



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

7th Session

Day 25

12th Assembly

HANSARD

THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 1995

Pagination reflects print edition

Speaker: The Hon. Samuel Gargan

THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 1995

Page 711

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

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

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 53-12(7): Global Climate Change

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise Members that Canada's Environment and Energy Ministers met in February and approved a national action program on climate change. This program describes the steps that federal, provincial and territorial governments are beginning to take to control the emission of gases which cause warming of the earth's atmosphere. These gases are commonly known as greenhouse gases.

Carbon dioxide, released during the burning of fossil fuels, is the most significant of these gases. Along with water vapour in clouds, the gases trap the sun's energy and keep the atmosphere warm. Now, human activities around the world are releasing so much of these gases that the earth's climate is beginning to change.

The national action program that Canada's Environment and Energy Ministers approved depends heavily on organizations adopting voluntary actions to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. In the Northwest Territories, the departments of Renewable Resources, Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources and others are developing programs to encourage northerners to take the necessary voluntary actions.

Some of these actions include:

-Renewable Resources is participating in the Mackenzie Basin impact study to help understand anticipated changes to the north's climate which will result from these emissions.

-Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources has completed an inventory of the greenhouse gas emissions caused by people in the Northwest Territories. They found that most of our emissions come from burning petroleum products for energy, transportation, heating and making electricity. The Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources is also managing energy efficiency programs and renewable energy initiatives as well as working towards the expansion of waste heat use from diesel generators.

-The Power Corporation and the Department of Public Works started recovering waste heat from diesel generators 10 years ago.

-A new wind generator system to make electricity has been installed in Cambridge Bay and two other units are currently being tested in Igloodik.

-Private companies in the Northwest Territories are supplying solar and wind energy systems to northerners.

These are just some examples of actions that will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and reduce fuel consumption. Another important benefit will be the saving of money.

Mr. Speaker, climate change is a problem that the Department of Renewable Resources takes seriously. It is a problem that we are just beginning to understand and it is a problem that will be with us for a long time. Renewable Resources will continue to work to develop a better understanding of what the impacts on the northern environment will be and will continue to work with others to control our own greenhouse gas emissions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Healing Workshop In Resolute Bay

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have mentioned this before briefly in the House and I would like to mention it again. Quite some time ago, the federal government started going to the northern communities. The aboriginal people's lives were really changed. Recently, they haven't been sure what to do about it. Some aboriginal people have lost their culture. There is a high rate of suicide. There was a high rate of sexual assault by teachers when people were young. These are some of the things that have really hurt the feelings of the aboriginal people. Today, they are starting to find out for themselves exactly how much they have been hurt. Now, we're starting to deal with the healing process.

Last year, there was a healing process in Resolute Bay, there were healing workshops, and they were very helpful for the people; next month, they will have another healing workshop in Resolute Bay. I know there are going to be a lot of people from the communities in the north wanting to attend the healing process.

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

Page 712

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for High Arctic is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Pudluk.

MR. PUDLUK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, sisters and brothers. The healing workshop that was held in Resolute Bay was very helpful to the people. Next month, I'm sure there will be a lot of people attending the clinic and there are going to be a lot of volunteers. The people who want to attend the workshop will be supported by some organizations and some airlines will also support the people who want to attend. I appreciate that very much.

Inuit know they will not go back to their traditional way of living but they know they are not going to lose their cultures or traditions. Their way of life is changing because a lot of people have moved away from their culture and traditions. For this reason, it's very important that they have a healing workshop. The group that is going to be holding the healing clinic in

Resolute Bay is requesting that the NWT government provide interpreters for use during the healing clinics so people can understand each other in the workshop. Mr. Speaker, this is what I wanted to make a statement on because I feel it's very helpful for people to have. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Recall Legislation

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For more than seven years, the major criticism of this Assembly is its lack of accountability. We have a fixed term of four years, with no mandate from the public other than election promises to work hard on certain issues and to be a good representative of the people. As individuals, we are free to vote in any way we please as we have no party discipline to direct us.

The major public concern I heard expressed, however, is that we're very good at making speeches, full of good intentions but we are reluctant to enforce on ourselves any standard of accountability or discipline. We make many laws that regulate the activities of other people but make few laws to enforce discipline on ourselves. Three years ago when I first began reading material on the issue of recalling elected Members, I had an open mind, Mr. Speaker. Over a period of three years, however, it has become more clear to me that the Legislature needed to do something more than make fine declarations against violence and adopt guidelines for the conduct and behaviour of Members.

Where political parties exist, very clear discipline is exercised over Members and there are consequences for breaking the rules. Since we're elected as individuals by our constituents, our accountability is very clearly to the electorate. If recall is appropriate anywhere in the world, Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate in the Northwest Territories, where we follow a consensus form of government and are not bound by party discipline. If it weren't for the fact that we follow a parliamentary system of government with a set of rules and

conventions, there would be a very undisciplined rabble in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I can assure Members.

At least for our behaviour in this Chamber, we have rules to follow and there are penalties for breaking them. As we all know, they are your responsibility, Mr. Speaker. Now that we've adopted so many principles to guide us in our work outside this chamber, we need some mechanism to make Members accountable. Today, I shall give first reading to Bill 31, Recall Act, and I urge Members to read the bill with an open mind since the bill will be in your books after I give it first reading today. I will have no fear in serving in this Legislature if this bill were in force. Thank you.

-Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Congratulating TEP Graduates From Beaufort/Delta Communities

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

I'm very pleased to be back. I really missed you guys.

---Laughter

Just kidding. Today, Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the achievements of two people from the Beaufort/Delta communities. We have two graduates of the Beaufort/Delta teacher education program who just graduated in the last two months. Ida Thrasher is from Aklavik and presently teaches in the Moose Kerr school, which is my alma mater. Ida entered the field-based program at the Inuvik centre a number of years ago and decided to continue her studies in the education field when the program was made available in the region. Ida was able to add diversity to her experience through her practicum sessions in Inuvik and in Tuktoyaktuk. She completed her studies on January 27, 1995 and plans on continuing her studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

The other graduate is Betty Elias who lives and teaches in Tuktoyaktuk. She began her studies through the field-based teacher education program

also and attained the aboriginal language specialist certificate in 1992. She has worked as a classroom assistant and as a bilingual teacher at Mangilaluk School for a number of years. Her experience in these areas has proven very beneficial in her course of studies. Betty completed her studies on March 4, 1995.

I wish to offer my sincere congratulations to these two graduates and I wish all the best to all the other teacher education program students in the Beaufort Delta communities and throughout the Northwest Territories. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Whitford.

Page 713

Member's Statement On Poor Air Quality In Yellowknife

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some things never change, Mr. Speaker, and it appears to me that this probably still applies to the unacceptable level of sulphur dioxide originating from the Giant Mine smokestacks. Yellowknifers have had to put up with uncertainty and some degree of fear related to the quality of air we've been breathing here in this city since the 1970s. It's a lot like shadow boxing, living with Yellowknife's air quality. It is hard to prove who the bad guy is and even when we finally get some real concrete evidence, it takes far too long to find workable solutions.

In the meantime, we Yellowknifers are almost forced to continue this balancing act, weighing questions that may affect people's health against a fear of job losses and further economic decline. Mr. Speaker, in February 1990, I asked the then Minister of Renewable Resources when we could expect the application of a monitoring system to measure emissions coming from heavy industry in this city. The Minister assured me that the matter would be taken under advisement. A recent document circulated by that same department states that sulphur dioxide, SO₂, has been monitored in downtown Yellowknife since 1992. The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is not directed towards any individual, but is directed to the length of time that it has taken to make progress in this important matter.

I am not convinced that the progress we have made is good enough for the people in this city. The latest reports I have read state that dust continues to be a problem. Ten samples of total suspended particles show levels above the NWT 24-hour air quality standard. Arsenic levels showed an increase over the previous few years and SO₂ is still too high. Would health and environmental authorities in southern Canada, the United States or western European countries accept these kinds of findings? I am not so sure other population centres would be so patient as we have been.

In full fairness, I understand that this is a difficult situation. That, aside from questions of health, involves the complex issue related to industrial profitability, shareholders' returns and job security. There are no easy answers.

Having said that, however...Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude.

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. Thank you, colleagues. Having said that, however, I would like to believe that if every elected Member of this Assembly made a genuine commitment, we could join forces and work with the other parties to find a practical collective solution to this problem not only here in this city, but across the Northwest Territories where it is a problem as well.

In my opinion, we cannot afford to continue procrastinating when it comes to the quality of air that our children are breathing. Maybe it is time to roll up our collective sleeves and to demonstrate what real political will can achieve. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Clean-Up Of DEW Line Sites

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today Members were fortunate to receive a very informative briefing on the clean-up of DEW Line and DIAND sites in the Arctic. I would like to thank officials from DND, DIAND, the Department of the Environment and the team that was assembled to give us an informative briefing today.

I was astonished to learn, Mr. Speaker, that the Resolution Island site in my constituency is apparently the worst site in the Northwest Territories for contaminants. It is estimated that it might cost up to \$30 million to clean up and remove contaminated soil unless innovative bio-remediation techniques can be employed. It sounds very exciting.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, Resolution Island is very hard to get to, due to treacherous waters around it and the nature of the island. It is a veritable fortress with high cliffs to scale, except for one access point. Again, fortunately, very few people from the area visit that island.

I am frankly more concerned about the hazardous levels of contaminants identified at the upper airbase site right near the community of Iqaluit. Therefore, I was very pleased to learn that DIAND, following its risk assessment last year, has identified that site as its number one clean-up priority for 1995. I will be encouraging them to make that site a priority and get on with the work of dealing with the clean-up of a site close to community habitation. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Annual Cross-Country Ski Championships In Yellowknife

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about the fact that the Yellowknife Ski Club will be hosting the annual Northwest Territories cross-country ski championships on April 1st and 2nd, which is this Saturday and Sunday. They are expecting 90 or more skiers to participate ranging in age from two years to people in our age category, those over 40.

Participants confirmed are from Yellowknife, Snare Lake, Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik. We are also

expecting some skiers from Kakisa and hopefully from Fort Providence, Mr.

Page 714

Speaker. In past events, there have been skiers from Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay.

These skiers will be skiing a distance of up to 20 kilometres. In Saturday's race, we are using the classic technique. In Sunday's race, we are using the free technique. This is the thing that young skiers can do now. They can skate about 19 times as fast as we can ski.

The Yellowknife Ski Club has a race committee consisting of many volunteers who meet to coordinate the various requirements for competitive events. Yellowknife ski trails are considered sufficiently challenging to be able to host national junior level competitions. As well, there are approximately 30 other volunteers out on the ski trails to ensure that the skiers have a good time in fair competition.

The Yellowknife Ski Club has a significant number of volunteers who, through the years, have developed an excellent recreation facility within the city of Yellowknife. During the past few months, a great deal of work has been done to renovate the biathlon range and it recently became operational. Several young people and veteran skiers are now working on improving their skills in this nordic sport.

In addition to activities in Yellowknife, the ski club has also supported the development of cross-country skiing in other communities. Our volunteer coaches have travelled to several communities in the Northwest Territories. Recently, clinics have been held in Snare Lake and Norman Wells. Skiers from Yellowknife have participated in the Canada Games, the western Canadian championships recently hosted by the ski club in La Ronge, Saskatchewan; the national junior championships recently held in Ontario; and, some skiers had the opportunity to attend the recent Nordic World Ski Championships held in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife North is seeking unanimous consent to conclude. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Continue, Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the Yellowknife Ski Club volunteers, John Stephenson -- who, for many years, was my executive assistant -- was invited to assist with trail grooming in the world championships. There were 34 Yellowknifers who recently travelled to Hay River to participate in the annual ski club races. Our participants did well in these competitions and they are looking forward to hosting several Hay River participants this coming weekend.

So races will begin at 11:00 each morning. There will be hot drinks and snacks available at the ski lodge. The club welcomes all spectators to attend these events. I have been asked to invite all MLAs, if we have any time over the weekend, to come out and have a look at our ski club.

