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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

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Page 885

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Antoine, Hon. Silas Arngna'naaq, Mr. Ballantyne, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Hon. Samuel Gargan, Hon. Stephen Kakfwi, 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, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Good morning, Members. It is my understanding that the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories is prepared to give assent to bills. Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if Her Honour, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills?

Assent To Bill 18

COMMISSIONER MAKSAGAK:

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, it gives me pleasure to assent to the following bill: Bill 18, Northwest Territories Energy Corporation Limited Loan Guarantee Act. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Canadian Study Of Diet And Lifestyle On Health

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've taken an interest in medication, health, economics and, of course, accountability. Today, however, my statement is about health, Mr. Speaker.

This is a letter from the University of Toronto addressed to me from Tom Rohan, professor in the Department of Preventative Medicine.

"Every year thousands of Canadians develop diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes. The conditions appear to be related to the way in which people live, our eating and drinking habits and exercise patterns. Therefore, it is thought that by modifying our diet and lifestyle, it might be possible both to prevent some of these diseases and to allow us to live more of our lives in good health.

"Researchers at several Canadian universities, Alberta, BC, Toronto and Western, presently carry out jointly one of the largest studies to date to investigate the effects of eating patterns and other lifestyle factors on future health. The study, called the Canadian study of diet and lifestyle on health, has been coordinated by the Department of Preventative Medicine at the University of Toronto. In order to carry out the study, we must recruit approximately 100,000 adults from across Canada. Our purpose in writing to you now is to see if you would be willing to be a participant."

Being a good democrat and believing in participating in the life of this country, then, of course, I need to get some advice from Members. This is the crucial paragraph, Mr. Speaker.

"To participate, all that you need to do is complete the two questionnaires, one dietary and one lifestyle, which accompany this letter and to place a few strands of your hair (including the roots) in the small envelope marked "hair" and some cuttings from each of your toenails in the small envelope marked "toenails." Then, seal the questionnaires and the small envelopes in the large addressed envelope and mail them back to us. Postage has been prepaid.

"It is estimated that it will take you one hour to complete the questionnaires. Please be assured that the information you provide will be treated completely confidentially."

I have about 12 seconds, Mr. Speaker. I need unanimous consent to complete this statement because I need some advice.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LEWIS:

Mr. Speaker, there has been a tremendous amount of concern expressed over the last three years, especially over the last three months, about who owns the patent for recreating each individual that we are through DNA. So, my dilemma is this: being a good democrat and wanting to participate in a health survey, I would, in fact, be giving to somebody who I don't know, my genetic make-up so that some time in the future, I could be recreated...

---Laughter

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh no!

AN HON. MEMBER:

One is enough.

MR. LEWIS:

So I have a dilemma because I really believe in health and I think the Canadian health establishment is incredibly good. We have some of the best medical research going on in this country, in the world, Mr. Speaker. But, as an individual, I worry about the ownership of my genetic make-up. I wonder whether I should send this to somebody, giving somebody else, voluntarily through this letter, this information, clippings from every one of my toenails. And by the way, I do

Page 886

have some. My nails are kind of gone, but my toenails are still intact. My hair is receding and I can't afford to give up very much of it.

So, I would like to ask for some advice over the next day or two about whether, in fact, I should be a good democrat and participate to help advance science in this country, or whether I should be cautious and not give up the means by which I could be recreated some time in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Passing Of Abigail The Pig

MR. PATTERSON:

I have to make one, Mr. Speaker, because it's Friday and especially now that you're in the chair. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about a death in my constituency and a setback for agriculture and farming in Baffin Island. Mr. Speaker, Abigail of the Arctic, Bill Mackenzie's pig, not to be confused with other swine...

---Laughter

...died this past week. I wasn't referring to any honourable Member, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

I have spoken before in this Chamber about Abigail, much beloved by the children of Iqaluit and Apex, nurtured and cared for for seven and a half years by Bill Mackenzie, Esq., the lord of Apex Hill.

---Laughter

She was a Hampshire pig, 700 pounds at her prime, given to Bill by his friend and neighbour, Marcel Mahe, as a 21-pound piglet as a surprise birthday present. Bill tells me that he knows it was utterly foolish for him to have kept the pig and cared for Abigail over the years because it cost him a fortune. In fact, friends of Bill, notably Mr. Bryan Pearson, tell me that the cost of food, hay and labour for caring for Abigail of the Arctic over the years has been calculated at \$240,000. Just recently, in fact, Bill arranged to ship in tons of fish scrap from the Pangnirtung fish plant for Abigail.

