



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

7th Session

Day 19

12th Assembly

HANSARD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 1995

Pagination reflects print edition

Speaker: The Hon. Samuel Gargan

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 1995

Page 521

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Allooloo, Mr. Antoine, Hon. Silas Arngna'naaq, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, 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. Pudluk, Hon. John Todd, Mr. Whitford

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Good afternoon. I would like to advise the House that I have received the following communication from the Commissioner.

"Dear **MR. SPEAKER:** I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories the passage of Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, during the Seventh Session of the 12th Legislative Assembly. Yours truly, Helen Maksagak, Commissioner."

---Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Ms. Cournoyea.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 33-12(7): International Women's Day

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, today is International Women's Day. It is a day for women and men throughout the world to recognize and celebrate the contributions women have made to society.

---Applause

In the Northwest Territories, women continue to play a strong role in identifying issues and in shaping the social, economic and political directions that are being taken at the community and territorial levels.

They have been the starting point of many new initiatives in the Northwest Territories such as the

zero tolerance strategy, the community wellness strategy, the fight against all forms of violence and abuse, and steps being taken to improve support systems for men and women in need.

Mr. Speaker, the role of women in the north has been that of a catalyst for change. At the same time, they continue to provide and encourage the kind of support needed to make sure family units and values remain strong in a rapid period of change and competing interests.

Northern women, whether they are involved in traditional pursuits or the wage economy, are helping to make a difference in today's world. There is still a long way to go and many challenges to be faced. But, I am confident that women in the north will continue to help make sure that all individuals have the opportunity to live a life of honour and dignity.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind Members of the special ceremony that will take place in the great hall, during the afternoon break, to celebrate International Women's Day and the launching of a new reference manual developed by the Status of Women Council. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Ms. Cournoyea.

Minister's Statement 34-12(7): Prospectors' And Developers' Conference

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest challenges in the Northwest Territories is finding ways to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on the federal government.

With Ottawa's plans to cut \$50 million out of our transfer payment next year, it is important to move very quickly to finalize a northern energy and minerals accord so that we can control the development of a more vibrant economy that will provide the revenues to support education, health care, housing and social problems for our rapidly growing population.

In addition, we have to work in partnership with industry and aboriginal organizations to develop mineral resources in a manner that puts the land to work for us to create jobs, business opportunities and revenues.

Those are some of the messages I presented during a speech to about 400 delegates attending a banquet at the annual Prospectors' and Developers' Association of Canada Conference in Toronto Monday night.

I also told the audience that northerners want to be self-sufficient and they want the respect and dignity that comes from being full and equal partners, contributing to the growth of Canada.

It was encouraging to see the industry's recognition of the north at this conference, as well as the active participation of a large contingent from the Northwest Territories that included: Energy Minister, John Todd; Nunatsiaq MP, Jack Anawak; representatives from the city of Yellowknife, town of Hay River, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated; the Dogrib Tribal Council and, of course, our own Susan Aglukark who provided the entertainment.

Page 522

Representatives from the Legislative Assembly included Henry Zoe, Mike Ballantyne and Charles Dent.

Mr. Speaker, it is becoming increasingly important for the Northwest Territories to be represented at events such as this, in order for us to get our message to leading investors and developers.

Mining generates more value per capita in the Northwest Territories than any other province or territory, and the government is anxious to develop the economic potential of this sector in an environmentally sound and culturally sensitive way that will benefit all residents of the territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 35-12(7): Review Of Student Accommodation

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise the Members of this Assembly that the reviews of student accommodation in the Baffin,

Keewatin and Beaufort/Delta Divisional Boards of Education have been completed.

Copies of the reports have been sent to the divisional boards and the MLAs representing those jurisdictions. If other Members of the Assembly are interested in the reviews, I would be pleased to supply them with copies of the reports.

Mr. Speaker, Avery Cooper Consulting have done a good job concluding such a sensitive project. They have provided reasonable short and longer-term options for the future use of Grollier Hall in Inuvik, Kivalliq Hall in Rankin Inlet, and Ukiivik Residence in Iqaluit.

During the next few weeks, my staff will be working closely with the administration staff of the Baffin, Keewatin and Beaufort/Delta Divisional Boards of Education. They will review the implications of the reports, with the objective of determining acceptable interim solutions for the 1995-96 academic year. These solutions will be recommended to my office for approval. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 36-12(7): Early Childhood Program

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, I spoke about the importance of early childhood development and some of the successful programs that are available to children in the Northwest Territories. Today, I would like to bring you up to date on the early childhood programs, which play an important role in improving access to quality child care in the Northwest Territories.

Since the former child day care program was transferred to Education, Culture and Employment, my staff have been consulting closely with stakeholders to determine how to improve the quality and number of early childhood programs in the Northwest Territories, and how to improve access by supporting parents and people who operate programs. This consultation included a symposium held in the fall of 1993, which brought together more than 80 people from communities across the Northwest Territories working in the field of child care and early childhood education.

On the strength of this consultation, a number of changes were made to the early childhood program, effective September 1st of last year.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that contributions to assist with the start-up costs of early childhood programs have been enhanced to promote more openings in the communities for infants and children requiring additional support. As well, this contribution is now available to assist with the start-up of part-time and after school programs.

Contributions supporting the ongoing costs of operating early childhood programs are also enhanced. More funding is now available for programs which provide for early intervention and the development of infants and children with special needs, as well as for those which operate part-time and after school programs. The contributions are being made quarterly and in advance, based on anticipated child attendance.

Research has shown that post-secondary training in early childhood development for care providers plays an important role in providing quality services to children. Our next challenge is to increase the qualifications of early childhood workers in the Northwest Territories and to assist facilities in hiring qualified staff.

Further consultations with stakeholders will deal with these questions and with planning a comprehensive and community-based training program for child care providers, which will be available across the Northwest Territories.

Child care services play an important role in supporting parents as they prepare for and participate in the labour force. The user subsidy, available to assist parents in accessing early childhood programs, has now been expanded to include parents who are employed or training part-time and require part-time child care. This assistance is also available to parents who are not employed or involved in training, but whose children are at risk and would benefit from a program of early intervention.

The user subsidy is now based on a needs assessment which helps to ensure that families will be treated more equitably according to their needs and the cost of child care. This year, 312 families are receiving the child care user subsidy, an increase from 298 in 1993-94 and 140 in 1992-93. We anticipate approval of many more before the end of this month.

Mr. Speaker, while parents have the primary responsibility for child care, we also understand that access to child care services is essential for northerners to work or take education and training programs. The changes to the early childhood program are a step in this direction, and Education, Culture and Employment have received predominantly favourable responses to the changes since they came into effect.

Page 523

The department is also collaborating with the federal government on early childhood initiatives so that Brighter Futures and the Aboriginal Headstart initiative, which will be announced April 1st, complement similar programs.

Mr. Speaker, to help mark Education Week, department staff have sent a package of information on the early childhood program to all licensed child care programs, all College East and West campuses, all community learning centres, principals of schools with grade extensions, and women's organizations. The information will also be sent to community health representatives and nursing stations. I will be distributing a similar information package to all Members of this Assembly.

Posters about the importance of parents reading to young children have been sent to all kindergarten students, as well as all licensed preschool programs.

The department staff will also continue to consult with interest groups and those directly involved in providing child day care services as the early childhood program evolves and improves so that it better meets the needs of northerners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On International Women's Day And Appreciation Of Mrs. Lewis

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is International Women's Day. For 32 years, Mr. Speaker, my wife, Della, and I have been residents of the Northwest Territories. We

were married on August 3, 1963, one month before we went to Baffin Island.

It wasn't until I married, Mr. Speaker, that I fully realized what civilization really meant. I suspected that many women belonged to a different culture, to the jock male culture that I was most familiar with. In my young bachelor days, Mr. Speaker, I never seemed to have a home, it was more like camping. My wife, Della, changed all that. Order was brought to my life and a sense of purpose. It struck me in the early years of my marriage that women were really the architects of our civilization, and it made me approach my understanding of history in a completely different way. They provide the basis for settlement and stability, they're the strongest voices in our society against injustice, abuse and intolerance.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate International Women's Day, all I feel I can do is talk about my personal experience living in harmony with a clever, talented, hard-working, strong woman. This month, my wife, Della, will retire after spending the past 18 years at the Abe Miller Centre. The work was demanding, the wages modest, but for so many working for non-government agencies, it has been a battle to obtain sufficient funds to keep this vital social service alive. It's a different world to the public service where you don't have to do fund raising to help cover the costs of wages and programs.

Through her, although I'm a person elected to serve, I've learned the true value of community service. She has served without complaint, without expectation of recognition or reward. In thanking her today, I thank all women who are really the true architects of our communities and our civilization.

If the government wants to do one thing to recognize women, it would be to address the obvious inadequacies in the wages many women receive for the often demanding work they take on. It's a systemic problem, Mr. Speaker, which perhaps can't be solved overnight.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, colleagues, very much. Mr. Speaker, this is a systemic problem and I know that you can't solve huge problems overnight. But, we should at least make some start on this because it is very often women who end up working for all kinds of social causes, either in the private sector, in the public sector and even for non-government agencies. I know it's too late to help my wife and her colleague, Joyce Williams, who will also retire from the Abe Miller Centre this month. These are both professionally-trained people and I know that both Joyce and my wife would echo the sentiments I am giving you today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On International Women's Day

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to acknowledge International Woman's Day. Women are often the unrecognized leaders in our communities and are the backbone of most community and volunteer organizations. We, in this House, have supported a lot of their initiatives, especially in combatting health and social services issues. We have dealt with family violence, alcohol and drug abuse issues, care for the aged, handicapped and disabled, and many other issues, maybe not to the satisfaction of a lot of people, but I believe that the initiatives we have worked on in this House, and some of the studies done by Members of this Assembly, are helping to address the issues raised by women's organizations.