In conclusion, I would like to give some recognition to some people who have been instrumental over the years in making the Yellowknife Ski Club a very successful operation. Coach David Sutherland for many years has coached our athletes at many levels of competition; Blair and Linda Dunbar; Fran Ramsden is the present president; Ros Smith is the vice-president; and, John Monroe is facilities coordinator, who looks after the building and the trail lights. I would like to wish all the participants at the upcoming NWT championships the best of luck, and we hope to see some MLAs out to cheer on the participants from their communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Support For Quebecers To Remain In Canada

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise as we have a lot of concerns about the environment in our communities. I grew up in Nunavik and my parents stem from the northern Quebec area so I have a lot of relatives out in that region. So, Mr. Speaker, the government has to try to help us in all aspects and not just give us hardships. The people of Quebec are fighting hard to keep Quebec a part of Canada. I think it is upon ourselves to try to help them remain within Canada, if Quebec was to divide as a Canadian province. I would like to voice my

support for the Inuit of northern Quebec to stay within Canada, Mr. Speaker. This is why I rose today. I'm sure a lot of the people here have relatives in northern Quebec, and it is upon ourselves to support the people of northern Quebec with their fight to stay within Canada. They have a good future as fellow Canadians. We will have to give continuing support for the people of northern Quebec to stay within Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement On Fort Simpson Youth Centre

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take time to inform the House of a very important project in my constituency. Mr. Speaker, in today's society, the preservation of one's culture is challenged by many distractions. A key element in preserving one's culture is education. This education must begin with children and must continue as the child grows. Mr. Speaker, the success of this also greatly depends on educating the children in the appropriate environment.

Two years ago, the Sachon Gonozu Gha Youth Centre in Fort Simpson was established with this in mind. The youth centre is currently organized and run by a group of volunteer community members, the Youth Management Committee. This committee consists of youth between the ages of 12 and 25 from the community. This committee decides the direction of the youth centre, however, Mr. Speaker, views of all community members, regardless of age, are invited. The committee is responsible for approving youth centre programming.

Mr. Speaker, because of the positive and encouraging results achieved by the Sachon Gonozu Gha Youth Centre, other communities of the surrounding area have become very interested in adopting a similar concept for a youth oriented/youth-directed centre for special events and regular programming for community youth.

Page 715

The programs offered reflect the needs and desires of the youth. Programs include probation officer training; Alateen meetings; women's support groups;

sexuality/spirituality cultural identity workshops; special needs programs and so forth; and, conference workshop and participation, as well, as other excellent programs too numerous to mention.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, community involvement of all ages is the basic ingredient for all programs. Programming at the centre directly reflects the mandate. Some of these activities are offered in connection with supervisor/coordinator of the events by the alcohol and drug counsellor. All activities are generally directed for the pleasure of the youth. The main idea is to have fun in a safe and healthy environment. This includes...

Mr. Speaker, my time has run out for my Member's statement. 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:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This includes the promotion of increased self-esteem for any individual. The freedom of unique expression by all youth, the development of positive socialization skills between youth/youth and youth/adults, and the development of communication skills, the awareness of choices and options, and the freedom and confidence to make responsible decisions.

Mr. Speaker, the Sachon Gonozu Gha Youth Centre is the result of a concerted effort of dedication and commitment from individuals and organizations. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to ask this House to join me in recognizing these efforts, and to applaud that very positive influence in the youth of the Fort Simpson region. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 290-12(7): Federal Royalties To NWT From Mining Activities

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two returns to oral questions today. One asked by Mr. Antoine on March 9, 1995 with respect to federal royalties to the NWT from mining activities.

Royalties from the mines vary widely depending on the profit of the mine. The maximum royalty rate is 12 per cent of the value of production, after certain costs are deducted. This is the lowest rate in Canada.

In the NWT, royalties received by the federal government from mines have ranged from \$71,000 in 1986-87 to about \$3 million in 1989-90, with an average payment of about \$8 million a year over the last five years, for which figures are available. The federal government also charges staking fees which amounted

to about \$4.5 million in 1993-94. The GNWT does not receive any of these revenues.

If NWT Mines were charged royalties that apply in other parts of Canada, the revenues collected would have been much higher. As a result of the last federal budget, the federal government has begun a process of updating its mineral revenue regime for the NWT to bring it in line with other jurisdictions.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have another return. This was asked by Mr. Antoine on March 8th with respect to improvements to the highway system.

On Wednesday, March 8, 1995, the Member for Nahendeh asked me if the Department of Transportation was looking at ways of improving the Highway 7 loop linking the Alaska Highway west of Fort Nelson, British Columbia to the Mackenzie Highway south of Fort Simpson.

In answer to the Member's question, for the upcoming fiscal year, 1995-96, the Department of Transportation is proceeding with the construction of a new bridge on Highway 7 over the Poplar River. The department has no other capital plans for a further upgrade at this time.

It is also important to note that the British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Highways does not maintain its 186-kilometre section of the Liard Highway to the same standard as the Northwest Territories' Department of Transportation. In fact,

British Columbia has reduced the posted speed limit on this section of road from 90 to 80 kilometres per hour.

I wrote to the British Columbia Minister in July of last year to call attention to the maintenance of this road. In response, British Columbia did additional gravel work on the road.

In January of this year, 1995, I again wrote the Minister of Transportation concerning this issue but as of yet received no reply. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 332-12(7): GNWT's Policy On Out-Of-Community Medical Leave

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Alloo on March 28, 1995. It concerned the government's policy on out-of-community medical leave.

Mr. Speaker, an employee that escorts a member of the immediate family to a medical centre outside of a community may be granted special leave for non-elective medical evacuation. Special leave is also available for an employee that needs to escort a dependant to another health care facility under the following circumstances:

1. If a dependant is referred for specialized medical examination, treatment or surgery and is sufficiently ill to

Page 716

require medical attention which is not immediately available in their home community, special leave may be granted for an employee to escort the dependant if clear medical documentation is provided from a medical practitioner;

2. In non-emergency situations if clear medical authorization is given, an employee is permitted special leave to serve as a non-medical escort as care giver to a sick dependent.

In all of the above circumstances, Mr. Speaker, the department head may grant employees special leave

with pay for a period of up to five consecutive working days and, where warranted by unique circumstances, over five consecutive working days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize and welcome a person who is usually the first person I see each day as I walk into this Assembly. He always sits directly in front of me and I imagine he's there to make sure I do a good job representing the workers in my constituency. I'm referring to and welcoming, of course, Mr. Ben McDonald of the Union of Northern Workers. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the 1950s, Mr. Speaker, I lived in London, England, and taught many classes of students who were trying to learn English. Today we have in our audience a group of students from the YWCA's English as a second language program. What I'd like to do is give their names and maybe when I give their names, they can stand, and at the end, perhaps, Members will welcome them in the usual way: Raemee Lee from China; Qianru Wen from China; Di Zhu from China; Hahn Tebyanian from Vietnam; Suryani Luh from Indonesia; Draga Stelkic from Serbia; Shoko Suzuki from Japan; Viviana Llantén-Díaz from Chile, and Anna Li Juan from China. Welcome to our Assembly.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to point out to our visitors that many Members in this Assembly learned English as a second language and have done very well. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LEWIS:

I made a terrible omission, Mr. Speaker, because a very significant person in this group is their instructor, Ms. Pam Fawcett, who is not a student but is an important member of the team. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Bess Ann Lafferty from Fort Resolution, one of my constituents. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I, too, would like to recognize someone. Gloria MacDonald, I think it is. You must be married by now, but that was your maiden name.

---Applause

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

---Applause

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

MR. KOE:

Thank you, colleagues. I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Reading Hansard, I found out there had been an agreement made on the health billings dispute, and the announced settlement of the billings dispute was some \$24 million in cash plus other arrangements. But from previous questions asked in this House, I understood that the amounts in

dispute were in the range of some \$90 million. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, what is the impact of the arrangement that was recently signed with the federal government on this government's bottom line?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the impact on us is we will have approximately \$6.5 million more on our books than we will receive from the federal government and will have to write off approximately \$6.5 million, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

MR. KOE:

I'm not really sure I understood the total impact but I understood that the Minister said that there would be a write-off of \$6.5 million. Does that mean that there will be a \$6.5 million addition to the deficit we're projecting this year?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Page 717

Further Return To Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

That's correct, Mr. Speaker, yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

MR. KOE:

Mahsi. I'm just reading in the unedited Hansard of March 29th that there was some consultation on this agreement. I would like to know what kind of consultation took place with all the aboriginal groups that the Minister mentioned on page 1622 of unedited Hansard. What type of consultation took place with these groups before signing this agreement? Were these groups advised and given a chance to comment or were they just told what the arrangements were?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, as I said before in the House, we had a commitment not to enter into an agreement until we had advised the parties that we had been dealing with over the period of three years. The calls were either conference calls or direct calls by the Premier or myself to the organizations, to the people there, and they were advised of the agreement that we had reached. They were told of the dollar amount and the impact that it would have upon them because, particularly with the aboriginal groups, their concern was that it not get in the way of self-government, treaty rights, infringing upon fiduciary responsibility or land claims. Those kinds of assurances were made, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Koe.

Supplementary To Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I guess that raises a concern, again, on the question of consultation and what it is. The Minister just told us that these people were told about the arrangement, and I would just like to ask if he considers that as proper consultation with these groups; telling them what the arrangements were before signing it. I guess my concern is how much time and what kinds of detail were these people presented with to give meaningful input into the agreement? Were they given considerable amount of time and consulted appropriately to give meaningful input in the arrangements with the federal government?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 355-12(7): Impact On GNWT Re Health Care Billings Arrangement

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, if the Member is asking me, through you, sir, if we were saying to people here's the agreement, what do you think of it; can you suggest any changes, that really wasn't happening. What we were doing was fulfilling what we thought was our obligation to advise affected people before we entered into the agreement that we had not gone beyond what we said to them at the very beginning. Three years ago, we said this is a contractual dispute, this is a dispute about money and they made us very aware of their particular concerns and we said when we went to court, we would not get into their area or jeopardize any of the agreements they have with the federal government.

We never, ever did say that we would consult with people and say what do you think about the agreement. What we did say is we would get back to them and make them very aware that we had not compromised them in any way and that we were settling this dispute in the best interests of people in the Northwest Territories. So there weren't days given. It was a telephone conversation, people were asked for their opinion and that was all, Mr. Speaker. There wasn't a lot of time given. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 356-12(7): Policy Re Funding Personal Care Facilities In NWT

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Health with regard to funding allocations for personal care facilities across the north. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Health what is the departmental policy with regard to allocating funds for personal care facilities across the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question 356-12(7): Policy Re Funding Personal Care Facilities In NWT

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, at this point in time and for the last three months, I have been trying to find out exactly what it is that had been allocated to each community and how we came to those decisions to put these particular facilities in the communities. From the information I have gathered, it does not appear to me that we have a clearly defined policy as to when, how and to what degree we do needs studies before a facility is determined in a certain area.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm still working on that to see if we can come up with a fair distribution of infrastructure so that each region gets treated fairly, and that each community has a needs study in terms of what their needs are as well. There are some policy guidelines, but decisions of this government in the past, as far as I can determine, have not really been guided by a global look at the Northwest Territories; rather, by community interest, or maybe a couple of communities together or a community that aggressively pursues resolution of infrastructure needs to be met in that community.

I hope shortly I'll be able to do an assessment to see how we can more adequately look at needs. Presently, for example, in the Delta region we've had a request for the ongoing maintenance of the Aklavik elders' facility. At the same time, we have another suggestion on what the town of Inuvik would like to see in their community; as well, what Tuk would like to see in their community. At one time, when the facilities were

Page 718

first built, one facility was put in and everybody else was channelled there. However, communities are getting more aggressive. They're getting more clear in enunciating what it is they feel they should be responsible for and to what degree they should keep their elders in their own community, and at what point in time we have to ship them out to a facility that has more medical back-up.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to clearly say that the guidelines and general policy really seems to have been motivated by the hard work of certain

communities or areas to pursue facilities for their region. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 356-12(7): Policy Re Funding Personal Care Facilities In NWT

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that there used to be needs studies done in order to determine whether personal care facilities are required or senior citizens' homes are required. I know in my particular community, it's a community initiative that has created and allowed for the building of a personal care facility. I guess the concern I have is that if there's no departmental policy in place, what guidelines does the department use to determine the amount of funding granted to each personal care facility in the north. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 356-12(7): Policy Re Funding Personal Care Facilities In NWT

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, once a facility is designated in a certain category, there are guidelines that indicate exactly what type of human resources you require in personal care, depending on the level of that care. So it does exist. I'm not saying that the government or the department is totally void of any guidelines. There are needs assessments done. For example, I know that, in looking at why there are some facilities in certain areas and not in others, some communities have been more aggressively pursuing and establishing the need so they could get in the forefront of another community or group of communities that have not done so.

