nunavut.

Arts And Crafts

The arts and crafts sector, like hunting and trapping, is the only source of income for many of our residents in the small communities. In order to improve producer incomes, staff in the department, working with producers, wholesalers and retailers, will place renewed emphasis on market development.

Producers usually sell their products through Northern stores or the co-op. The department is supportive of these traditional purchasers of arts and crafts but there are independent producers who would like to try selling their products themselves. To give these producers a better chance to get into and succeed in the marketplace, the department will provide market information.

For a number of years, efforts to expand the marketplace concentrated off-shore, in Europe and Japan. Market information indicates that the largest potential market is in North America. In order to expand sales of arts and crafts, a coordinated effort to market products in the United States will be made by the Northwest Company, some co-ops, Cape Dorset Fine Arts and the Dene Cultural Institute. EDA funding will be utilized by the proponents.

Parks And Visitor Services

Parks are a significant capital item for the department. A new parks policy will be finalized and a parks system plan developed. The plan will be developed on the basis of the policy and extensive consultation and will guide park development for the next 20 years.

Parks attract tourists, provide a place for them to stay, and provide recreational opportunities for residents of the Northwest Territories. They are needed but have to help pay their own way. The department will develop a revenue-generation strategy involving fees, permits, royalties, donations and merchandise related to parks.

Capital projects approved during the last session will be carried out this year.

- Construction of the Inuvik Visitors' Centre will be completed and the facility opened later this year.

- A start will be made on construction of tourism information facilities in Pond Inlet and Lake Harbour.

- Major renovations will be done at a number of parks including the Gwich'in park in the Inuvik region; Hidden Lake Park, east of Yellowknife; and, Meliadine River Park in the Keewatin. South of Great Slave Lake, work will be done on the Hay River Park.

Planning related to park activities in the Sahtu and development along the Wrigley highway extension will also be undertaken.

Tourism Development And Marketing

The department is conducting a review of tourism organizations in the Northwest Territories with the objective of establishing two tourism authorities -- one in the east and one in the west. Products are different in each area and with two authorities the needs of operators and tourists can be better met with increased industry participation in decision-making.

Natural Resources

Fur

The development of the renewable resource sector in a sustainable manner has always been a priority of this government. In the smaller communities, the harvest of renewable resources is often the only economic option for residents. We are still committed to this policy.

With the crash of the market for seal skins, and depressed prices for other furs, hunters and trappers have been under financial pressure for a number of years. The demand for fur products is making a slow come back. In order to capitalize on this, the department is proposing to give the Northwest Territories Development Corporation a one-time contribution of \$450,000 towards offsetting the cost of developing high-end fur coats and the establishment of manufacturing facilities in the Kitikmeot and Inuvik regions. Subject to the commercial success of these new products, one further production centre would be established in the Baffin region and another in the Deh Cho in subsequent years. An estimated 30 manufacturing jobs will be created with this initiative.

This initiative dovetails well with the renewable resource development strategy done under the auspices of the Minister of Renewable Resources and will support efforts being made by his department to revive the fur industry.

Commercial Game Harvests

The Department of Economic Development and Tourism and the Department of Renewable Resources have been collaborating -- how unusual -- to assist the Aiviit Hunters' and Trappers' Association of Coral Harbour to plan and execute a spring caribou harvest of approximately 2,000 animals. The

Page 325

harvest is to be undertaken to federal inspection standards with the NWT Development Corporation providing marketing services on a contractual basis.

Firm offers to purchase have been provided by the NWT Development Corporation.

It is expected that the hunt will be completed by the end of April. If successful, the Southampton herd is sufficiently large enough to support continued large scale harvests in future years.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we are taking the advice of this House. We are undertaking initiatives Members have asked for. I think most of you will agree that progress has been made during this past year which has been beneficial to us all. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance, Mr. Dent.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The standing committee is generally pleased with the work of the department. As the Minister noted in his opening statement, the changes made in the last year to devolve authority seem to be making progress towards making the department and its programs more accessible to northerners. In the report on the 1994-95 main estimates, one of the committee's major concerns was about the effectiveness of the tourism zones concept. The committee said there is a perception that planning and decision-making in some of the zones is dominated by a few individuals from larger communities and by tourism operators, many of whom reside outside of the territories. Smaller communities in a given zone are not heard or taken into account. The committee feels that it would be appropriate for the department to make funding to the various zone associations contingent upon the guarantee of appropriate representation from all communities within each tourism zone.

Committee Members feel many of the concerns they raised last year remain. To add to those concerns, there has been a cut in the funding this year to tourism zone associations. The developing tourism industry supports the efforts of the department to increase economic activity. The tourism association's primary focus is to increase tourism. Before cuts are made, there should have been an evaluation of the effectiveness of those dollars and of possible alternative uses for the funds which would then be

more effective. The committee has received a commitment from the Minister to complete an evaluation before the end of the fiscal year. Before any decision to cut funding to tourism associations, the evaluation should be considered in the House.

Recommendation 7

This leads to recommendation 7 of the committee, Mr. Chairman, which I will make as a formal motion at the end of our comments. The committee recommends that the tourism development and marketing activity in the estimates of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism not be considered until the Minister has tabled an evaluation of the

effectiveness of grants to tourism zone associations, and until this evaluation has been debated in the House.

Evaluation

The Minister described for the committee a number of changes in the areas of tourism, marketing and support to the industry association. Before changes are made, there should be an evaluation of the current activities and value for dollars spent. The committee urges the department to prepare objective evaluations prior to proposing program changes.