Today, I would just like to wish all the women of the Northwest Territories and across the world the best of luck in all the things that they do. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Member's Statement On Susan Toolooktook's Walk Of Love

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to make a comment on this day. I would like to recognize the efforts of one woman from the

Page 524

community of Baker Lake. On February 14, 1992, I rose in this House to commend Susan Toolooktook on her walk of love from Baker Lake to Sugarloaf Mountain or Nauhaaq. This 50-mile walk was to draw attention to the plight of, and raise money for, poverty-stricken local families and resulted in the creation of a food bank in Baker Lake.

Today, I rise in this House to commend the NWT Status of Women for selecting Susan Toolooktook as the 1994-95 eastern Arctic recipient of their wise woman award. This award, first given in 1991-92, was created to recognize and celebrate women who have made a significant contribution to the lives of others in their communities. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to give notice that Susan, to this day, has continued to work in the community of Baker Lake in trying to help those who are incapable of helping themselves. Susan is also the mother of a child who is now of age to work and who is making a significant contribution to the community.

Mr. Speaker, Susan Toolooktook has shown unprecedented dedication to the needy in Baker Lake and she should be celebrated as a fine role model for young Inuit. Congratulations to Susan, and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Patterson.

Member's Statement On Reorganization Of Heritage Canada In NWT

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, parks and tourism provide very important economic opportunities in the Baffin and in Nunavut. For many Inuit, parks are also seen as an opportunity to preserve and protect the land while respecting traditional Inuit activities, including subsistence hunting.

New parks and planned parks were established in Nunavut, with the consent and support of adjacent communities and Inuit organizations. Indeed, I

believe, having been involved in the land claims negotiations as part of the Government of the Northwest Territories, that the land claims settlement of the Inuit of Nunavut was predicated on existing park reserves and new parks being established in the settlement area.

Land selection by Inuit was based on reliance on Heritage Canada's commitment to support and maintain existing and future parks in Nunavut. Soon, in fact, the Nunavut impact and benefit review process will begin, with the aim of establishing the present park reserves as permanent national parks.

Mr. Speaker, recently, Heritage Canada officials provided information about a reorganization of Heritage Canada in the Northwest Territories. Many of my constituents were alarmed about this. They were concerned that the recently vacated position of Nunavut parks superintendent, at least temporarily, will not be restaffed. Of even more concern was the planned relocation of the Nunavut land claims implementation coordinator for Heritage Canada from Iqaluit, out of Nunavut, to Yellowknife. Nothing against Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker, but it seems to my constituents -- and as well to Jose Kusugak, president of Nunavut Tunngavik -- that the person responsible for implementing parks provisions in the Nunavut land claim should live and work in Nunavut.

I request consent to briefly conclude my statement, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to inform Members of this House that our concerns were heard and heeded. I was just informed this morning by Ms. Josie Weninger, who is acting director in the Northwest Territories of Heritage Canada, that it has been determined that the position of Nunavut land claims implementation coordinator will remain in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, Iqaluit's loss, however, is Pangnirtung's gain. I understand the plan is to relocate the position to Pangnirtung, which is in Nunavut. I'm delighted that this decision has been made. So, Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend the officials of Heritage Canada for

heeding the concerns expressed by many of my constituents and others. I wish to say that later in this session, I will be taking steps, which I hope will allow Canadian Heritage officials to be accountable to Members of this House for further explaining their plans for reorganizing and changes in an area that has important impacts on the people of the Northwest Territories. So I am grateful for this decision and look forward to further consultation on planned changes in the north that might affect our constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Ms. Mike.
Member's Statement On International Women's Day

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a statement today because it is International Women's Day. I also want to say to this House Inuit women have worked along side their men, historically. I believe we still have a number of those families who still work as partners.

However, there are a few very touchy issues. If we are to effectively implement strategies such as zero tolerance, community wellness and the fight against all forms of violence and abuse, as our Premier stated, we will have to begin here in our House.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, I can only say from my own experience that I cannot help but notice that when I got a Cabinet portfolio, it wasn't even two hours before I was being asked questions in the House during question period. Kindly, the Premier took the questions herself.

Since I stepped down, Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but notice Mr. Ng, who is now Minister of MACA, has had hardly any questions posed to him. That really makes me wonder. Is it because he is a man? Did I get more questions because I was a woman?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Nay, nay.

Page 525

MS. MIKE:

During the time I had the Cabinet portfolio, Mr. Speaker...I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Baffin Central is seeking unanimous consent to complete her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the time I had the Cabinet portfolio, when I travelled to the communities outside my constituency, I had many women come up to me and say they are giving you a hard time because you are a woman. I would like to thank those women who, without being told, recognized that. I would also like to thank my constituents for having treated me as equally as they treat men. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statement. Mr. Whitford.

Member's Statement On International Women's Day

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. I, too, would like to add my comments to salute International Women's Day. I look forward to the events that are going to take place at the great hall later this afternoon to help us celebrate International Women's Day.

There isn't a day that goes by that we don't hear in the news or read in the newspaper, special events that are taking place across the world and in our territory that put forward the great achievements that women do make in the areas of commerce, industry, entertainment, research, medicine and sports, to name a few.

We have women in every walk of life who affect our lives daily and who are to be looked at as role models and examples. There are the Mother Therasas of the world who look after people who can't look after themselves. We have the Sister Sutherlands of the Northwest Territories. I would like to pay a special contribution to Sister Sarazan who many of us in the Northwest Territories owe a great deal. She was a teacher of ours many years ago. She taught us to

respect others as well as to be good students and turn around some of what we learn in school to help better the communities that we live in. She passed on several years ago now. Her memory is still fresh in many of our minds.

The Madam Curies of the world of research; the Florence Nightingales of medicine work in the hospitals and research labs to make the world a better place. There are countless unsung heroines among us who are not only working for the benefit of women, but the benefit of all human kind. I owe a special thank you and recognition to my grandmother, with whom I lived for many years. She taught me to respect other people. She was a kind and gentle lady who lived into her 90s before she passed on from this earth. My mother is still living and taught me the good ways of life. My wife of almost 30 years now, Mr. Speaker...

---Applause

Unfortunately, my wife and I were never fortunate enough to have daughters...

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Whitford, your time has lapsed.

MR. WHITFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, it was unfortunate that we never had daughters to teach and enjoy as a family. But we are fortunate to have three sons. We always live with the consolation that soon we are going to have three daughters-in-law to add to the long list of female influence in my life.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by saying the same thing that I said last year at this time. I said, we should just make time and recognize women not only one day of the year, but I think we need to give the recognition that they deserve every day of the year. With that, I salute International Women's Day.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Winter Roads In Nahendeh

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House as to the current status of the winter roads in my constituency.

---Applause

I would like to begin with Trout Lake, Mr. Speaker. This is the longest of the three winter roads in my constituency. It is 126 kilometres in length. This 126 kilometres covers terrain that is flat and open with no hills. In the 126 kilometres, Trout Lake winter road crosses four small creeks. According to residents of Trout Lake, there has never been a major overflow problem that the community couldn't deal with.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke with the community this morning and they indicated that the present road condition no way warrants early closure, and that the residents do not understand why March 15th has been chosen as an official closure date when the road is in this good condition.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the situation of having heavy equipment used for the purpose of towing vehicles when stuck has rarely occurred on a stretch of winter road. The winter road that connects Jean Marie River to the rest of the world is 27 kilometres in length. There are creeks on this winter road; however, Mr. Speaker, due to the construction of a fair weather road, bridges have been built over all these crossings and therefore pose no environmental threat.

Mr. Speaker, according to residents, there have been gravel haul operations going on here and the road has been packed, resulting in longer road life. As far as immobilizing heavy equipment for the purpose of towing vehicles, residents have exercised common sense and have never required these services. Also, Mr. Speaker, the communities involved in the

Page 526

heavy equipment program have been maintaining approximately half of this road.

To continue, Mr. Speaker, Nahanni Butte is the shortest of these winter roads at 21 kilometres in

length. This road crosses the Liard River and the small swamp area. There is economic activity in the form of logging in this community that is relying on the winter road to remain open until the end of the month. Again, Mr. Speaker, like the other two communities, no heavy equipment has been used to tow vehicles stuck due to warm weather conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I'm running out of time. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Nahendeh is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Conclude your statement, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize that this is the first year the Department of Transportation has implemented a March 15th closure date. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that part of the reason for the early closure date was meant to address environmental concerns. This is very considerate of the department and I applaud their efforts and concerns. However, Mr. Speaker, the action that was chosen by the department to address this concern was one-sided and therefore suffers from inadequacies.

Mr. Speaker, what I'm talking about is cooperation or, in this case, the lack of it. This is a good example of how important it is for the government to consult with communities for efficient program delivery. In future decisions of the department, active participation of all factors must be a common denominator. The residents of these communities were disappointed that they were not consulted for their input. They are the ones directly affected, and if anyone is to be considered experts with regard to this issue, the residents of these communities are probably your best resources.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mr. Speaker, it only makes sense that any community decisions made should be made in direct consultation with that community. As far as using a lack of money as a reason for early closure, as stated by the Minister...

AN HON. MEMBER:

Shame.