It's not to put a negative connotation on somebody who has moved ahead, it's just that I think we haven't communicated very clearly with all the communities. There are certain levels of care that are quite able to be handled at the community level; other levels of care have to be handled in areas where there are more medical services available. I've been attempting to deal with that over the last two or three months, or

maybe a little longer, and trying to rationalize that with the communities so we get a clear understanding from the communities what is possible to be done at the various levels.

As to staffing requirements for certain care facilities, there are criteria that have been established in terms of the human resources that are required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 356-12(7): Policy Re Funding Personal Care Facilities In NWT

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once the funding is allocated from the department, it appears to be determined upon the different levels of care throughout the facilities. I'm wondering whether the Minister can advise me, are the service fees imposed to seniors who are in personal care facilities determined or is there a guideline that these facilities can impose on seniors. Is there a cap which basically allows for personal care facilities to be charged to seniors utilizing the service? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, there is a formula. I'll take the question as notice and provide that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question is take as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Ms. Mike.

Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation made a statement on northern manufacturing initiatives, and that the Housing Corporation spends approximately \$17 million each year. Is this \$17 million expended only in the west

part of the territory for northern manufacturing initiatives?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The \$17 million represents expenditures of the NWT Housing Corporation in the whole Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary to the same Minister. Where are these northern manufacturing businesses located in the NWT?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to say that bathtubs and the tub surrounds are manufactured in Fort Resolution, in my riding. The doors are being manufactured in Hay River. The windows are being manufactured in Hay River. Cabinets are being manufactured

Page 719

in Hay River, trusses in Yellowknife. Screwjacks are being manufactured in Yellowknife. Fuel tanks are being manufactured in Yellowknife and a portion of tank stands are manufactured in Fort Resolution. The other portion will be manufactured in Yellowknife. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary is to the same Minister. Realizing the northern manufacturing initiatives have been successful in this western part of the territory, would the Minister look into the possibilities of making the same initiatives in Nunavut communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it has been a very successful undertaking in the Northwest Territories. How it was developed was they went to public proposal call and anyone interested could have put in a proposal to bid on these contracts. I also believe that last year in Iqaluit, cabinets were manufactured. We are working with an Iqaluit company now to manufacture cabinets in Iqaluit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One thing we don't have that the west has is trees. However, there are fibreglass products that could be successfully implemented in Nunavut communities to increase employment and create a viable economy. Would the Minister look to see whether that would be feasible or not?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 357-12(7): Location For Northern Manufacturing Initiative Funding

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be pleased to look into that and see if it would be feasible.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Patterson.

Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. When is the plebiscite on municipal lands in Nunavut? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is going to be held on April 10th of this year. Advance poll is April 3rd.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you.

Supplementary To Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

MR. PATTERSON:

Since I know his department is very involved in assisting in the holding of these community referenda, what is the choice the communities will be making when they vote in April? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question will be, do you want to give your municipality the right to sell municipal lands; either yes or no. Those are the two choices that the voters have. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What are the implications of a yes vote or a no vote in those communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

HON. KELVIN NG:

If the voters vote no, the municipalities will not be able to sell land for at least 20 years before there is another referendum allowed. If the majority of the voters vote yes, they will give the municipalities the right to sell the municipal lands at any given time between that date and the next 20 years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do I understand, Mr. Speaker, that even if people in a community feel that they may not be ready right away to sell land, but they might be ready in five, 10 or 15 years, if they would like to keep the option open, they should vote yes. Is that correct? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Page 720

Further Return To Question 358-12(7): Time Frame For Plebiscite Re Municipal Lands In Nunavut

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If a majority of voters vote yes to give their municipalities the right to sell land within the municipality, the municipal council has the option at any time to decide when they want to sell the land. It doesn't necessarily have to happen immediately. It will be up to the municipal council to decide that.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 359-12(7): Status Of Student Employment Seminar

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, at a student employment seminar last spring, the Minister said it would be a good idea to hold an information session for students around the Christmas break. When I questioned the Minister last fall as to whether or not such a session was planned, he assured the House that such sessions were planned, it just wasn't certain where they would be. I would like to ask the Minister, were student employment seminars held this winter?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Return To Question 359-12(7): Status Of Student Employment Seminar

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that they were. I will provide more details. We also had a session at the University of Alberta approximately one month ago, to advise the students at the university in the Edmonton area about some of the processes and the recommendations that they should be making clients or potential employers aware of their expertise in terms of their education.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Dent, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 359-12(7): Status Of Student Employment Seminar

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, is the department contacting students who are outside the territories in writing to advise them of the procedures and policies for student summer employment with the government this year?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 359-12(7): Status Of Student Employment Seminar

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. We will be following that up again with other seminars once the students return back to the Northwest Territories, particularly in the city of Yellowknife, which has the largest number of students in a particular community.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 360-12(7): Policy Re Electricity Subsidy For Seniors

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation. Mr. Speaker, in the north, we give many subsidies to seniors, such as the fuel subsidy. I know in my community we attempt to assist them by their tax subsidy and we certainly try to help our seniors as much as we can. However, one subsidy they don't have is a subsidy for their electricity bills. At some point in time, I asked the Minister whether the Power Corporation would consider this. I would like to know whether or not the Minister has thought of the concept of a subsidy for seniors for electricity in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, Ms. Cournoyea.

Return To Question 360-12(7): Policy Re Electricity Subsidy For Seniors

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, there is one subsidy that is available for everyone across the Northwest Territories. It is a subsidy that this territorial government gives as a subsidy on a power bill. There is no specific subsidy for seniors on power costs. The issue and the idea has been circulated. However, other than the subsidy for everyone across the board, there haven't been any indicators that there will be one for seniors specifically. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 360-12(7): Policy Re Electricity Subsidy For Seniors

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The subsidy that is given to individuals now appears to be on the current rate that is being applied here in Yellowknife. In my constituency, I know that our electricity rates are a lot lower than Yellowknife because we have an abundance of power, even though we have to pay for the low water surcharge. In fact, seniors and the people of Fort Smith don't really get a subsidy for electricity. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not she would consider reviewing the concept of creating a subsidy program for seniors and, possibly, passing on the idea to the NWT Power Corporation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 360-12(7): Policy Re Electricity Subsidy For Seniors

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that through the rate structure review, which would have established new rate structures in the communities, would have been completed by now. That would have identified Fort Smith in the special category where they have lower power generation costs. The rate structure review is still before the Public Utilities Board and I would assume that if there were to be further subsidies, the government would have to determine whether they would want to carry that out. I believe the best plan would be for us to try to move ahead as quickly as possible on the rate structure review so the communities know what the cost of power is in their communities and the

Page 721

communities paying more than they should be can be adjusted downward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 361-12(7): Completion Date For Rate Structure Review

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Would the Minister have some idea when the rate structure review will be completed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the answer will be better posed to the Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board, Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have trouble with my hearing. I wonder if the Member could repeat the question please.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame.

MR. SPEAKER:

Could you clarify your question, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've always been aware that this particular Minister has selective hearing.

---Laughter

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board whether he knows when the rate structure review process will be completed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 361-12(7): Completion Date For Rate Structure Review

HON. JOHN TODD:

Interesting question, Mr. Speaker.

--Laughter

A moment of your time. Mr. Speaker, regarding the rate review currently under way, we were required to do some additional community consultation at the request of some Members of the House. We did that recently. We're optimistic that this review will be completed in the not-too-distant future. I don't know the exact date at this time but there is certainly a real need to have more clearly defined the true costs of power, delivery of power to the communities and how we are going to go about charging it back to the consumer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Mr. Speaker, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada is sponsoring a very exciting event called "Spirit of the Arctic" at the CNE this summer. There is going to be a cultural component, featuring performances and demonstrations of traditional arts and crafts and a retail and trade that promotes existing businesses in Canada's Arctic.

I would like to ask the Minister if his department will be providing assistance to the ITC to do business with the estimated 1.8 million people who will visit the CNE, and hopefully many of them will come to this exhibit this summer.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

HON. JOHN TODD:

The short answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes, we are going to provide some assistance. The long answer is we'll have to be creative in providing it, given the fact that there are limited funds. We've asked the ITC to break out where they need some assistance and that assistance will come from existing budgets within the regions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I'm told that this should be a tremendous opportunity to sell lower-priced arts and crafts -- jewellery, handicrafts -- to the many visitors. I would like to ask the Minister if he's open to the idea of assisting in creating and buying an inventory of arts and crafts through the good offices of ED&T or through the Development Corporation so there will be a good inventory available for sale at this pavilion this summer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

HON. JOHN TODD:

Two weeks ago, the CBC called me the "Minister of Poverty" and that's where we are today. We're not prepared to fund the inventory for the CNE exhibition. As I said to the honourable Member, we're prepared to provide ITC and other groups with assistance within the existing resources we have. We've already distributed all the money into the regions and suggested to ITC that they seek regional support for any assistance they require, whether it is sending musicians, artists et cetera. I'm optimistic that, through some regional support, we'll be able to reach the fiscal target they've asked us to meet. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Page 722

Supplementary To Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I understand the financial constraints that we're all operating under. I would like to ask the Minister, since this is clearly an opportunity to sell our very unique arts and crafts from the Northwest Territories to a sizeable audience of Canadians who will be visiting the CNE, wouldn't it be possible for the government to establish a revolving fund to begin purchasing arts and crafts now which will be replenished and paid back from the sales that would take place in this intense 18-day period in August and September. Couldn't it be done that way, without a loss of funds to the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds to me what the Member is suggesting is Spain all over again. What I would suggest to the honourable Member is no, I'm not prepared to do it at this time. We are prepared to provide ITC and others with a significant amount of money from the regional budgets, provided the regions agree with it. We've given the fiscal responsibility for those dollars to the regions. That's what it's all about.

I'd also like to point out that while the CNE is one very exciting opportunity for northern artists, there are also others out there. There's a massive arts and crafts festival, for example, in Santa Fe that we're active in and a number of others we're getting involved in. We're endeavouring to increase the exposure of northern artists on the North American landscape but I'm not prepared at this time to fund an inventory or a revolving fund because I've given all the money away to the regions so it will be closer to the people in making the appropriate and right decisions on behalf of the artists. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the money and the authority has been given away, as the Minister says, to the regions, if it should be determined in a region that it would assist the economy of the region and artists to market their products outside the Northwest Territories through establishing a revolving fund and purchasing inventory for sale and replenishment at the CNE, would this option have his support, if it's developed and approved in any region? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 362-12(7): Assistance To Inuit Tapirisat Of Canada For CNE

HON. JOHN TODD:

I would be concerned that we were establishing a dangerous precedent for this one particular exhibition when there are others that will be held in the future and others that are in the works right now. However, if Mr. Patterson feels that he can convince the region that this is in their best interest, I would be prepared to look at a proposal of that nature. But I'm concerned about getting government too involved in the marketing of arts and crafts at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 363-12(7): NWT Arts And Crafts At CNE

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism about the Canadian National Exhibition that is coming up this summer. I realize what he just said, that he's concerned about the government getting too involved in marketing. However, we have projects that this government owns such as the Uqurmiut Artists Association, Fort McPherson Canvas, and Baker Lake Arts and Crafts. They are largely funded by this government. I think it would be a good idea to exhibit these products and promote them. Would the

Minister consider, for these government-assisted operations, making sure they at least have a space at the CNE? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 363-12(7): NWT Arts And Crafts At CNE

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that the NWT Development Corporation and some of its subsidiary companies will be in attendance at the CNE, displaying and selling their products. And, if I can be a little selfish for a moment, my understanding is Ivalu Arts from Rankin Inlet are working overtime right now because they believe they have somewhere in the region of \$300,000 worth of sales for their products. I believe some of the other subsidiary companies will be at the CNE through their own fiscal resources, rather than additional resources from us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 363-12(7): NWT Arts And Crafts At CNE