I know that, for Bill, looking after Abigail was a labour of love and he took good care of her. Many Inuit children would otherwise have never been able to see a live pig. Mr. Speaker, Bill was always terribly offended whenever anyone suggested that Abigail should become bacon or pork and I've been asked by several honourable Members who were providing condolences to me about Abigail's death whether Abigail had been eaten this week. I told my honourable friends that if they knew Bill Mackenzie, they would know that even asking that question is an insult to Bill and his beloved pet pig.

So, in the Scottish tradition, she was cremated last week on the slopes of Apex Hill in a spectacular funeral pyre with the aid of more than a few sealift

pallets and some stove oil and the remains were buried in a simple Presbyterian ceremony.

Bill tells me that to live almost eight years is notable for a pig, especially a pig in the Arctic. In fact, he noted that most pigs don't usually get the opportunity to live past their first year. Abigail's passing was noted by Peter Gzowski on Morningside yesterday by millions of listeners.

I would like to inform Members that there are still animals at the Mackenzie country estate: 50 pigeons; Billy Boy and Ma'Mselle, two goats; and many dogs. Bill Mackenzie continues to be a much-loved and respected resident of Apex Hill. His friends say that Bill was a little more subdued than usual this week but Bill tells me he will carry on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ballantyne.

Member's Statement On Environmental Assessment Review Panel

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about the EARP. As you know, it is in the process now of hearings on the BHP project. Members may recall that the panel was born in some controversy, there were a lot of delays. Finally, after much soul-searching, the federal Minister appointed four people. The four people, as Members know, are Letha McLaughlin, Walter Kupsch, Jessie Sloan and Cindy Gilday.

I remember after the announcements were made public, I got a lot of criticism from a lot of people about most of the members on that board. I heard major criticism from environmentalists about some people on the board, I heard major criticism from the Chamber of Commerce members and the mining industry about other people on the board. I made a speech to a fairly large crowd at the Chamber of Commerce a couple of months ago, and what I said there is something I think is necessary to repeat again.

At the end of the day, the board has been chosen. The people on the board all have extremely good credentials and there is a fair philosophical balance on the board. I'm proud of the fact that in my constituency live two members of that board, both

Cindy Gilday and Jessie Sloan are from Yellowknife North and I want to publicly give a vote of confidence to both of them. They are both well-qualified, well-experienced people. The way the make-up of the board ended up was with three women of the four members on the board. That is major step forward for the Northwest Territories, to have a majority of women on a very, very important board.

Each member of that board should be judged on their own qualifications, on their own experience. At the end of the day, we are going to judge them on the product that they deliver. From everything I have heard, the hearings are proceeding very well. There seems to be goodwill among the members. I have every confidence that each member will be objective, will bring their experience to bear. My major message here

Page 887

today, the same message I gave to the Chamber of Commerce, is we have a good board, they are doing well, let them do their job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear! Hear!

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. 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. I rise to recognize a well-known, familiar figure in this Legislature who represents the interests of organized workers in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Ben McDonald.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Sergeant-at-Arms, I have noticed that there is blockage of the doors. Members, the doors are there for emergency purposes and I don't think they should be blocked like that when Members are in the Chamber. Could you

do something about it? Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 429-12(7): Delay In Increase For Seniors' Vehicle Registration

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, I raised an issue with the Minister of Transportation with regard to the purchasing of annual registration for vehicles by seniors and the increase in the amount that has been levied, effective April 1st. The Minister was very kind in responding immediately to this matter, but the issue that has come to mind, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that this policy is now in effect, the increase is now in effect, and it will affect those persons whose birthdays are in the month of April as it became effective April 1st.

The Minister had agreed to instruct his department to review this policy with intentions of reconsidering this increase. I would like to ask the Minister if he would also instruct his department to hold off on implementing this policy until this review is done in order that those persons who are required to register their vehicles not be affected until this review is done.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 429-12(7): Delay In Increase For Seniors' Vehicle Registration

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the honourable Member has said, the policy has been in place effective April 1st. Right now, I am not sure how many people will be affected because their licences and renewal licences are based upon birth dates. What I will commit to is try to, as quickly as possible, look at the amount of revenue that would be generated from this and see if there is some way that we can reconsider this kind of policy. But I cannot put a stop to it immediately at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Zoe.