MR. ANTOINE:

...in Hansard on Wednesday, March 1st, the cost of maintenance is almost insignificant in comparison with those winter roads and ice roads where major river and creek crossings are more frequent and road lengths are consistently longer. According to one highway contract maintenance personnel, Mr. Speaker, he stated that money allocated for winter road maintenance has been two-thirds exhausted. The Minister was saying in last Thursday's Hansard that the roads were opened earlier this year, but a quick estimate shows that two thirds of the money allocated has been used in the last three months. That leaves one third for the next seven days.

Also, Mr. Speaker, according to another highway maintenance official, for a three-month period, the total maintenance cost

was approximately \$5,000. Again, Mr. Speaker, just a quick calculation gives a cost of \$840 for an extra two-week period.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Minister, the ultimate responsibility for making the decision to close these winter roads early was that of the Minister and his department. I strongly urge the Minister to reconsider his decision, considering the sensitivity of this issue and the feedback as a result of the March 15th closing date. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On International Women's Day And Mrs. Ningark

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleagues, today being International Women's Day, I would like to recognize someone very special. Someone who is very special and has been a defence lawyer, a doctor,

a teacher, a woman of God and she has done all these without pay, without complaint. Her clients are myself and my kids, her customers are myself and my kids and she has done this for over 20 years. My kids and I are very grateful to her. I am speaking of my partner in life, my wife, Celine. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On International Women's Day

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some of my colleagues have mentioned that today is International Women's Day. Mr. Speaker, in these modern times, we often hear about how good women have it. On the surface, no doubt, it is true. Women can vote, women can work and women can take an active role in our society today.

However, Mr. Speaker, I want all Members to take time to think about the realities of a woman's place in society. Some men say it jokingly but some say it sincerely, that every day is women's day. In some places in our society, this is true and there are many men who respect their spouses and treat them as equals. I commend them for that.

---Applause

However, Mr. Speaker, as a whole, the idea that women are treated with respect and equality reflects an ideal world, and we know we don't live in such an ideal world. When we look at our communities, we see women who are facing difficult situations daily.

Women face violence, physically, mentally and emotionally. Women face intimidation from men who are not comfortable sharing an equal standing with women. Women face the difficulties of single parenting, of providing for a strong family life and have primary responsibilities for child care. Women

Page 527

even face the difficulty of acquiring pay equity which I know is still an outstanding issue to be addressed by this government.

Mr. Speaker, when we look around this Assembly, there are only three women Members of this Assembly. It is not that women aren't good leaders, Mr. Speaker. When we look at the community governments, there are many women leaders. Most community organizations are run by women.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is at times difficult for women to get into politics at the territorial level in particular. Aside from the issues of intimidation and child care, women have to deal with being away from their families, and it makes it much more difficult when we have children.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Conclude your statement, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and honourable Members. Mr. Speaker, when we are away from our families it is, at times, difficult to receive the same degree of support which men receive for doing the same work. At times, I think of this difference when people approach me and make comments to me about my husband. They'll often say to me gee, Jeannie, you have a great husband -- not that I don't agree with them -- but they tell me he's great because he's willing to take care of the family so I can do my work. The ironic thing is that they would never dream of saying the same thing about men in this Assembly who allow their wives to do the work at home while they do their work in the Assembly.

It's expected that women should keep the family going and it only seems special when the man does it. Even when women make it to this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether we're treated as equals. I remember, vividly, receiving a plaque when I first became a Member, from a male Member in this House which read: "A woman's place is in her home and that's where she should go, right after work." I certainly hope, Mr. Speaker, that that attitude still doesn't prevail.

Women in the public see the things that happen in this Assembly and are they the kinds of things which would encourage women to consider this type of political lifestyle? As my colleague, Rebecca Mike,

said when she was a Minister -- and I have to agree -- she was often the subject of fierce and frequent questioning. Did being female have anything to do with the approach Members took? If she was male, would she have received such harsh treatment? Male Ministers who sit in this Assembly have received warning tickets from Renewable Resource officers, who are in fact considered police officers when they apply the Wildlife Act for offences, and they still sit as Ministers. Do we have a double standard, where a female Minister is forced to resign, not because of actual offences but simply because of allegations which, at the time, the RCMP decided were not worthy of pursuing?

Mr. Speaker, another example discussed in this House which often becomes quite heated are issues of concern to myself as a Member. However, for the most part, it remains in the House. I wonder at times, Mr. Speaker, if I were a male criticizing the Minister the way I did regarding the CL-215 base, would I have been taken to court? If I were a male criticizing the actions, he would have viewed it as something between men and not something to be pursued in the courts. Mr. Speaker, I've been in politics for about 18 years and, although the presence of women has increased over that time, there is still a long, long way to go.

After hearing about the difficulties which face women in territorial politics, some women may wonder if they should pursue a seat in this House. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't blame the women for being discouraged. But, at the same time, I would like to encourage women to pursue the goal of acquiring a seat in this Legislative Assembly. It's important that women get involved at the territorial level.

Women in politics bring their personal experiences with them. One of the most important of these is their ability to organize and balance priorities, skills most women learn very quickly in order to survive and become an effective mother. As a result, women deal more directly with issues. They know what they want and are prepared to work quickly and in a straightforward manner to get on with the business. They are very organized in their approach and the women I've known in politics make sure their homework is done on issues they have to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to remove the barriers and break down the chauvinistic attitudes which remain with some of our politicians, particularly in this House. I also want to say that there are some Members who make every effort to work equally with women. Mr.

Speaker, I would urge more northern women to stand by their strong convictions and put their names forward for the territorial election in the fall. Women have always been great teachers, and with the presence of more women in this Assembly, women will continue to strive to achieve equality for all women in our society. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return To Question 248-12(7): Protection From Rental Increases For Public Housing Tenants

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a reply to a question that was asked by Mr. Titus Alloo on March 6, 1996 regarding the protection from rental increases for public housing tenants.

Mr. Speaker, the rent scale is the protection for social housing tenants. Rents are based on a tenant's income. Therefore, if a tenant's income changes, the rent charged also changes. In market housing, the rent is a fixed amount set by the landlord, regardless of a tenant's income. There is no protection if a tenant's income decreases. In social housing, if a tenant's income decreases, their rent will also decrease. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Ms. Cournoyea.

Page 528

Return To Question 225-12(7): Procedures For Verifying GNWT Candidates' Credentials

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question that was asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on March 3, 1995 regarding procedures for verifying GNWT candidates' credentials.

Mr. Speaker, for positions working with youth and other positions of trust, we ensure employees hired

have a clear criminal record. Credentials are verified for certain professional positions such as nurses, lawyers and teachers. Job offers for these positions are conditional upon membership with the professional association. The association sets standards and verifies credentials for these positions. New employees are requested to provide a copy of credentials for their personnel file. If credentials are falsified, dismissal action is taken. If appropriate, other related action may be initiated.

The Department of Personnel is currently updating the staffing guidelines in the human resource manual. Verification of credentials for all positions, where appropriate, will be added. This section will include a detailed verification process for staffing officers to follow, prior to formalizing job offers.

Return To Question 152-12(7): Established Public Policy Re Procurement Procedures

Return To Question 127-12(7): Economic Policies Re Organizations And Businesses

I have a second return to questions asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on February 21, 1995 and February 23, 1995: Question 127-12(7), established public policy regarding procurement procedures and Question 152-12(7), economic policies regarding organizations and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, a response provided today to Written Question 8-12(7) asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on February 21, 1995, provides the information requested by these two questions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Mr. Bill Nom, president of the Nuni Development Corporation from Fort Resolution. He is also a town counsellor. Sitting next to him was Euan Hunter, the mayor. He's not there right now, but I'll recognize him anyway.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize two people from my community, Letidia Apsaktaun and Catherine Kringorn.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very difficult for people in the smaller communities, especially in the east, to come here. I have three constituents from the community of Baker Lake, one of whom is Susan Toolooktook, who I spoke of earlier this afternoon. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I've been informed by several honourable Members -- in case I didn't notice -- I would like to recognize and welcome back Mr. Ben MacDonald of the UNW. I understand yesterday he was attending an important meeting with the GNWT on employee assistance, so I'm prepared to excuse him for his absence from the House yesterday. Thank you.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to recognize Clifford Schaefer. Clifford used to live in Fort Providence.

---Applause

Okay, we'll take a break now until the bells sound.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Finance who is responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat. It's regarding concerns raised about the affirmative action program. Early this year, this government formed a review committee to review the affirmative action program. I would like to ask the Minister the status of this review committee.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, the committee will soon commence consultation to see if the affirmative action program is and has been working and to look at what people from different areas of the Northwest Territories think about the program, with the objective of reporting back to the Financial Management Board the results of their survey and to make suggestions if there

Page 529

need to be any changes to the affirmative action program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

Can the Minister advise us who is on this review committee?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I will table that information in the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

I will be looking forward to finding out who is on the review committee. The Minister said the committee is going to begin their consultations. I would like to know who they are going to be consulting with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, the committee will continue consulting with the original group they talked with late last year, with aboriginal organizations and also there will be some consultation by region with interested parties, whoever wants to make a presentation. Or if people want to send in briefs to us, they can do that as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if there are any representatives of any of the aboriginal groups on this review committee.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 269-12(7): Status Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, it's an internal committee and it is consulting with aboriginal organizations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to refer to Tabled Document 51-12(7). I would like to ask the Minister of Housing if that tabled document was used as a form to inform housing association tenants about rent adjustments due to take place April 1, 1995. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe it was one of many that were used. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, did the Housing Corporation develop a form for the housing associations in the communities to use to assess the income of the household which will affect the rent scale? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that the local housing authorities have all been trained and they are going to sit down and work out with their clients what their new rents will be. They have forms that they use to calculate that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Was that form provided by the Housing Corporation to assist the housing associations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For sure the Housing Corporation is involved with the local housing authorities and they are working with them to help them assess the rents for tenants. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Mr. Allooloo.