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's fine for the Minister to be a little bit selfish, I would like to be too. We have very fine tapestry products from Pangnirtung that are already made and in stock. This is what I'm talking about. I'm not talking about people who are really busy trying to produce things in time to meet this exhibit in Toronto. Is the NWT Development Corporation going to be displaying these products, and not just Ivalu products? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 363-12(7): NWT Arts And Crafts At CNE

HON. JOHN TODD:

I will clarify for the honourable Member that Ivalu has taken the initiative on their own, without any additional resources, to find a space in the CNE and to find

Page 723

sales. That's what it's all about. It's not being driven by the minister or the department. It's being driven by an independent subsidiary of the NWT Development Corporation. The group of artists in Pangnirtung, who have been in business a lot longer than Ivalu and others, should do exactly the same thing. There are no additional funds available to assist, except for what I outlined in my earlier statement to Mr. Patterson regarding ITC. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 363-12(7): NWT Arts And Crafts At CNE

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't asking about additional resources. I'm talking about finished resources we have in stock that this government can display and maybe make an attempt to sell at this exhibit. Will that be happening through the NWT Development Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 363-12(7): NWT Arts And Crafts At CNE

HON. JOHN TODD:

I'm not aware at this time, and I'll have to look into it, whether the NWT Development Corporation is going to have a booth in Toronto. I'm not sure, I'll have to check with the chairman of the board who is in town right now. If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that ITC has asked us for some assistance to enhance arts and crafts from the eastern Arctic. It may be appropriate that the group from Pangnirtung contact them to see, in fact, if they can work out a coordinated approach to display the lovely tapestries out of Pangnirtung that we saw last night at the NWT Development Corporation's reception. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 364-12(7): Renaming Of Aurora Campus In Inuvik

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I would like to congratulate the Minister on the two wonderful names for the new colleges, Nunavut Arctic College and Aurora College. I think they're a considerable improvement over college east and college west. I'm curious about one thing, though, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the Inuvik campus of the new Aurora College was called the Aurora Campus. I would like to ask the Minister, will the Inuvik campus of Aurora College continue to be called Aurora Campus? Or is it possible that a new name will be selected for that campus? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 364-12(7): Renaming Of Aurora Campus In Inuvik

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Premier Cournoyea campus might sound better.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear.

---Laughter

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Speaker, on a more serious note, it is certainly our intention to find another name for that campus. I think there are other names that could be identified, for example, that could be associated to individuals who have contributed either to this Assembly, the public service of that community or that region. Or, for that matter, it could be an aboriginal name. We need to consider a new name for that campus.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 365-12(7): Multi-Income Residences Under New Social Housing Rent Scale

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, the Minister made a statement the other day about the implementation of the new rent scale. I think it will take effect a few days from now on April 1st. I think his statement was that things were going relatively well but there is one concern that I would like to ask the Minister about that has arisen in my constituency. And that is, when you have a number of people responsible for paying rent in a household with, let's say, four incomes, has the Minister determined what will happen if, say, one of those individuals does not pay rent? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Housing, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 365-12(7): Multi-Income Residences Under New Social Housing Rent Scale

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The new rent scale was developed on the basis of trust, trust with our tenants, and people are obliged to pay rent to the best of their ability. In situations which arise where some members of a household do not pay rent, that person will be counselled by the housing authority, they will try to work out the problem and get them to pay rent. If everything fails, then it will go to the rental officer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 365-12(7): Multi-Income Residences Under New Social Housing Rent Scale

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I think we all would hope everyone would pay their rent. I would like to ask the Minister, for these households where there are several incomes, has the corporation figured out how the tenancy agreement should be structured? Is it the three, four or five people who earn incomes who will sign and be named in the tenancy agreement? Will the tenancy agreement include an elder who may be exempt from paying rent? Have the details of how the tenancy agreements will be drawn up been worked out by the corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Page 724

Further Return To Question 365-12(7): Multi-Income Residences Under New Social Housing Rent Scale

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that this has been worked out. They are working with the local housing authorities to implement the new rent scale and the tenant agreements so all people in the unit who are working are part of the agreement for that unit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 365-12(7): Multi-Income Residences Under New Social Housing Rent Scale

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly accept that every measure, short of eviction proceedings, should and will be followed. But, I would like to ask the Minister, if all reasonable measures fail and there isn't the kind of cooperation we would hope to have in every situation and a single person in a household refuses to pay rent -- and as the Minister said, it'll be referred to the rental officer -- is it the corporation's position that if one person in a household refuses to pay rent that the whole household be evicted for non-payment? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 365-12(7): Multi-Income Residences Under New Social Housing Rent Scale

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Allooloo.

Question 366-12(7): Legal Opinion On Contracting Summer Students

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the chairman of the Financial Management Board a question. First of all, I would like to thank him for the prompt response he gave me regarding the summer student employment program with regard to the rates paid to students who work for the government in the summer. The rates are considerably higher than the private sector is able to pay and therefore, it is unfair competition. In his response, he suggests that the government has to abide by collective agreement requirements and also requirements for contracting out work. He went on to say employing students for government work through contracts with other agencies may constitute contracting out. I wonder if the Minister will attempt to find out from his legal advisors whether this work is contracting out or not. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Chairman of the Financial Management Board, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 366-12(7): Legal Opinion On Contracting Summer Students

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, there are agreements with our employees through their respective unions and we have to abide by those particular agreements. We raised this issue of casual summer student positions with the UNW before and haven't had any success in resolving it. As I said in the House, if we were seen as syphoning off some of those jobs and contracting them out at a lesser rate, I'm sure the union would file a grievance with us. However, I'll go back and talk to the legal beagles. I'll ask them the question Mr. Allooloo has asked me, through you, Mr. Speaker, and provide him with an answer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Allooloo.

Supplementary To Question 366-12(7): Legal Opinion On Contracting Summer Students

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate the work that will be done by the Minister to find out whether more students could be employed at lesser rates by way of contracting out the work to the private sector, such as co-ops, housing associations, or hamlets. Mr.

Speaker, how long does the Minister think it will take to answer the question about whether they can contract out this work or not? Will it be before the end of session, since the work that is going to be required by the GNWT for these students will be coming through very soon? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 366-12(7): Legal Opinion On Contracting Summer Students

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll deliver the answer on Tuesday of next week. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 367-12(7): Minister's Intention Re Community Wellness Document

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, all Members received copies of the directions document, "Working Together for Community Wellness" recently. I think the English version came out in January and the Inuktitut version came out this month. The Minister, in forwarding the document to me, indicated that it would be tabled in the Assembly this session. I want to say that I think this is a very important document and good progress. I would like to ask the Minister, in tabling the document, is it her intention that Members of this Assembly consider it and approve it? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Madam Premier.

Return To Question 367-12(7): Minister's Intention Re Community Wellness Document

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, any document that's tabled in the Legislative Assembly can be moved into committee of the whole for discussion. That's the privilege of the Members of the Legislative Assembly, if they wish to

discuss any document. Mr. Speaker, the document has been put together for discussion in the areas of social reform, community wellness and community involvement and I believe

Page 725

the document has also been very well circulated outside the Legislative Assembly in communities.

In a number of communities that I've visited recently, that document seems to be very well-received in terms of what people want to talk about. They want to discuss the wellness of their communities, what they are going to do about social well-being, who is going to do it, and how they can get together to have healthy communities. It has taken on a life of its own because it seems to be speaking the language that communities want to speak. Often it is referred to at the same time the income reform document is being discussed in forums. A lot of individuals who discuss community well-being talk about social welfare reform, community involvement and use the income support and community wellness documents as support for those discussions.

It is well-received by the communities and it is being talked about. I, Mr. Speaker, would have no objection to having the document moved into committee of the whole for discussion if any Member wishes to do so. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 367-12(7): Minister's Intention Re Community Wellness Document

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly will be encouraging that kind of a debate in this Assembly. I would like to ask the Minister in light of what she said about the good response this document is getting in communities, would the Minister agree that the community wellness strategy represents quite a fundamentally different approach on the part of this government, having communities rather than government bureaucrats solving their own social problems? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ms. Cournoyea.

Further Return To Question 367-12(7): Minister's Intention Re Community Wellness Document

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I realize that over the years the establishment of government in the Northwest Territories has occurred along the lines of programs that were federal programs offered to any provincial jurisdiction, Northwest Territories and the Yukon territory. Those programs were predesigned in one package. If you wanted to access those programs, the access were with the guidelines and the criteria that have been established. Clearly, from the community discussions over a number of years, communities have objected to having to take programs that already have guidelines that really didn't fit into the community. We've heard that message for a long time now, not just in the last couple of years. It's not a revelation, it's something that has been haunting many of us for the last 15 or 20 years on how do you make those changes and how do you give and empower the communities with the necessary tools to look after themselves; and how do you build individual self-esteem, dignity and pride; and how do you help community leaders guide the community into a healthy community?

Certainly, that type of flexible approach has not been awarded to the community. It has not been awarded to the GNWT because the programs have been designed at the federal level with the anticipation that it could suit anybody anywhere and not have the problems of trying to be flexible.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it has been with the protests that have come from the aboriginal organizations and from Northwest Territories communities and leaders, of how much destruction has been done to communities and community well-being by creating dependence on a welfare system that really was a negative system and really didn't support growth and well-being. The community wellness strategy -- as the honourable Member for Iqaluit has indicated -- does lead to discussion away from the bureaucratic approach to how programs and services have been applied in the past and looks to giving more to the community. The communities certainly want to take a hold of the issues that arise in their community, they want to resolve problems; but they want the tools and the flexibility to do so.

This document is really a document that has come out of a lot of discussions over the last number of years in trying to empower the communities to take on that

responsibility and that accountability. It's going to be a major change. Recently, with the meeting with the group that has been set up under Mr. Nerysoo's responsibility on income reform, it was clearly stated that while communities were very excited and really looking forward to getting the show on the road, they were a bit apprehensive that we'll get the kick-start, people will get excited, then the ball would be dropped. So we had to make a commitment on behalf of all the Legislative Assembly Members and Cabinet that we're behind this initiative, we want it to work. And the communities are the ones that will have to grapple with the issues at home, and we have to try to provide the tools so they can resolve and set direction and priorities to resolve their problems.

So, yes, it does answer that one question. It's a long answer, but I think it's a pretty exciting thing when people say this is what we've been saying all along, now can we get on and get it done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Before we get into item 11, we'll take a 10-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. We're on item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 6-12(7): Report On The Review Of The Legislative Discussion Paper On The Draft Of The New Education Act

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I am pleased to report on the review of the legislative discussion paper on the draft of the new Education Act.

Page 726

Background

The Department of Education has been developing a new Education Act for the past five years. The process began in 1990 with a series of workshops across the north and the development of a paper called "Help Improve the Education Act."

From March to April 1994, the department consulted with students, trustees and school board officials in a series of focus groups, to discuss strategies for education program delivery and legislation in the north.

In May 1994, the discussion paper, *Voices: Direction for Improving the Education Act*, was widely distributed with a questionnaire to education agencies, municipal and band councils, cultural organizations and other interest groups. The discussion paper was based on comments and direction received by the department since 1990.

The department also received public and stakeholder input in preparing *A Strategy to 2010*. In addition to the views of northerners, much of the direction for improving northern education was founded on current educational research, the directions of the Legislative Assembly in *Reshaping Northern Government*, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada* and the philosophy of education presented in *Our Students, Our Future: An Educational Framework* (1991).

In fact, consultation on the development of a new Education Act has been ongoing since the Special Committee on Education was established in 1980.

The legislative discussion paper contains a preliminary draft of the legislation for comment. It is a consultation paper. The department distributed the paper to people and agencies in the north to encourage discussion and provide further direction in order to refine and improve the draft legislation prior to introducing the new Education Act in March 1995.

Standing Committee On Legislation Review Process

When the Minister tabled the legislative discussion paper on the draft of the new Education Act, he also made a motion to refer the paper to the Standing Committee on Legislation for review. Both the Minister's comments and the paper itself indicated that the department was continuing its consultations on education in the north in general, and on the paper in particular, in its efforts to bring forth the new Education Act in the very near future.

Subsequent to the document's referral to the committee, it was confirmed that the intention of the department was to obtain the committee's views on the draft legislation prior to the introduction of the education bill. The committee's review of the discussion paper was also intended to provide standing committee Members with a firm understanding of the nature and content of the legislation being proposed. In addition, Members would then be familiar with the legislative framework when the education bill is introduced and referred to the committee for public review.