Assistance To Small Businesses

Committee Members noted that many northerners are finding success by establishing very small businesses. Often, these business ventures can be started with as little as \$5,000 to \$10,000. The committee encourages the department to encourage continued development of these small businesses.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a formal motion of recommendation 7.

Committee Motion 30-12(7): To Adopt Recommendation 7, Carried

Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that the tourism development and marketing activity in the estimates of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism not be considered until the Minister has tabled an evaluation of the effectiveness of grants to tourism zone associations, and until this evaluation has been debated in the House.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

There isn't a quorum.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, I've been advised that there isn't a quorum in the House. I will ring the bells.

Thank you. We need order. Order, please. There's a motion on the floor. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

---Carried

Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes the opening remarks of the Standing Committee on Finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Before I open the floor for general comments, I would like to ask the honourable Minister if he wishes to bring in a witness or witnesses.

HON. JOHN TODD:

If I may, Mr. Chairman, that would be appreciated.

Page 326

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Proceed, Mr. Minister. Thank you. For the record, Mr. Minister, would you kindly introduce the witness to the committee?

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my immediate right is the deputy minister of Economic Development, Mr. Roland Bailey.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The floor is now open for general comments. Do we have general comments from the committee? Member for Thebacha.

General Comments

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I don't have much to say on Economic Development. Basically, I just have to commend the Minister for turning the department around, and for addressing some of the issues that have needed to be addressed with regard to streamlining and cutting down the time frames for funding to be evaluated. I certainly have recognized that it is a quicker time frame.

However, I did want to ask a couple of questions about a comment he has made. First of all, I would like to ask about pages 6 to 8 regarding visitors' centres. Recognizing that there are visitors' centres in the eastern Arctic and in some parts of the western Arctic and Inuvik's visitor's centre has been completed, I would like to ask about whether consideration is being made for visitors' centres in the Fort Smith area.

In addition to that, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to get clarification about our natural resources; in particular, fur. It states: "The demand for fur products is making a slow come back," and he is proposing to: "...give the NWT Development Corporation a one-time contribution of \$450,000 towards offsetting the cost of developing high-end fur coats and the establishment of manufacturing facilities in the Kitikmeot and Inuvik regions. Subject to the commercial success of these new products, one further product centre would be established in the Baffin region and another in the Deh Cho in subsequent years. An estimated 30 manufacturing jobs will be created with this initiative." Does this basic initiative, which includes high-end fur

coats, also include anything with respect to tanneries? I would like an update on that area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, kindly, honourable Member for Thebacha. The honourable Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the issue of visitors' centres, I have felt -- if I can be candid, which I like to be -- that perhaps the return on the investment of those buildings wasn't as great as it should be. I gave some direction to the department that, clearly, before we invest in large visitors' centres which cost this government significant dollars -- these are not cheap buildings, if that's the right term -- we need to evaluate the traffic flows of tourists, et cetera. Of course, the Inuvik one is easily defensible, certainly since I became the Minister, because of the enormous flow of traffic in there.

There are no plans under way right now to build visitors' centres in Fort Smith. I think we do provide some support to some of the visitors' centres that are there; some fiscal support. But, there are no plans in the department's budget to build a visitors' centre in Fort Smith.

The other issue of fur; it has been indicated to us that there is a very slow increase in the fur sales. There certainly is a keen interest in Arctic fur in comparison with farm fur. We are trying to assist the NWT Development Corporation to get some manufacturing jobs done in some of the areas of the territories. We're looking right now at development of small tanneries. I believe that was the question. When you get into the larger-scale type of operation, we come under a great deal more environmental consideration and a whole set of policies that are different than if we do small, compact tanneries. We have an experimental one going on in Whale Cove, I believe, also one in Broughton Island. It certainly would be our intent and our long-term plan to tie in the development of the fur, the development of client products; it would be our intent to tie in the tannery as well so that it's all-encompassing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. The honourable Member for Thebacha.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman, just looking through some of the pages of the budget, if the Minister could obtain for me the amount of funding that is given to a visitors' centre. I guess the point I want to make is that the visitors' centre in my community of Fort Smith was built totally by the community with no government funding. The amount of funding they get now is very minimal. I think it's something to the tune of \$16,000 a year.

The concern I have is being in a community south of the lake where we have our season of tourists starting very early compared to normal spring season; I think that amount is inadequate. When you look at the amount of this budget with \$7.3 million in this particular activity, \$16,000 is very little. I think the community should be commended for that. At the same time, I also believe that if you're going to start looking at these lucrative visitors' centres and they're going to be underutilized, then maybe the government should be looking to spend their dollars in a more economical sense and repriorizing their funding accordingly.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to ask with respect to...I recognize that the Business Credit Corporation is at arm's length, it's a Crown agency. I would like to ask if there are any policies -- and I recognize that the Business Credit Corporation just came up a few years ago -- or procedures in place to ensure once you get your loan agreements or any type of credit contribution, that they're repaid accordingly? The problem that I have noticed is the continual monitoring is not on a consistent basis, where many of your loans may fall back, then maybe a year later there is all of a sudden a lot of pressure placed on these different businesses to repay these particular loans.

I get some criticism because of it being government loans, of many people not paying back. As a result, community members feel they may be forgotten

Page 327

about. Then later on, the department comes in with an extreme amount of pressure trying to collect these loans. Like any other bank, if you don't pay your loans, they take their measures and address them. But it seems like the measures taken by the department at times are inconsistent and cause concern in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I think it's fair to say that historically the department has been somewhat passive in the collection of its loans. I wouldn't deny that. As part of the reorganization thrust in bringing Mr. Bailey in, we did take a hard look at this. We increased the PYs from three to eight. We now do our own collections in-house, where before we left it to the Department of Finance. So there is a much more driven and a much more aggressive approach to collections. We are using external legal people where we have difficult collections, in an effort to try and collect more. So we are taking a much more aggressive position in trying to recover the money that's lent out, because ultimately if we lose it, it means there's less with which to reinvest for others who are perhaps making the effort to repay their loans.

