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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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Speaker: The Hon. Samuel Gargan

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MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Allooloo, Mr. Antoine, Hon. Silas Arngna'naaq, Hon. Samuel Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Koe, Mr. Lewis, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, Ms. Mike, Hon. Don Morin, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Hon. Kelvin Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Patterson, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Mr. Whitford

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Good afternoon. Before we begin, I would like to recognize some students from Fort Providence. Their teacher is Gordon Walters. They are grade 10 students who came in yesterday and are going back this afternoon some time. I told them to take a minute to sit in the gallery so they could be recognized.

---Applause

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

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 32-12(7): Slave Geological Province Regional Study

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, the first workshop for the Slave geological province regional study occurred on February 28th and March 1st and 2nd. This workshop brought together representatives from aboriginal groups, industry, environmental groups and government. The basic objective of the study is to develop an environmental and socio-economic information base for the area that geologists refer to as the Slave geological province.

Prior to this workshop, there were discussions with these groups on a bilateral basis. This workshop was the first opportunity for all groups to express their vision, interests and concerns surrounding the sustainable development of the Slave geological province. The main purpose of the workshop was to build a partnership among all parties, as the Slave geological province regional study must reflect the

priorities of all partners so that mineral development can proceed responsibly.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that after three days of hard work and considerable discussion by 50 to 60 participants, there was consensus on a course of action for the next stages of the study. A working group has been established consisting of a representative from Nunavut, Treaty 8, Treaty 11, Metis Nation, NWT Chamber of Mines, DIAND, GNWT, the guiding and outfitting industry and the environmental organizations. This working group will be responsible for refining the terms of reference for the study and organizing future planning meetings.

Mr. Speaker, it was also decided that the GNWT and DIAND would lead in bringing together all existing information, in order that the study address information gaps and not duplicate work that has already been done. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased with the progress that was made at this first workshop. There has been a clear indication that all stakeholders are willing to work together in designing an environmental and socio-economic study for the Slave geological province.

Mr. Speaker, this workshop was the first time all stakeholders, including Dene elders and political leaders, major mining companies, small industry, Inuit representatives, Metis, our government, the federal government and environmental organizations have met around a table to work toward a consensus. I look forward to many more successful meetings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On New Rent Scale

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the staff housing strategy was implemented three years ago, the government was very careful to follow its own law. This law requires that individuals receive formal notice of rent change three months before the new rent takes effect. This law is in place for good reasons. With the high cost of living in the north, many

northerners don't have a great deal of disposable income.

The three months' notice gives people a chance to plan for expenses and figure out where the money will come from for rent. It also gives people time to look for alternative accommodation if they just won't be able to pay for the rent. This can mean finding a new place to live or making arrangements to share housing.

Mr. Speaker, the government gave this consideration of notice to its staff when it increased staff housing rents and even then, people had difficulties. It is amazing to the ordinary Members that the government does not feel it must show the same consideration to people in public housing units. We find it hard to accept that the Minister of Housing can apply something different for public housing tenants than the law which applies to everyone else. The issue is not whether the law allows the

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Minister to do this, but whether it is acceptable to apply a different standard for public housing tenants.

Over the past few days, the ordinary Members have been trying to get detailed information from the Minister of Housing regarding the notice of April 1st for rent changes. Yesterday, in his statement, the Minister indicated that every tenant will be individually informed about the new rent scale. Given that the rent changes are now less than a month away, this means, Mr. Speaker, there are still many tenants who are confused and don't know what this really means for them.

Mr. Speaker, this is of grave concern to Members. Once again, the corporation shows that it has different rules than everyone else. Just as it remains a corporation without the need of a board, it can implement rent changes in a way which is totally unacceptable for other NWT residents. Members will be pursuing this issue further during question period. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Visit To Inuvik

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, I was in Inuvik for a constituency visit. Somebody mentioned that I was in the real western Arctic. The sun was shining and it was fairly warm, compared to weather in Yellowknife.

There were lots of activities going on in Inuvik during the weekend. There was a Royal Canadian Legion rally. All the NWT branches were represented there and they were having their meetings at the legion. The Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association were gathering for their annual general meeting. There were a lot of young athletes in town who were participating in the Inuvik regional winter games training and development camps. The dart league was having a casino; there were the usual bingos; the government had a curling funspiel; there was old timers' hockey in Aklavik; and, even on Saturday night, there was a business meeting of tourism people led by a person from Calgary starting a study on tourism organizations. For a Saturday night, they had over 20 people at the meeting.

I also had lots of opportunities to meet and talk with people. There were a lot of issues and concerns brought up by people, a lot of them revolve around government, social and health issues, education issues and housing issues. My colleagues have been raising issues about the new rent scale and the lack of information. It's no different with some tenants up there, that they're not getting complete information on the proposals.

I've also observed that there's a different air in Inuvik. The businesses seem to be thriving, they're active, there's a period of stabilization and some growth. So all these are real good signs. If we can keep the winter roads open as late as possible this year, it will continue to help the economy of Inuvik.

I just appreciate this chance to talk about my brief visit to my community and note the activities going on there. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Development Of Aboriginal Businesses In Small Communities

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the past several months, a number of interesting business developments have occurred in Fort Resolution. The Deninu K'ue Development Corporation, which is a commercial arm of the local First Nations, has four new projects under way. The largest deals with manufacturing of fibreglass products. The Deninu K'ue First Nation was the successful proponent of a public proposal call for bathtubs and tub-surrounds. They won that and are now building bathtubs and tub-surrounds. They have already produced the tubs and the tub-surrounds and have delivered them to the Housing Corporation. My understanding is that they are very good quality and the people doing the work are very proud of their accomplishments. It means two full-time jobs to Fort Resolution, as well as six training positions.

There is also a training program being carried out to try to teach those people to work with fibreglass. There are also three other small projects in progress as a result of the corporation's efforts to get money from the federal government. They developed what they call a "SMART program," which is an abbreviation for sensible management and real training. Their approach to that was to actually develop businesses and get them up and running in Fort Resolution.

There were three project groups. The first was made up of Paul Boucher and Monica Klugie. What they came up with was fashion, and design of fashion wear. They designed T-shirts and sweatshirts. All Members have a T-shirt. It says "Eschia" -- take it easy. Those T-shirts and sweatshirts are selling as fast as they can come off the press.

The other item they came up with is dear to the young crowd, they're bluejeans and they're supposed to be fashion bluejeans. They're called "Bare-Butt" bluejeans. They have the polar bear which is the traditional emblem of the Northwest Territories. These will be embroidered on the back with a hole in the centre so shorts can show through. That's how young people like to wear their pants nowadays, I understand. Those are coming into production and will be on the market fairly soon.

The second project group was made up of Annie

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Balsillie, Marilyn Martin and Irvin Norn. As Members know...

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin, your time is up.

HON. DON MORIN:

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my Member's statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Tu Nedhe is requesting unanimous consent. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Morin, conclude your statement.

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Members. The second project group is made up of Annie Balsillie, Marilyn Martin and Irvin Norn. They took on the task of finding new markets for traditional handicrafts and traditional native crafts which people have tried to market in many different ways. What they did is designed the product and geared their product to a fairly narrow market, and that is to people who are in the United States that belong to the Black Powder Association. They have a magazine called "The Muzzel Blast," and there are over 30,000 readers to this magazine. So they've marketed directly to them. What they sell are authentic items from the year 1700, such as gun cases, jackets, gloves and complete outfits traditionally tanned. They also have orders in already. They've also designed their own marketing material that is in The Muzzel Blast magazine in the United States. So that looks like it's going to take off and pay dividends to this group.

The key thing that Members have to remember is that this was all brought about...and for each one of these projects they spent \$3,000, for a total of \$9,000. They managed to achieve these things with very limited resources. So it does show that our aboriginal people in our small communities can achieve things with the help of other people. They should be commended on their efforts and their achievement. I would also like to thank Norm Zigarlick and Vicki Blahun for their efforts and their help in developing this. I ask Members to wear their T-shirts and support small aboriginal businesses in the small communities. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Morin. Mr. Morin, you might want to share with the Members later on, who was the winner of the game.

HON. DON MORIN:

(Microphone turned off)

MR. SPEAKER:

Oh, you did. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement On Support To Canadian Red Cross

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the Canadian Red Cross Society in its important life-supporting efforts in supplying blood to people. The Canadian Red Cross Society has launched an education campaign designed to rebuild public confidence in the blood supply. Mr. Speaker, the Canadian blood supply is considered one of the safest in the world and this fact was confirmed by an international panel of experts commissioned by the Krever inquiry to study the safety of the blood supply.

This can be found in the interim report released by the commission of inquiry into the blood system of Canada, which was released recently. However, Mr. Speaker, despite the endorsement of experts, confidence of Canadians in their own blood supply has been declining. Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Red Cross Society has been an agent of blood supply for many years and has always been a world leader in its efforts to be a critical source of blood supply. Insistence on the adherence to the policy of strengthening blood operations and strict adherence to policy of safety enhancement for those operations has always been the society's underlying philosophy and mandate.

Mr. Speaker, the Red Cross's capacity to inform the public of their efforts to rebuild Canadian confidence is limited and requires support. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge that the honourable Members of this House to support the Canadian Red Cross in its efforts to rebuild public confidence in its blood supply systems operation. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Implementation Of New Rent Scale

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I've been away from the House for a couple of days so I'm going to beg your indulgence and that of Members to speak a little longer than ordinary.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, having just returned from my constituency, I was able to get a report from the Iqaluit housing authority on the new rent scale. I was shocked to learn that of a total of 402 tenants, between 200 and 250 have still not come in to report their household income and get their new rent assessment for April 1, 1995. This is far from the 95 per cent of households referred to by the Minister of Housing yesterday. Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious problem, because if a tenant does not come in to get their new rent calculated, whether their rent goes up or even down, the rent for April 1st will suddenly become the maximum rent.

Mr. Speaker, I am satisfied that the Iqaluit housing authority has made every effort to inform their tenants of these new developments. Notices have been delivered to the households, ads have gone in the newspaper and the chairman has gone on the radio to explain the new rent scale. The authority staff have even made themselves available on Saturday afternoons to go over the new rents with tenants.

I see this as a big problem, Mr. Speaker, because people who get assessed the full maximum rent -- which in Iqaluit is \$2,220 for a four bedroom house -- will not pay, will go into arrears and may get evicted. How did this serious state of affairs

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come about, where more than half of the tenants of social housing in Iqaluit are not coming in to even find out what their new rent is. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the problem arises from the rent scale change notice devised by the Housing Corporation to try to let tenants know what is going on. I will table a copy of this notice later today.

In two places, at the beginning of the notice and at the end, the notice informs each tenant that the maximum

rent will be revised substantially upward, for example, to \$2,560 for a five bedroom home. Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents who have been given this sophisticated form have told me that they believe this is a notification of their new rent. They are so shocked by the new maximum unit rent that they do not go on to read, in the notice, that the actual new rent that they will be charged will depend on their household income. In short, the rent scale change notice does not inform the tenants of their new rent. It only informs them of their new maximum rent ceiling and tells them about a process where they can come to the local office to find out what their actual new rent really will be.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue and I would request unanimous consent to complete my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Iqaluit is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many of the people who haven't gone in to the local office are, in fact, low-income people whose rents might go down or at least stay the same. However, they are upset and angry and are very frightened to go into the Iqaluit housing authority office, it seems. Another indication of their anxiety is that rent payments have also dropped this past month by 30 per cent over the usual levels. The Iqaluit housing authority is over \$20,000 short of rental income this February, compared to last year.

Some people have apparently given up paying any rent at all. This is a big problem. Unless there is some flexibility shown, especially for these low-income earners, I fear we will end up with many lower income people in Iqaluit having sizable rental arrears because they were afraid to go into the local housing office to find out about their new rent. They got so spooked by notice of the new maximum rent payable on their unit, that they are afraid to go anywhere near the housing authority office.

When I see the obvious confusion and fear in many of my constituents -- many of whom approached me over the weekend -- I wonder about the fairness of the process the NWT Housing Corporation has followed. First of all, the Minister says that the corporation

needs to give only one month's notice because these units, unlike government staff housing, he says, are subsidized rental units. So, the corporation, probably the largest landlord in the Northwest Territories, is therefore exempt from the requirement faced by all other landlords in the NWT to give three months notice of a rental increase.

Secondly, is this really notice of a rent increase? Not the way I see it. The notice my constituents received only says that the maximum you may pay for your unit is increased. For people who are expecting to find out what their new rent will be, all they are told is that there will be a new process, taking into account all the income from a household, which will let them know what their new rents will be.