Question 430-12(7): Time Frame For Response To Written Question Re Migratory Birds Convention

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Renewable Resources. On Tuesday, April 4th, I made a Member's statement with regard to the migratory birds convention, but it has been brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker, that the final negotiations with United States are going to occur later this month. I understand that the Canadian negotiating team is strategizing prior to those negotiations.

It has been brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker, that the dates set are next week, Tuesday and Wednesday, April 11th and 12th. I gave a written question on April 4th. I would like to ask the Minister when he will be responding to my written question because it is quite critical, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 430-12(7): Time Frame For Response To Written Question Re Migratory Birds Convention

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that, according to our rules, I have until the 25th of April. But I will certainly will get a response to Mr. Zoe on his written question, probably Monday morning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Zoe, supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 430-12(7): Time Frame For Response To Written Question Re Migratory Birds Convention

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if it would be possible if the Minister could provide it some time today, the reason being that I have asked a number of questions in my written question as I want to know if the government has a position with regard to making a presentation to the negotiating team. They are presently set to meet on Tuesday and Wednesday, and I would like to hear from the government to see where we stand. I wonder if I could ask the Minister if he could provide it today, if possible.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 430-12(7): Time Frame For Response To Written Question Re Migratory Birds Convention

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the information that the Member is seeking is readily available, so we should be able to come up with a response late today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions.

Page 888

Question 431-12(7): Raising Profile Of NWT

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, it has become more and more obvious to me that we, the Legislative Assembly, are becoming mired in the quicksand of what I call the three P's of politics: policies, procedures and process. I guess my point is that we can contemplate our own navels, and beat each other up with negative criticisms of each other for only so long. It seems to me that we now need that vision, that leadership, to get us out of this quicksand.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear! Hear!

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I made a suggestion in a Member's statement earlier in the week that perhaps it is time for the Government Leader to use her office to get her Cabinet Ministers together with groups of aboriginal and non-aboriginal businessmen, and start to raise the profile of the north, start to beat the drums of the north, and start to get out there in Canada and other places in the world to put the NWT on the map. Would the Premier consider a high-profile approach between now and the election to bring a positive element to the development of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 431-12(7): Raising Profile Of NWT

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that comment and I fully agree with the honourable Member. Over the last number of months, we have been trying to put together such a strategy, with Minister Todd as the lead Minister, to try to come up with a higher-profile media strategy for developing a focus on the NWT, as the honourable Member has indicated, and we will continue to do so. We intend to try to polish that up over the next few weeks. However, Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult for us to have time when we are in session. You know our time is dedicated fully to the House. Once we are out of the House, we will attempt to polish off the work and focus on carrying forward that strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 432-12(7): Status Of Discussions With UNW Re Student Summer Employment

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am following up on some questions asked earlier this session by Mr. Alloo to the Minister responsible for the FMBS, Mr. Pollard. I understand that in order to smooth the way for the employment of a maximum number of summer students in all parts of the Northwest Territories this summer, we need to secure the cooperation and goodwill of the UNW to make sure that the letter and law of the collective agreement doesn't pose barriers for this worthwhile goal of employing summer students. Could the Minister give a status report on discussions, which I understand have been taking place with the UNW, to smooth

the way for employment of maximum numbers of summer students this year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Chairman of the Financial Management Board, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 432-12(7): Status Of Discussions With UNW Re Student Summer Employment

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues. The students have said to us in the past, you assist us with loans, grants and contributions to help us get an education. Some of us would like to come back to the Northwest Territories and earn some money so that we can pay for part of our education. Some of them specifically request work in the area that they are training in, so they can get some on-the-job experience.

Certainly, the government has, over the years, tried to accommodate those students. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, the UNW, rightfully so, has certain rules and regulations in the collective agreement with regard to casual positions and obviously they want to protect their members.

The other issue becomes -- and that has been raised by Mr. Allooloo -- the amount of funds and the rate of pay that is paid to students. Mr. Allooloo contends that in his area if the rates were lower, there could be more students hired and the wealth spread around.

There is another contributing factor to this problem, Mr. Speaker, albeit a good-news problem. In 1992, we were at 416 placements; in 1993, 668; and, in 1994, 785. So there are more students out there looking for summer work. I don't need to reiterate to the House that there has been an uptake in education and Mr. Nerysoo is dealing with that.