Page 530

Supplementary To Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if the Minister is evading my question but I'm asking whether the Housing Corporation provided forms that the housing associations would use to assess the rents of tenants. I wonder if that was done. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that my question has not been answered. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 270-12(7): Use Of Tabled Document 51-12(7) To Inform Tenants Of Rent Adjustments

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have answered the question. The Housing Corporation does work with the local housing authorities and they use different forms, to my understanding, to assess the rents of the tenants. The housing authority staff sit down with tenants, go over their income and other things they need in order to assess the rent. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. My question is, was the form that went to the housing authorities entitled "Rent Change Notice" designed by the Housing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the forms in the information package is titled "Rent Change Notice." One of them is, yes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How many rent change notice forms were sent to the housing associations from the Housing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said yesterday in this House, I believe approximately 7,000 English copies and 2,900 copies of the information packages were distributed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The rent change notice form indicates that rents will change as of April 1, 1995. Was that sent to all housing associations and authorities across the NWT?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, all local housing authorities received these packages and they had workshops as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Had the Minister answered my first question, I wouldn't have had to use all my supplementary questions just trying to get the answer I'm after. My question to the Minister is this: was the translation in Inuktitut of that notice also provided to the housing authorities and associations by the Housing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 271-12(7): Designation Of Form Entitled "Rent Change Notice"

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 272-12(7): Extension Of Date For Closure Of Winter Roads

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up the statement I made earlier today with regard to the winter roads to Trout Lake, Nahanni Butte and Jean Marie River, which are scheduled to close March 15th. I also, in recognition of those constituents who are involved with this issue and are making their concerns known, on behalf of those constituents, I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation what the department has done so far in reaching an attainable and reasonable solution to extending the closing date. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 272-12(7): Extension Of Date For Closure Of Winter Roads

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did ask the department before I left Friday to go to Iqaluit over to Rankin and then to Toronto, to treat this matter with a sense of urgency because time was running out, as they say; I asked them to review this entire issue and see if there was some way that we could, one, stay within our

budget requirements -- and I want to emphasize that - - but at the same time two, perhaps consider a creative way in which to extend some of these ice

Page 531

roads. I am not in a position today to give a full report to the Member, but I will assure him that by tomorrow I will hopefully be able to make a Minister's statement that, while it may not be a perfect solution, be better than what we currently have. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 272-12(7): Extension Of Date For Closure Of Winter Roads

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another problem I have with the winter road closure is the way these roads are going to be closed. If they are going to be closed, sometimes huge tires are put in the way or there are snow banks that are put in place; the members of the community know when the roads will be closed and when they can't pass any more. So they are requesting that they be able to use the road as long as they can.

One of the points that we found out about, I would like to ask the Minister if it's true, is that the department plans to fine winter road offenders anywhere from \$2,000 to \$5,000 if they are caught on a winter road after closure. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 272-12(7): Extension Of Date For Closure Of Winter Roads

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not to my knowledge, and I am meeting with the deputy minister later on this afternoon. I want to assure the Member that we do recognize that this is an important economic link in the region. We are trying as hard as we can to come up with some creative solution within the current fiscal framework in which we are working. So, not to my knowledge at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 273-12(7): Inuktitut Translation Of Rent Change Notice Misleading

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin. In the Housing Corporation's notice to the tenants, in Inuktitut, it says that those people who refuse to disclose their income will not be paying rent for their units. That information seems to be misleading. Mr. Speaker, what is the Minister prepared to do since the information in the notice that was given to tenants is misleading? It was mentioned by the Member for Iqaluit that people are not coming to housing associations to disclose their income, because they read in Inuktitut that if they do not disclose their income they don't have to pay the rent for their unit. What is the Minister prepared to do with that information? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 273-12(7): Inuktitut Translation Of Rent Change Notice Misleading

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the English side of this but I do not understand the Inuktitut translation of the rent scale change notice. I have talked to other people about this and one person said it says exactly what Mr. Allooloo said. Then I had the Housing Corporation check up on it -- we checked in Pangnirtung and Pond Inlet -- and my understanding is that the translated notice is the same as the English notice. That is what the local housing authorities there are saying to us, and none of the tenants have identified anything wrong with the translated copy. So I am getting mixed messages on the translation of this document.

I don't see it as a major problem. We can use this form, and I have already directed the Housing Corporation to become very aggressive and go back, explain the error and work with the local housing authorities and make sure that everyone fully understands what the intention is, because this has been ongoing for a long period of time.

We also had workshops and training with our local housing authorities and our tenant relations officers and Inuktitut speaking managers, and they never had a problem with it.

The message I am getting from the local housing authorities is that things are on schedule and people are coming in. They also have extra dollars from the Housing Corporation to make sure people fully understand what is happening. They are doing that. They are starting to meet with people, and every day more people are coming in.

So, through this form, as well as through the radio stations in the eastern Arctic, we will aggressively let people know what is happening and encourage them to come in. I encourage Members of this Assembly, if they get any calls from constituents or people who have a concern, to explain it properly to them because we can all pitch in and help out to make sure everybody fully understands. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 273-12(7): Inuktitut Translation Of Rent Change Notice Misleading

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For those unilingual Inuit who speak only Inuktitut, this would mean that if they do not come to the housing associations to verify their income, they will not have to pay for their unit. That's what it says to me and also to my colleague for High Arctic who speaks more Inuktitut than I do or has spoken Inuktitut longer than I have.

Mr. Speaker, for those people who read this the way we read it, if they do not go to the housing associations to verify their income, will their rent be subjected to a new rent scale? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Page 532

Further Return To Question 273-12(7): Inuktitut Translation Of Rent Change Notice Misleading

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

Question 274-12(7): Distribution Of Premier's Speech

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today, the Premier made a statement about her visit to the prospectors' and developers' conference. The Premier stated that she made a speech to the delegates at the conference in Toronto. The Premier is not here so I would like to ask the Premier's designate if a copy of that speech will be tabled or distributed in this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 274-12(7): Distribution Of Premier's Speech

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

The speech will be tabled tomorrow, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Ms. Mike.

Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin, concerning the rental increase. On the last question Mr. Allooloo asked, I understood him to say that regardless of improper or inadequate information they may have received in the Inuktitut translation, their rent will be increased. Is that my understanding?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding from the Housing Corporation, through contacting the local housing authorities, is they have indicated they would

meet the deadline of counselling all their tenants and assessing rent by April 1, 1995. I once again say that if Members have the opportunity to talk to constituents and constituents do have a concern, Members of this House can also help to clarify this situation. We are going to go on the radio and become more aggressive to ensure that all people get the message, and get a very clear message. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this is important and, in a way, I'm trying to help the Minister out here. I realize that he's going to be working with the housing authorities and the housing associations, but the translation into Inuktitut says "for those who earn more money and those who refuse to disclose their income will not pay rent." That's the translation from Inuktitut to English. All we are getting is that these unilingual Inuit who cannot read English will be charged increased rent, even though they have received this notice provided by the Housing Corporation to the housing associations and authorities. Will the tenants of public housing pay increased rent if they do not show up to verify their income with housing associations and authorities?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The information I've received to date -- and I have not received all the information -- I have nothing in writing which says what the honourable Member has just said about how the translation is worded. I had the Housing Corporation contact some of the local housing authorities; for example, in Pangnirtung, I had them get in touch with the Pangnirtung Housing Authority; I'm getting a mixed message. What they say is that the tenants do not have a problem with the

translation. What it says on the English side of this, it also says in the translation. So until I clarify that, I can't really answer the Member's question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

MS. MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of unilingual Inuit not only in my riding but also in the Keewatin, Kitikmeot and Baffin. But, Mr. Speaker, the Minister is avoiding the questions that are being asked here. I realize he doesn't have the back translation which I asked for yesterday when I asked the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment to provide this. However, we have had the back translation done by the Legislative Assembly staff. What I read out was the back translation from Inuktitut to English. "For those who earn more money and those who refuse to disclose their income will not pay rent." That's from Inuktitut, and those unilingual people will understand it that way, Mr. Speaker.

If these tenants don't come to the housing association to verify their income, they think they're not going to pay. If they don't verify their income, will they be assessed at the maximum ceiling rent as was set by the honourable Member for Iqaluit? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I previously said -- and let me make it perfectly clear to the Member, I'm not avoiding the question and I am answering the question -- the information I have -- and I have to depend on the department to give me the information from the local housing authorities as to how the rent scale is being implemented in the region -- is that the English translated into Inuktitut is the same

as what is said in English. Now the Member has some other information. In this case, I'm willing to give the benefit of the doubt to the people we are all elected to serve. I will look into the situation.

If that is what that notice says -- and I don't know that yet -- then we'll have to work that problem out with the tenants and the local housing authorities. So I don't see a problem with that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wouldn't say anything that would mislead this House, especially on something like this that affects a lot of lives, especially in the Nunavut communities.

I understood, when Mr. Allooloo was asking questions to the Minister, if the public housing tenants don't come to the housing association or the authority to verify their income, they will have to pay a ceiling rent. That's a very simple question. He won't answer it, Mr. Speaker, and I want an answer.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Mike, Members cannot demand an answer. Also, there was no question there; you didn't ask a question. Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

(Microphone turned off)

MR. SPEAKER:

(Microphone turned off)...supplementary. Do you still want to use your final supplementary for a question? Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

MS. MIKE:

Mr. Speaker, my question was -- I repeat, again -- if public housing tenants don't go to the housing association or authority to verify their income, will they pay a ceiling rent that is proposed by the Housing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 275-12(7): Rental Increases Regardless Of Misleading Inuktitut Translation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In all normal circumstances, yes. That is what the rent scale change says and that's a very clear answer to the Member.