The process undertaken by the committee consisted of an interactive workshop with committee Members and other interested Members of the Legislative Assembly to review the discussion paper in detail. Officials from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment provided a complete overview of the consultation process and a detailed explanation of the draft legislation. This workshop took place on January 7 and 8, 1995. During the workshop and discussions, the committee was able to provide feedback and suggestions to the department on various aspects of the discussion paper. This report is a summary of the committee's concerns and suggestions and the department's responses.

Issues And Responses

The following issues and responses are presented in the order in which they appear in the draft legislation, and roughly the same order that they were addressed during the standing committee's review.

At this time, I would like to defer to my colleague from Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Lewis, to continue with the presentation of this report.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Lewis.

Part I: Students And Parents

Access To Education

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Issue: The committee expressed a concern with the wording contained in the draft act with respect to the age for starting kindergarten, where a child would have to be five years old as of December 31st to be eligible. It was felt that the act should be more flexible in this regard,

particularly when taking into account the flexibility proposed for the school calendar.

Response: Department officials agreed with the suggestion and responded with a proposal to change the wording in the appropriate sections to state that "the child must be five years old within five months after the start of the school year."

This would take into account the more flexible school calendar by clarifying that regardless of when the school year started, if the child turns five prior to the half-way point they will have the opportunity to start kindergarten. For example, if the school year started on September 1st, the child would be eligible to enter kindergarten if they were to turn five by the 31st of January rather than December.

Inclusive Schooling

Issue: It was noted by the committee during the review that the current act states the Minister shall provide special needs programs to students who require them, but the draft act says that such support services shall be provided in accordance with the direction of the Minister where practicable.

The committee was concerned that, regardless of the fiscal position of the government, the parents of special needs students must be assured that their children will have access to the special services that are required.

Response: The department indicated that in the absence of the precise legal wording of an education bill, it would be

Page 727

premature to debate this issue. Officials felt that if Members were not satisfied that the present wording did not adequately express the intent to provide special needs services, it may be more appropriate to address the issue after the bill has been introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

Home Schooling

Issue: During the review the committee engaged in discussions on the relative merits and drawbacks of the home schooling program and there was a general concern that high standards of education be maintained through monitoring and evaluation.

Response: The department responded by referring to provisions in the draft act which require the district

education authority and divisional education council to "evaluate and provide support to home schooling programs in accordance with the regulations." In addition to regulations on home schooling, the draft act includes provisions which require the superintendent to "review, approve, reject, monitor and terminate programs to be used for home schooling" and the principal to "perform the prescribed duties relating to the support and monitoring of home schooling programs."

The department further stated that:

"Through regulations, we intend to establish procedures which will require the programs used for home schooling to be comparable to those used in the public schools of the Northwest Territories, and require the progress of students in home schooling programs to be regularly evaluated to ensure that the program is meeting their educational needs."

Issue: In home schooling discussions, there was also a concern that the proposed provision for reimbursing parents for home schooling program costs was too open to interpretation and could conceivably lead to requests from home schooling parents for unauthorized financial support.

Response: The draft act states that home schooling education program costs must be approved by the district education authority. Department officials stressed that the draft act:

"allows district authorities to determine which program costs they will approve, and which they will not, even for a home schooling program that has received their approval. The home schooling regulations will also clarify the kinds of program costs a district authority can expect to pay, such as correspondence course fees, texts and other learning materials."

Private Schools

Issue: During discussions respecting private schools, it was noted by the committee that the draft legislation was not clear that private schools were those providing programs for students to whom compulsory attendance applies, specifically children aged six to 16.

It was suggested by the committee that the definition of private schools be reworded to clarify that schools which must register as private schools are those offering programs for students (aged six to 16) to whom "compulsory attendance" applies.

Response: The department agreed with this recommendation and has undertaken to facilitate the required changes.

Issue: The committee also noted that the legislation should include a penalty for private schools that remain open in violation of a suspension or cancellation of their registration.

Response: The department has committed to address this concern by adding a section which would make it a duty of a private school providing educational programming to compulsory-aged students to register with the Minister. Another section will be added to allow for the charging of a fine to those private schools that operate without being registered or that continue to operate after their registration has been cancelled or suspended.

I would now like to ask, Mr. Speaker, if my colleague from Baffin South, Mr. Kenoayoak Pudlat, would continue with the reading of this report. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pudlat.

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Attendance

Issue: Committee Members questioned departmental officials on provisions in the draft legislation which affirm that education is a "right" for those between the ages of five and 21, by stating that they have an "entitlement" to an education program. However, the draft act goes on to refer to "compulsory attendance" for those between the ages of six and 16 and places a burden of duty on the parents to ensure compliance.

The committee's concern stemmed from the apparent contradiction that a "right" must be enforced. While the committee understands that a child's entitlement to receive an education must be recognized, it is unfortunate that the parents' duty to ensure that right must also be legislated. It was felt that the more government legislates this kind of responsibility, the more they are telling people that they are not competent to make such decisions respecting the health and welfare of their children.

Response: The department explained that the compulsory attendance provisions were phrased in a manner consistent with all other Canadian

jurisdictions. They must first recognize the right of the child to receive an education and secondly, to ensure that right, parents must assume a measure of responsibility for the benefit of the child, at least until the age of 16.

Confidentiality Of Records

Issue: The committee examined the section on student records and noted that there may be instances where certain information contained in confidential student records must be accessible to health and social services professionals, given the appropriate consents, in order to meet the needs of the student. In addition to the health and welfare of the student in question, there must also be due consideration for the health and welfare of other students and staff.

Page 728

In the interests of all parties, the committee felt that there should be a protocol for interagency information sharing between education, social service and health professionals so that all those who provide services for the student could have access to all relevant information.

Response: The department has agreed to address this concern by adding a section that will allow information from the student record to be shared with health and social services professionals. The department also assured the committee that such a provision will be consistent with access to information and protection of privacy legislation, and will include the necessary requirements for notification and consent.

Student Discipline

Issue: In its examination of the section dealing with student discipline, the committee was of the opinion that the act should specifically state that the use of alcohol, drugs and weapons should be specified as behaviours for which a student can be suspended or expelled. It was felt that the proposed approach of including specific offences and behaviours in a set of "rules" to be established by each district authority was not sufficient and fell short of the "zero-tolerance" philosophy.

Response: The department proposed to change the draft legislation to include the illicit use of alcohol or drugs as behaviours for which a student can be suspended or expelled. However, on the advice of

legislative counsel, the department will not include a reference to "weapons" in the new provision.

"With regard to the use of weapons -- the term 'weapon' may limit rather than increase our ability to suspend under the current provision which states that the suspension can occur for conduct injurious to the physical or mental well-being of other students or school staff."

Also, in response to the committee's concern regarding zero tolerance for violence, the department proposes to add a provision to include in student records, documentation of any violent acts perpetrated by a student. This record will follow a student in the event that he or she changes schools.

I will now defer to the Standing Committee on Legislation Member, Mr. Allooloo.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Allooloo.

Part II: Educators

Teachers

MR. ALLOOLOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Issue: In reviewing the proposed provisions for the suspension of teachers where there is misconduct or incompetence, it was not clear to the committee whether such a suspension was with pay or without pay. In the interest of clarity, the committee felt that the act should specify whether a suspension is with pay or without pay.

Response: The department has agreed to reword the section that refers to the suspension of a teacher for misconduct or incompetence, to clarify that it is without pay.

Issue: The committee also noted that another section dealing with alleged misconduct or incompetence was worded awkwardly and should be made more clear.

Response: The department will undertake to reword the section that refers to the suspension of a teacher for alleged misconduct or incompetence to eliminate any confusion.

Issue: Committee Members expressed a concern from a community perspective that teachers must be

familiar with, and sensitive to, the cultural environment in which they are teaching. It was suggested that teachers' performance evaluations, conducted every year, should include a cultural component to gauge each teachers' sensitivity and adaptability to their cultural environment.

There was also some discussion pertaining to the fact that, in the draft act, principals are responsible for evaluating teachers, giving the appearance at least of "peer evaluation." The committee was not entirely comfortable with the provision.

Response: Department officials explained that, under the new terms of the draft act, district authorities are considered the board of education management and the principal serves as a manager, taking direction from the local authority. Therefore, it would be the local authority that directs the evaluations conducted by the principal and sets the guidelines and standards for these evaluations. In order to address the cultural sensitivity requirements, these guidelines and standards could include knowledge and understanding of the culture of a community, as directed by the district education authority or divisional education council.

Part III: Communities - Cultural Diversity

Language Of Instruction/Program Language

Issue: The wording of a particular section on determining the language of instruction in a district caused the committee some concern. It was interpreted by Members to say that a district authority could choose a language of instruction only if approval of the Minister was secured. This seemed to contradict a basic objective of the draft legislation, which is to move more decision-making authority for education to the community level.

Response: The department agreed with the committee's assessment and responded by committing to create a new section: "which will state that the Minister will, by directive, give guidelines for the implementation of language of instruction programs to ensure that high standards of education are maintained." In addition, the present wording will be changed to eliminate "ministerial determination" as a prerequisite for the district authority's choice of language. These changes will ensure that the decision is in the hands of the local authority, but within prescribed guidelines to maintain standards of education.

Issue: Additional sections caught the attention of the committee with respect to their wording which seemed to give priority to the English language in Northwest Territories schools. The committee requested that changes be made to ensure that there was more of a balance between English and aboriginal languages.

Page 729

Response: The department made the commitment that the section referred to: "will be reworded so that English and the official languages other than English are referred to in a more parallel manner."

Mr. Speaker, I will now ask the Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark, to continue the report. Qujannamiik.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ningark.

Religion And Spirituality

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The standing committee engaged in extensive discussions on the issue of religion and spirituality in schools. By way of introduction to what is proposed in the draft act, the following is taken from the explanatory notes in the discussion paper:

"The current act provides that the school day may begin with the Lord's Prayer and provides for the delivery of religious instruction in public schools. These provisions were enacted before the Canadian Charter of rights and Freedoms became law in 1982, and should be considered now in light of the Charter.

"The draft act is proposing that teachers may make statements about spiritual or religious values or beliefs, if required to explain an aspect of a subject or a world view. The draft says teachers can make such statements providing that the statement is made in a manner that is respectful of the spiritual or religious values or beliefs of all the students.

"The draft act also says that a public denominational school may provide religious instruction up to 150 minutes a week, and may conduct religious exercises. It says that the religious instruction and exercises shall be provided in a manner that is respectful of the spiritual or religious values or beliefs of all the students."

Issues: Although the Charter does not permit religious instruction in a particular faith or denomination in public schools, committee Members felt that something should be done in schools to recognize the spirituality of our existence and which reminds us that we are human beings and we should be respectful of the values and beliefs of others.

The committee suggested that the department come up with some inclusive way to recognize spirituality that is respectful of all religions. A possibility suggested by Members was to allow some sort of universal expression of spirituality and goodwill that offends no one, yet recognizes a power greater than ourselves.

Further discussions progressed to the point where committee Members were clearly uncomfortable with the elimination of religious instruction in public schools. It was felt that such instruction imparted basic values and respect for others to our children, and should be allowed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. NINGARK:

Response: The Department considered the committee's position and looked at ways to address the issue within the boundaries of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms:

"What Charter decisions have shown is that instruction in religions within schools is permissible as long as it is consistent with the multicultural heritage of Canada."

In other words, as long as instruction in religion is offered in the context of other world religions, and is respectful of all faiths and their inherent values, it will not be considered in contravention of the Charter.

Therefore, the department proposed to add a subsection "enabling public schools to allow instruction in world religions and spiritual values in a manner that is respectful of the spiritual or religious values or beliefs of all the students."

Issue: Discussions on religion and spirituality led to a related issue which the committee felt should be

addressed. Members noted that the draft act did not provide for expressions of patriotism in our schools. The once-common practice of singing the national anthem on a regular basis has faded from much of our institutional activity.

Members felt that this need not be the case if the department could propose some method of retaining such a practice.