What I would say to the honourable Member would be there's been an increase in people, there's been an increase in emphasis in collections, and I hope in the coming years that that will be reflected in the write-offs that we have to do. If you remember, last year I did bring forward an accumulation of 10-years' write-offs; somewhere in the region of about \$2.83 million.

We want to avoid that. Obviously, in any system you're going to have some write-offs. Some people, through a variety of circumstances, don't repay their loans. But the objective of this department now and the approach we're taking is an aggressive approach in the collection of our loans. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Just one final general comment. Would the Minister obtain for me the amount of funds that are expended by his department for the visitors' centre? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Yes, I'd be happy to provide that to the honourable Member. I want to say again that I think historically we've perhaps put money in the area of visitors' centres that hasn't been able to demonstrate the

return on investment. Clearly, we have direction from SCOL that these fiscal investments which are large will be based upon our ability to stand in this House and try to demonstrate the return on investment. Certainly, that's the approach we've taken in the last two years. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We are dealing with the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. This is the 1995-96 main estimates. We are dealing with the activity summary. Are there any more general comments? Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to congratulate the Minister on the work he and his staff are doing in the department. I've noticed, especially in my trips to the communities, the benefits of the initiatives that the Minister has done. He has taken steps and devolved responsibilities and authorities from headquarters to regions. He has also moved, physically, person years from headquarters to the regions. I hope that these initiatives are not being ignored by other Ministers. I think these are examples that should be followed by all departments in devolving responsibilities from headquarters to regions, and in turn to communities.

Early in his ministerial career, one of the Minister's initiatives was...I think he used the words "jobs, jobs, jobs." Try to create jobs in the smaller communities, in all our communities. I want to say that creation of jobs is not...Sure, there is a lack of jobs in small communities, but many larger communities -- mine, in particular -- still have a high unemployment rate. There's not a lot of industry going on and there's a need to assist and help in a community such as Inuvik. We have to create and help create and help assist the creation of small businesses. I think it's well-known that if you have 10 small businesses with two or three jobs each, that's 20 to 30 jobs. It think it's been proven that the small business grants and contributions really go a long way in generating these one or two-man businesses.

The investments, as the Minister mentioned, from the Business Development Corporation, a lot of the money has initially gone into replacing buildings. That's a high-cost effort and really is not generating many new jobs. I think the construction has generated some jobs but basically you've just housed the employees that were there before in new buildings

and new comforts and, hopefully, it might increase their productivity but I'm not sure if we've got any numbers on that.

One of the issues, I guess, and it's still something that has to be looked at -- the devolution of responsibilities and authorities for contributions and grants may have eased it a bit -- there's still in loans and, I think, in EDA a long waiting period for cheques. I know one time it used to be 90, 180 days, maybe longer. I think that's reduced now to maybe 30 to 45 days or whatever it is but small, \$20,000 or \$15,000 cheques shouldn't take that long. We have regional finance officers that can issue cheques in the region and something should be done there to help get the monies out quicker.

One area that I didn't see very much of in the Minister's statement was with regard to co-ops. Co-ops are still very valid and going concerns. They're still one of the largest employers of northerners, especially aboriginal people in the north. They are registered businesses and I think they should be given proper credit. They should be supported in whatever way possible.

I still, personally, have trouble with the concept of level I, level II, and level III communities. As I mentioned earlier, the problems of high unemployment, the problems of transportation, all the criteria used when generating economic...In running businesses, it doesn't matter where you are in the north because I think they're all the same to different degrees, and I think we should look at that concept of how we categorize communities. Help should be given where needed on meaningful and employment-generating initiatives. That's all I wanted to say. Mahsi.

Page 328

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I do appreciate the Member's kind words. The fundamental changes that we made to this department -- and, frankly, that's why I took the time to explain them -- are significant, and I'm pleased that we took the lead on this, ED&T. The proof, if you want, of whether we were successful or not is really going to be up to the regions and the regional superintendents who are now part of our

senior management team. They now have the fiscal authority -- and I've said this a number of times in the House -- for large chunks of money which, historically, lay in the hands of headquarters. They now develop the policy of the department through consultation with the communities which historically was developed by headquarters. They, in fact, as Mr. Koe alluded to about the EDA, have approval up to \$200,000 although the cheques still come out of Yellowknife and maybe that's a problem we have to look at.

So I'm really, not smug, but pleased about the fact that we've been able to make these changes, and while it's not perfect, I think it's gone a long way to making it a little better. I think the comment about the development of small business and the \$500,000 grant system has had a bit of an impact on a lot of people. Certainly, with respect to the efforts we are making with arts and crafts and the fact that we now have not only some of the cooperatives who have been involved for a long time, we now have the new Northwest Company which is a very aggressive company right now across the whole network; they are very active with us, in partnership, in trying to develop the arts and crafts field.