Mr. Speaker, the third big problem emerging is that elders don't like the rent scale. Many of them are feeling that by not being asked to pay any rent, their contribution to the household is not valued. The result is that working children in the family will have to pay even more than if the elders were still paying rent. Elders have traditionally made very good efforts to pay their rent. Now they are being spared from having to pay any rent but they still feel some obligation to get their working children to pay, even though the elder will be forgiven from making any rent payments.

Some children in some families are now refusing to be assessed and refusing to pay the new rents. Tensions are increasing in these families as a result. This family upheaval is exactly what had been predicted and feared in community consultations in the Baffin this past summer.

The last problem I see is that it has still not been worked out how the new tenant agreements will be set up. Whose name will be on the lease? I understand each person will be told what portion of the rent is theirs to pay. But if one person in the household pays, but another doesn't, who will be evicted? Is the good tenant in a family evicted, along with the one not paying rent? Is the elder who is not required to pay rent evicted along with the rest of the family if his or her children or grandchildren refuse to pay rent?

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Minister of Housing can provide clear solutions to these problems soon. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Lack Of Returns Provided To Questions

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recognizing the Premier is out of the House today and there has been no notice given to Members as to who is acting Premier, I want to bring up an issue, particularly with regard to this government's inability to address questions posed by Members.

Mr. Speaker, since we started on February 15th, I have been trying to ask this government questions with regard to the tanker base issue. Unfortunately, the vast majority of my oral questions have been taken as notice.

As of today, Mr. Speaker, 21 oral questions were taken as notice, and as of today I still have 15 outstanding oral questions. I further recognize, Mr. Speaker, that I have five written questions still outstanding. But in reality, there are 10 questions posed under written questions to be answered.

Mr. Speaker, we are in session to address the budget and I recognize that. But this session also gives Members the ability to address areas of concern in our constituency and to ask the

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government questions on decisions they've made. But it seems, Mr. Speaker, that the Cabinet, particularly our Premier, cannot and is not answering my questions.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, every Minister of this government voted to have a two-week spring break. I find that somewhat shameful, particularly when I recognize that the attitude in replying to Members' oral questions is somewhat lax. Luckily, Mr. Speaker, we have rules for a time frame for written questions to be answered, but we don't have time frames for oral questions to be answered. So I would like to take the time to urge this government to reply to our oral questions, particularly before considering a spring break. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Recycling

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, in February of 1991, I tried to raise awareness about the environmental effect that littering has on the Northwest Territories. Yesterday, I was quite surprised, along with my colleagues, to hear the Minister, in response to a question that was asked about the recycling of aluminum cans, say it was not an environmental issue but more of a littering issue. I think those are one and the same.

After quite some time, Mr. Speaker, back in 1991, I managed to persuade the government to study the issue of a surcharge on glass bottles. It seemed easier to get consensus on the litter part of the issue, but I still think we have a problem with recycling. Recycling generates some returns. Clearing litter and simply storing it somewhere is not what we should be satisfied with. We should be more intent on effectively and efficiently recycling aluminum, particularly aluminum cans. I can't recall the numbers of cans that were mentioned, but it's somewhere in the neighbourhood of 100,000 per year and then some. Those are the only ones we know of. We should be recycling these things and sending them back to the businesses that manufacture the cans or else reuse the aluminum for other purposes.

In April of 1991, I urged local business people to consider what was then a growing North American trend towards the recycling industry. At the time, we were spending about \$2 billion to begin the recycling plants.

Mr. Speaker, I doubt that the 200 million tonnes of North American refuse that was being disposed of back in 1991 has been reduced satisfactorily since then. I think it has grown even more, certainly here in the territories with the transportation systems we have now. We're getting in more bottles and more cans. As a matter of fact, they're using more aluminum cans now than pop bottles. At the time I had suggested that if there were a deposit on the can at purchase, there would be some incentive for children or a business to collect these cans and return them for a refund, thus getting them off the street.

The system of getting them out of the territories, Mr. Speaker, is really easy. Yesterday I was surprised to

hear the Minister say that the only way out is to fly them out. That's not true. I don't think there's a community in the territories that isn't accessible either by road or by water. A lot of times we have containers coming in -- that's what they use to ship stuff now, is these big containers -- that stay in the community all winter and they're emptied of their goods. Those could be used to return aluminum to southern Canada on either the sealift, the return barges or the return trucks.

So there's an answer to a question which was asked yesterday and no solution was provided by this government towards recycling. I think it's well past the time, Mr. Speaker, that this government take some prompt, effective measures to rectify the situation of recycling. I'll have some questions in question period for the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Patterson.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what's wrong, but Ben MacDonald is not here today.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER:

So, Mr. Patterson, you don't recognize him then. Point of order, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Point Of Order

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Mr. Speaker, I noticed that you skipped over item 4, returns to oral questions.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq, you're correct. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 99-12(7): Report On Fire Management And Fire Suppression

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address one of the Member's statements today and return an oral question asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on February 17th on the report...

---Applause

...on fire management and fire suppression.

In response to direction from the Financial Management Board, the Department of Renewable Resources issued a request for proposals in December 1992 for a comprehensive review of the forest fire management program and policy. The main questions to be asked were:

- is the forest fire management policy appropriate;

- is the current fire suppression methodology appropriate and affordable;

- is economic leakage to the south minimized;

- are there ways to achieve a cost-savings of \$1,000,000;

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- are there ways to increase the proportion of local labour versus mechanized equipment; and,

- are there ways to reduce the use of large air tankers.

The contract was issued to Peat Marwick Stevenson and Kellogg. The total cost of the review was \$392,674.69.

As requested, copies of the terms of reference and the 14 volumes of the final report have been provided to the honourable Member for Thebacha. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 230-12(7): Investigation Of Fort Smith UNW Regional Vice-President

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on March 3, 1995. It concerns the investigation of UNW regional vice-president for Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, concerns regarding the educational credentials of Mr. Keith Dowling, the UNW regional vice-president, Fort Smith, were brought to the attention of GNWT officials in July 1994. The matter was investigated. However, prior to completion of the investigation process, Mr. Dowling terminated his employment by resigning on November 21, 1994.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 253-12(7): Status Of NWT Housing Corporation

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the honourable Minister responsible for Housing. In government, there are two major types of structures. There are departments which report to the Minister, through the deputy Minister and corporations which report to boards through a president. We seem to have a very unusual structure here in the NWT, Mr. Speaker. The Housing Corporation has a president but reports to the Minister. It participates fully, like a department, in budget preparation but does not have to reveal budget details such as PYs to this House. My question to the honourable Minister is, can the Minister of Housing tell us whether the Housing Corporation is, in fact, a corporation or a department. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 253-12(7): Status Of NWT Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a corporation.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 253-12(7): Status Of NWT Housing Corporation

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. Without a board, what factor makes the corporation a corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 253-12(7): Status Of NWT Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We dissolved the NWT Housing Corporation board of directors back in 1992, I believe. And, with full concurrence of this House we amended the legislation to do that. That's how we can still operate as a corporation without a board. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 253-12(7): Status Of NWT Housing Corporation

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. Since the Minister indicates that this is, in fact, a corporation, there should be a board that is responsible for its actions. When will the government be reinstating a board to provide direction to the corporation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 253-12(7): Status Of NWT Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will not be reinstating the board for the Housing Corporation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 254-12(7): GNWT Policy On General Contractors Paying Subcontractors

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, concerns have been expressed to me about the roles and responsibilities of general contractors and subcontractors. Situations arise where sometimes general contractors do not pay all their subcontractors for work done on Government of the Northwest Territories contracts. I have a question for the Minister of Government Services and Public Works. What is the current government policy regarding general contractors paying subcontractors?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

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Return To Question 254-12(7): GNWT Policy On General Contractors Paying Subcontractors

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, we withhold funds from the general contractor. If, within 120 days after completion of a subcontractors job he or she, or that company, advises us that they haven't been paid by the general contractor, we make a payment to the them or encourage the general contractor to pay them out.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 254-12(7): GNWT Policy On General Contractors Paying Subcontractors

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. After a job is done and final inspections have been made -- and before the Minister mentioned the final holdbacks are paid -- I understand there is a requirement for a general contractor to sign an affidavit or statutory declaration which states that all subcontracts, all employees and all debts have been paid off. I would like confirmation from the Minister whether or not this is true.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 254-12(7): GNWT Policy On General Contractors Paying Subcontractors

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

That is correct, Mr. Speaker. The statutory declaration indicates to us that the general contractor has met all of his or her obligations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 254-12(7): GNWT Policy On General Contractors Paying Subcontractors

MR. KOE:

Mahsi. Thanks for confirming that. It is true then that the contractor has to sign a statutory declaration. What happens if a contractor signs a statutory declaration and subsequently you find that a certain subcontractor has not been paid?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 254-12(7): GNWT Policy On General Contractors Paying Subcontractors

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Well, number one, we'd be most upset, Mr. Speaker. We would investigate the matter and see if we can resolve the issue between the contractor, the subcontractor and ourselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 254-12(7): GNWT Policy On General Contractors Paying Subcontractors

MR. KOE:

For the record then, if a statutory declaration or affidavit has been falsely signed, what recourse has this government to ensure that all subcontractors are paid for work performed or materials supplied on a government contract?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

That's a legal question, Mr. Speaker. I'll take it as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, last year this House was informed of the millions of dollars of cuts to social housing and the Minister indicated that these cuts would mean a reduction in the delivery of housing. However, they did come in with a supp. Can the Minister advise whether or not there was any reduction in the number of units delivered as a result of the large cuts to last year's budget. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are delivering approximately 435 units this year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. With the permanent reduction in the funding from the federal government for social housing, there is a reduced need for staff to run these programs. As well, all government departments have been asked to cut costs. How many fewer person years were in the Housing Corporation in 1994-95 than in the previous years, taking into consideration that there have been phenomenal funding cuts to the Housing Corporation's budget? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Taking into consideration that the Housing Corporation has undergone many changes: we've changed programs; the way we deliver programs; we've changed the rent scale, which has taken a lot of work, there are new home ownership programs; there has been reorganization; and we are still delivering the same amount of units that we have delivered previous to the cuts, no there has not been a reduction in PYs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It appears that there is no control on spending or any attempt to reduce

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PYs. Most departments have made cuts at headquarters to help the government get a better control on spending. What was the approximate reduction on operations and maintenance expenditures of the Housing Corporation over the past couple of years? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me assure the Member that there is control on spending in the Housing Corporation. The Housing Corporation has done the same amount of work, if not more, with a smaller amount of money. We've had to redesign all the programs and implement them. We've gone through many changes. We are doing that, and we are doing that within the existing budgets we have had. We

have come forward to this House with a \$17 million supp for capital projects, and that's houses that are going to be delivered into the communities, houses that are desperately needed. Also, the Members must realize that for every dollar you cut from the Housing Corporation, you're giving 75 cents back to the feds. Ultimately, you're cutting 25 cents of NWT money. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Housing Corporation isn't able to cut their expenditures with regard to PYs and all other departments have, can the Minister justify the existing number of PYs the Housing Corporation has now? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 255-12(7): Reduction Of Housing Units Due To Budget Cuts

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we can justify it and we will do that when we present our budget in this House. All the PYs are there and all that information will be available to the Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Patterson.

Question 256-12(7): Contents Of Notices Re Changes To Rent Scale

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister said that notices of "change to rent have been either hand-delivered or sent by double-registered mail to tenants" and he went on to say that over 95 per cent of the public housing tenants had got these notices. When most people get a notice of change of rent, they expect to know how much their new rent will be, how much it's going up or down.