Response: The department's response that a statement "will be added to the preamble referring to the multicultural heritage of Canada" was the result of a misinterpretation of the committee's concern. Further discussion with departmental officials on the issue served to clarify for the committee that the act would not prevent a district authority from including regular expressions of patriotism in schools as a matter of practice, but it need not be made a requirement in the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like now to defer to the Member for Yellowknife South and the SCOL chairperson, Mr. Tony Whitford, to conclude this report. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission...

PART III: Communities - Governance

Membership And Terms

Issue: In responding to a request from divisional boards for more continuity on education councils and committees in the communities, the draft act proposes that the term of office of members of a district education authority will be three years, except where the term of the municipal council of a district is two years. In this manner, the election of district authority members would coincide with municipal elections.

The committee felt that each community is different and should be able to decide for themselves how much "continuity" they require in their district education authority membership. It was suggested that this provision for determining the terms of members be flexible, perhaps within a range of one to four years, to allow more community control.

Response: The department responded by indicating that a provision will be added:

"allowing communities to petition the Minister for an alternate length of term for the members of the district education authority. One qualifier will be that the elections for the district education authority must coincide with the elections for the municipal authority in their district so that costs are not increased. Since most municipal authorities have staggered terms, and so have elections every year, this would allow a great deal of flexibility for most communities if they wished to change the terms of the members of the district education authority."

Issue: The draft act also proposes that the person who receives the most votes in the election and the person receiving the second-highest number of votes will be named the chairperson and the vice-chairperson respectively.

The committee did not agree with this method of selecting these positions and recommended that the department make a change.

Response: The department agreed to change the relevant sections to enable the district education authority to select its chairperson and vice-chairperson from among its members, rather than being determined by the number of votes candidates received during an election.

Coordination

Issue: In the general discussions on the role and responsibilities of district education authorities in the community, the committee felt that there should be more emphasis placed on the need for coordination of education planning and management with the governing authority of the municipality.

Response: The department made a commitment to add a provision in the responsibilities and duties of local authorities that requires the district education authority to inform the governing authority of the municipality or community of the development and use of school facilities to enable coordination with municipal planning.

Part IV: Finance And Administration

Public Denominational Finance

Issue: In the discussions on support for, and voting in the elections of, either public or public denominational

schools, there was some confusion with respect to the options available to ratepayers.

Response: Upon closer examination of the relevant provisions of the draft act, department officials provided the following explanation:

"...those who support a public denominational district may vote for the district education authority of that district, and those who support the public district may vote for (that) authority. If a person sends contributions to both districts, they must choose the district in which they will vote, because they cannot vote for both the public and public denominational district education authorities. (In addition,) only those support the public denominational district through taxes can vote on issues dealing with the expenditure of money in that district."

However, in the event of joint property ownership, the draft act allows the two joint tenants "to send their contributions to different districts and each to vote for the district education authority of the district to which they send their contributions."

Conclusion

The Standing Committee on Legislation was very pleased with the draft of the new Education Act. Although it will likely require additional adjustments and minor revisions to meet the needs and concerns of northerners, the committee felt that the foundation and the necessary provisions are present. The committee especially supports the move reflected in the proposed legislation to vest communities with additional responsibility and authority for education. This will allow community and regional priorities and differences to be reflected in education programming throughout the north, while maintaining the quality and standards of the core curriculum.

The committee is aware that over the course of the last two months the department has endeavoured to present the draft legislation to the divisional boards of education across the Northwest Territories and engage in discussions aimed at further improving the new Education Act. When the education bill is introduced, it will likely reflect additional changes suggested by the education boards.

A new Education Act for the Northwest Territories has been years in the making. When the education bill is introduced in the Legislative Assembly, the committee is confident that all parties, including government, communities, education professionals, parents and

students will give it the priority consideration it deserves.

Acknowledgements

The Standing Committee on Legislation gratefully acknowledges the considerable efforts of the Honourable Richard Nerysoo, and the staff of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in assisting the committee with its review: Mr. Hal Gerein, the deputy minister; Mr. Eric Colbourne, the ADM of educational development; Ms. Gail Joyce, director of policy and planning; Ms. Janet Grinsted, senior policy advisor on legislation.

Their commitment to education in the north enabled the committee to gain a thorough understanding of the proposed legislation through their contributions to the committee's review of the discussion paper.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Motion To Receive Committee Report 6-12(7) And Move To Committee Of The Whole, Carried

I have a motion to make, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Natilikmiot, that the report of the Standing Committee on Legislation on its review of the draft

Page 731

Education Act be received by the Assembly and moved into committee of the whole.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Item 11, reports of standing and special committees.
Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills.
Item 13, tabling of documents. Ms. Cournoyea.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, Tabled Document 77-12(7), Annual Report of the Nunavut Implementation Commission for the Year Ending March 31, 1994.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Motion 16-12(7), Setting of Sitting Hours by Speaker, Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 16-12(7): Setting Of Sitting Hours By Speaker

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sittings hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Lewis. 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 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Lewis.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 31: Recall Act

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 31, Recall Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 31 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 28: An Act To Amend the Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kitikmeot, that Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act to provide that the Commissioner, on the advice of the Premier, may revoke the appointment of a Member of the Executive Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

MR. SPEAKER:

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

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 28 has had second reading. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

Bill 30: Deficit Elimination Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 30, Deficit Elimination Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill provides that the budget of the Government of the Northwest Territories must be balanced for the 1998-99 fiscal year. To meet that target, the bill provides that the deficits for the 1996-97 and 1997-98 fiscal years must not exceed \$20 million and \$10 million respectively. If deficit targets are exceeded in either the 1996-97 or 1997-98 fiscal years, the budget must be adjusted by an offsetting amount in the next fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. KOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I reviewed the proposed Bill 30 and I support the good intentions of the bill. This is very similar to initiatives taken by other Legislatures across Canada and across the USA. However, this bill provides that the budget of this government be balanced for the 1998-99 fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, we are going through periods of great change now; let's say not just change but upheavals in the Northwest Territories. We have fiscal

Page 732

problems. This government is now experiencing deficit situations which it hasn't before, or at least not to the extent that we are looking at. We have growth in our population with much of our population considered younger people and this is putting great strains on all of our services, all of our programs. We're going through economic upheavals and trying to negotiate new arrangements for oil and gas and mineral accords plus other arrangements. Our EDA program has been cut. Other programs are being cut and we're going to have to look at how we develop economics in the Northwest Territories. Lastly, we're going through a period of division. In 1999, we will have two new territories. Currently, we are negotiating with the federal government and with each other. Who knows what the end results will be or what the costs for implementing division? There are huge uncertainties, not only for Nunavut but also for the new western Arctic.

In my brief review of this proposed bill, I don't know what the impact of this bill will be on the bureaucracy or on this Legislative Assembly. To me, there don't seem to be any penalties imposed for incurring a deficit. So what will happen if a deficit occurs by 1998-99, other than the new Legislature in 1999 having to deal with it and balance the books somehow. We are putting the onus on a group of people, who knows who they will be, five years from now.

If we are to approve a Deficit Elimination Act, then this act should have some teeth and make someone accountable for continuing to incur deficits. Therefore, I need more time to review and examine this bill before I can fully support it. I know we're going to go to committee if it gets second reading and we'll have, hopefully, some time to do so. At this time, I will abstain from voting for second reading of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the principle of the bill. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that I believe every Member of this House fully supports the intent of this bill. I believe it is certainly something we want to see when the territory divides. We don't want to see a huge deficit for either territory to have to absorb. However, in reviewing this bill, while the intent is good, the thing that is missing is what I would call "teeth," accountability for a deficit if it occurred over the amount that is presented in this bill. There's no accountability in this bill for allowing a deficit. No one is made accountable and I think, in as much as this bill has good intentions, it appears to be paying lip service to the territories.

I know that's not the intent of the bill when it was formulated so I would urge the government to look at putting some sort of accountability into the bill to make people accountable for overexpending and incurring deficits, which we don't want to see. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the principle of the bill. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, support the principle of the bill but am concerned that the bill is somewhat

lacking. I think the intent of the Standing Committee on Finance was that in 1999, there be no accumulated debt so

there wouldn't have to be a division of an accumulated deficit in the formation of two new territories.

This act before us does allow deficits to occur in two years and doesn't specifically require that they be addressed. That's one area I would hope to see addressed through amendment to this bill. I hope that sort of amendment will take place at the committee stage. I also think there needs to be, as other Members have suggested, some teeth. There is no recourse right now should a government fail to achieve the targets set out in the bill.

I think those are two areas that will have to be addressed, but I would like to say that I support the principle of the bill and hope to see some amendments to make the bill truly address the requirement that the Standing Committee on Finance hoped to bring forward.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the principle of the bill. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate the Minister of Finance and the government for bringing this forward-looking, progressive bill forward today. This is in keeping with the spirit of the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Finance. I know that these days and in future years, it is not going to be easy to restrain spending but I admire the courage of the Minister of Finance and his Cabinet colleagues in laying this out as a goal.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I'm sure we all agree it is not in the interest of Nunavut that there be a deficit on the eve of division of the Northwest Territories nor, I'm sure, is it in the interest of the new western territory that there be a deficit to deal with on the eve of the creation of that new territory. We have to take the tough steps now to ensure that future governments are not saddled with this problem. I think it is timely and appropriate that this measure be introduced now in 1995, because we're going to have to begin preparing now to ensure these problems are not upon us and have not accumulated by 1999.

Having said my piece about supporting the legislation in principle, Mr. Speaker, and congratulating the

Minister for responding to the recommendations of this House, I have to add, and echo the concerns of my colleagues, that the bill could be improved on and must be improved on when it is considered during second reading in committee of the whole. Specifically, I believe that, together -- and I invite the Members of Cabinet to cooperate and work with us on this side of the House to improve the bill -- we can make it even stronger. Instead of a goal, we can make it a requirement of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

I imagine, Mr. Speaker, if the will is there and we continue to have courage and support from the Members of Cabinet, that ways can be found to strengthen this goal that I'm sure we all agree on. I think measures will be suggested and I'm confident that Mr. Pollard will welcome constructive, reasonable suggestions to strengthen the bill and ensure it's not just a goal but that it's a requirement that has reasonable incentives, if not sanctions, to ensure these requirements are met. I am pleased to support this bill, Mr. Speaker, on the expectation that, although it's good, it can be improved upon as we work

Page 733

on it in a spirit of cooperation and with an eye to our obligations to the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the principle of the bill. Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate the committee for raising this as an issue. I would like to thank the Minister for responding to it. I said earlier on today, Mr. Speaker, that we are very reluctant to impose discipline on ourselves and here's one example of an attempt to do that, to have discipline in what we do here. We've been reluctant to do it for a long, long time. So, it gives me great pleasure to see a movement by one of our Ministers to impose some discipline on ourselves in difficult times.

I don't know, and maybe some people know already, whether they'll be here after next October. Some people have already counted themselves out. I know that some people are reluctant to support a bill that wants to impose something on future Assemblies and Members. They may be told that it's fine to pass laws that you may not have to live with, that you've had

good times, but what about us? We're passing a law that tells people how they have to behave in the future. We're going to get that kind of criticism but it takes courage sometimes to do what you think is right on the basis of your experience. We say this is what we think we have to do. The future Assembly will have to live with that, but, of course, as an Assembly they can change it if they want, if they would dare.

But I support the bill, I support the Minister, I think he's showing courage in doing it. I also join with my colleagues in saying perhaps we can put a bit more teeth in it because that's another problem. We talk about great principles and great ideas, but what about some teeth; something that actually is meaningful and puts a bit of accountability into things.

So I'm very happy today, Mr. Speaker, to see that we are prepared to impose some discipline on ourselves. It's wonderful. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

To the principle of the bill. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it was initially the Standing Committee on Finance who made the recommendation, that before 1999 -- before the NWT splits into two; one into Nunavut and the other into a western Arctic government -- that the government of the day doesn't have any deficit at the end of 1999. For that matter, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion, of course.

I know when we set a goal, Mr. Speaker, and we make a law or policy, we want to make sure those who infringe upon the role, the policy, the law, or whatever you call it, will be responsible for their actions. Like my colleague across the room, I would like to utter that I wish there were more teeth to the bill. I wish there was more power than when someone does not meet the goal at the end of 1999, whoever is responsible for their actions be penalized, Mr. Speaker. I think if each and every department is deemed responsible, the Ministers, deputy ministers and people at the management level, then they will try very hard to meet the law or policy.