While we've a long way to go on some issues, we need to ensure that we get a faster turnaround with cheques. I think that's an argument we've had for years, whether we've been members of the House or the private sector. I think we're not quite there yet but we're getting there. With this House's indulgence and patience, I think in the next six or seven months we will reinforce what we've put into place. I'm optimistic that we'll be able to streamline things much more effectively. We'll be able to turn around the grants and the cheques more expeditiously. We've got policies now that will help the small business person that simply weren't there before, and I think, from what I've seen so far, we also streamlined the paper where there is far less bureaucratic red tape to get the kinds of monies that people are requesting. As I've said, we're not perfect by any means but we've come a long way in a short period of time, and if you'll bear with us for the next six or seven months, I'm optimistic you'll see even more change that reflects the advice that each and every one of you gave us. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. If we were smart and perfect, I don't think we'd be here. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Thank you. I think I'd be remiss if I didn't mention tourism and the initiatives and again, some of the initiatives that are going on in the Inuvik region are much-needed for our economy. Again, on behalf of the people in the region, I want to thank the department for doing what they're doing. There's still a lot of work to do because we're just developing and this was mentioned, that we just completed a visitors' centre which is much needed.

Inuvik being one of the emerging markets, there's been a lot of new entrepreneurs opening businesses and they need a lot of help and assistance. The department has a lot of that knowledge and background and I would appreciate if the Minister would continue putting some initiatives and efforts into the tourism area. It's one of the issues that I'm very interested in and have always been. The Dempster Highway is a tourism attraction in itself and I know, speaking to the Minister, wearing his Transportation Minister's hat, that some of the things that are going to happen with the Dempster, again, would be appreciated and would help generate business.

Tourism, as it is here in Yellowknife and I think happening up in the Delta now, is becoming more than a three-month business. We're looking at the shoulder seasons and spring time festivals, and I think any marketing assistance would be appreciated. I notice that there's been a reduction in the core funding for the industry but I hope that reduction is now going direct to the entrepreneurs themselves rather than just being cut and not being used in the industry. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you very much. I believe the honourable Minister wants to respond. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you. It does give me the opportunity to say a couple of things. I think, first of all, historically -- and maybe I'm repeating myself to the point of boredom -- a lot of what was going on in terms of policy and the direction of tourism development was driven at headquarters. I was fundamentally opposed to that. It is now driven by the superintendents who, theoretically, are supposed to discuss it with industry.

One of our initiatives right now -- which I hope will be met with support in this House -- is we are doing a review of what we call the Tourism Industry Association. I believe that the current Tourism

Industry Association no longer reflects well enough the different and diverse tourist interests across the territories. I said in my speech that there is clearly a need for an east/west split. And it's not just because of Nunavut; it is also because of the different conditions. In Mr. Koe's area, you can fly in on a jet or you can drive in a truck. In Mr. Ningark's area and Mr. Pudluk's area, you simply cannot do it. The conditions are different.

It is my hope that we will get support for two industry associations. Once we have support for these two industry associations, I'm committed to taking the marketing dollars that are currently spent under the direction of civil servants and putting it into the hands of those associations for them to determine how that money is spent. Let me assure you, those are significant dollars. We're not talking about \$40,000 to \$50,000; we are talking about \$1 million.

It would be my hope, if we can get general consensus that we move towards two associations, that we find some way to streamline the zones -- and I am ready for the question on zones and will answer the question when we get to it -- and their representative nature. It is my hope that we will have two associations. If we can get that, I'm prepared to transfer the fiscal dollars that are in marketing to those associations for them to determine where they go. Thank you.

Page 329

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. General comments. Sorry, Mr. Lewis, I didn't see you. Mr. Lewis and then Mr. Whitford. Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's no reference to it in the Minister's remarks, but several years ago there was a proposal to have a development corporation. The reason for that was we really did believe that this department would be doing economic development. The thought was there are lots of people who are natural entrepreneurs in the territories who would like to do things and who maybe need to know more about something or need to have some assistance.

When, about four or five years ago, we proposed some kind of development corporation, I was shocked when the government came forward with an act to create a corporation that would run businesses.

That's what the corporation was to do. I think anyone who listened to Mr. Martin's budget address this afternoon will know that nearly every government now is trying to get out of those things which are business-like. Business should look after business. What I had hoped would have happened some years ago when the initiative was taken to establish a development corporation was that there would have been a pool of money and a network put in place for real economic development to take place.

In other words, if you wanted to establish a brewery, you could get a brew master for six months to show you how to do it, or if you were going to go into meat processing, you could get somebody to help you set up a meat processing operation so that you wouldn't be buying things and trying to run them.

It is pretty clear that governments are not really good at running businesses; it is not what they do. It is clear from the comments that we heard this afternoon that that is certainly the way the federal government is going and that's the way many of the provinces are going. They are going to try to do the things that governments do and try to do them well, like providing services, but business-type operations will be run by business. All government can do is provide some kind of support and assistance. That's what I had hoped would have happened some years ago when the opportunity was there to help and assist in economic development.

That's history now. We've got it. But, I never saw that as the way to go. Many of us didn't, but it was the wish of the government to proceed in that direction because it was felt that there had to be some hands-on approaches to developing businesses and economic enterprises. Even though it was arm's length and run by a corporation, it was still really seen as being too close to government. That's the first comment I want to make: that government should get out of business and do government -- which they do well -- and we should try to find as many ways as we can to support and help business to develop. We should assume that governments should only have a supportive role and maybe help to create conditions, through all kinds of regimes, to help support business.

That brings me to my second point. When I responded to Mr. Pollard's budget the other day, I only had one criticism. First of all, it was said that the only hope we have is to create wealth; that we can't do it by trying to squeeze water out of one rock. We have to create wealth. To do that, we have to develop a private sector that will create jobs and so

on. Yet, in this budget, I see several references to increases in fees in Economic Development, and different schedules and tariffs. If you are going to depend on private enterprise to create the wealth that we all recognize we're going to need, then it seems to me to be non-productive to then tax them because they can afford to pay a little bit more by increasing fees, licences and everything else.

If the Minister is going to respond, I would like to get some kind of feeling about what these fees and licence increases are because I know there is interest out there to find out exactly what the government has in mind in terms of imposing increases as revenue initiatives. Those are the only two comments I have to make.