Also, I would like to assure the Members and this Member, particularly, that I just received the document she is referring to which says "will not pay rent." If that is the case and that is how it is, then it has to be cleared up. We have to give the benefit of the doubt to our tenants and we have to work it out with our local housing authorities how to solve the problem, but I don't see it as a major problem and we should be able to address it fairly shortly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 276-12(7): Status Of Staffing Justice Of The Peace Trainer Position

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Members will know the role that justices of the peace play in the day-to-day delivery of justice in the communities. Almost every community across the territories has at least one justice of the peace; in some cases, two or more. Those justices of the peace, hard working as they are, require a certain amount of contact, weekly, to be assured of what they are doing and they also need training.

Mr. Speaker, it has been some time since the justice of the peace trainer, Mr. Stevens left the territorial government and the justices of the peace have been left without someone directly responsible for them. I would like to ask the Minister, what are the plans for replacing the justice of the peace trainer in the foreseeable future?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 276-12(7): Status Of Staffing Justice Of The Peace Trainer Position

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the plan is to find someone to fulfil the function that was done by Mr. Sam Stevens until he left. Whether or not we will fill that position to carry out that function or come up with another means to get that function fulfilled is under discussion right now with the chief judge of the Territorial Court. We all recognize that training is an important element in developing community-based justice and in supporting the development of justices of the peace. We are having discussions with the chief judge on how best to fulfil that requirement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 276-12(7): Status Of Staffing Justice Of The Peace Trainer Position

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's reassuring that this is being looked at. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I've heard from a number of justices of the peace that plans are afoot to replace that position with that of a judge. While I recognize the value that judges may contribute to training justices of the peace, quite a lot of the function is administrative. There is recruitment, there is a lot of paperwork and personal contact and I fear if this is the route that is taken, it will detract from this. I would like to ask the Minister if they would take into consideration the administrative role when they are seeking a new trainer.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 276-12(7): Status Of Staffing Justice Of The Peace Trainer Position

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we shall.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Page 534

Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I asked the Minister of Housing whether or not the Housing Corporation had cut PYs from their budget and he indicated they didn't cut any, even though they experienced a drastic cut in their budget allotment.

Mr. Speaker, his response, and I quote from unedited Hansard: "Yes, we can justify it and we'll 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, my purpose for asking the Minister whether or not there were any cuts in PYs is, if he looks in his budget book, there are no PYs described at all. It just requests approval for \$62 million, and that's it.

I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he will provide the number of PYs that the Housing Corporation has, for the past four years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister provide the number of PYs that the Housing Corporation has prior to his budget coming into the House, or when will he provide them? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll provide them as soon as the Housing Corporation provides them to me. That shouldn't take very long because it's the same type of information we provide to SCOF. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

In addition to PYs, Mr. Speaker, recognizing that this is International Women's Day and in trying to establish government's commitment to ensure adequate representation of women at all levels of the territorial public service, will the Minister indicate how many positions in the Housing Corporation at the director level or above are presently filled by women? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will provide to this House information on all positions, whether they are women, men, aboriginal, or non-aboriginal, in the Housing Corporation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Will the Minister commit to providing that information prior to our sessional break? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 277-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, no.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Koe.

Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I asked the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat about the affirmative action review committee. I was surprised to hear that the review committee is an internal one because I believe many of the concerns and problems with the affirmative action program are caused by lack of internal initiatives. My question to the Minister is, why was a decision made to have the review committee composed only of internal Government of the Northwest Territories employees?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was felt that people from within the government would have knowledge of the efforts that have been made in the past and the results of those efforts and that, by consulting with people in the government, they could see where people wanted to go with affirmative action and where we had fallen down. And that, as we consulted with external groups by various means, we would be able to provide information on the history and the present and take direction from external groups on where we needed to go in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Page 535

Supplementary To Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In the initial exercise to set this review up, there was some criticism because of the way it was shaping up. Aboriginal groups were used as part of the initial focus groups. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not the input and information from these aboriginal groups is being used to design the study?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, we were given a considerable amount of information at the original meeting. That information has been taken into consideration and we will use that information as we consult across the five regions of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

If that's the case, I would be very interested to know what the terms of reference for this review committee are. Will the Minister commit to table the terms of reference for this review of the affirmative action program?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

I'll table the information that I mentioned before, the make-up of the committee. I'll table the terms under which they're going to conduct this particular exercise, and I'll also table the process they intend to use. I'll also table what will happen to the information that is compiled, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

MR. KOE:

Mahsi. One of the issues of the affirmative action program is the issue that deputy ministers were supposed to be accountable for the programs within their department. I would like to ask the Minister whether a process or a procedure was ever implemented whereby deputy ministers were to be measured. I think it was to affect their merit pay, if they were able to meet the goals they were to set under the affirmative action program. I would like to know whether that was ever implemented or not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 278-12(7): Make-up Of Affirmative Action Review Committee

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, all Ministers are conscious of the affirmative action policy, the affirmative action program and the affirmative action results their departments are achieving. The Ministers individually deal with their deputies and measure them against the objectives that they've set, and Ministers deal with deputy ministers on the objectives they set in this particular area. When deputy ministers are reviewed and performance is reviewed against the objectives they had set, this is one of the areas that is taken into consideration, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Allooloo.

Question 279-12(7): Extension For Unilingual Tenants Re Rent Increase

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again to the Minister of Housing. Since the document has been verified by the Minister that the English version is not the same as the Inuktitut version that was given out to tenants, since the wrong information was given to tenants saying if they don't come forward with their income, they don't have to pay rent for their unit, since that incorrect information was given to them, is the Minister prepared to give to those unilingual tenants

an additional one-month notice after giving them the correct information? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 279-12(7): Extension For Unilingual Tenants Re Rent Increase

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working right now with the local housing authorities. I understand that every three days, approximately a little over 10 per cent of the people are coming forward. The local housing authorities verify their income and the local housing authorities have told us they are going to start working at nights and in some cases hire extra staff to visit people in their homes, explain it properly and they feel they could meet the deadline. But in some cases where tenants are out of town or on the land or do not understand this document, then we would consider working with these tenants to make sure they do understand. Any rental decreases or increases would have to wait until they fully understand that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 279-12(7): Extension For Unilingual Tenants Re Rent Increase

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister knows, because of a lack of communication that has taken place in the past or other problems, right now in my constituency there are people being evicted from their houses in 40 below weather. They have no place to go when they have been evicted. I'm trying to say, Mr. Speaker, that the answers the Minister has been giving us...If these people with the wrong information do not come forward with their income, their income assessment will be based on the maximum. I'm afraid those people who do not come forward because of this wrong information the

Page 536

Housing Corporation gave, will be in the same boat as those in my constituency who are being evicted in 40 below weather.

Mr. Speaker, I am questioning whether the government is considering the Inuktitut letter as official, with the same status as the English letter they have sent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 279-12(7): Extension For Unilingual Tenants Re Rent Increase

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are going to be working with the local housing authorities, as well as the tenants, to ensure that all people understand the rent scale. Even as of today, people are working aggressively at the local housing authorities to try to get people to understand the new rent scale. This notice is no different than any other notices that are given out. Occasionally, to calculate rents, people are requested to come in and verify their income and they should do so.

As of April 1st, the rents will go to the maximum if they do not come in. What we'll do is work with the tenants, and if they did not understand that or it was beyond their control -- if they're out on the land or whatever -- then we would make it retroactive. You also have to remember that there are people whose rents are going down. For 30 per cent of the people, rent is going down. So it wouldn't be fair to those people to leave their rents higher just because they didn't understand this documentation. So we would work with them to ensure it's taken care of.

Members have raised a legitimate concern and we will work to address it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Personnel a question. Mr. Speaker, I initially asked the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation if he could provide the number of PYs for the Housing Corporation, prior to the break. His response is, unfortunately, no. I would like to ask the Minister of Personnel whether she would commit to providing the number of PYs for the Housing Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER:

Point of order, Mr. Morin.

Point Of Order

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect, the Member did ask two questions of myself. The number of PYs, I said I could table because that's information that goes to SCOF. She also asked how many women were employed in the Housing Corporation and I said I would table in this House the number of women, the number of aboriginals, the number of men and the positions they hold, and it would take time to accumulate that. So I believe that by asking the Minister of Personnel and by saying it was just PYs she was requesting isn't right. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

So, Mr. Morin, what's your point of order?

---Laughter

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member said that I said no to tabling the number of PYs in this House and I did not do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin, you don't have a point of order. It's standard procedure to clarify your answers to the Members. So we will just carry on. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Personnel if it is possible to provide to this House, before the sessional break, the number of person years for the Housing Corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chairman of the Financial Management Board, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Mr. Morin has committed to provide the person years to the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know Mr. Morin has committed to provide the number of person years to the House, but in my last supplementary, I asked if he would be able to provide the number of person years and the number of women in directors' positions before the sessional break, and Mr. Morin's response was no. So therefore, I want this information before we get into the Housing Corporation budget. I would like to ask the Minister of Personnel if he can provide the number of person years and the women in director-level positions for the Housing Corporation prior to the sessional break. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I understood Mr. Morin to say that he couldn't guarantee that he would get it in to the House prior to the break. I think that's because Mr. Morin realizes that, in order to gather that data, he may not be able to make that deadline. What I'll commit to, Mr. Speaker, because it falls under the Financial Management Board Secretariat, is that I'll work with Mr. Morin on that particular data and see if we can collectively put it together and bring it to the House before the break. I should say, Mr. Speaker, that we may not be able to make that deadline -- and I think that's what Mr. Morin was saying -- because of the complexity of it. But, we will certainly work together to try and do that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Page 537

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what the complexity is. I mean, the Housing Corporation must know how many PYs they have in director-level positions filled by women. Can the Minister of the Financial Management Board Secretariat indicate that he can provide the number of directors in the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can provide that information on the number of directors in the Housing Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, when he provides the number of director positions with the Housing Corporation, would he provide how many are filled by women? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 280-12(7): Number Of PYs At Housing Corporation

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I will work with Mr. Morin to provide that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Pudluk.