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill, but there are no teeth to it. I wish someone would at least be responsible; perhaps, a politician. Thank you.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the principle of the bill. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I support the principle of Bill 30, Deficit Elimination Act. It's along the lines of a recommendation of the Standing Committee on Finance. I would like to applaud the Minister of Finance for putting this past his colleagues so we can debate it here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious bill, it's a very tough decision to make. I'm sure, like everybody else here, when I put my name forward to represent people in my constituency, people were concerned about balancing the budget. We had an accumulated surplus when we started and now we're into an accumulated deficit, so we're in a very tough situation.

The federal government has cut us back and division is coming in 1999. The intention here is to have a balanced budget before division occurs so we wouldn't have the problems that would be associated with trying to deal with an accumulated deficit when division does happen.

So I applaud Bill 30 and I support the principle. However, again, I would like to repeat what other Members have said, that there have to be sanctions in there that we have to make sure this bill is a serious bill so when we don't meet our targets, we have to have some sort of accountability for people. I think it's going to be a tough decision. It's going to be the people in the government, the Minister and Cabinet who are going to have to be taking the responsibility, I'm aware of that. But if there are going to be cuts; I've said in the House before, we have to work with the people in the communities to determine where we should be spending our resources. Our resources are depleting and we have an accumulated deficit. The people in the communities have become very aware of where our funding comes from and they know how the funding is spent in communities. I think we have to work together here, the government and Members on this side of the House, then we, as politicians, have to work with the people in the communities we represent so we make the right

decisions. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I support the principle of this bill. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. To the principle of the bill.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 30 has had second reading. Bills 28 and 30 have had second reading, and accordingly the bills stand referred to a committee.

Page 734

Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96; Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Fair Practices Act; Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Retirement Plan Beneficiaries Act; Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95; 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. Whitford in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The committee will now come to order. What is the wish of the committee? The chair recognizes the Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to recommend the committee consider, first of all, Bill 21 to see if we can conclude that, then resume consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Report 4-12(7), specifically the budget of the NWT Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, do you wish to take the witness chair?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

If I might, and bring in a witness, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The Sergeant-at-Arms will assist you. Does the committee agree that the Minister bring in a witness to assist him?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please assist the witnesses into the House?

Minister Pollard, would you be so kind as to introduce your witness to the committee?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Mr. Lew Voytilla, secretary to the Financial Management Board. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Department Of Education, Culture And Employment

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, Mr. Voytilla. When we concluded yesterday, we were on page 32 of Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95. The document is in your green books. We were on the Department of Education, Culture and

Employment. The subject was capital and I think we were at the last item. The chair recognizes the Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday, when we concluded, I was trying to get your attention but you recognized the honourable Member who called progress. I wasn't concluded with this department, especially the educational development section. If I may, Mr. Chairman, I would like to get to it.

This is concerning an item which states: "To reduce funding in the Fort Simpson Bompas elementary school project to finance the GNWT's share of costs associated with the Canada/NWT infrastructure agreement." The funding for this elementary school in Fort Simpson has been reduced by \$103,000. I wanted to ask a couple of questions about that.

Mr. Chairman, this elementary school has been totally renovated and the project is still ongoing. It is not known at the present time what the complete costs of the project are yet because they are still working on it. While construction is still going on, \$103,000 has been eliminated from the total project. I was wondering why that happened. Usually when a project is completed and there is a surplus left over, that's what is used to carry over to other projects and so forth. This project is still going on, yet a substantial amount of funding has been reduced. I was wondering if the Minister could give me some information on that: how much the total project is at the present time; how much money is left to complete the project; and, why was \$103,000 taken away from a project that's not completed yet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, we were advised by the Department of Education that favourable tender results would allow them to reduce renovation estimates to Bompas elementary school in Fort Simpson by \$103,000. The department had some favourable tender results which, we understand, won't affect the scope of the work, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A certain amount of funding was approved for the project. I'm concerned because it's in my constituency and I want to make sure that a project such as an elementary school is done properly and does not suffer because of a shortage of funding. As we all know, when a project is under way, unforeseen problems crop up from time to time and there are cost overruns. I'm concerned that by withdrawing this funding because of favourable tenders, they might have a problems acquiring \$103,000 from another source if they do run into problems and they need to recall the original budgeted amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Minister.

Page 735

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Minister of Education to deal with that question, please. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Minister of Education, Mr. Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The project, itself, will not suffer. In fact, all the requirements for the programming -- in other words, all the programming and design requests in the project -- are part of the tender that came in. As a result, the contractor's estimate was \$103,000 less than what had been projected for the contract. The responsibility for any changes or costs more than proposed -- in other words, where we didn't make changes -- is the responsibility of the contractor. The program designs were \$103,000 less than voted in the budget. If we have a problem with regard to our programming and ask for more, then we would obviously have to come up with the resources to respond to that but, other than that, everything that has been requested so far is part of the contract.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This elementary school project is under construction right now and the Thomas Simpson school, which is not part of this project, is a separate project starting renovations as well. There was a request by the community education council of the Minister to see if the excess funds could be used by the other school so the Thomas Simpson school could be renovated in a proper way. I know the Minister has received a letter requesting that from the community education council and I wonder why the \$103,000 wasn't granted to the other project. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Honourable Richard Nerysoo.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. Just so everything is clear, the money that we vote in our capital budgets is basically a snapshot of the assessments of what it would generally cost for a project. They're not the dollars that may end up being spent for a project. Some could be less and some could be more, depending on the changes or program being requested for that project. Even if we were to make changes to the other project, we would still have to come back to Cabinet if additional dollars were required for expansion to the other project. We can't simply take project dollars and move them over to another project without having to come back to FMB for a change in that other school. Regardless of whether it is from the same community, we have to come back and get the changes appropriately voted by FMB.

I understand the request that has been made, but it is not simply a matter of moving money back and forth. We still have to review the program requirements of the additional renovations going on.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, honourable Minister Nerysoo. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, on page 32 there is a line that indicates that the total GNWT share for 1994-95 is \$500,000. What is that referring to? It's a line by itself. Is it making reference to the Canada/NWT infrastructure agreement? What is it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

The Minister can answer but just very quickly, it is the infrastructure program that we're talking about.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Mr. Minister, did you wish to add anything to that? That was the answer?

MR. ANTOINE:

(Microphone turned off)...that was reduced from the Fort Simpson Bompas elementary school project because the contractor bid was favourable for that amount less than was allocated. So this \$103,000 then goes into the Canada/NWT infrastructure agreement for 1994-95 and the total amount was \$500,000. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, our share in this particular fiscal year, 1994-95, was \$500,000. That is correct. You'll note throughout the supplementary appropriation there were capital dollars where they were free in other projects, they were taken and put towards our \$500,000 share. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. That concludes your questions, Mr. Antoine? Thank you. Any further comments? We were concluding the document Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, we were on page 32, educational development, not previously authorized, \$197,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Total department, not previously authorized, \$1.386 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that we've concluded with the supplementary appropriation document, detailed, and that we proceed to Bill 21?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause by clause. Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, clause 1.

Page 736

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Schedule, part I, vote 2, capital, total capital, \$1.42 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Part II, vote 1, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance,

\$25,120,500. The chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

Committee Motion 33-12(7): To Amend Part II Of The Schedule To Bill 21, Carried

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that part II of the schedule to Bill 21 be amended by:

(a) increasing the amount set out opposite vote 1, item two, by \$1.2 million, from \$215,000 to \$1.415 million;

(b) increasing the amount set out for total operations and maintenance by \$1.2 million from \$25,120,500 to \$26,320,500; and,

(c) increasing the amount set out for total supplementary appropriations in parts I and II by \$1.2 million, from \$26,540,500 to \$27,740,500. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. The motion is in order. Copies are being circulated to the Members. We'll just give a moment or two here to get the copies circulated. The motion is in order. You all have copies. To the motion. The chair recognizes Mr. Antoine and then Mr. Ningark.

MR. ANTOINE:

Mr. Chairman, this is the first time that we have had to deal with such a substantial amount in a supplementary appropriation. I have a number of questions here, Mr. Chairman, if I could ask them at this time. I don't know whether the Minister has told the House exactly what the increases here represent so I would like to ask, first of all, to the Minister, what is the increase here of \$1.2 million to the Municipal and Community Affairs amount of supplementary appropriation? Could you provide that information here to the committee? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

To the motion. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Chairman, in the water and sewer account there is a shortfall for

1994-95 of \$2.022 million. There will be some reimbursements to MACA by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation in the amount of \$491,000. The department has identified \$331,000 from within its budget that it can put towards this shortfall which means that there is a shortfall in the department in this particular area of \$1.2 million, Mr. Chairman. That is why the motion has been put forward. Unfortunately, this was not discovered until late in the year and we were unable to get it into the supp and get it before the Standing Committee on Finance and, as I advised the standing committee in the House yesterday, we did have knowledge of it and I wanted to make the House aware because otherwise the Minister's department would appear to have overspent by some \$1.2 million and this would be a better way to handle the situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Changes to the subsidy program were discussed in committee of the whole in April 1994 and, at that time, the Minister of Municipal of Community and Affairs suggested that the additional cost to the government would be about \$201,000. The total amount originally budgeted for the subsidy program in 1994-95 main estimates was \$7.011 million. This was already increased to \$8.436 million and this amendment will increase it by a further \$1.531 million, of which \$1.2 million is to be supplementary funding making the total new figure of \$9.967 million. This is an increase of almost \$3 million which is about 40 percent of the original budgeted figure. Can the Minister explain how much of that increase is due to the changes in the subsidy

Page 737

program, and how much is due to other factors such as new house construction, sale of staff and NWT Housing Corporation housing, and increased per capita consumption and so on? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The combined effects of various factors are affecting these subsidy payments, Mr. Chairman. They include new private customers who qualify for subsidized rates, including home ownership housing through NWT HC, GNWT and NWT HC houses sold to occupants or to the private sector, new private housing units excluding home ownership and GNWT sold units, and new commercial customers or buildings. There have also been increases in water consumption for existing private customers due, we believe, to increase in per capita consumption which is, we believe, due to the quality of housing and plumbing; there is more water used in appliances, increasing the size of water tanks, changes in user habits et cetera; population growth, which we know is all across the Northwest Territories; and, increases in the level of commercial activity. I believe Mr. Antoine mentioned that there have also been increases in economic rates for the water and sewage services.

Mr. Chairman, I think his specific question was how much of that is due to the increase in economic rate, and we believe that to be \$140,000. The additional subsidy payment for 1994-95 was due to the delay in implementing the rate increases in the water and sewer area, Mr. Chairman. That was \$142,000. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. The chair continues to recognize Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs communicate with the NWT Housing Corporation regarding the new houses that have been constructed by the corporation and put into use? This is in order that the department can properly plan for increased consumption. If the Minister could give me some information on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, yes, there is communication between Municipal and Community Affairs with regard to new home ownership units through the Housing Corporation, also with regard to their public housing units and there's also DPW talking to MACA about the

same sort of thing because they are selling houses as well.

The difficulty is we really don't know what the consumption is going to be and what the progress is going to be on those particular units. And I will admit that we knew going into this particular fiscal year that the department was experiencing a shortfall in this area which has been made up for in the budget that's now before the House, Mr. Chairman.

I think the department is doing as good as it can to keep up with the changes that are occurring across the territories and it's working closely with the municipal governments to make sure there's good communication; but I think always in these cases, we're going to be down to the last quarter before we know exactly what the impacts are, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. General comments. The chair continues to recognize the Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Why did the department not plan adequately, Mr. Chairman, for increased consumption due to the sale of staff housing and the new houses that were constructed? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, we did make some plans on the sale of staff housing, and we made some projections both on the revenue side and also on the impact to departments side and we did make some adjustments to the department. We also adjusted the department because there was a new water and sewer rate coming into effect and we, I think, took away over \$300,000 from them in anticipation of those new rates. But we delayed the increase in rates. The other thing is that we really don't know when those houses are going to be sold. DPW can say we have this number of units that have had interest expressed in, but by the time the ink is dry on the paper and the mortgages are in place and so on, we really don't know when those sales are going to take place or, in fact, if the whole number of sales are going to take place.