I really believe that government should look again at what economic development is, rather than taking the position that government is going to run things through whatever agency to bring business on stream and make it productive. To me, the best thing is to try to find out where there is initiative and find some way of helping those people achieve their visions, what they want to do, by giving them access to the kinds of expertise they need to get off the ground. When you go into business, you are taking a big risk, especially if you have a fair amount of personal capital involved. You want to have some degree of comfort in knowing that there is someone who knows what they're doing and can help you to set up, at least for a certain period of time, as you learn the new enterprise you had a vision about but about which you need to know a little bit more.

That's what I thought economic development was all about: following other people's visions -- not what the government sees as a vision, but what people really want to do -- and helping them to determine whether they are feasible or not. Those are my two comments, Mr. Chairman. I would appreciate some kind of response, at least on some of it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, if you put the NWT Development Corporation aside for the moment, in fact, we are doing exactly what Mr. Lewis is saying. We are now responding to initiatives from the private sector, whether they are small cottage industries with \$5,000 grants; whether it's the development of a

garage operation in Rankin Inlet; or, whether it's arts and crafts in Cape Dorset. I think we're doing that. We're also trying to bring in new money by working in partnership with some cooperatives, the Northwest Company and a number of others.

My belief is we're doing it, though perhaps not as effectively as Mr. Lewis would like. When you're viewed as the Department of Economic Development, I guess sometimes you're viewed as responsible for solving all the economic ills of the area. That's difficult to do when you have the size of a budget we have and the limited mandate we have. I'm not making excuses, I'm just saying that I think that's what we have been doing, certainly in the last two years. We've been trying to provide support and aftercare for small business.

Regarding the NWT Development Corporation, first of all, it is important to say that I inherited this as a Minister. However, I fundamentally believe in some of the principles of it, where we have to at this time,

Page 330

during the interim development of some of these industries, provide some form of subsidization. It's fine to make comparisons to southern Canada, but I just don't think you can. I don't think there's anywhere else in southern Canada, except for maybe in the Maritime provinces, where you have 40, 50 and in some cases 60 per cent unemployment. Where we have the fastest growing budget right now in this Legislature is social assistance, that we have to find a ways and means in which to try to make people feel better about their lives and try to create some jobs and we do that through the policy which allows us to subsidize it.

I view the NWT Development Corporation as only one small part of the overall economic strategy to make life a little better in Arctic communities. I don't see it as the be-all and end-all. Whether it's an operation in Fort Liard making baskets, the Jessie Onark Centre in Baker Lake, or the print centre in Pangnirtung, I think there's an interim requirement to get these businesses up and running, there's an overall objective to try to get them to break even and we would certainly be very, very pleased if they could make money. But I think it's incumbent upon us and this government, as has been the past practice and certainly the present practice, to recognize that at least on the front-end there is a need for some form of subsidization.

Let me tell you, the NWT board of directors and in particular the chairman, who is Bob Leonard from Arviat, a private-sector guy, clearly recognizes a need to try and reduce the subsidies and there is a great deal of effort going on to do that.

I think Mr. Lewis is correct; most people in the private sector don't view government in a particularly favourable light. I'm optimistic in the long term that some of these operations will eventually be able to break even, and optimistically, some of them may be able to make money and we can sell them off, et cetera. In fact, we did that last year. We sold off the logging operation out of Hay River. So it's not our economic salvation, but it's one part of making life a little better for people. That's my position. It still stays the same. I think there's a need for it at this time. Should it go on forever; I don't know at this stage of the game. I would hope that at some point there would be less requirement for the subsidies.

But I can tell you this, when I go to Gjoa Haven or I go to Arviat or Baker Lake or any of these communities that are bursting at the seams, and social assistance dollars are racing through the roof, we have to find a way in which to create some economic activity. It's not purely fiscal, it's also emotional. It's the fact that you feel better about yourself if you have a job.

I don't want to make a long spiel about this. I know in my own riding with the fish plant there, I've gone to the fish plant on a number of occasions where we've taken people who are unilingual, haven't got an opportunity, not a hope in heck of getting a job, and I can tell you the smiles on these people's faces as they're working, trying to make an effort. Is that money well spent? That's debatable. I think at this stage of the game it is.

I want to assure Mr. Lewis, that in the long term my belief is that we can hopefully limit the subsidies. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. General comments. Mr. Lewis. Mr. Minister.

---Recording Difficulties

HON. JOHN TODD:

...about the revenue component. I won't say it's insignificant, but the revenues that we're trying to generate, primarily social revenues, would be in campground user fees. The overall revenues that

we're generating are about \$87,000. The additional revenues that we want to try and get are through campground user fees. I would suggest that overall it won't have a significant impact on the private sector. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are you through for now, Mr. Minister?

HON. JOHN TODD:

(Microphone turned off)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have much to add. A lot of my thoughts have already been expressed by the other Members as they spoke earlier on. I have just a couple of comments: one on fisheries and one on the fur marketing and fur products and arts and crafts.

When we hear about fisheries in the territories, it appears that a lot of the thought that has gone into it deals with the char fishing industry and perhaps not so much on the freshwater fish on this side of the territories. Both products are commendable. They come from pretty clean water and all that and it's a component that I think should be used in the marketing strategy a little bit more.

But getting back to the point, freshwater fishing on this side of the lake has come under considerable stress because of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation and the way they are perceived to deal with fishermen. The Minister commented in his remarks that we will consult with the fishermen to determine what has to be next, once the government accepts or rejects the report of the committee on fisheries and oceans.