When public housing tenants got their notice recently, was their new rent a part of that notice? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 256-12(7): Contents Of Notices Re Changes To Rent Scale

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Patterson was good enough to send me this rent scale change that his constituents have received. My understanding from this is that tenants were informed of the maximum rent they could pay for the unit they're in. They have been directed to go into their local housing authorities and sit down with the local housing authorities to work out what their rent would be and the process that would take. It's also my understanding that tenants were given packages. For example, in North Slave, they received their package on January 16th; South Slave, January 30th; western Arctic, January 19th; Baffin, January 23rd and 24th; Keewatin, January 29th and 30th; and, Kitikmeot, January 31st and February 1st. In that package, there is a lot of information. We have 7,000 information packages printed in English and 2,900 printed in Inuktitut to keep people informed. They were given those packages, and in the package was information on the new scale including examples and answers to some of the basic questions tenants may raise, as well as information on the corporation's new home ownership programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 256-12(7): Contents Of Notices Re Changes To Rent Scale

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Minister has told me tenants were informed of their maximum rent, the most they might pay. He has told me they were informed of the home ownership programs. They were informed of the complicated process of calculating the rents. But he didn't inform me that the tenants were told about how much their rent in their house will go up or down each month. So I would like to ask the Minister, is it fair to Members of this House and the public to say that notices of changes to rent

have been hand-delivered to 95 per cent of the households when, in fact, those notices of change of rent, although they give lots of information about the process to change the rent, don't tell a tenant how much their rent is going to go up or down? I would like to ask the Minister, is it fair to say that tenants have gotten notices of change of rent when none of them, unless they go in, have actually been told their rent in each household is going to go up or down? Is that fair? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 256-12(7): Contents Of Notices Re Changes To Rent Scale

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tenants have received notice of what their maximum rent will be. This is not a new story, this rent scale has been in the works for at least two years. It has gone through broad community consultation, regional consultation, it's been on the air, it's been in the newspapers, it's been on posters in the communities and tenants have gotten their package. They're encouraged to go into their local housing authority and sit down and discuss their incomes with the housing authorities who have all been trained to deal with it now and work out what their rent will be. Every tenant is different. Whether they're working at the time or not

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working, that reflects on their rent. Hopefully, people will go into their housing authorities and sit down with their own people and discuss what their rent will be. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 256-12(7): Contents Of Notices Re Changes To Rent Scale

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, in my riding over half of the tenants have not gone in three days before the Minister's deadline, before the boom is lowered and they're assessed the maximum rent on their unit for not going into their local housing authority and verifying their

income. I would like to ask the Minister, rather than telling the House about how many people have got these notices about the process and about the maximum, can he tell this House how many people have actually now got notice of the rent change for their household? What percentage of the households in the Northwest Territories have been given the detail of how much their rent is going to go up or down for their house? That's the real question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 256-12(7): Contents Of Notices Re Changes To Rent Scale

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll go back to the Housing Corporation and get them to get in contact with every local housing authority to get the numbers of actual people who have gone in.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Ms. Mike.

Question 257-12(7): Translation Of Rent Scale Information Into Official Languages

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Housing. As the Minister knows, many of our public housing tenants have difficulty with English, which is their second language. Is the information on the rent changes being translated into all official languages or just Inuktitut?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 257-12(7): Translation Of Rent Scale Information Into Official Languages

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The information is translated only into Inuktitut and English. It's in both languages. But in all the western Arctic communities, as well as in the eastern Arctic communities, this change in the rent scale has been explained to people by their own people who speak their own language. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 257-12(7): Translation Of Rent Scale Information Into Official Languages

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This rent scale has been talked about for more than two years. Don't you think that it is reasonable to expect to have this information translated into other official languages, other than just Inuktitut?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 257-12(7): Translation Of Rent Scale Information Into Official Languages

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, if people request that this rent scale be translated into, for example, Cree, Chipewyan, Dogrib, Gwich'in, North Slavey, South Slavey -- and I understand, from the Official Languages Act that we passed in this Legislative Assembly -- those people have a right to request that and then it would be translated; it has to be translated. However, we haven't had that request. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions, supplementary. Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 257-12(7): Translation Of Rent Scale Information Into Official Languages

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm surprised at the Minister's response because with this type of initiative or implementation of rental increases to the public, you would think that the government would have the initiative on their own, without being asked, to have the material that is being passed on to the tenants translated to all the languages. How can the Minister justify that he has to wait for somebody to come up to him and say they would like to have this translated? Is that reasonable?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 257-12(7): Translation Of Rent Scale Information Into Official Languages

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very costly for translation to all languages and we do not have the money within our budget for translation. If the Member is aware of some other group amongst the western Arctic aboriginal people that request or need it translated into their language, or any other documents this government produces -- for example, the budget, anything, these are all important documents -- if she's aware of that, then please let me know and I could try to fix that, especially when it comes to the rent scale. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Allooloo.

Question 258-12(7): Status Of Financial Assistance For GLO Wages

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the government with regard to a decision to downgrade GLO positions in my constituency from full-time to half-time. Earlier this session, the Premier announced that she would work with the other departments to see whether ways could be found to continue to support these valuable Inuit employees in the isolated communities by getting other departments who are using the GLO services to help pay for their wages. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the government could tell me what the status is of the government's efforts to get other departments to assist with GLO wages. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 258-12(7): Status Of Financial Assistance For GLO Wages

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I know the Premier has been working on this particular issue, and I believe that she's going to report to the House on the issue when her budget

comes before committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 258-12(7): Status Of Financial Assistance For GLO Wages

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you. I know the information came to us that the GLOs were given an alternative, either to take half-time pay or resign from the government if they do not sign the government offer. Is it also true that the GLOs in the Baffin, none of them have accepted a half-time position? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

I'm not aware of the answer to that question, Mr. Speaker, so I'll take it as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question is taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

Question 259-12(7): Consultation With High-Income Earners In Social Housing

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question that I would like to direct to the Minister of Housing. Yesterday, the Minister of Housing indicated that options for home ownership will be discussed with those higher-income tenants who may consider moving out of social housing. This would indicate that some high-income earners have not yet been talked to about these changes. The new rent comes into effect in less than three weeks. It is impossible in most communities to find alternate housing even with a longer amount of lead time. Why did the Minister not ensure that meetings were held with higher-income earners as soon as the rent scale changes were announced?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 259-12(7): Consultation With High-Income Earners In Social Housing

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All tenants and all people in the Northwest Territories can sit down at any time and make appointments with project officers to discuss the home ownership program that we have available for all people in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Finance. On page 14 of the recent Budget Address delivered by the Minister, he stated, and I quote, "I am pleased to report that progress has been made on a number of outstanding problems, including the health billings dispute, official languages program cutbacks and responsibility for police service." My question to the Minister is what is the status of the health billings dispute?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that last Friday afternoon, Mr. George Braden, the principal secretary to the Premier, signed -- or did not sign, but initialled -- an agreement with DIAND in Ottawa. The initialling was to say that both parties had taken it as far as they could and agreed on this particular document. That document will be presented tomorrow to the Standing Committee on Finance, and to Cabinet the following day. As far as I'm concerned, at the present time we have initialled an arrangement with Ottawa, subject to the Standing Committee on Finance, obviously this House, and Cabinet approval, and the notification of the aboriginal organizations that we started to work with when we began this case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

MR. KOE:

Can the Minister indicate at this time what progress, in terms of positive dollars to this government, has been made in the initialling of this agreement?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I can advise the House that the offer made to us by the federal government through their Department of Indian and Northern Affairs was better than the previous offer that they had made and that was what started us on the road to negotiating again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This has been a long-outstanding issue and every year a bill goes to the feds for health services and they pay some of it. How many years, in this current agreement that the Minister mentioned was initialled, does this cover? Does it bring us right up to date?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr Speaker, it covers the past, it covers the present, and it will cover us up until 1998. I believe

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there's a clause in this agreement that suggests that we could ask the federal government, or they could ask us, to alter that time frame if it were necessary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

MR. KOE:

I presume that once the agreement is signed, the Minister will be tabling it. It seems that however often the billings are done, monthly or weekly, disputes can arise on every issue and again, I will have to presume, not knowing what was initialled. I would like to ask the Minister, is this new agreement going to clarify the areas of what is a legitimate cost and what is not a legitimate cost, what can be billed and what cannot be billed? Will all of that be clarified in this new arrangement?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 260-12(7): Status Of Health Billings Dispute

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I believe there will be a better understanding of issues, what can be billed, and what will be paid for by both sides, if we are able to conclude this agreement. The signature that is required on the part of the federal government is Mr. Irwin's and, on behalf of our government, will be Madam Premier, as the Minister of Health. If we're able to convince people that this is as good as it gets, then with those documents being signed, there will be a simpler system put in place, I believe, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 261-12(7): Reason For NWT HC's Exemption From Notice Of Rent Increases

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to pose a question to the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Housing indicated that the Housing Corporation doesn't have to give three months' notice, in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act. Mr. Speaker, we, in the Legislative Assembly, passed the Residential Tenancies Act and are the lawmakers of this land. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice what allows the Housing Corporation to be exempt from this particular law? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the Member is asking for a technical or legal opinion and, therefore, I would have to take the question as notice to provide the appropriate response she is seeking. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

Question 262-12(7): Status Of Child Abuse Report

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the honourable Minister of Justice. About two or three years ago, the former students of Chesterfield Inlet residential school went to Chesterfield Inlet for a reunion. Some students said they had been abused in that institution. Mr. Speaker, I was a lucky one, I was never abused as far as I can remember. Prior to today, I have received phone calls from former students who want to know about the Katherine Peterson report on the action taken in Chesterfield Inlet. My question to the honourable Minister, Mr. Speaker, is the report completed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 262-12(7): Status Of Child Abuse Report

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the report is completed and has been received by the government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 262-12(7): Status Of Child Abuse Report

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. If, in fact, the report is completed, will the Minister make the report public so that the public will finally get to know what happened? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 262-12(7): Status Of Child Abuse Report

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the report has been withheld, pending investigation by the RCMP on some allegations and information that was collected during the course of the writing of the report. So, until the RCMP have completed their investigation and have decided if any action should be taken, the report will not be released. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 262-12(7): Status Of Child Abuse Report

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same Minister. Once the appropriate action has been taken, will the report be made public? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 262-12(7): Status Of Child Abuse Report

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the release of the report will be dealt with in conjunction with the RCMP and with officials, to ensure the rights of individuals are properly respected and there is no damage done as a result of its

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release. Once we are certain that can be done, we will be in a position to decide if the report can be released. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 263-12(7): Consideration Of Home Ownership Programs

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. Up to today, we keep hearing from the Minister and from the public that there are concerns being expressed about the new rent scale. Mr. Speaker, I think people are becoming more and more concerned about what is happening as they come to understand it more.

We are aware that more people are going into the home ownership program and owning their own houses, and with the new rent scale, higher-income people will be offered new home ownership programs but people who have to stay in social housing are not going to be given access to these programs. Are the existing programs for home ownership going to stay in place? Right now, it is really hard for low-income people to access home ownership. I think this is becoming more of a concern. Does the Minister think that by offering new home ownership programs only to people who have higher incomes that it is being fair to people who are in the lower-income scale?

For example, if I worked and was in a higher-income bracket, am I going to have to go into home ownership? Do I have to buy my own house? Am I going to be evicted from social housing if I happen to live in one of the units? Or, are you going to make the home ownership program more accessible to people in the NWT? In the new rent scale, have you given consideration to those people who want to own their own homes through the home ownership programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 263-12(7): Consideration Of Home Ownership Programs

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member says that possibly the new rent scale will not be fair to low-income people. If home ownership was only available to high-income people, then that would be correct. But home ownership is available to low-income people as well as high income people. Under the new rent scale, people of lower income would be getting a decrease in rent. There is also the alternate units that are available to low-income people. The home ownership programs are all based on the amount of dollars that a person makes. There is a program through the Housing Corporation to assist all people, whether they are low or high-income people. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Pudlat.

Supplementary To Question 263-12(7): Consideration Of Home Ownership Programs

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We only have a small number of people who are trying to get their own homes. Do you expect those numbers to increase? Are you going to make it easier to access those programs? Are you seeing more applications through your new home ownership program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 263-12(7): Consideration Of Home Ownership Programs

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the new home ownership programs that are available through the Housing Corporation, they have...In the past, low-income people as well as high-income people were not eligible for home ownership. They are all eligible now for a housing program of some sort. If they make enough money to pay for the operation and

maintenance of the home ownership program, then they are eligible for that. We also have the forgivable loan program that's being received very well in the Baffin and that is making more homes available to people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 264-12(7): Transfer Of Responsibility For Staff Housing To NWT HC

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the acting Premier. Mr. Speaker, there have been indications that the NWT Housing Corporation will be taking over the responsibility for staff housing effective April 1st. Is it the intention of the government to move the staff housing function to the Housing Corporation on that particular date? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier on in my Member's statement I attributed a statement, about the cost of recycling to the Minister. In fact, it wasn't the Minister that made the statements about costs of communities having to fly things in and out. It was Mr. Handley, the deputy minister, who made that statement, and I apologize to the Minister for implicating him with that comment. However, the Minister did say and I quote, "In terms of beverage containers, I have indicated that they may be unsightly but not hazardous." While that's true, the figure that I quoted of some 70,000 in my Member's statement was far too low. The 70,000 was what that

one person alone had collected. I think we're dealing in the millions of containers, aluminum cans.

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I would like to ask the Minister why are we not charging a fee, such as five cents per beverage container, at the retail level, and applying the deposit fee to a sound recycling program that will make some positive improvements on this issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the Department of Renewable Resources, the section of environmental protection, I had indicated yesterday during committee of the whole that the recycling of beverage containers was too costly to the government. A proposal had been made to the Financial Management Board and I believe this was before my time. The proposal was turned down. The proposal, I believe, was to address recycling of beverage containers all across the Northwest Territories.