Question 281-12(7): Polar Bear Management

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq. When he was in Resolute Bay, the members of the community were talking to him about polar bear management. Polar bear biologists are usually situated here in Yellowknife, where there are no polar bears to manage. I am just wondering if he could relocate a biologist to an area where there are polar bears. Perhaps it would be better if a biologist would be situated in a community where he can work closely with the community about polar bear management. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 281-12(7): Polar Bear Management

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, the Department of Renewable Resources is in the process of a review of which divisions within Renewable Resources would be better situated in the Nunavut region, and we are reviewing the possibility we might be able to relocate a biologist. I can indicate that we know there are no polar bears in the Yellowknife area, and it doesn't make sense that all these biologists are located in this region. I can advise the Member, perhaps in the near future, as to what we are going to do with this situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 282-12(7): Employees' Awareness Of GNWT Vehicle Restrictions

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Public Works and Services. Mr. Speaker, there have been concerns brought to my attention about government warehouse facilities and vehicles

being used for employees' personal use. I would like to ask the Minister of Public Works and Services what he is doing to ensure that employees are aware of restrictions that exist on the use of government vehicles and facilities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 282-12(7): Employees' Awareness Of GNWT Vehicle Restrictions

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, this question comes up every so often, and I guess every so often our employees need to be given a gentle reminder of the rules and regulations. With the Member bringing it to the attention of the House and bringing it to myself, tomorrow I will issue a directive or a letter to people informing them of the rules and regulations with regard to the use of vehicles or any other equipment for personal use. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 282-12(7): Employees' Awareness Of GNWT Vehicle Restrictions

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, and I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, frequently people in communities are aware that improper use of government property has taken place but are concerned about retaliation or scapegoating if they inform the appropriate authorities. I have even heard of people being reluctant to report that alcohol or drinking parties are at times held in GNWT warehouses because the individuals are sometimes affiliated with people at the higher levels of government. I would like to ask the Minister if he can provide assurance to this House that incidents that are brought to his attention such as this would be considered confidential, and will he protect the interest of individuals who bring this information forward? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 282-12(7): Employees' Awareness Of GNWT Vehicle Restrictions

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Page 538

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 282-12(7): Employees' Awareness Of GNWT Vehicle Restrictions

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

My final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Public Works and Services personally look into whether complaints about the improper use of government property have in fact been received and acted upon by his departmental officials since 1991? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard, and you still have a final supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Further Return To Question 282-12(7): Employees' Awareness Of GNWT Vehicle Restrictions

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 283-12(7): Improvements To Highway System

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Transportation. Mr. Speaker, there is a highway system that runs into BC and joins the Alaska Highway just west of Fort Nelson, BC. This road is an important corridor to the Northwest Territories in that it's advertised in a lot of publications such as the Explorers' Guide, which is a government publication and the Mackenzie Connection newspaper. This is a joint venture between Alberta, BC and the Northwest Territories; they call it the

"loop." This area is drawing a lot of tourists in vehicles, bus tours and so forth. It has been said that the road system is in extremely poor condition and there are complaints from visitors; the poor conditions of the road are creating bad publicity. I was wondering if the Minister of Transportation could tell the House if his department is looking at ways of putting some improvements into this highway system.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm afraid that question has me stumped today. I will have to take it as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 15-12(7): List Of Purchases Made By DPW Local Garage In Fort Smith

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been advised that one of the businesses in my constituency is going to be closing. I would like to ask the Minister of DPW the following question.

1. Would the Minister of Public Works and Services provide to this House a list of all purchases by the Department of Public Works required by the local garage in Fort Smith from April 1, 1993 to present?

2. Would the Minister please ensure the list includes from whom these purchases were made and the cost of the items purchased? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Written Question 16-12(7): Maintenance And Closure Of Winter Roads In Nahendeh

MR. ANTOINE:

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

Transportation please advise the House of the following:

1. The exact dollar figure allocated to the maintenance of the following:

- a) the Trout Lake winter road;
- b) the Jean Marie River winter road; and,
- c) the Nahanni Butte winter road.

2. The exact dollar figure expended to date in maintaining the following:

- a) the Trout Lake winter road;
- b) the Jean Marie winter road; and,
- c) the Nahanni Butte winter road

3. The sources from which the information is based on answering the previous two questions.

4. What is the Department of Transportation's current policy with regard to establishing the closing date of the three winter roads for the following:

- a) Trout Lake winter road;
- b) Jean Marie River winter road; and,
- c) Nahanni Butte winter road.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 6-12(7): Notice Of Development Of High School Program And Reduction Of Services

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that it is not always the case that Members read returns, but I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, for the information of Members. This is a return to a written question that was asked by Mr. Patterson on February 17, 1995 regarding notice of the development of high school programs and the reduction of services.

About two years ago, in March 1993, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment held a workshop on student accommodation programs in Fort Simpson for representatives of all school boards. The workshop was scheduled at that time because of the increasing need for small student residences resulting from the extension of senior secondary grades in communities. The workshop addressed

Page 539

the design of small residences, the hiring and training of suitable house parents and examples of effective student support.

Over a year and a half ago, I began to inform school boards of the need to plan for the implementation of the senior secondary schooling policy approved by Cabinet in July 1993. The policy states that senior secondary programs will be offered in every board and divisional board jurisdiction in a student's home community, or as close to home as possible. Specifically, on July 12, 1993, I wrote to the Baffin Divisional Board of Education to confirm an additional teaching position for the extension in Cape Dorset and to request that the board begin developing its plan to phase out the use of the Ukiivik residence in Iqaluit.

In September 1993, the department wrote to all school boards to offer assistance in the development and implementation of new strategies for student accommodation. Other letters were also written on related issues, such as the review of future student enrolments, board plans for evaluation of student accommodation, and options for future directions in this area. As well, letters were written directly to the director of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education on these issues.

Later, on February 25, 1994, in response to oral questions in the Legislative Assembly on the quality of education in community schools and cost-estimates on education programs, I stated that we were considering the possible closure of Ukiivik and Grollier Hall because of the decline of students in those particular residences as a result of the extension of senior secondary grades in communities.

Then, in November 1994, I tabled "A Strategy to 2010," which states that we need to make investments that give long-term cost-benefits and one of the approaches noted was to close large residences over a period of years, beginning immediately.

I am sending the Member for Iqaluit a copy of all the letters identified here, providing notice and advice to school boards on the development of senior secondary schooling and, as a result, on alternatives to accommodating students in large residences. I am also pleased to inform the Legislative Assembly, as I noted in an earlier statement, that the review reports on the large residences are complete, and that the department is planning another workshop on student accommodation strategies for board representatives this spring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another response.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Nerysoo.

Return To Written Question 14-12(7): Review Of Arctic College Environmental And Renewable Resources Technology Program

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a reply to a written question that was asked by Mr. Patterson on March 7, 1995 regarding review of the Arctic College environmental and renewable resources technology program.

The college, in cooperation with the department and major stakeholders, undertakes program reviews on a regular basis. Last year, Arctic College reviewed the diploma level environmental programs which it offered. The study, completed by Avery Cooper & Co is now being used to guide discussions of how to improve program activity.

I will -- and I think I have already -- be providing the Member for Iqaluit with a copy of the review of the environmental technology program and renewable resource technology program which was completed for Arctic College by Avery Cooper & Co today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Return To Written Question 5-12(7): Arctic College Base Funding

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 5-12(7) asked by Mr. Patterson to the Minister of

Education, Culture and Employment concerning Arctic College base funding.

In order to adequately respond to the written questions on Arctic College base funding tabled by the honourable Mr. Patterson, I would like to first provide some background information on the newly-created funding formula which is working to equitably distribute funding between the two colleges.

The division of Arctic College into two colleges on January 1, 1995, made it necessary to create a funding formula known as the college funding allocation system (CFAS). Through this system, GNWT program and services contribution funding is equitably distributed between the two colleges according to agreed-upon programs and services. As well, the allocations are adjusted for geographic cost differences. In addition, the system allows the colleges the flexibility to establish specific program budgets on an assessment of need.

When Arctic College was split into two colleges, there was no intention or justification to duplicate every program at both colleges. Within the college system, it is expected that the programs offered by the two colleges will complement one another so that the colleges can work together to build an effective post-secondary education system for the residents of the Northwest Territories. As a result, the following responses to the written questions asked by Mr. Patterson are based on these financial and management factors.

Arctic College Base Funding - Questions And Answers

-How many person years and what level of base funding is now in place in College East and College West for trades training?

Trades training is base funded by the GNWT funding only at College West. For 1995-96, the college is being allocated an estimated \$860,000 including funding for nine positions for this purpose. Both colleges also deliver a wide range of trades training as a result of funding from other sources such as Human Resource Development Canada (HRDC).

-How many person years and what level of base funding is now in place in College East and College West for environmental technology training?