We have received delegation after delegation after delegation from the fishermen in Hay River. That's just Yellowknife MLAs, and I can just imagine what it was like with other MLAs. People were pleading with us to assist in getting a better market or better dollar for their product and being treated a little more fairly than in the past. So maybe it's a good thing if you're getting out of the freshwater fish marketing. If the Northwest Territories government takes over the

responsibilities, our hope is that it's not just another freshwater fish marketing board in NWT clothing; that they really do meet with the fishermen and discuss with them what they see best.

I know here in Yellowknife that we've been fortunate to have a little company move in and set up a small, family operation down on the lake. There seems to be a steady path beaten to their door by just Yellowknifers looking for their product. It was difficult to get fresh fish in this community that was from the Northwest Territories. Fishermen like to go out and catch their own, but there are many, many people who can't do that so there's a market here in the territories for that kind of a product if it becomes available. It's encouraging to see that the

Page 331

government will be looking at this from the fishermen's point of view, as well. They know where the market is as well as anybody else, and maybe some of the middle people be cut out of the system so that there will be more of a return to the producers than is there at the present time.

Mr. Chairman, the other area I was wanting to make some comments on, I don't want an answer from the Minister right at the moment. I just wanted to comment on the arts and crafts. I've raised this a number of times over the years that lots of good crafts are produced in the territories, but they're so predictable. You see carvings that look pretty much the same made by different people, lots of things that are pretty much the same.

I raise the issue sometimes of carvings being carved by skilled people to meet the needs of the market. Soapstone can be shaped into many different forms other than just the traditional seals and walrus and bears, et cetera. I've seen and purchased -- and Mr. Morin will attest to this -- when we were overseas we bought little figurines like a bust, the head and face of elders carved in soapstone. It's so life-like you could almost tap on them and say "Grandpa, talk to me." That can be done, I'm sure, by our carvers here. It's another market. It's would what people would want. But I've been told that's not the way we do things. We make our drums a certain way, we make our little rattles the same way. That's fine, but when you're trying to develop a product sometimes you want to go out and find out what people want, find out if there's a certain niche in the market for what the people want and are going to buy it.

So you say to the producers that this is what is selling, this is what is popular and this is what will put some dollars into your pockets. If you want to get in the market we'll help you, we'll attract the clientele, we'll find out where the market is and we can steer you to that direction, but this is what we need.

It was sad when Expo had to return a lot of the products that were sent over there because they may not have been marketable. But had there been some way of determining what people would be buying, cost-wise as well...When you go to a store here in the territories and you look for artwork, sometimes the most popular stuff that sells is stuff that's cast, replicas of something or other and they're made offshore. That's not really fair to the producers who do good work, but maybe that's what we need to start doing as well. We have two products, one that's the trinket trade and the other is for the more serious buyers. A lot of times people will come up to visit the north and they don't have an awful lot of money but they want to take something back with them so they take back something that's inexpensive. I've seen some very nice inexpensive fur products, things that we're made out of sealskin and stuff like that. They're small, they're inexpensive and they sell.

Those are the kinds of things I'm saying to the economic development people: look at those kinds of markets and encourage people to participate in those two levels. I don't think it's offending the arts and craft people who do good work, but the reality of it is that if there's any money to be made let's make it. You find other people doing the same.

I noticed in the comments that the Minister made, that for the longest time we've been saying the offshore businesses are probably the place to go; Japan, China, Pacific-rim business, because we do border them and there's a lot of money there. I guess I'm a little disappointed in the comment that for a number of years efforts to expand the marketplace concentrated offshore in Europe and Japan but the market doesn't indicate that that's where the market is, or your studies don't indicate this is where the market is. I'm sure you've done the analysis and all that, but I'm quite surprised because it seems the Japanese and the Chinese are looking for products in North America and here we're saying it's really not where the market is, the largest potential is in North America. I don't know how the study of this has come about, but it seems to have been a switch from the last couple of years from what I've been hearing and I'm a little surprised at that.

The other thing is with regard to natural resources and the issue of fur. It's good to see that there has been some movement made now in the seal industry. I was listening to a program yesterday, Cross Country Check-up, where they kind of allude to the fact that there's going to be some development in that area, some movement in that area to get away from the stigma that had occurred a few years ago with the baby seals and the decimation of the seal pelt market. If it ever gets moving a little bit, it will benefit the people of the Northwest Territories because, as a by-product of harvesting seals for food, the pelts will be of some value. There's a bit of market there and we have to be very careful how we do this because I think that the anti-seal hunt people are still out there and if we make a mistake somewhere along the way they would certainly be quick to jump on us and shut that down again.

The secondary industry dealing with fur -- the primary, of course, being the trapping and selling of raw fur -- being the processing of fur and making products out of it. Again here, the establishment of manufacturing facilities in the Kitikmeot and the Inuvik regions. By the sound of it, they're talking about fairly expensive items, coats and things like that. Recently, Mr. Chairman, I bought two fur hats, rat skin hats. Both of them were made in Winnipeg. There's no reason why those types of hats can't be made here in the Northwest Territories. We have duffle, we have good quality rat skins and lots of them, so there's no reason why these types of items need to be made in Manitoba.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Microphone turned off)

MR. WHITFORD:

Sorry? Lots of rats, rat backs? Pelts. Oh, thank you. I stand corrected.

These rat pelts need to be sent to Manitoba to be processed into hats when we could be marketing these hats here in the territories and make it such a common item, an inexpensive item, that people will be able to buy them and use them. We have to promote that a little bit more and maybe we can include that in that market.