The suggestions that are being made by the honourable Member would apply very well in the areas of the Northwest Territories that have lower transportation costs. The submission that was put before the Financial Management Board addressed all communities across the Northwest Territories and when you look at the costs of trying to collect beverage containers and then have them transported for recycling, it just became too costly to try to have beverage containers recycled.

I believe the recycling of beverage containers is a priority, but it's just not as high as those environmentally hazardous products that are disposed of in the Northwest Territories, such as PCBs and air quality in the Northwest Territories, where we have created guidelines for air quality. I believe the recycling of beverage containers would likely fall in third priority with this section of the department. However, it is not hazardous, it is a product that could be crushed and buried underground and not be environmentally disruptive. It was felt by the Financial Management Board that this

would be more efficient if this was done across the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's an old saying: "Where there's a will, there's a way." However, if there's no will, then we'll find a way not to do that. While I understand that there are places that don't have any means of getting in and out and I think my friend pointed out that Colville Lake was one of them, the majority of communities anywhere along the coast or the river...A large number of the communities in the territories do have some transportation mechanism in place: ships or a road or something. I only suggest that is one way of doing that. As far as it being a low priority, Mr. Speaker, in the old days when the explorers used to leave tin cans laying around -- they have become artifacts now and are very valuable -- they deteriorated, they rusted away to nothing. Aluminum doesn't do that. We're going to be carpeted with aluminum cans in the territories if this continues.

It can pay for itself. I want to ask the Minister why would the FMB turn down something like that when it could pay it's own way? Why would it be costly to the government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can understand where there is a transportation system which is cost-effective that the suggestion would work, but as far as the Government of the Northwest Territories is concerned, we deal with all of the Northwest Territories. I have lived in Rankin Inlet for a couple of years and the hamlet had made this effort to try and collect cans that are made of aluminum and have them sent by sea. However, they found that those who recycle the containers like to have the containers not crushed in any way, which would have made it

cost-effective to have transported the cans. They found that those who do the recycling like to receive the cans not crushed or disrupted in any way because it makes it easier for them. However, when the cans are not crushed -- the transportation companies charge by space rather than weight -- it made it very expensive for the council to transport the beverage containers by sea.

For the government to do something like this in the east would be much too costly. So, the department has taken the direction of the Financial Management Board that it would be more cost-effective if we dispose of cans much the same way as we dispose of dry waste. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, if there's a will, there's a way. I think Ecology North could show the government a few things about compacting of aluminum cans. Small portable compactors are available and quite easy to operate. I would like to ask the Minister if he would commit to asking his department to revisit this issue again, given the interest, shall we say, in disposing of recyclables like aluminum which will never deteriorate. Will he commit to looking at this issue again?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just recently, the Alberta Government has allowed the delivery of hazardous waste which has been the number one priority of environmental protection in the Northwest Territories. We have found a way that hazardous waste can now be disposed of. The second priority of this department's environmental protection section has been the disposal of used oil, as well as air quality guidelines which we are continuing to work on and monitor. This has been a concern of Yellowknife. Those three areas have been the priority of

environmental protection, but I will commit that the department will re-examine the beverage container recycling project to see if there's a way to make it

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cost-effective. I'm not able to guarantee anything at this point, but I will commit to having the department take a look again at the recycling program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for the answer. We're dealing with something that is perhaps not as hazardous as PCBs but perhaps I was approaching it from the wrong angle. I would like to know from the Minister whether or not his department is able to draft legislation that will put a deposit on the cans, so it may become self-financing because it will be worth something to someone to pick them up and return them. Is his department able to draft legislation that would put a deposit on an aluminum can?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 265-12(7): Deposit Fees On Beverage Containers

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know that it would require legislation. If it becomes cost-effective for a private entrepreneur to collect beverage containers and send them out, then all it would require would be the will of the private entrepreneur to do that. It wouldn't require legislation. I have committed that the department will take a look again at a program that might be proposed to private businesses, which would include Ecology North and other environmental organizations that may have some information about how to make the recycling of beverage containers cost-effective. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 266-12(7): Maximum Rent Assessment For Social Housing Tenants

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, the rent scale change notice that was discussed earlier today said, in my constituency, that if tenants don't come in by March 10th, three days from now, effective April 1st, the maximum rent will be assessed. I would like to ask the Minister about his statement yesterday, when he said that only 40 per cent of tenants have asked for information and counselling as of last Friday. Is he determined to assess these folks up to \$2,560 rent for a five-bedroom house, even if the Minister knows that, historically, the household is low-income and the assessed rent may, ultimately, be nowhere near the maximum rent? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 266-12(7): Maximum Rent Assessment For Social Housing Tenants

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we are committed to is working with the local housing authorities who understand every community because they are the delivery agents on the front line. We will work with them to work with their tenants to make sure their rents are assessed properly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 266-12(7): Maximum Rent Assessment For Social Housing Tenants

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I've talked to the Members of the Iqaluit housing authority who are getting very nervous because they have three days to counsel 200 or 250 tenants who have not come in, for reasons I outlined in my statement. The boom is about to fall on their heads. They are telling me that the direction from the Minister of Housing is that, unless this counselling takes place before March 10th, they are going to have no choice but to assess the maximum rent. I'd like to ask the Minister, is this the way the Minister and the

Corporation plans to build good, open, trusting relationships and communication between the tenants and their landlord; to say, if you don't come by a certain date and find out what your new rent is, we'll punish you by increasing your rent five, 10 or 15 times? Is that the way to build up good relations with tenants?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 266-12(7): Maximum Rent Assessment For Social Housing Tenants

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The good way to build good relations with tenants as well as local housing authorities is to have a line of communication with them. Information packages have been distributed to all tenants. The local housing authorities have had all the training and extra dollars funded to them to carry out consultation with tenants. We are working with the housing authorities and tenants to make people aware of what the maximum rent could be for the units and to encourage them to come in and discuss with the local housing authority what their rent would actually be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 266-12(7): Maximum Rent Assessment For Social Housing Tenants

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister and his officials have succeeded, beyond all estimates, in making tenants aware of the maximum rent they could be assessed. It has scared the daylight out of them, Mr. Speaker. I think it has been clear today in the dialogue in this House that the information packages have not told tenants what their rent is, it has just told them the maximum. I would like to ask the Minister, particularly where the household income is historically low, will the Minister consider, on a case-by-case basis, in cooperation with the local housing authority exempting these people from being assessed maximum rents on April 1st if they

haven't all managed to come in by the deadline three days from now? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 266-12(7): Maximum Rent Assessment For Social Housing Tenants

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I will commit to the Member is that the Housing Corporation staff, along with the local housing authority, will approach this issue with the greatest care. We realize that tenants are people who live in our units, and we have to work with them to make them understand and we will do that. We will work with the local housing authority and the tenants to ensure that all people understand the amount of rent they will pay. Especially people of lower income will fully realize that the rents they will pay will probably be lower than they're paying today. So I encourage them to work with their local housing authority to get the proper information.

I encourage the Members, if you have local radio stations or if you have anything else available to you as a Member of this Assembly, to also get that message out to your constituents. I will, once again, check with the Housing Corporation to get the message out very clearly to get your rent properly assessed, work with your housing authority, your own people, to get the proper information so everything can be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Time for oral questions has lapsed. Item 7, written questions. Ms. Mike.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 13-12(7): Employment Status Of Government Liaison Officers In The Baffin Region

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question for the Minister of Personnel.

Would the Minister of Personnel please advise this House of the following:

1. Notices of lay-off were given this month to GLOs in the Baffin region. These notices gave GLOs

five days to either accept or reject new half-time positions. What has been the response of GLOs to these lay-off notices and new job offers?

2. Will GLOs who refuse to accept the new half-time job offer be offered the benefit of the workforce adjustment policy?

3. Has the government undertaken a study of the daily work requirements of GLOs in the Baffin region? What were the results of that study?

4. What departments of the Government of the Northwest Territories have GLOs in Baffin communities been serving?

5. Are there any plans to have GLOs in the Baffin region deliver social services for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in the coming fiscal year?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 7, written questions. Mr. Patterson.

Written Question 14-12(7): Review Of Arctic College Environmental and Renewable Resource Technology Program

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Would the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment provide me with a review of the environmental technology program and renewable resource technology program, which I understood was done for the Arctic College by Avery Cooper and Company? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Things are looking up. Today I have the opportunity to table Tabled

Document 49-12(7), a letter addressed to Warren Allmand, chairman of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, from Jack Anawak, Member of Parliament for Nunatsiak. The letter states strong support for the committee to come to the north to hear the views of northern people. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 50-12(7), Budget Supplement 1995-96, Social Envelope Committee, submitted January 1995. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table Tabled Document 51-12(7), Rent Scale Change Notice, Iqaluit Housing Authority, in Inuktitut and English. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

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ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 18: Northwest Territories Energy Corporation Limited Loan Guarantee Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kitikmeot, that Bill 18, Northwest Territories Energy Corporation Limited Loan Guarantee Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of the Northwest Territories to guarantee loans made to the NWT Energy Corporation Limited. The principal amount of loans guaranteed under the

bill must not exceed \$25 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. We're short a quorum. Mr. Clerk, can you ring the bells?

The chair recognizes a quorum.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 18 has had second reading and, accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee.

Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, 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.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The committee will now come to order. When we concluded yesterday, we were dealing with the Department of Safety and Public Services and Bill 1. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

I believe the wish of the committee is to continue with the review of Safety and Public Services. If we conclude that, we can move on to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Do we have the concurrence of the committee that we will deal with two matters after the break? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

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

Department Of Safety And Public Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The committee will now resume. Before we get into general comments, I would like to ask the honourable Minister if he wishes to bring in a witness or witnesses. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have the indulgence and support of my colleagues of bringing in the witnesses, I would be pleased to.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Do we have the agreement of the committee Members that the honourable Minister shall bring in the witnesses? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Please bring in the witnesses.

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

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right is Mr. John Quirke, the deputy minister; on my left is Mr. Henry Dragon, who is the director of finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you very much. We are reviewing Safety and Public Services main estimates for 1995-96. We are going through the activity summary. At this point in time, I would like to open the floor to general comments from the Members. Are we ready to go line by line? Mr. Whitford.

General Comments

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a very important department, when it comes to the operation of the territorial government and service to the people of the Northwest Territories, because of a few of its components. Certainly, the mine safety, safety, labour standards, fire safety and public utilities are things that affect our everyday lives. Of course, the consumer and corporate affairs and vital stats part is equally important. It doesn't matter where we look, there is a part of that department which will touch our lives from the time we're born until the time we die. So it shouldn't go without some comments on it.

I don't have any criticism of the department. Some people would say the department is not doing its job, or not doing its

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job well. But I must point out some of the things that I hear from people I do talk to as an MLA.

I'm not sure exactly where to start. Yellowknife is a mining community, so there is one area where I hear both sides. Some people say that mine safety isn't really doing its job; there are not quite enough mine inspectors. On the other hand, I'm reasonably assured by what I see, that there are sufficient people. But there are only so many people, only so many inspectors. There's only so much time in a day, or time in a month. One of the things I'm wondering about is the frequency of mine inspections. Mining, at best, is a dangerous occupation. If the companies don't maintain their facilities properly and their

operations, it could become hazardous. I'm not really sure whether our injury rate and death rate in the mining industry is any higher than any other province, but I guess any time we have an injury or a fatality, it's one too many.

One of the things I have said on previous occasions, in addressing Safety and Public Services, was that a criticism had come up about mining inspections: that they were too planned. That notification would be given to the mine that the inspectors were coming, and it's alleged -- Mr. Chairman, it's not validated, I'm sure, but I feel I have to mention it -- that by doing that, it takes away some of the surprise that an inspection might have. Again, it's alleged that by giving notification in advance that the inspectors are coming, things can be tightened up. If there's something that may have gotten a little bit slack over a period of time, it could be corrected so that the mine inspectors would not see that occur. This is what has been said to me.

I said I would certainly make sure that I would bring it to the attention of the Minister and the department that perhaps safety inspections in the mines could be undertaken more randomly, without notification, to assuage that criticism that people might be making. Whether it's justified or not, I don't know, and I think the department could best be the ones to measure that. The saying, "to be forewarned is to be forearmed," means that things could be corrected so only the best would be seen by the inspectors while they're there and the truth would not be known.

I want to raise that only as a concern that was expressed to me by some people in my riding who work in mines, in order that the Minister may hear that and maybe take it under advisement. If such a thing exists, we should change what could be seen as a too-easy way-out for companies that may wish to stretch the safety regulations a bit.