Environmental programs are base funded programs at both colleges. The environmental technology program, which is designed specifically for the eastern Arctic, is offered at the Nunatta Campus of College East. A renewable resources training program is offered by College West at Thebacha campus in Fort Smith. For 1995-96, an estimated \$340,000 is allocated to each college to support the program. This includes funding for three positions. As well, College East receives an additional sum as a result of cost differential.

-How many person years and what level of base funding is now in place in College East and College West for student support services?

Both colleges offer student support services at the campus locations. Student services include residence services, recreation, admissions, counselling and libraries. For the 1995-96 year, College East will receive approximately \$1.507 million and funding for twelve positions. College West will receive approximately \$2.285 million and funding for eighteen positions.

-How many person years and what level of base funding is now in place in College East and College West for heavy equipment operator training and driver education training?

Heavy equipment operator training is funded as a trades program only at College West. There are currently three funding positions assigned to this program. The allocation for the program for 1995-96 is approximately \$280,000. This includes three positions. Both colleges fund driver training activities through fees and contract revenues rather than base funding.

Actual budgets for programs are established by each college board of governors. These budgets may differ somewhat from the allocation, as the colleges also utilize funds from other revenues to support their activities.

Return To Written Question 8-12(7): Protection From Rental Increases For Public Housing Tenants

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 8-12(7) asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell to the Premier concerning community-based organizations.

One, there is no universal government definition of what constitutes a community-based organization. Two, there are no processes established in GNWT

policy or legislation for a community to sanction the establishment and/or existence of community-based organizations.

Non-profit community-based organizations providing for "benevolent, philanthropic, charitable, religious, provident, scientific, artistic, literary, social, education, sporting, or other useful purposes other than the carrying on of a trade or business" may be established under the Societies Act. However, these organizations need not be based in or sanctioned by a community and are not technically "owned" by anyone. Several government policies and programs provide sanction and assistance for such non-profit societies.

With respect to community-owned businesses, in two further oral questions asked on February 21, 1995 oral Question 127-12(7) and February 23, 1995 oral Question 152-12(7), the MLA for Thebacha asked if the government has any economic strategies and policies which govern their relationship with community-based organizations versus individually-owned businesses, and if any such policies or related directives in its procurement procedures recognize the socio-economic benefits of community-based organizations versus individually-owned.

As noted above, no special provisions are made for the GNWT or communities to establish or sanction a business as community-owned rather than individually-owned, or that would lead the government to treat community-based businesses differently than individually-owned businesses.

In defining local and northern ownership of a business, the business incentive policy does provide for the possibility of several ownership options, including individually-owned, partnerships, joint ventures, and cooperatives. However, the policy does not provide any different treatment or benefit to those businesses based on that ownership structure. It does provide additional support to local versus other northern businesses, and for northern over non-northern, but individually-owned local businesses are treated the same as locally-owned cooperatives or partnerships. The additional assistance for local over northern business only applies if a community or local area is specified in a tender for a good or service delivered wholly within that community or area.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 8, returns to written question. 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. Todd.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two documents I would like to table today. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Tabled Document 52-12(7), Status Report, Public Accounts Committee Report 16-12(6), "Towards An Economic Development Strategy."

And, if I may, Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Tabled Document 53-12(7), Annual Report of the Business Development Fund, April 1, 1993 to March 31, 1994. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table Tabled Document 54-12(7), a note sent by the Honourable Kelvin Ng this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table Tabled Document 55-12(7), a document entitled "translation back from Inuktitut to English, March 8, 1995, local housing authority notice clarification rent change notice"

Page 541

provided by the language bureau to Members through the good office of the Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, since we have no rules on unsigned documents in this House, I'd like to table Tabled Document 56-12(7): which is correspondence that I

received as a Member from a Tu Nedhe constituent regarding improper use of government vehicles and warehouse facilities in the community of Fort Resolution. Mr. Speaker, this correspondence was received in January and it's not my responsibility to address Tu Nedhe concerns as the elected Member for Thebacha. Therefore, I'd like to table this document so the appropriate individuals can address it. At this time, I would also like to table the envelope that this letter was sent in. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Patterson.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Motion 15-12(7): Invitation To Department Of Heritage Canada Officials To Appear Before The Legislative Assembly Of The NWT To Respond To Concerns

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, March 10, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the Member for Baffin Central, that Mr. Bill Balan, regional executive director for the Department of Canadian Heritage, Prairie and NWT Region, or his or her designate, be invited by this Assembly to appear at his or her expense to outline current organizational and fiscal changes and responses to the concerns of this Assembly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTIONS FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, I have four, if I might do them all, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Proceed with your four, Mr. Pollard.

Bill 20: Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 20, Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96, be read for the first time. The second one, Mr. Speaker.

Bill 21: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95

I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, be read for the first time. The third one, Mr. Speaker.

Bill 22: Forgiveness Of Debts Act, 1994-95

I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95, be read for the first time. And the last one, Mr. Speaker.

Bill 23: Write-off Of Debts Act, 1994-95

I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Ng.

Bill 24: Community Employees' Benefits Act

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Nerysoo.

Bill 25: Education Act

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 25, Education Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Bill 26: An Act To Amend The Jury Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Jury Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Bill 27: An Act To Amend The Land Titles Act

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 10, 1995, I shall move that Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Land Titles Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. 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. Item 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; and, Committee Report 4-12(7), Report on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates, with Mr. Lewis in the chair.

Page 542

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

I would like to call the committee to order. What would the committee like to do? Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend to the committee that we deal with Bill 17, An Act to

Amend the Nursing Profession Act, and if we are able to conclude that today then move on to Education, Culture and Employment which we started yesterday.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much. Do the Members agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

Bill 17: An Act To Amend The Nursing Profession Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Okay, we'll deal with Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act. Would the Minister responsible for the bill please make any introductory comments that have to be made. Mr. Pollard.

Minister's Opening Remarks

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased, on behalf of the Premier, the Minister of Health and Social Services, to introduce a bill to amend the Nursing Profession Act.

Mr. Chairman, the act presently provides for the NWT Registered Nurses Association to register and discipline nurses in the Northwest Territories. This bill proposes to allow graduates of a Northwest Territories nursing program to be registered so that they can practise nursing in the Northwest Territories.

Currently, Mr. Chairman, the act does not provide for nursing education. Under the existing act, before a nurse can practise in the Northwest Territories, she or he must show that they are registered or eligible to be registered in a province or the Yukon territory.

College West Yellowknife Campus, formerly known as Arctic College, began a nursing education program in September of 1994. There are 27 students from across the Northwest Territories enrolled in the program. Graduation will occur in the spring of 1996.

The proposed amendments will provide for the registration of these graduates by:

-establishing a process for approving College West's program as sufficient to graduate nurses who are eligible to be registered to practise nursing in the Northwest Territories;

-setting standards for nursing education in the Northwest Territories;

-allowing for registration of graduates of the program, to enable them to practise as nurses in the Northwest Territories;

-establishing an education advisory committee to make recommendations on standards and program approval for the program.

Mr. Chairman, the NWT Registered Nurses Association will have the authority to carry out some of the provisions in the bill. In addition to current responsibilities, the amendments will give the NWT Registered Nurses Association responsibility for reviewing and recommending nursing education standards to the Minister. The NWT Registered Nurses Association will also have the authority to register graduates of College West's program.

This bill, Mr. Chairman, was developed in close cooperation with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and with the NWT Registered Nurses Association. These amendments will help the health and hospital boards of management to staff nursing positions with nurses educated in the north. If there are any questions, Mr. Chairman, at the appropriate time I will endeavour to answer them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. The Standing Committee on Legislation has a report. Mr. Whitford.

Standing Committee On Legislation Comments

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I'm pleased to report on Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act.

The Standing Committee on Legislation has completed its review of Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act. The committee held public hearings on March 6, 1995 and received presentations from the NWT Registered Nurses Association and from the chairperson and four students of the nursing program offered at College West.

The committee thanked all the participants for participating in our review of this proposed legislation.

The NWT Nursing Profession Act establishes the Registered Nurses Association as a corporation. The association manages their affairs and is directed by a board. The director has the authority to determine who can be certified in the association's registrar, and has the responsibility for the discipline and the conduct of the association's membership.

Under the present legislation, if a person is competent, has a satisfactory reputation, and is active and in good standing as a registered member in another provincial registering body, that person may be granted a certificate of registration by the NWT association, and they may use the title "registered nurse."

Bill 17 proposes to amend the section of the act which would deal with registration eligibility. The bill broadens the eligibility to include those persons who are competent and in good standing in the Yukon, as well as those who have completed an approved education program in the Northwest Territories and have completed the membership examinations.

Page 543

Further, Bill 17 proposes to amend the Nursing Profession Act to allow for the establishment of an education advisory committee. This committee will be responsible for recommending the standards for nursing education programs as well as providing results of reviews on nursing education programs. The board of the association will receive the recommendations of the advisory committee and would forward those recommendations to the Minister for approval. The board would also have the responsibility of establishing and administering examinations to applicants who are applying for membership in the association.

The committee was assured by both the Minister and the president of the NWT Registered Nurses Association that the proposed amendments are consistent with provisions contained in other Canadian jurisdictions, and that the standards of the NWT are consistent with those jurisdictions.

Although the committee is fully supportive of the proposed amendments contained in Bill 17, the committee has one concern. All submissions received by the committee stressed that it was urgent that the proposed amendments receive support and passage immediately. All presenters stated that this urgency is dictated by the fact that the program currently offered by College West cannot be approved

under the present legislation, and that the program must receive approval prior to the graduating of 28 students currently enrolled in the program.