I have one more item, Mr. Chairman, that I just wanted to comment on and that's parks and visitors' services. I know we have some nice parks along the roads that people can stop at and take a bit of a rest

at. We probably need more of those day-type parks where we can see the lake and stuff like that just using Highway 3, as an example. Highway 1 from the

Page 332

border to the junction of Highway 3 and Highway 3 to Yellowknife could use more places where people could stop and have a look at the Great Slave Lake. Right now, there's only one or two places along that whole route from Hay River to Yellowknife where you can actually see the lake and the thousands of islands and the beauty that it has. It's encouraging to see that we're going to do some more work in those areas south of Great Slave Lake. It says there Hidden Lake. Great, but I think that we have to promote Great Slave Lake a little bit more in this area, Mr. Chairman, because it is a very interesting area that they're going through here and, in my opinion anyway, it's very inexpensive to develop this kind of tourism attraction. I would caution the department to be careful about how much we're going to start charging people. I recognize that it's good to get some fees out of tourists, but I think they do contribute to the economy in other ways. If we start increasing the fees so much people may not choose to come, at least by wheeled vehicles, into the territories and then we will lose in the long run.

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make those comments on the Minister's presentation. I don't have a problem with the other areas he has touched on. The Minister and his department should be commended for the work they are doing in the areas I haven't dealt with and which haven't been dealt with by other Members. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you very much, Mr. Whitford. We are on general comments. Are there any further general comments?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Line by line.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Shall we go line by line?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Line By Line

Directorate

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Okay. We are on page 14-12, directorate, Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Operations and maintenance. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, before we get to page 14-12, I wonder if I might ask the Minister questions about the definitive objectives. If I may, I would like to start on page 14-7.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that we go back to 14-7, definitive objectives?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

Definitive Objectives

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this Minister is noted for brevity, except for today in his opening remarks and, typically, one who in the past has said nasty things about obfuscation and bureaucratize when it comes to speaking about things. Therefore, I just wonder if I can get the Minister to explain something that really stands out in the definitive objectives to me as being incomprehensible bureaucratize. Under the definitive objectives for corporate and technical services, what exactly does "Implement discrete programming for quality control in the arts and crafts industry," mean?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I don't know. I'll ask my deputy minister. I'll put him on the spot. Is it Friday? I don't know, Mr. Chairman,

just stand by and I'll check with my illustrious compadre, Mr. Bailey.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I understand, Mr. Chairman, that this is a typographical error. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I was wondering, since this department is going to have to come back as a result of the motion we passed earlier today, perhaps we could ask the Minister to provide us with some explanation of exactly what this means, at the time he appears before us to conclude the departmental budget.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, go ahead.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is nothing that would satisfy me more than to explain this situation and I would only be too happy when we come back to discuss the zone money that Mr. Dent has such a problem with. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you very much. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure that tourism zone funding was solely my problem. I would point out that it was a committee motion, passed by a majority of Members in this House, just for the record since the Minister seemed to make me the heavy in this one. I have one other question about the definitive objectives under tourism development and marketing. I know the Minister touched upon this in his opening comments and it reads: "Assess the need and feasibility for a major tourism destination awareness campaign for electronic and print media."

Just so the Minister understands, I fully support the evaluation of how we spend our money, where we

spend it and then making decisions based on that. What I would like to get is a bit more detail than what he has given us already on exactly how this is to be undertaken. For instance, have we hired an outside agency to conduct the evaluation? I would just like some details on how we're planning to pursue this.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

Page 333

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is something that I've driven myself. I think there is a need to evaluate, as Mr. Dent says, where we are spending our money. We've been unable, up until recently, to even determine what the return on investments is and we spend \$1 million a year on most of this. We are doing some of this internally. We are also getting some information from Tourism Canada. We alluded to that, I believe, in SCOF hearings where we said we were able to buy a whole bunch of information about where the traffic flows are, what the impact is of advertising, and what the impact is of TV, for a total of about \$5,000.

Really, there is no specific consultant hired to do this work. We are trying to do it with a combination of in-house work and externally seeking advice and details from organizations like Tourism Canada and Manitoba and Alberta tourism people. I think this has been badly needed for a long, long time. Hopefully, we'll be able to come forward with a fairly comprehensive position. I will get back to what I said earlier. In my opinion, this is a role for the private sector. This is for those who are most directly affected: the operators. My personal preference would be, before the next election, to see this money and responsibility in the hands of the zone associations.

That's really what I want to see. But, it is incumbent upon us to provide those associations, should it come about, with the best advice possible and that's what we're endeavouring to do at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the Minister mean before June or October when he says before the next election?

---Laughter

Just kidding. Seriously, Mr. Chairman, I think it's important that this evaluation take place. The question is, will the Minister share the results with all the MLAs so it is not just an internal document but so there will be broad understanding of the reasoning behind the decisions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, do you mean October 15th at midnight? Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Whatever the majority of the House prefers, Mr. Chairman.

---Laughter

I think I said when I first ran for office that I believed in the politics of inclusion. Hopefully, I've demonstrated that over the last two years with some of my initiatives. I want to assure the honourable Member that this particular expenditure and program will be discussed, not only with the MLAs but with the industry, itself. Now, as I said to you earlier, there is a review currently under way assessing the zone associations, their impact, and their ability to represent the industry. I think I've been pretty clear that my preference would be to see two associations: east and west.