But overall, if one looks at the statistics, there are accidents; but without having the information in front of me that shows what the fatality rate per 1,000 hours of work in a mine of that nature would be like, it's difficult to say if we're any better or any worse than anywhere else. But I wanted to raise that as a concern so we can keep that in mind.

In the territories, because of our climate being so cold and the requirements for heat being so great, we have a situation which combines extremely cold temperatures with the dryness of the climate. Fire hazards in homes are quite high. I heard recently that

one of the things that was being suggested in the new building codes would be the introduction of a sprinkler system in all new homes as a first line of attack. What has been pointed out to me is that it's fine in some big buildings where a lot of people are living in close proximity to each other, and if an accident happens in one apartment it directly affects the other. Fatalities do happen in homes, there is no doubt about it. I think a tragedy occurred in my riding a little over a year ago, where a house burned to the ground on the coldest day of the year. It was suggested that had a sprinkler system been installed in the house, they may not have had a fatality and the damage to the house would have been limited to the area of the immediate fire and maybe water damage. It has also been expressed that it would be difficult to do something like that. I'm not sure whether or not the chief fire inspector is supporting this and pushing for it, but it's something we need to find out a little bit more about to inform the public.

I'm not speaking against this, if this is what's going to happen. I just think there's a lack of information out there, information that tells the public what the intention is and what the cost-benefits are. Anything that can save a life is to be commended, but there are other realities too. There are extreme temperatures in the north. Homes cool down quite a bit, there is a danger of frost, and water systems have to be considered. It's okay in areas where there is a pressurized system, such as mains, but when it comes to buildings with water tanks, it may be a little more difficult. Of course, the high cost of building in the north is probably a reason for having a good system to prevent destruction of a house but, on the other hand, it could be astronomical to install such a system so that it may be cost-prohibitive to first-time buyers. Certainly, with renovations, it would be very difficult. This is an area of concern.

I know that the department is responsible for the Liquor Commission. Recently, there has been concern that the price of liquor has gone up. Equalization has been enforced and is making things a little more equal across the territories, as I understand it. It has brought the price of more expensive alcoholic beverages like champagne, cognac and wines down by a substantial amount. I see a price drop of \$75 a bottle, which is a substantial amount. But, on the other side of the spectrum, it has raised the more-available, less-costly beverages by a substantial amount. Concern has been expressed by some of the groups concerned with social problems that people who overindulge with lower-costing

alcoholic beverages would find it out of their price range now to consume a certain amount a day, which is normal to keep a person satisfied with a drinking problem, and they may switch to something else that may be a bit more hazardous to their health than sherry and things like that.

On the one hand, if we price alcohol out of the market, people may stop buying and reduce their consumption but, on the other hand, the concern that was expressed by the Women's Council is that it may cause people to turn to other substances which may be more hazardous to their health than Bright's sherry, for instance, which is a reasonably-priced commodity. Those kinds of concerns have been expressed.

Overall, because I'm running out of time -- the chairman has informed me that my time is almost up - - I think the public have expressed a certain amount of satisfaction with Safety and Public Services. They've also expressed the concerns that I have related to the Minister through you, Mr. Chairman. I

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certainly hope the Minister will take them under advisement so I can convey to the public that yes, these messages have gotten through to the Minister and the department.

The staff of the department are to be commended for the amount of work they do. Safety is very important to our everyday lives and how they deliver that service is certainly greatly appreciated. As I said earlier on, it affects us from womb to tomb, so to speak, and the staff are to be commended for their work. With that, I will let someone else have an opportunity. Perhaps I will ask questions as we get into the department a little more, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Mr. Whitford, you have always tried to uphold the 10-minute limitation. When I'm sitting here, I just like to remind you of it. General comments. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't want to go over old ground, but I just want to say briefly that I think it's important that we acknowledge that more attention is now going to be paid to mine inspection and mine safety. I'd like to commend the department for

somehow having turned a subject of great controversy and great staff upheaval, not many months ago, into a function which seems to have won the respect of the industry and labour, by and large, and a function which seems to be operating without controversy lately. I think that deserves to be noted. It's a very difficult area. There'll never be enough resources, but I think there have been some significant improvements.

I also note that attention is being paid to the construction field, where there have been a lot of accidents, and I congratulate the Minister and the department for getting more resources, hopefully to prevent accidents from here on in. I also want to note that we're now learning that the major legislative reform in the Mining Safety Act is now going to be turned into regulations, with implementation in the coming year; the major work that has been done with the Liquor Act will also proceed in the coming year. I think these are both very controversial areas and my assessment is the department has managed to carry out public consultations and produce results even in an area where there is bound to be strong opinions and opposition to any change. This is all commendable.

In the north it often seems that one of the issues that people are concerned about is competition, and where there's no competition if there's anything that can be done to regulate companies that may be charging excessive prices or fees. I would like to raise that as an issue.

I would also like to note that I think the same is going to be true of the whole area of the rental officer and landlord/tenant relations. I guess it's no coincidence that I'm bringing that up today because we're in the process of examining rent changes including significant increases as well as some decreases by what may be the largest landlord in the Northwest Territories, an organization called the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. I believe Members were somewhat shocked to discover that this government's own legislation -- and I don't believe this particular Minister is responsible for this legislation -- exempts public housing tenants from the ordinary rules about rent increases. I won't go into detail about my concerns about how these rent increases have been handled, but the facts have come out today and yesterday that sizeable rent increases and rent changes are about to fall on the heads of some 5,000; I don't know if it's as many as 5,000, but thousands of public housing tenants. The Minister is saying we didn't have to but we gave them a month's notice, but

then when one looks closer one finds that the month's notice was actually just a notice of the maximum ceiling being changed. Up to 40 or 50 per cent of tenants in a particular community in public housing may still today not know precisely how their rent will change even though the rent increases may take place April 1st.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister may wonder why I'm raising this. I was told by staff in the Iqaluit Housing Authority that everything has been worked out and it's all according to the law. The rental officer for the Northwest Territories, who I think is within this department, had reviewed with the Housing Corporation their plans to give notice to their tenants - if you can call it notice -- and that everything was according to Hoyle, and the rental officer had provided advice that it was being done properly. I'm curious as to whether the rental officer, in addition to regulating disputes between landlords and tenants, provides advice to employers and landlords about the proper way to implement rent increases and, particularly, whether the rental officer has been solicited to give advice to the Housing Corporation which seems to have exempted itself successfully from the application of at least some sections of the Residential Tenancies Act. I'm a bit surprised, if it's correct, that the rental officer has been involved in giving advice in an area which seems of some concern to this House and the manner in which it's being executed.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate the department for the good work they've done in mine safety, in the new Mine Safety Act, in construction, in looking at the construction workplace and in embarking on an ambitious reform of the Liquor Act, but I want to say that they're going to be hard pressed to deal with consumer issues. I've cited a couple that

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are of immediate concern but I think there will be many others so I would be interested in getting any reactions that the Minister has when we get to the appropriate section on just how well equipped they are to deal with what I suspect may be quite a flood of consumer issues from an increasingly vigilant, if not angry, public out there dealing with the financial pressures that we're all facing these days. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. I haven't heard any direct question to the Minister. I believe that was just a comment. The floor is still open for general comments. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This department has a lot of responsibilities and this has been mentioned by my colleagues. People don't normally notice up front and centre until there's a need and usually there's some kind of accident or incident that brings out the inspectors, the firefighters and people who are related to the activities and the acts that are under the responsibility of this department. In many cases these people are volunteers and I'm glad to see there is a proposal to review the Fire Prevention Act. I'll be looking forward to that review. I understand that there's more money to assist in the training of firefighters in the communities. They provide a valuable service and protect a lot of lives and property.

As was mentioned, the Mine Safety Act came into effect. The Minister undertook to point the Members to it and I see that one of the definite objectives is to complete the implementation of this act. We haven't heard anything negative since the act was passed so I have to assume that everything is proceeding fairly well.

Another major piece of legislation that has been looked at is the Labour Standards Act. I see that the Labour Standards Board is reviewing this. It's something that I haven't heard too much about other than what I've read in this document, and it's very skimpy information so I will also be looking forward to seeing what kind of information comes out. There are many new companies, especially in the mining business, that are in the north and many that we don't know about that come in and leave. The labour standards and payment of employees and payments of contractors and subcontractors are very important to our economy, and the registration of these businesses. All these fall under this department; the licensing of businesses and the standards that they have to follow. So it would be interesting to see what is being proposed under this new act.

I also note that the Public Utilities Board is funded under this department. Everybody in the Northwest Territories is impacted one way or another by decisions made by the board affecting utilities. We're all aware of the proposals from the Power Corporation for rate increases. So it's interesting to see that the

board is under the responsibility of this department. I not it says it's an independent board, but still this Minister and government funds it, so I assume it has some political clout over what goes on.

The one item I raised some questions about in the budget was the liquor licensing. Again, there's a proposal. The Standing Committee on Legislation has been looking at the legislative action paper on new liquor laws. That's a major development and one that I'm sure is going to take a while to become law and get implemented, but it's much needed. The Liquor Commission, through the Liquor Licensing Board, has authority to control licences and the management of licensed premises. It's very controversial because it has a major impact, and most of it negative, on our population in the Northwest Territories.

I disagree with my colleague on the negative impacts of pricing. I believe that the higher the prices, the less consumption. That may reduce our cost for everything else we pay for because of the impacts of liquor. All our health costs, social costs, police costs, corrections costs, all those are there and increasing because of the impact of liquor and, to some extent, drugs. So it's something that I believe you keep raising and people who can afford it will use it. But you can regulate those other things, too, through the stores. They do it everywhere else.

The other thing I find interesting under consumer affairs is that this department is responsible for the implementation of the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act. If I hadn't looked at page 07-5, I would never have known. A week or so ago, I asked a question on the implementation of this act, and it's interesting to note that it's under this department. In future, I'll know who to ask.

Those are just some general comments. As Mr. Whitford and Mr. Patterson mentioned, everything that's a responsibility of this department impact every resident. The big one, as Mr. Patterson mentioned, and controversial one has been, through the Residential Tenancies Act, the privatization of all the government homes. Now, the changes in the social housing structure is something that is front and centre and impact just about everybody in the communities. Soon the liquor laws...We dealt with mine safety and, as I mentioned, the Labour Board and labour standards are going to be reviewed. So these are positive things, and I hope the impacts and changes are reflected positively in any proposed changes. That's all I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Koe. General comments. Do we agree we go into detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Line By Line

Directorate

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

On page 07-8, directorate, total operations and maintenance, \$947,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Consumer And Corporate Affairs

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Consumer and corporate affairs, total O and M, \$864,000. Mr. Patterson.

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MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, by way of an example and not to emphasize my particular constituency's concerns, people in Iqaluit this past week are saying we really wonder whether the mark-up on gasoline in our community is fair, we feel that there's one retailer who may have an advantage because of lack of competition. I know I asked the Minister if this department could look into these concerns. Could I get an idea from the Minister, perhaps using this issue as an example -- I know there are many others that could be found -- just what kind of capability the department does have to respond to consumer concerns of this kind? And further, whether they have linkages with other organizations or governments that can assist in looking at questions, particularly competition. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of components we try to address consumer issues with. One is the whole issue of addressing the consumer protection information and also dealing with complaints. In terms of the services, we have a hot line that deals with questions or problems. Our consumer affairs officer investigates complaints of consumers and attempts to resolve the problem if warranted.

I can't indicate to the honourable Member that the actual jurisdictional question may often be the basis by which a resolution can occur immediately. I think what we can do in those particular instances is to ensure that those who have a complaint know the basic processes that are available to the individual or the community to address those issues.

It's very difficult for me to say one way or the other what suggestions might be made or what resolutions might be offered unless we know details, such as the honourable Member pointed out, the issue of the gasoline prices in Iqaluit. It has to be specific and we have to deal with it appropriately.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 07-9, consumer and corporate affairs. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to know a little bit more about the rental officer's role. As I said, I had heard the rental officer had advised the Housing Corporation on how to proceed with notices of rent change to public housing tenants. Does the rental officer provide advice of this kind to departments and agencies like the Housing Corporation? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the responsibility of the rental officer is to provide information to both the tenant and the landlord so that information, depending on what is requested, can be appropriately provided.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

I would like to specifically ask if the rental officer was asked to provide advice to the Housing Corporation on how to appropriately give notice to tenants about rent changes. Secondly, I believe, in looking at the activity summary on this page, that the department is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Residential Tenancies Act. I would like to ask the Minister if he's had an opportunity -- in light of questions in this House yesterday and today -- to consider whether it is appropriate that the ordinary rules for notice of rent increases should not apply to the thousands of tenants in public housing but should apply to everyone else. Is this an appropriate and fair provision for public legislation in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the issue of whether or not the information or advice was provided, I'm not aware of that and I will seek information to clarify the role that the individual played in that issue and appropriately respond to the Member and all other Members through written communication.