So we have all these factors pressuring us. We are dealing with the Department of Personnel with regard to resolving our own in-house situation. We are discussing that with the Department of Education and we will raise the issue with the UNW at our earlier convenience, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 432-12(7): Status Of Discussions With UNW Re Student Summer Employment

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe another honourable Member pointed out earlier in this session that the time to resolve these questions is now, since

students who are out at school are going to be finished soon. I would like to ask the Minister if he is expecting that these issues can be resolved expeditiously before the students return to the north in the next week or so. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 432-12(7): Status Of Discussions With UNW Re Student Summer Employment

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, we anticipate having as much success as we had last year, which was 785 placements. We are doing everything we can under the existing rules and

Page 889

regulations to get as many of these students into these positions that become available in the summer. I can't say that we will resolve the issue with the UNW in that short time frame, although we will attempt to raise this issue with the UNW and look for a more long-term solution. Right now, I am interested in trying to use the existing rules and regulations properly and effectively and, in collaboration with the Premier and Mr. Nerysoo, place as many of those students as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 433-12(7): Federal Royalties From NWT Oil And Gas

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. Mr. Speaker, earlier in the session, I asked the Minister the amount of royalties the federal government plan to receive from mines and he did provide me with that information. However, I would like to ask the Minister for the total amount the federal government is receiving from oil and gas royalties in the Northwest Territories today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take that question as notice. I don't have that number at my fingertips. I want to make sure that I give the honourable Member an accurate reflection of the records. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 434-12(7): Status Of ERS Services At Iqaluit Airport

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had asked the Minister of Transportation earlier in this session about emergency response services and whether they might be modified in my constituency, the major airport in my constituency, as a result of Transport Canada reviewing its guidelines. I would like to ask the Minister if he can give me a status report on the ERS services at Iqaluit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 434-12(7): Status Of ERS Services At Iqaluit Airport

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did answer a question raised by the honourable Member earlier in the week with these current negotiations on the nine Arctic A airports and whether the current level of service would be maintained in those airports. It is certainly our desire to do that. I know there have been news releases out recently indicating that there may be significant cutbacks in the coming months. I would like to assure the honourable Member that we will be taking every steps we can in the final days of these negotiations that we are now in, to try to retain the base funding that is necessary to maintain the current level of service in each of these airports. Mr. Patterson's particular airport is one that we are paying special attention to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 434-12(7): Status Of ERS Services At Iqaluit Airport

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for that response. Do I understand correctly that the whole strategy of the Department of Transportation in these negotiations is, in fact, to secure a transfer preserving, as much as possible, the present level of services provided by MOT to the Arctic A airports, so that cuts that are being discussed and forecast elsewhere in Canada may be spared for the vital airports that serve the Northwest Territories? Is that the strategy of the Minister in these negotiations?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 434-12(7): Status Of ERS Services At Iqaluit Airport

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I have indicated on a number of occasions, when the Arctic A transfer was taking place, but I don't know whether it was by good management or accident that we have managed to maintain the adequate base funding to maintain the current level of services of these airports. We have been in intense negotiations for two years. We are at the final strokes of trying to work out some of the smaller details of the transfer. I am optimistic and confident that the arrangement that has been reached between our department and the feds is going to provide us with adequate resources to maintain the current level of services at the airport in Iqaluit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 435-12(7): Funding For Broughton Island HTA

MS. MIKE:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of MACA. During the month of February when the session first started, I asked Mr. Arngna'naaq if there would be any funding available for hunters' and trappers' associations. When we were considering MACA's budget, I asked him that question again. I hadn't received a response from the

previous Minister. Now I would like to ask the current Minister of MACA whether he could provide some funding for hunters from Broughton Island to travel to Pangnirtung. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Ng. Mr. Mike, just for clarification, did you ask the question of the Minister of MACA or Renewable Resources?

MS. MIKE:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm asking my question of the Minister of MACA.

MR. SPEAKER:

I'm sorry, it's to the Minister of Renewable Resources. I think the translation was incorrect. Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arnagna'naaq.

Page 890

Return To Question 435-12(7): Funding For Broughton Island HTA

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I responded to Ms. Mike's written question and indicated there would be some funding available for hunters. I indicated there would be some funding provided for hunters in the Baffin. I talked to my official in the Baffin and he indicated to me that he would find some funding for the hunters. The superintendent for Renewable Resources will be looking after this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Ms. Mike.