The committee is concerned that this government implemented an educational program without the prerequisite changes to legislation receiving passage by the Assembly. In this instance, the time and money spent by the current students registered in the nursing program could be in jeopardy, should these amendments not receive approval in this House at this time. The committee is of the opinion that government should not sponsor educational programs prior to all the appropriate steps being taken. This will ensure that the students and the programs are not at risk.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

MR. WHITFORD:

On March 6, 1995, the committee passed a motion that Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act, was ready for consideration in committee of the whole. That concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Legislation, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thanks very much, Mr. Whitford. Mr. Pollard, do you need to get some help or do you want to deal with this bill from your seat?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I would request that I be allowed to have witnesses. Just before you ask for that request, I would like to ask Mr. Nerysoo to have some input into the bill because Education is delivering the program and he has some words that we would like on the record, Mr. Chairman, if the committee would agree.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thanks, Mr. Pollard. Do committee Members agree that Mr. Nerysoo can make comments from his seat and that Mr. Pollard can bring witnesses into the House? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

First of all, Mr. Nerysoo, do you have any comments you want to make?

Comments By Minister Of Education

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the support of my colleagues.

Just for clarification, Mr. Chairman, I do want the honourable Members to realize that the whole process of the changes began in June of 1993. What has taken us some time is trying to develop and improve our working relationship with the NWT Registered Nurses Association and have them involved in the drafting. I wouldn't want anyone to get the impression that we didn't think this was a serious issue, and that we understood from the Nurses Association that they also wanted some additional changes and we accommodated them and we accommodated their advice. So it has been almost two years now that we've been part of this process. I just wanted to provide that information to you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Mr. Nerysoo. Back to you, Mr. Pollard.

Sergeant-at-Arms, maybe you could get the witnesses to join the Minister at the table.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you. Mr. Pollard, for the record, would you like to introduce your witnesses, please.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on my right is Carol Whitehouse, legislative counsel, Department of Justice, GNWT; and on my left is Cheryl Walker, manager of policy and legislation, Health and Social Services; and to her left is Maureen Morewood, manager of nursing services, Health and Social Services, both from the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thanks very much, Mr. Pollard. General comments or general questions from Members. Mr. Koe.

General Comments

MR. KOE:

I am very pleased with and supportive of this bill. It's nice to see another professional association get the right to be able to designate who their membership is and the right, through the act, to certify that their members are members of a profession, the nursing profession. I am also very pleased to see that, hopefully through this act, the graduates of our northern nurses programs may be eligible -- and I say "may" because I note that this still has to be clarified and worked out -- if they graduate they become members of the association. I assume that means they still have to become a registered nurse. I think all too often we've had to wait and bring in somebody else because you had to go somewhere else before to get an RN degree or bachelor of science or something else. They always had to come from somewhere else. Now we're

Page 544

starting to train our own people and develop our northerners through our own nurses program.

As most of you know, I have a great affiliation with nurses as my wife is a nurse. When I met her, she had come from somewhere else to the north.

The committee reviewed this, and I note a couple of their concerns. I would just reiterate that we have a good program. It is something that is developed in the north. It is for northerners to help bring northerners into the medical profession through nurses' training. The committee says that it sort of seemed like a chicken and an egg. We get it in and then we do the bureaucratic, administrative stuff later. I just want to say that we are in the midst of developing a lot of new programs and a lot of made-in-the-north programs, and we have to ensure that all the legwork and the planning has been done appropriately at the front end.

One thing about the current nurses program, I am very pleased that they did put the access year into the program. I know the bill is not specifically for the nursing program, but I would like to make a comment, while I have the floor, that I think it is very beneficial and I think it's something that most of our new

programs should adopt. The teachers' education program, for instance, should have had an access year program, component to it because people who come into these programs have various levels of education and, as we will hear when we deal with the Department of Education, they have various abilities to read, write and do arithmetic depending on where they are from or the individuals' abilities.

So just generally, I am fully supportive of this. Being a professional myself, I totally agree with the organization legalizing themselves and being able to certify and register their own memberships. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Mr. Koe. Next is Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to advise Members that I fully support this particular bill. I think it's striving to achieve one of the goals we are looking at, that of attempting to educate our own people in the north to provide the services that we need in the north. I know that once we have passed this bill, that eligibility for registration of RN designates would be allowed; particularly for the students currently enrolled in Arctic College.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to state though, for the record, that it is very unfortunate that lobbying on the students' part had to take place to get this bill in the House. It is unfortunate that, before the program was designed, this bill wasn't looked at to make sure it was completed. The students are already under a tremendous amount of pressure to be able to fulfil the requirements of this course, and I am aware that this added a lot of stress to the students. I received letters from different students indicating that they needed this piece of legislation, and I just don't think that students should have to absorb that type of stress with regard to trying to address and achieve some of the goals that they have set forth.

Having said that, it does reflect bad planning on the part of the government. However, we are fortunate in a consensus Legislative Assembly that we can bring forth this bill and address it. I don't think there is a Member in this House that doesn't support the concept of this bill, but I want to indicate that there's no doubt that this bill is a good bill. There have been comments that the timing is right for this bill because

it's International Women's Day. I found those comments to be a little bit chauvinistic. This bill would apply to male nurses or male individuals, too, who are going to the college and attempting to acquire an RN designation. This bill will allow for all northerners to be able to become RNs.

---Applause

I want to indicate my full support for this particular bill. Thank you.

---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Mrs. Marie-Jewell. Next on my list is Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a member of the Standing Committee on Legislation, we received the students from the program who appeared before the committee. What I saw in those young students was that they were very ambitious young people. They are eager to get ahead in life. They were so into the program that at one point, one of the ladies was almost emotional. I am told by people that as a politician, I should not get involved in emotional things, but sometimes, as a human being, I do get involved in emotions.

Mr. Chairman, according to my understanding, there are times when Canadian people, in order to get ahead in the professions they have chosen, have to go to other countries. I understand, way back when I was growing up, around the 1960s, some of the ambitious musicians to-be had to go the United States in order to be recognized. When I watched a documentary on TV, I thought maybe this doesn't happen any more. Then I learned that we don't have an act to recognize nursing students who may be qualified to be registered in this particular jurisdiction; it brought me back to the documentary that I watched a few years ago.

Mr. Chairman, I think that Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act, as my colleagues, Mr. Koe and Mrs. Marie-Jewell, have indicated, is a good bill. Although I am not a chairperson of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I would like to thank all the Members who support the bill. I think it's a good bill.

Many times, I asked the students who appeared before the Standing Committee on Legislation for

anything that they wanted to tell us that they didn't like about the program. Each and every one of them said it was a good program. They liked it. They were very ambitious, as I indicated earlier. They wanted to learn. One student told us they wanted to be a nurse here in the Northwest Territories. They did not want to go to another jurisdiction to learn and be registered there. So I think I will support the bill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Any other general comments or general questions that Members would like to raise? Are we ready to go clause by clause?

Page 545

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Sorry, Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do support having this legislative amendment passed; however, I wish that the legislation committee had also, at the same time, stressed the fact that the present legislation deals in zones from when responsibility was transferred from the federal government to the territorial government. Some of the wording should have been cleaned up at the same time to refer to regions rather than zones, since we do have regional health boards. As well, the representation of the board members should have been looked into. However, this is more urgent and I just wanted to say for the record that the legislation, itself, needs further cleaning up. I hope that the department will look into that. I will support the bill, but I just wanted to indicate to this House, on the record, the two areas in the legislation that could be improved. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Ms. Mike. Any response from the sponsor of the bill?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if someone could point out to me where zones are mentioned in the bill?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The proposed bill does not indicate them. It was during the Standing Committee on Legislation's review with you and your witnesses that I asked a few questions about the present legislation using zones instead of regions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Ms. Mike, you still have the floor.

MS. MIKE:

The board make-up is from the zones, instead of the regions. It is just something to think about. It's not urgent at this time. As I indicated, I will support this bill.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Ms. Mike. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

I think Ms. Mike is referring to the by-laws of the Nurses Association, Mr. Chairman, and we have no control over that but we will pass on the concerns to the Nurses Association. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

To the bill. I want to be sure that everybody has a chance to make general comments. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act, is a good bill. I know the NWT Registered Nurses Association, and especially the nurses who are presently training in the Arctic College program that was started two years ago, are very interested in this bill. The reason for that is the old bill wouldn't have allowed them to be registered or recognized. But, now the amendments to the Nursing Profession Act will allow the nurses in the north who are training to be registered by the Registered Nurses Association; that way, they can work in the north. They are

training in the north and so they should work in the Northwest Territories as well.

Based on that and looking at these documents and the comments that were made by the government, the Standing Committee on Legislation and the presentation provided to the Standing Committee on Legislation by the NWT Registered Nurses Association -- who are quite in favour of it -- I want to add my support to this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Are there any more general comments or questions? Are you ready to go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

We're on Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Bill as a whole.

Page 546

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Does the committee agree that Bill 17 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Bill 17, I'm happy to report, is now ready for third reading.

---Applause

Thank you very much, Mr. Pollard, and thank you for bringing your witnesses in today. We've completed Bill 17. Mr. Ningark, what is the wish of the committee?

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Sorry, Mr. Ningark, Mr. Koe had his hand up and I have to recognize him. Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

Since there is only 15 minutes left and there is not enough time for general comments on the next subject, I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

There is a motion to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

I shall rise and report progress to the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 17 and would like to report progress and that Bill 17 is ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Pudluk is the seconder. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there are meetings tomorrow morning at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus and at 12:00 noon of the Caucus for the diamond briefing.

Orders of the day for Thursday, March 9, 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

- 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

---ADJOURNMENT

- 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

Page 547

- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act

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

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 9, 1995, at 1:30 pm.