One point I would like to make is that I'm not really in a position at this time to comment, one way or another, about whether there should be a different basis for increases to public housing units; in other words, whether it should be three months or one month. The fact is the existing legislation gives that loophole and therefore allows for the appropriate decision to be made. I don't want to get into a debate on the merits of that legislation, I will only say that we do apply and appropriately provide legal advice on the issue. I think it's a bigger issue and is a legislative matter that we need to address.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Total O and M, \$864,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Safety

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Safety, total O and M, \$2.574 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Mine Safety

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mine safety, total O and M, \$1.009 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Fire Safety

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 07-12, fire safety. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given the activity that is taking place in the corridor of hope about diamonds and

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such, and knowing that there may be some difference between diamond mining and traditional mining in the north, in anticipation of something happening, is the department providing any training or examining the diamond mining industry to bring our mine inspectors up to speed, if that's necessary, and to cope with what will come should diamonds be a minable commodity, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to say that it is certainly our intention, through discussions in the department, that we are as well-prepared for the possibility -- I guess we have to use that word -- of

diamond mining operations coming into production. But, like everything else, issues have to be dealt with. I believe we are looking at having our chief inspector of mines and the open pit service mining engineer visit diamond mine operations. I think there's a need for us to get an indication of how surface mining operations operate in a technical sense. We need to address the matter of design, development characteristics, which are specific to surface diamond mines because that has not been our experience. Our expertise so far has to do with underground and quarry mining.

We are also considering secondment of inspectors to operating mines in other jurisdictions in 1995-96 and also 1996-97. I think this may give our inspectors experience and education in the operation of diamond mines. That's our plan of action at this particular juncture. That doesn't preclude us, Mr. Chairman, from looking at other alternatives to training those in the mining industry here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mahsi cho. Fire safety, total O and M, \$854,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I heard there is going to be a firefighters' school established somewhere in the Northwest Territories. I think it is to be commended, if such a thing is going to take place because we've heard about this for a little while and I think the fire chiefs were encouraging this to happen. If it is coming, is there any indication about how we will be paying for it? Is it through this department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to indicate to the honourable Member and other Members in the

Assembly that the training facility is an initiative that has been undertaken by the Hay River Fire Department. The resources that were used were infrastructure dollars provided through a joint arrangement of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government. I want you to be aware of that.

We are considering, on an as-needed basis, utilizing the resources that are going to be made available in Hay River whenever there's a need for the facility to provide training. However, I think that what we must continue to do is ensure that we still provide more on-site regional-type firefighting training, because it provides more access for people in the smaller communities to get the appropriate training that they need. I want to say to the honourable Members here that we will be working in conjunction with Municipal and Community Affairs to address this whole area of responsibility, in trying to ensure that there's some certainty about the responsibility that Safety and Public Services has and also the responsibility for training that Municipal and Community Affairs has in this area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Fire safety, total O and M, \$854,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Labour Board And Labour Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Labour board and labour services, total O and M, \$504,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Public Utilities Board

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Merci. Public Utilities Board, total O and M, \$489,000. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it may be a bad question to ask as I may have forgotten or not done my homework on this, but was there some indication that the Public Utilities Board was to be more self-regulating and self-paying? The total amount that it costs to run the Public Utilities Board, there's no other monies coming from elsewhere, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That proposal actually came forward to the Assembly and, in fact, was defeated by Members of the Assembly. The fact is that we are still funding it based on the original submission.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I understand. I just wanted to be sure that that's the way it still was, the way it had been prior. There were good reasons for the decision by the honourable Members to defeat that suggestion that additional monies be put on the power bills. I think that's what it was. I just thought this was probably the safest, most convenient way of dealing with the Public Utilities Board, rather than trying to impose that on the ratepayers at the time. I was just confirming this, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for letting me know.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister is indicating to me that he wants to reply to this. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to advise the Members that the PUB, in this case is an administrative responsibility that the department has for managing the administration. The functional responsibility remains with the honourable Member for Rankin Inlet.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Ultimately so, Mr. Minister. We are on page 07-14, Public Utilities Board, total O and M, \$489,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We have details of grants and contributions, grants. Yes, Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Forgive me, Mr. Chairman, but I wasn't sure where to ask this one. I would like to ask a question about the Custom Adoption Recognition Act implementation. I guess I missed it under an earlier activity. May I ask a question before we conclude this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Proceed, Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the request is simple. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people have been awaiting the passage of this bill. There are many -- not just children, but adults -- who are lacking the basic evidence of their existence in the form of birth certificates, social insurance numbers, et cetera, because they have not been able to go through the convoluted process of adoption through the courts; of recognizing a custom adoption through the courts. Mr. Chairman, my question is simple. Since this is such a high priority, since the bill was passed this past fall, since we have a beautifully clean, elegant process relying on local elders to certify that a custom adoption took place, a process designed by the late Mr. Graeme Garson, who minimized the procedural hurdles and the bureaucratic hurdles. The local person certifies that an adoption took place and it becomes a Supreme Court order. It's a brilliant scheme. All we need now is to appoint those local Commissioners and see that they're given some remuneration for their work. I guess there's some training or orientation that's required.

I want to ask the Minister if it will be a priority of this department and of this Minister to get this long-

awaited thing off the ground, because it's been a cause of endless years of frustration for many people. Even some MLAs have close relatives who are affected. You don't have to look very far to find people who are anxious for this thing to happen. Can the Minister tell us, has he got the money, has he got the political will to move ahead with it, does he need help from MLAs, do you need advice on who should be appointed with respect to people in our communities? How do we get this thing moving, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Patterson, the appropriate section would have been on page 07-9, consumer and corporate affairs, but since I have allowed the honourable Member to pose the question, I will allow the Minister to respond to the honourable Member. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure how I should respond to the comments made by the honourable Member because I, personally, think I have the political will; it's whether or not, if I make some decisions, people will support them. That's the issue, it normally happens that way and if you move things quicker than you would want them to, there's a tendency of people wanting it to slow down.

I agree, Mr. Chairman, with the comments that the honourable Member has made. It's been an issue of constant frustration for many years and I appreciate the work that has been done so far. There's still a bit of work that needs to be done in terms of dealing with some of the regulation: to have them in place, to deal with the process so that we advise people in the communities, train our Commissioners, as the honourable Member has pointed out, and generally get on with the work because it's our estimation that there are about 15,000 caseloads that are backlogged and that there are probably going to be about 400 cases annually. So it's a catch-up thing and probably far more than that, but that's our calculation so far.

I appreciate the advice given. We'll try to move it along as quickly as possible. As soon as we have all the things in place, I will advise all the Members of the Assembly of the process, who the Commissioners are, and get on with doing the job.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. The honourable Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am quite satisfied with that answer. I would like to ask the Minister if he has the money budgeted to do this work. I don't think it has to cost a lot, but it will cost money. I know this bill was only passed after the budget was almost put to bed, so I would like to ask the Minister, will financial resources be a problem once he gets the regulations put in place. I can see training costs, bringing people together for training sessions and some honoraria required. Does the Minister have something budgeted to address these costs in the coming year? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just to advise the honourable Member that there is an increase in our budget of some \$57,000 and an increase of one PY. I know that we are not certain whether or not that is going to be satisfactory, but I do want to say to the honourable Member I think there are enough combined resources that are being provided. For instance, in the case of the registration for some claims that can help us, if we can get the appropriate information from the aboriginal groups that can, hopefully, streamline this process. It can be very helpful in terms of indicating -- through the registration of beneficiaries -- who is eligible and who has, through custom adoption, changed their family situation.

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Hopefully, we can work with them and get the appropriate information. It will be much simpler if we can work together.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence. Just one final question. I am only asking the Minister because I am going to get asked and I have been asked already. Could the Minister give me an idea of when he thinks I will be able to tell my constituents

this process will be in place and you can make an application for your child? Does the department have a target date that we can tell our constituents? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Yes, Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not to create a situation where people confine us within the date, but we are trying to work around the implementation date of September 1st this coming year. That will be dependent upon the action plan we adopt, the regulations and the plan of action we propose, because if we are not convinced that the training we have offered is complete, obviously we may need extra time to complete that training, but that is certainly the goal. The very latest we wish this thing to be implemented is December 1995. That is our goal and within that window, hopefully, we can have it done. The sooner the better, as the honourable Member has pointed out, for the people who have to have this work done on their behalf.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I believe the honourable Member for Iqaluit is satisfied. Details of grants and contributions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Grants and contributions, \$10,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

On page 07-16, information item, Liquor Commission revolving fund. Agreed on the information item?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Yes, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the information item regarding the Liquor Commission revolving fund, in the 1994-95 revised forecast we see revenue of \$30.672 million -- that was the revenue for this current year -- and the total O and M is \$15.504 million; therefore, there is a profit of \$15.168 million for the sale of liquor in the Northwest Territories for 1994-95. In 1996, there is an estimated total revenue of \$32.402 million, the estimated total O and M is \$15.465 million and the estimated profit is \$16.937 million. I would like to ask

the Minister what is the estimated revenue of \$32.402 million based on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The honourable Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

I believe that is a calculation that is based on the sales, the price increases that have been proposed and the anticipated consumer utilization of the product.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

I would like to ask the Minister again, is the Minister saying that the amount of liquor that is going to be sold in the Northwest Territories is going to increase by \$1.8 million?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The calculation is based on two things: price increase and volume increase. In other words, the price increase that is being proposed by the government and the other component is our percentage calculation of volume

increase. It is approximately three per cent per year that the volume is increasing.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Yes, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the definitive objectives in the directorate, this department is developing new liquor legislation. Is the new liquor legislation that is currently being developed going to include the total revenue and O and M of this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of components you have to look at with the liquor legislation. The liquor legislation basically guides us in terms of managing liquor use. The matter that is before you in terms of the Liquor Commission, deals with marketing. I guess what the honourable Member is asking is whether there is a combination of those two. I'm not certain if it's possible, until I have some indication of what the legislation is going to be, whether there should be an amalgamation of those responsibilities. Right now, obviously, the two are separate and have said the commission has to function as an independent body.

We, as a government, take their surplus revenues and put it in our general revenue and then allocate them to other social, educational, or other programs in government. I think it is very difficult to know if there is going to be a combination but, certainly, we have to address both issues in our legislation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Is it agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark): Thank you. We will move on to 07-17, detail of work performed on behalf of third parties. Total department, \$60,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Now we go back to the program summary, page 07-7. Safety and public services, total O and M, \$7.241 million. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since this is the conclusion of the department, I wanted to ask one question. I waited until this was concluded. It deals with the reorganization of the department. In the Strength at Two Levels report, the Beatty report, as it is commonly called, there were suggestions regarding the reorganization of Safety of Public Services which included amalgamation with other departments. Over the past three years, there have been numerous rumours regarding a possible reorganization of departments; however, nothing has been formally announced.

I would like to ask the Minister if, indeed, his department is going ahead and reorganizing. Is there a date as to when this is going to take place? There are indications that there will be reorganization, but nobody seems to know when and here we are in the twilight years of this government. The Beatty report came out four years ago.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Structural, management and departmental change is an ongoing process. Sometimes we have to make decisions that have to respond to not only the reallocation of resources or priorities of this Assembly, but also the priorities of Cabinet. We've made an effort to respond seriously to the issue of safety. I think that's been our priority for the last several years. It's our belief, based on the fiscal situation and the financial problems that may arise, that we may have to reorganize ourselves to do the job better without reducing services or programs.

I can tell you, and I'll be very honest, that we are reviewing this issue. We haven't come to final conclusions about what changes may be. But, they

won't be at the expense of safety or, for that matter, the delivery of services to workers. I want to say that there is still a major component that hasn't been dealt with that will eventually have to be -- not necessarily by this government, but probably the next government -- and that is the issue of labour. Labour issues and relations and the conduct of how we do business generally, in terms of our labour legislation -- all components -- have to be dealt with; not simply the Labour Standards Board and labour legislation.

It's a significant issue. The honourable Member asked about the conditions of the mining industry. The simple fact is -- and this is very important for people to understand -- most governments establish labour legislation to protect unorganized labour. That is their responsibility. Our labour legislation is outdated and I think that, at some time, we have to confront that matter. That is the way we are reviewing the issue.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Members who made general comments had high praise for the department and how its effects are felt by every segment of the population in some form, from custom adoption to death certificates and everything in between. It's quite an important department and it is of concern to Members like myself, when we hear of reorganizational plans. If it is questionable to me, it certainly is more questionable to employees.