There were a number of factors that were influencing this particular area this year, Mr. Chairman, and made it difficult for the department to accurately forecast. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. To the motion. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Again, Mr. Chairman, I think the consumption of water...A lot of the new units in the north have water tanks and the consumption, perhaps, may have gone up with the new construction, the larger water tanks and so forth. Did the department anticipate this in the budgeting process since it appeared to be a factor in a dramatic increase in the subsidy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, that's another difficult one because public health workers are out there encouraging cleanliness and encouraging people to use more water. And we know that when people do have access to good, clean water and hot water, that they do use more of it. The only thing that seems to affect the consumption of water in the Northwest Territories is price, Mr. Chairman. As the price goes up, people are much more frugal with the wastage of water.

Again, it's something that is anticipated -- because we know that the increase does occur when it becomes more available -- but something that's really hard to predict, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Page 738

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Can the Minister explain to us how changes in the economic rates for water and sewage service have affected the amount of this subsidy? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, as the economic rates increase so does the draw down on the subsidy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. The chair recognizes the Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I understand that part of the problem is that the reason for this increased cost is that more people have acquired private housing, the government employees have purchased staff housing and people have built their own home ownership units under the home ownership programs of the NWT Housing Corporation.

Mr. Chairman, is it correct that it costs our government more in subsidies when people convert from staff or social housing to private home ownership? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I believe I understand what the Member is asking me, but could I just ask him to clarify for me, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Patterson, to the motion.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand, Mr. Chairman, that some of the increased costs have to do with the sale of staff housing and the take-up of home ownership units by people who are living in public housing. I understand that that's one of the factors that has driven us to require this increased expenditure. I would just like to ask the Minister, does it cost the government more to provide subsidies for people who are living in private homes, compared to what it would cost if those same people were living in social housing or in government staff housing? I hope I made myself clear.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Did that help, Mr. Minister?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, yes, I understand. Mr. Chairman, when the government has a house and we buy from a community or municipality, we pay the economic rate and we don't go back to MACA and ask for a subsidy. This is where the complexity comes in because when we sell that house to a private home owner and they start to pay their own water bills, then they have a right to go and ask for that particular subsidy. So that costs MACA more, but theoretically, we should be seeing savings in whichever government department is paying for those utilities. We would expect money to lapse

this year in DPW, although we have already made some adjustments in DPW with regard to utilities, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, when there is a brand new house that is put up by an owner who has been to the Housing Corporation and received an access house or something like that, once they start drawing water, the subsidy is brand new and they start drawing that down on Municipal and Community Affairs. It doesn't affect the other departments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess when I was talking about Housing Corporation units, I should have given the example of a tenant who buys a Housing Corporation unit from the corporation, which I think has happened in a number of communities this year. Would the Minister agree that the proper way to account for this factor of increased sale of staff housing and sale of public housing to tenants would be to offset the increased cost to MACA with a reduced allocation to the Housing Corporation and to the department of Public Works and Services for utilities. Would that not be the best way of giving this House the true picture of what is going on here? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. That is what we did at the beginning. I think everyone knows that when we started getting out of staff housing and making all of these adjustments, there was some confusion. A lot of the confusion was to do with us because we suddenly realized the impact upon us of these different arrangements that we were making with clients. So, yes, that is the proper way to do it and that is the way we made the adjustments originally in this fiscal year. This is a late adjustment and we are handling one side of the ledger, which is the fact that MACA is going to be short money. We anticipated, as I said earlier, that DPW will lapse money in this area simply because they won't be paying where the customer now is paying, and drawing a subsidy from the Government of the Northwest Territories. So we anticipate the offset to be in the lapse from DPW, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a general question. I think the Minister has admitted that this area in the program is very complicated. I think some of the questions and responses have proven that. I find it very hard to understand the different categories of communities and their various treatment. I believe Yellowknife is in a category all to itself. Perhaps without subsidies, there are settlements and undeveloped areas that have special rates. Then there are hamlets and cities, towns and villages. Would the Minister agree that we have a complicated system that it is almost

incomprehensible for the average person to understand? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Pollard.

Page 739

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, to know it, you have to live with it. So I would agree that it is difficult for people who are not dealing with it every day to understand what is happening. It is complex, yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

It seems from this supp, Mr. Chairman, that it might even be hard for the capable officials in the department to understand because they erred by about 20 per cent in what they forecast for the take-up on this subsidy, if my primitive math is correct.

I wonder if the Minister would agree that it would be desirable if the program could be simplified and made more understandable for the average person so we can encourage people to conserve water. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I think that the department has made good progress in the last little while towards simplifying the program. When we first started on it, it was much more difficult to understand than it is now and I think they also realize there can be improvements. I think you'll see, as time goes on, that where there can be improvements and where they're working with communities and getting more efficiencies, that it will be a simpler process in future years. It's going through a big upheaval right now with who is on the system, who's off the system, who is entitled to subsidies and who isn't, so we anticipated there would be problems in the last quarter in this area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. To the motion. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, I wouldn't want to embarrass anybody but I guess I will ask this question. We've had sort of an unusual procedure here in the process of considering this supp in that the House was asked to take note of a matter of a possible additional submission to the appropriation act before it had been submitted to the Financial Management Board. I think the Minister of Finance quite properly gave us notice of this and quite properly amended the bill, otherwise I think the department would have been in violation of

the Financial Administration Act and subject to a comment by the Auditor General.

I would like to ask the Minister if he would explain how it came about that such a large submission was not included in the bill that was presented to us originally. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs didn't have the numbers and couldn't meet the deadline for the cut-off for the main body of the supplementary appropriation we're dealing with. Consequently, by the time they had the numbers, the request came in late and we couldn't get it into the Standing Committee on Finance. The Minister wanted to be upfront about it and so did I, and that's why we advised the Standing Committee on Finance and this House that there was \$1.2 million that hadn't been dealt with. That's why it's being handled in an unusual fashion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. To the motion. The chair recognizes the Member for Thebacha.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we know that the water and sewer service subsidy policy that was implemented is fairly complex because of the different categories that were developed, but can the Minister tell me the intent of the subsidy policy? Was there an intention for a user-pay concept or was it to subsidize service areas? What was the intent of it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of reasons why we would want to subsidize water. Good clean water is necessary for health, cooking, washing, et cetera. In my own community, until very recently, you could get all the water you wanted for \$5 a month. That was one of the things that was happening in Hay River. In other parts of the Northwest Territories, as those

places came along, there were other programs that were put on to help people get water. There was also the pressure upon the government to make it feasible for people to live in their own houses and have water in those houses.

There were a number of reasons and it grew, over time, until it was a hodge-podge of different things across the Northwest Territories. I think the government tried to boil it down and make it more standard. Of course, when you are looking at making it more standard, it is very difficult to look at all the communities in the Northwest Territories and then realize that they all have a different economic rate for hauling water. It may have to come a certain distance. It may have to be treated differently. It may be by pipe or it might be by truck. There are all kinds of other factors that have to be taken into consideration.

Right now, there are a number of people who say water is a commodity that we have every right to have and we are surrounded by it in many instances. We should get it to our door at a relatively low price. For all those reasons, the government is trying to assist people in having good water in their residences. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you for that explanation. I know it has certainly been appreciated by our community to have the funding for our new water treatment plant so that we can get quality water. But there are areas in our community that can't access the piped water through the water subsidy program because of water delivery. I appreciate all the support the Minister is addressing with his department, but I do want to state for the record, Mr. Chairman, that it appears when this policy was developed -- I don't know if it was an oversight -- the intent of the program appeared to leave out Fort Smith with

Page 740

regard to the outlying service areas. I don't think that was the intent of the policy. I certainly hope that some type of resolution can come to fruition in the near future to address this. I just wanted to make that comment because it has been a concern. I feel fairly

confident that the new Minister will certainly make every effort to address this particular concern.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs if he could respond to that specific issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. The chair recognizes the Honourable Kelvin Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize that there are satellite communities and some may be designated as special service areas. In the case of Fort Smith, there are a few areas that aren't on the piped service. They currently receive trucked service. There is some difficulty with some funding in addressing the service to the one area. I know the department has undertaken discussions with the town of Fort Smith in trying to find a suitable solution, so that all parties are happy. I was speaking to the Member earlier on the matter and I think we are going to take a look at it again and see if we could come to some kind of an accommodation that would be suitable to everybody. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Ng. The chair continues to recognize Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I have no further comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that response.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Before I go back to the motion, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize in the gallery a respected elder from the Kitikmeot, John Maksagak.

---Applause

To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Question has been called. The chair recognizes the Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my question was answered by the Minister when the honourable Member for Nahendeh posed the same question that I was trying to get clarified.

I'll speak to the motion. Water is essential and it doesn't matter where you are, either in the north or all over. Mr. Chairman, when I look at TV and see people from other countries who are practically dying on the street because of no water, that causes me some concern. If I had a million dollars, Mr. Chairman, and I was thirsty -- there was no water around me -- I would spend that million dollars for a glass of water, any day, any time. I think this is a good motion. I think people living in the small communities, people living in Yellowknife, Fort Smith and all over deserve to have water delivered to their homes at minimal costs, whatever that means, subsidized. So I will support the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. The chair recognizes the Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

One more final question here. This is quite a big increase to the department's main estimates of 1994-95 and quite a high percentage increase in this budget. Has the department got a good handle on this whole program now so that we won't see huge increases like that in the future? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

I hope so, Mr. Chairman, but I would let the Minister answer for himself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Minister Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we've recognized the deficiency of this year and it had to do with what the Minister of Finance alluded earlier, to the late implementation of the changes to the water/sewer subsidy program. We've made allowances as he had indicated, as well, in the 1995-96 main estimates and we're hoping that that will be sufficient. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Ng. To the motion. The chair recognizes Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, could I ask what is allowed in the 1995-96 main estimates in this area?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Minister Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, there is \$7.211 million for water/sewer subsidy program for hamlets and there's also the subsidy for tax-based municipalities at \$2.548 million. So it's \$9.759 million in total in the book this year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Pollard. Once again, to the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

---Carried

Page 5, part V, total operations and maintenance, as amended, \$26,320,500.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Total supplementary appropriations in parts I and II, \$27,740,500.

Page 741

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. The bill as a whole, as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, is now ready for third reading, as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister and his witness, Mr. Voytilla, for assisting us in this matter. What is the wish of the committee? The chair recognizes Mr. Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Mr. Chairman, you recognized Mr. John Maksagak earlier but I would also like to recognize the two individuals who are with him, his son Gary Maksagak in the middle and his son-in-law, Joe Evetaligak. Thank you.

---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

That's highly unusual, but thank you. Welcome gentlemen. What is the wish of the committee. The chair recognizes Mr. Koe.

MR. KOE:

I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have a motion to report progress on the floor 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. Whitford.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 21 and would like to report progress, that one motion was adopted and Bill 21 is ready for third reading, as amended. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Do I have a seconder? It is Mr. Lewis. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

We don't have a quorum. Mr. Clerk, please ring the bells.

The chair recognizes a quorum. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

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

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to deal with third reading of Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister is seeking unanimous consent to deal with Bill 21. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

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

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Members. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kitikmeot, that Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Your motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 21 has had third reading. It is my understanding that the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories is prepared to assent to bills. Mr. Clerk, will you ascertain if Her Honour, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to the bills.

ASSENT TO BILLS

COMMISSIONER MAKSAGAK:

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, it gives me pleasure to assent to the following bills: Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95; and, Bill 29, Interim Appropriation Act, April 1 - June 30, 1995. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Clerk, item 22, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the Special Joint Committee on Division immediately after adjournment tonight.

Orders of the day for Friday, March 31, 1995:

Page 742

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
 18. Second Reading of Bills
- Bill 31, Recall Act

19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96
- Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Fair Practices Act
- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Retirement Plan

Beneficiaries Act

- Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2
- Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act
- Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Land Titles Act
- Committee Report 2-12(7), Report on the Legislative

Action Paper on the Office of Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories

- Committee Report 3-12(7), Report on the Review of the

Legislative Action Paper Proposing New Heritage

Legislation for the Northwest Territories

- Committee Report 4-12(7), Report on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 5-12(7), Report on the Review of

Rewriting the Liquor Laws of the Northwest Territories:

A Legislative Action Paper

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

(Microphone turned off)...Motion 16-12(7), the sitting hours for Friday, March 31st will be 9:00 am to 12:00 noon.

---ADJOURNMENT