That's part and parcel of where we're heading with this thing and where we're heading with our strategic plan for tourism development. It's all part of my desire, as Minister responsible and the deputy's desire to find a way to increase the private sector's involvement in the expenditure of these kinds of funds. At the end of the day, yes, we will discuss it, obviously, with the legislators. We will also discuss it with industry and, hopefully, running parallel with that, I'm optimistic we'll reach some consensus as to the development of two associations. Then, let me remind everybody, we're prepared to transfer the dollars involved in this into the hands of the associations. After all, it should be in the hands of those who are directly involved in tourism development. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. We are on page 14-12, directorate, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$3.327 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Policy And Planning

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page 14-13, policy and planning, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$1.288 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

There's a blurb in here that the human resource planning function is responsible for the department's affirmative action business education development program, AABED. Can the Minister relay to us the success or some report card on this program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Under policy and planning, fourth paragraph. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I don't have the statistics with me off the top of my head, but I'm prepared to provide them to the honourable Member. I want to tell you, though, what I've done. I've given clear instructions to the department on two things: if you hire south, it better be on my desk ahead of time because I want to know about it; and, when you're hiring north, preference is given to aboriginal people. So I'm prepared to provide the Member and this House with our success and failure as it relates to affirmative action, both from an aboriginal component and from affirmative action with respect to northerners.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, only part of your statement was recorded. Oh, we didn't miss much. That's what I'm told. Operations and maintenance, total O and M. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Page 334

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

It's my understanding that in this particular section the PYs are being increased from 2.0 to 3.6. Is the program expanding or is it just in general the human resource function?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Mr. Bailey has advised me that the human resource component really isn't increasing, it's mostly in the policy and planning area because there's a greater emphasis on trying to manage results and to try to evaluate more clearly the return on investment we're getting of our expenditures. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Policy and planning, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$1.288 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Business Credit Corporation

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Next page, Business Credit Corporation, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$897,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Parks And Visitors' Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Merci. Parks and visitors' services, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$3.85 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I doubt that the Minister will have this information at hand but since we noted before that he will be appearing before us again on this budget, I was wondering if we could request at that time a regional breakdown of expenditures under the task "assist tourism industry"?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

We could provide that information to my honourable colleague. I thought it was all wages and salaries, but maybe I'm wrong.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The information will be provided to you, Mr. Dent. Operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$3.85 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Koe. Mr. Koe, do you have any general questions to ask?

MR. KOE:

Just a quick question again. I recall several years ago, the Minister had indicated some concern with our expenditures on parks and the ability to provide cost-benefit analysis of what's the cost-benefit of having a park and having one visitor or 100 visitors go through. I was wondering if the Minister or the department has done anything in trying to provide that kind of analysis on the costs of developing these parks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I believe we presented to the Standing Committee on Finance, not the last time around but the time before, our first cut at how we would do a cost-benefit analysis. We admitted then that it wasn't a perfect document, that we would hope in the coming months we would be able to streamline it. There was a fairly aggressive effort on the part of the deputy minister and the staff, recognizing the direction given by the Standing Committee on Finance, so that we have to be able to justify these expenditures in parks and the development of parks. So there is some work under way, Mr. Chairman, and we are hoping to refine it as we move forward in the coming months so that it's more defensible. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$3.85 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Corporate And Technical Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 14-16, corporate and technical services, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$12.036 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

I like the use of words here in the narrative about six lines down, "This Division administers programs which promote co-operation and harmonization both inter and intradepartmentally." Can the Minister give us some rationale for this harmonization concept?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you. We have bonding. Basically, there is a requirement for cooperative efforts on the part of Economic Development and Tourism and Renewable Resources as it relates to forestry, as it relates to fur, as it relates to fish, et cetera. There is also a requirement particularly with the increase in the mining industry of some coordination between ED&T and EM&PR. So that's really what we mean there by harmonizing the relationship. It's more coordination and trying to get all of us on the same wavelength

Page 335

with respect to some of the major initiatives that are taking place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 14-16, corporate and technical services, operations and maintenance, \$12.036 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Economic Development Agreement

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 14-17, economic development agreement. Operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$8.443 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Finance And Administration

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Finance and administration, page 14-18. Operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$1.428 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The next page, 14-19, is deferred. Page 14-20, details of grants and contributions. Grants, \$420,000. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

What about the tourism development and marketing for \$2.989 million? Do we have consensus in the room that this has been delayed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe there was a motion. Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I wonder if I can get clarification on this budget. If I'm unable to provide the information prior to the end of March that the honourable Members have voted on, what do they suggest I do?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. This section is deferred. We'll move on. Who wants to speak to this? This is the initial motion on recommendation 7 made by the Standing Committee on Legislation. I will read it into the record so that the honourable Minister will know where we stand: "The committee recommends that the tourism development and marketing activity in the estimates of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism not be considered until the Minister has tabled an evaluation of the effectiveness of grants to tourism zone associations, and until this evaluation has been debated in the House." This is where we stand.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you very much for the clarification, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 14-20, details of grants and contributions. Grants, \$420,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

On page 14-22, contributions, \$14.835 million. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

I believe the item contributions have to be deferred because the \$416,000 for industry association core funding ties in with the task tourism development and marketing. Therefore, we cannot deal with it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Is that agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

The time being 5:56 pm, I will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 21, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 21: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and Committee Report 4-12(7) and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. Is there a seconder to the motion? Mr. Koe. 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 22, third reading of bills. Item 23, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be meetings tomorrow at 9:00 am of the Caucus, at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus and at 12:00 pm of the Nunavut Caucus.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, February 28, 1995:

1. Prayer
 2. Ministers' Statements
 3. Members' Statements
 4. Returns to Oral Questions
 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
- Page 336
6. Oral Questions
 7. Written Questions
 8. Returns to Written Questions
 9. Replies to Opening Address
 10. Replies to Budget Address
 11. Petitions
 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
 13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

- 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

- Committee Report 4-12(7), Report on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates

21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 28, 1995 at 1:30 pm.

---ADJOURNMENT

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1995