Like any team -- and you've got a good team, Mr. Minister, because where you sit, I once sat and I know -- if they're kept in suspense and they don't know what's happening, it is pretty difficult. They are sitting there waiting for the shoe to fall and that is disconcerting. Morale is something that's really important, I feel, to a department to keep people working as a team in good, healthy spirits. People want to get the job done but there is a fear, looking at the federal cuts of 45,000 and Beatty has been cutting and slashing since 1991. That's why I asked the question, so the employees, myself and my colleagues could find out what is going to happen.

If there is, then it should be up front. You should say, this is what is going to happen and here's why we're doing it. You've got a small organization and they do a lot of work. I think it's too small, in some cases,

rather than too large. I want to point out to the Minister that it is of concern to Members like Mr. Lewis and myself, and to other Members here, I'm sure. I just wanted to bring this up and ask if, indeed, this is going to take place and when there will be announcements and things like that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To use the famous words of **MR. WHITFORD**: "to assuage the fears of those who are in this Assembly," the fact is, we always go through a process of management review, of whether or not we are functionally doing the job properly or we have the right people in the right places. Just a simple little organizational change.

The question of labour services or worker services and safety. We have some functions that should be in the worker services that are presently in the safety component. That's the kind of stuff when we look at these issues to decide whether or not we're functionally doing the right job. In the end, I can say the decision has not been completed, but we need to do those things. We're doing more harm to the success of our organization if we don't continue to do that kind of work.

So I agree with the honourable Member. It's not our intention to create anxiety. Certainly it's our intention to be constructive about any management arrangements that are proposed by my deputy minister, because my view is I try to stay out of the daily management of my department as much as possible. I do want to deal with the whole issue of policy. I allow my department to function and the managers to do their work because I don't believe I should be stepping on their toes and telling them what they should or shouldn't be doing if they're doing their job the way you have said they have been doing it. I think that is gaining great respect in the communities in the Northwest Territories where the services are provided. So I

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take note of your concern and will not try to cause any more anxiety, but management reviews have that tendency, irrespective of whether or not you lay a person off. Reviews have that tendency of making those changes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Program summary, total O and M, \$7.241 million. Agreed? Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

In terms of total PYs, I know it's not a big department but there are 79 PYs, an increase of two. What's the ratio of aboriginal people in this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

In the department, there are 92 positions, of which 20 are aboriginal, 12 are indigenous non-aboriginal and 60 are non-aboriginal.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Thank you. Program summary, we agree with \$7.241 million total O and M. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Do we agree on the left-hand side?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that consideration of Safety and Public Services main estimates is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank the honourable Minister and the witnesses for appearing before the committee.

On the agreement of the committee, we shall go into the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I would like to recognize Mr. Antoine before we proceed. Mr. Antoine.

Provision Of Funding To Social Envelope Committee

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier this session, we deferred the four departments that belonged to the Envelope Committee. Based on a budget supplement that was just tabled today, there was about \$3.2 million that was supposed to be allocated. Last week, we passed a motion telling the government to give earnest consideration to finding this \$3.2 million from the budget reserve supplement.

Before we look at a member of this envelope committee, which is Education, Culture and Employment, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if the government was able to give earnest consideration to the motion that we passed last week. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the government has indeed given earnest consideration and has accepted the recommendation from the Standing Committee on Finance. The money will be reallocated from supp reserves to the wellness fund. That is why I tabled the budget supplementary today. The documents will be changed in the books during the break, and there will be adjustments made to the bill at the end, as we're passing the bill, to adjust the different departments, Mr. Chairman. So, the money is there.

---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are we ready to proceed with the opening comments? Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Just for the record, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the Minister of Finance and the government for making the decision according to the motion that SCOF put forward and was supported by the majority in this House. So I would like to thank the Minister, mahsi.

---Applause

Department Of Education, Culture And Employment

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine, and thank you, Mr. Minister. Is the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment ready to provide opening comments on the department?

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The remarks I'm going to make, Mr. Chairman, are quite lengthy. It's mainly because I think there's a need for me, as Minister, to respond to a lot of the issues that are generally of public concern. I also think it's important for the public to know that we have tried to take many of the major policy issues to the public for consultation.

Mr. Chairman, the estimates I present today reflect the need to become more strategic with our resource allocation in these increasingly difficult economic times. The department has been working closely with the other Members of the Social Envelope Committee -- the departments of Health and Social Services, Justice, the NWT Housing Corporation -- to reshape our programs. We believe that by working together, programs contributing to the wellness of communities and the education and training of children and adults can continue to be delivered within the means of this government.

During the last session of the Legislative Assembly, I tabled the department's strategic plan which will guide the direction of Education, Culture and Employment's programs and services into the next century.

Seven major strategic objectives are outlined:

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- to improve support for communities to achieve their culture, heritage and language goals;

- to provide people in all communities with access to public information networks;

- to build a comprehensive early childhood learning system;

- to improve student achievement;

- to improve access for adults to learning and work;

- to develop a flexible, comprehensive system of post-secondary learning; and,

- to ensure a lasting impact from learning and human resource development.

The department's main estimates begin the process of focusing and reshaping existing funding and programming, following these strategic objectives. This includes reallocating existing funding to areas where we believe a change in focus will bring greater benefits, restructuring programs to meet a broader need, integrating similar programs and, where possible, reducing administrative costs.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to start by describing how these main estimates support the department's strategic objective for improving support to communities to achieve their culture, heritage and language goals.

The development of school curricula and programs which reflect local language and culture plays an important role in helping us reach this objective. One of the educational development branch's key initiatives in the coming years is to increase instruction in aboriginal languages in NWT schools. In 1995-96, the department, in partnership with the boards of education, proposes to implement Innuqatigiit, an Inuktitut curriculum from kindergarten to grade 12, in schools throughout Nunavut. With the successful implementation of Dene Kede curriculum in kindergarten to grade 6 throughout the western Arctic, the department proposes to start the development of the Dene language and culture curriculum for grades 7 to 9. The department also proposes to implement the French second language curriculum.

The department, through its heritage and culture division, provides a number of funding programs to help local people operate culture, language and heritage projects. To move the administration of these programs closer to the people they serve, the department proposes to continue to offer a range of

programs which support language and culture activities at the community level.

Mr. Chairman, the second strategic direction is to provide people in all communities with access to public information networks. New communications technology offers an increasing number of opportunities to enhance program delivery and overcome the barriers presented by geography.

In the coming year, the department proposes to complete and begin implementing a distance learning strategy to support learners from kindergarten through adulthood. This will be accomplished by establishing systems through telecommunication infrastructures, defining hardware and software appropriate to all users and developing training for educational users.

Mr. Chairman, the third strategic objective is to build a comprehensive early childhood learning system. The transfer of the early childhood program to the department has offered new opportunities to link activities with developmental initiatives offered through Education, Culture and Employment.

These opportunities are reflected in improvements made to the early childhood program, effective September 1st of last year. These include improving access to the user subsidy and enhancing contributions to assist with the start-up and ongoing costs of operating early childhood programs.

Mr. Chairman, through these improvements, we have been able to provide support to an increasing number of clients. In the coming year, the department will review the changes to the early childhood program to ensure it is serving the needs of a broad base of clients.

The fourth strategic direction guiding this budget is the improvement of student achievement. To reach this goal, it is important that we know more about our students' current level of achievement. Northwest Territories students have been participating in the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada's school achievement indicators program since it began in 1993. In the past two years, assessments in mathematics, reading, and writing have been conducted. These assessments have given the department a good deal of information about our students and we recognize that we need to take action to assist them in improving their skills.

As a result, one of the key proposals in this budget is a \$550,000 numeracy and literacy initiative designed

to improve achievement among NWT students. Initiatives would include assessing the reading and writing skills of all grade 3 students in English, Inuktitut and the Dene languages, which we plan to carry out in the 1995-96 school year.

Mr. Chairman, many NWT students need additional support to reach their full potential. To support students who need help in dealing with academic or personal problems, we are proposing to increase the school community counsellor program.

The first graduates of this program began working in schools in 1988 and have quickly become a well accepted and indispensable part of the school team. In addition to the 35 counsellors who have graduated from previous programs, 15 new positions will be added in January of 1996, at a cost of \$218,000 for the remaining three months of the fiscal year and

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\$870,000 for 1996-97. During 1995-96, the department also plans to implement a strategy for the allocation of counselling resources to boards of education.

The department, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Justice, will implement a holistic, interagency approach to student support in 1995-96. A focus group session comprising stakeholders at community, regional and departmental levels was held in Yellowknife in early December. This focus group provided direction for development of a community-driven model for delivering school linked services to children and youth. A policy framework document describing the model and its implementation is now being developed. Implementation of this interagency approach to student support will begin across the NWT in April of 1995.

In August, I attended the excellence and equity in education conference in Toronto, which brought together advocates, student support professionals and political leaders from across the world. I was pleased to learn, Mr. Chairman, that the Northwest Territories is a leader in inclusive education in North America. Our approach, as outlined in the inclusive schooling directive, is to provide the support systems and services to enable all students to participate in regular classrooms appropriate to their age, in their home communities. Maintaining students in their home communities and providing an additional \$1.5 million this year for the support and training of

teachers and students will augment the existing special needs programming through a community-based approach.

The health of students and the communities in which they live is crucial to student success. The Department of Health and Social Services has discussed a community action proposal with you which would support communities to undertake projects that will help develop community wellness at the local level. Since the department offers programs and services which range from early childhood to adulthood, we would be a major contributor to community action fund projects. We would work with our social envelope partners to encourage and support communities in setting up innovative projects which promote school-linked services, early intervention and other wellness initiatives.

In 1994, I released a document called *Creating Choices: Solving the Income Support Puzzle*, which is being used as a starting point for public discussion and consultation on this complex issue, which will continue in the coming year. The planned transfer of social assistance to this department is designed to create direct links to education, training and work, and would help to develop an integrated community delivery system. In the coming fiscal year, the department proposes to organize projects combining the delivery of career development and social assistance functions in every region.

Mr. Chairman, Education, Culture and Employment, the Department of Health and Social Services and the Government of Canada are already cooperating on the investing in people strategy, a two-year initiative which provides specialized counselling, career and employment development, life skills, on-the-job experience and education to social assistance recipients.

The total contribution from both levels of government for the two-year joint initiative will be up to \$8 million, which will be cost-shared equally between the federal and territorial governments. Education, Culture and Employment has reprofiled the short-term employment program, and a portion of the training on-the-job program to cover a portion of our contribution. In the coming fiscal year, the department proposes to increase opportunities provided through the investing in people strategy by increasing the number of northern skills development programs and work activity projects offered in communities.

Education, Culture and Employment continues its delivery work in other programs that build bridges between learning and work, such as the Canada-NWT infrastructure program, a \$10.8 million, three-year program that is also cost-shared with the federal government. And, Mr. Chairman, I know that all Members realize that we are also partners with the Housing Corporation and Public Works in the building and learning strategy. To further strengthen the link between learning and work, the department is proposing to develop a strategy linking apprenticeship with the career and technology studies program and to pilot a senior secondary apprenticeship program in selected communities. In the coming year, the department also proposes to develop program and service guidelines for career development initiatives for youth.

The public service career training program plays an important role in preparing affirmative action candidates for officer level jobs in the territorial government. The department is currently proposing to restructure it so that it is cost-shared with employing departments. This, and other training initiatives, should help to offset the impact of a \$1 million reduction planned for 1995-96.

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Community teacher education programs have provided many northerners with the opportunity to get involved in the field of education. Students, schools and communities also benefit from these programs, as an increasing number of qualified aboriginal educators enhance local language and culture in the schools, and act as role models for students. In the coming fiscal year, the department proposes to introduce two additional community teacher education training projects, one in the Deh Cho and one also likely in the Sahtu.

Mr. Chairman, college and university programs play an important role for preparing many NWT residents for the workplace. Therefore, the sixth strategic objective is to develop a flexible, comprehensive system of post-secondary learning. An increasing number of NWT students -- particularly aboriginal students -- are continuing on to post-secondary education. We need, Mr. Chairman, to control rising costs and we are proposing minor revisions to some benefits. Even so, we are requesting an increase of \$2.8 million for funding for student financial assistance. In the coming fiscal year, the department plans to review the student financial assistance program, and propose changes to the program so that

we can maintain adequate support while increasing access in these difficult financial times.

The creation of two northern college systems is well under way. A college funding system to define accountability and to ensure equitable distribution of funding will be implemented. I plan to direct the college to streamline administration and to charge back third-party contracts to save \$600,000. I also propose to reinstate a \$1 million one time 1994-95 contribution reduction which caused the college to draw down its surplus. The department will continue to support the two colleges in the coming year, particularly as they work to provide science and technology programs and services.

Mr. Chairman, we want to ensure that the Northwest Territories benefit from the investment it makes in people through education and training programs. One of the ways we plan to reach this objective is by working with employers to set national occupational standards. During the past few years, jurisdictions across Canada have examined ways to take advantage of the apprenticeship format and apply it to a broader range of employment positions. These discussions have led to a movement to support occupational certification, which involves developing standards for various types of positions. In the next fiscal year, the department proposes to begin the implementation of occupational certification according to the Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act and prepare proposals to amend the act's regulations.

In preparation for division, the department is providing leadership in the completion of human resource plans for each of the two new territories. A planning model and time frame have been developed and approved. We expect that two human resource plans will be prepared by September 1995, and will include education and training in strategies that make the most of affirmative action employment in the new public services.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of increases in the department's main estimates due to funding formulae and forced growth. There are a number of factors which contribute to forced growth, including the rapid increases in the NWT's population. The increasing success of the school system has also resulted in greater pressure being placed on the school system and on our main estimates. For instance, the extension of high school grades in smaller communities has resulted in greater participation rates as more students stay in school longer. These

factors have contributed to an increase of \$5.5 million in contributions to boards of education. This will be partially offset by decreasing expenditures on school residence programs by some \$1.5 million. Of course, Mr. Chairman, this is dependent on a number of initiatives we undertake with the boards. This reflects a rapidly declining need as more students receive all their high school education in their home community. To live within our means we are also proposing that the school program funding formula be reduced by \$2.1 million, or 2.5 per cent, in 1995-96.

Mr. Chairman, I realize I have been quite long but I just wanted to advise the Members of the initiatives that have been undertaken. What I will be doing at some future date, Mr. Chairman, is tabling a document of all the consultations we've undertaken already and make a personal response to the comments made by the Standing Committee on Finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister, for those opening remarks. I will now ask a representative from the Standing Committee on Finance to give his opening comments. The chair recognizes the Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to make the remarks on behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance as dynamic and arresting as the Minister's opening comments...

---Applause

...as tough a challenge as that might be.

Mr. Chairman, committee Members noted that this department has a number of initiatives planned and in progress. While the committee noted progress in many of these initiatives -- some of which were in response to committee recommendations -- there is concern that it will be difficult for the department to accomplish all their objectives in a timely manner.

The committee is also concerned that the Minister does not keep Members well informed about changes to department policies. Too often, a policy change is introduced which may have a significant effect on constituents, without the Minister providing adequate information to Members. Members are then unable to

provide the best possible assistance to their constituents when concerns arise. The Minister has an obligation to keep Members informed on matters which will have an impact on northerners.

As well, with such a variety of departmental initiatives planned, committee Members feel it will be difficult for the department to monitor and report on the progress of these initiatives. Committee Members felt that some of the information presented by the department demonstrates an inability to properly evaluate or communicate the department's progress.

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Committee Members strongly urge the department to develop a more realistic list of objectives and initiatives, along with a better means of monitoring progress on those initiatives. Without better communication and information, it is impossible for Members to effectively evaluate whether this department is fulfilling its mandate.

Social Assistance

One of the most significant highlights of this budget is the proposed transfer of social assistance programs to this department. Committee Members appreciate the rationale behind this move; namely, to help social assistance clients become more self-reliant through education and career development. However, the department did not provide a detailed plan for the implementation of the transfer. The committee has serious concerns that this initiative may be rushed and ineffective. Committee Members are especially concerned that social assistance clients not suffer while the department learns how to manage this program. The committee will expect the department to provide a clear, detailed implementation plan when the department's main estimates are considered in the House.

As well, the transfer of staff for social assistance program delivery from the Department of Health and Social Services to this department will need to be approached carefully. In the spirit of comments made elsewhere on regional coordination of interdepartmental cooperation, the committee encourages this department to rely on the resources and the knowledge of regional staff and health boards to ensure that the transfer is as smooth and efficient as possible. Care should also be taken to involve and inform clients, to minimize any disruption in their lives.

Quality Indicators And Focus On Excellence

Last year, the committee recommended that the department: "adopt a focus on excellence as a fundamental principle of the educational system." Committee Members noted that the department is working with other provinces to develop a set of "quality indicators," which would enable the department and schools to monitor the progress of their students and compare it with achievements of students elsewhere in Canada. Continued participation in national standardized testing programs is also an important part of this concept.

Interdepartmental School-Based Services Model

The critical issue here is making it easier for students and their families to get help when they need it. Almost all northerners aged six to 16 -- arguably the most vulnerable age range with relation to social issues and problems -- attend school. If resources to help with social problems are available in the school, the students will find it easier to access those resources. Where the problem is not so much the student's as it is that of a whole family, the school-based "access point" is often still a convenient one for the family.

The details of the model are not particularly important. Whether it involves a full-blown committee with social workers, nurses, RCMP officers and teachers involved, or merely a small office space in a school where one contact person can easily arrange for appointments with such front-line workers, the key is the school-based access point. Once this has been established, the details can be worked out on a community-by-community basis. The committee again urges this department to take a forceful lead in this initiative.

Student Residences

Committee Members are disturbed by the reductions in student residence funding proposed in the department's estimates. The Minister had said that a study of the entire issue of student residences would be completed before any changes to funding would be implemented. However, these reductions have been introduced before the study has been completed. Members are concerned at this apparent contradiction, and will be asking the Minister for an explanation when he appears before the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Koe.

Point Of Privilege

MR. KOE:

Before we proceed further, due to the level of interest in this House, I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have a motion to report progress. It is not debatable. The chair does not recognize a quorum so I'll sound the bells.

Thank you, Members, for coming. Prior to the motion to report progress, Mr. Koe raised a point of privilege. After consultation, you don't have a point of privilege but thanks for bringing the notice to the chair. There were insufficient Members in the House, given the importance of the department. We have a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I shall rise and report to the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

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MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Whitford, your motion is in order. Do we have a seconder? Mr. Koe.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 4, return to oral questions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Sahtu is requesting unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Kakfwi, proceed.

REVERT TO ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 245-12(7): Status Of Funding For Victims' Services Programs

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is in response to a question that was asked by Mr. Lewis yesterday, March 6, 1995. Mr. Lewis asked whether I would confirm that the four victim services programs in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Yellowknife and Fort Smith will be receiving no funding in this coming fiscal year. I regret that my answers to the question and the supplementaries may have been misleading and I wish to clarify any confusion that I may have caused.

In 1988, when victims were becoming a prominent public issue, the federal government set up a program of funding for victim support. This government entered into a three-year agreement for \$50,000 a year which was extended for an additional year.

In 1992, the federal government declined to renew the agreement. This was, as I said earlier, just one of a number of examples of how the federal government will provide money for a program and then withdraw it to the detriment of the provincial and territorial governments.

Since then, the funding for the four victim services programs referred to comes from funding programs within the federal government as well as the territorial government. This government's Department of Justice this year is providing \$54,000 to the Yellowknife victim services program and the federal government is providing \$50,000. The Fort Smith and Rankin Inlet programs received \$32,000 and \$33,500, respectively, from the Government of the Northwest Territories and \$10,000 each from the federal government. The Iqaluit program received \$90,000 from the federal government, the Department of

Justice of this government provides \$47,000, Health and Social Services provides \$7,000 and Education, Culture and Employment provides \$27,500.

The territorial Department of Justice victim programs are budgeted for in 1995-96 at the same level as it was for 1994-95 but the maintenance of these programs are dependent on the continuation of federal funding. In fact, we were hoping for additional federal funding because of the growing demands on these programs. The information received so far is that there have been cuts to victim funding sources in federal justice as a result of the recent federal budget. We do not yet know how much or what the impact will be in the Northwest Territories. We are presently attempting to determine this and I will be reporting back to the Assembly once I have more accurate information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. We're back to Item 21. Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 6, oral questions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Baffin Central is requesting unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Ms. Mike.

REVERT TO ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 267-12(7): Translation Of Information On Rent Scale Notice

MS. MIKE:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. One of my colleagues from Iqaluit tabled a document with regard to the housing rent scale notice and the translation into Inuktitut. I wonder if language services can translate the Inuktitut to English and, if possible, complete it by tomorrow?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 267-12(7): Translation Of Information On Rent Scale Notice

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the translation services and the Assembly, it's really the responsibility of the Speaker to provide that particular service. You might say I'm in charge of the overall programming, but the direction is received right now in the Assembly from the Speaker's office.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 267-12(7): Translation Of Information On Rent Scale Notice

MS. MIKE:

(Translation) Supplementary to my question. The Inuktitut translation states the increase in the rent scale from the Housing Corporation. I wish to have it translated by our qualified staff from Inuktitut to English. I would like it translated to English.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 267-12(7): Translation Of Information On Rent Scale Notice

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understood the question the first time. What I'm saying is the honourable Member may request the translation through the Clerk. I don't think the question should be directed at me because I'm not in charge of the staff here when they are

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functioning on behalf of the Speaker. But I will advise the honourable Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Ms. Mike, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 267-12(7): Translation Of Information On Rent Scale Notice

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize that the staff in the Assembly are dealt with through the Clerk's and the Speaker's offices. I'm simply asking if the staff in the language bureau could translate the rent scale change notice that was provided by the Housing Corporation into English from Inuktitut. That's all I'm asking.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 267-12(7): Translation Of Information On Rent Scale Notice

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. I understood the question. The thing is, the staff are here in the Assembly. I guess what I should say is which staff do you want to do it? The ones in Iqaluit, the ones in Rankin Inlet, the ones in Kitikmeot or the ones here in Yellowknife? In my view, the Speaker can handle the responsibility.

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 267-12(7): Translation Of Information On Rent Scale Notice

MS. MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, I did indicate, if possible, that I would like to have it done by tomorrow. Now that he has given me the choice of Yellowknife or regional staff, maybe I should pick the hardest one and make the Minister work. The most expedient would be the Yellowknife staff, if that is possible, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Okay. There was no question there. Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the acting Premier a question. The Premier tabled a document last week about the Fort Smith aircraft maintenance facility. As I went through the document, I noticed that there are two letters which were tabled that were unsigned. Mr. Speaker, according to our rules, documents unsigned are not allowed to be tabled. I would like to ask the acting Premier if he would provide, in accordance with the

rules, the signed documents and retable them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to remind Members that any documents that are tabled in this House have had the prerogative of all the Members and there are no rules about signatures. You may, however, tell a Minister that you would like a letter with signatures on it. I think the Member may want to rephrase the question. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I'll try again, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding, according to the rules, that we cannot table any documents in the House, such as letters, that don't have a signature. The Premier tabled Tabled Document 40-12(7) on March 2nd and there is information in it without proper signatures. That's why I would like to ask if the Premier can provide those particular documents, with the signatures, to the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Again, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, with regard to the document tabled by the Minister, we don't know whether or not the Minister is aware that the documents that she tabled were unsigned. We have to check the rules of Beauchesne with regard to signed documents being tabled in the House. Maybe it's a question of procedure and a point of order. Perhaps you may wish to raise this as a point of order. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 268-12(7): Tabling Unsigned Documents In The House

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I'll try again. Mr. Speaker, I'm asking the acting Premier about Tabled Document 40-12(7), which the Premier tabled. There are letters that are not signed in this document. I would like to ask the acting Premier if he would provide those letters to this House to ensure they are valid letters. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Yes, but that should be raised as a point of order. Acting Premier, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 268-12(7): Tabling Unsigned Documents In The House

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I'll be glad to go through the document and any letters that have been provided in an unsigned state -- if they are on file with a signature -- we'll collate again. I would point out to the House at this time, Mr. Speaker, that there are some documents that have come to light from different files since we tabled that chronology and it may well be that we should add those documents in and table the whole thing again, with signed letters if they are, in fact, signed. I will do that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 268-12(7): Tabling Unsigned Documents In The House

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. I would appreciate that because there are quite a few letters that aren't in here that should be in here. I would like to ask the acting Premier if he can make a commitment to retable the correct document, if I may use those terms, by the end of the week. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 268-12(7): Tabling Unsigned Documents In The House

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

I'll make every effort to meet the deadline of this Friday, Mr. Speaker, yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The tabled document that was tabled today by the Member for Iqaluit...

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MR. SPEAKER:

As a matter of process, Mr. Allooloo, the time is past 6:00 pm now and the House shuts down at 6:00 pm,

according to our rules. Item 22, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are meetings for tomorrow morning at 9:00 am of the Standing Committee on Finance, at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus, and at 12:00 noon of the Special Caucus Subcommittee on Bill C-68.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, March 8, 1995:

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

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

- Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing
Profession Act

- 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

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned
until Wednesday, March 8, 1995, at 1:30 pm.

--ADJOURNMENT