Supplementary To Question 435-12(7): Funding For Broughton Island HTA

MS. MIKE:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I still have not received any written response from the Minister. The Broughton Island Hunters' and Trappers' Association has indicated that they have been requesting funding; however, they were told there was no funding available. When will the Minister tell the hunters' and

trappers' associations that there is funding available now? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arnagna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 435-12(7): Funding For Broughton Island HTA

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be giving a written response to the request of the hunters' and trappers' associations and they should be getting the funding as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 436-12(7): Status Of Government's Action Paper On Recall

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. I've already said many times that I'm a democrat and the will of the House was expressed yesterday in defeating the principle of recall. But since this issue was referred to the Premier through a motion in this House as a result of the work of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges, the government developed an action paper. Is it still the intent of the government to proceed with that bill?

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 436-12(7): Status Of Government's Action Paper On Recall

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, yes, it is.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 436-12(7): Status Of Government's Action Paper On Recall

MR. LEWIS:

Is it the intention of the Premier to get that bill completed so that Members of this Assembly will have a chance to look at it if we meet in June?

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 436-12(7): Status Of Government's Action Paper On Recall

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, as I've stated before, that's the intention. Members will have the opportunity to have access to the paper in June or before June.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Lewis.

Supplementary To Question 436-12(7): Status Of Government's Action Paper On Recall

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Since the House has already declared it's will and the principle is dead, what does the Premier expect to achieve by bringing forward this action paper, as requested by the committee, by that date?

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 436-12(7): Status Of Government's Action Paper On Recall

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, the intent is to follow up on the referral from the Standing Committee on Rules, Privileges and Procedures to get all the issues on the table, the pros and cons.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 437-12(7): Information On Necrotizing Fasciitis

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services and is with

regard to a statement that my honourable colleague, Mr. Zoe, made a few days ago about the flesh eating disease called Necrotizing Fasciitis. This deadly disease came to our attention when the leader of the Bloc Quebecois, Lucien Bouchard was infected with this disease this winter. Recently, closer to home, a young man from my honourable colleague Mr. Zoe's riding was infected with it. This is a big concern for people in the north. How serious is this disease and what can the Minister of Health tell this House about it? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Health and Social Services, Madam Premier.

Return To Question 437-12(7): Information On Necrotizing Fasciitis

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I know that something of this nature causes a great deal of concern. My understanding of this disease is that it affects perhaps one in one million, although it was given quite a bit of media hype when the leader of the opposition party was affected. This is

Page 891

not an unknown disease, although there are mysteries about it, such as how it actually starts. There are some medical records written about the particular disease which can be made known. There is some speculation about how it begins and whether it is considered a virus which attacks during certain conditions, but there is still a great deal of mystery about it.

I can provide the Member with some of the material I have had access to, it's not difficult to read. I can assure the Member that although it came into the public eye recently, it's not a disease that was totally unknown. I would be pleased to provide some of the written material that I have to any Member who is interested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 437-12(7): Information On Necrotizing Fasciitis

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not a medical expert of any kind at all, but this concern has struck close to home and a lot of people are going to be concerned about it. It's a mystery. To get this information out to the people is a big concern. If they don't have to worry about it, then this information should go out to the people. I would like to ask the Minister if this communication has gone out to the people, perhaps through the health workers, and if the health workers are aware of the different signs they have to watch out for when this deadly disease is detected. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 437-12(7): Information On Necrotizing Fasciitis

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, when we were faced with this new condition, the regional medical health officers prepared a facts sheet for use by health care providers who may have to respond to public enquiries on this subject. It has been widely circulated to health care givers, particularly in the west, in the most urgent way of handling and getting the information out. The health centres are made aware of the issue. They have been provided with a facts sheet. Certainly, the medical health officers are prepared to provide more information if requested by any community or community group. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Patterson.

Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier a question about official languages. Mr. Speaker, I won't say wasted, but we took most of question period yesterday trying to get the Minister of Justice to agree that the cuts of half the person years in the vital legal interpreters program in his department would cripple court interpreting services, would jeopardize the right of the accused to a fair trial and would also probably be contrary to the Charter of Rights and would probably jeopardize the amendment to the Jury Act allowing for unilingual juries. Mr.

Kakfwi basically said he had no option. He had to cut. So I would like to ask the Premier, who is responsible for official languages if anyone in the Government of the Northwest Territories has taken a look at the money being spent on official languages in all areas of the government's services and tried to set priorities so that vital programs like legal interpreting can be preserved over lesser priorities. Has that assessment and priority-setting exercise been done by the official languages unit? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Return To Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I felt certain that the Minister of Justice had answered the questions very well. In the area of interpretation on how we are going to proceed in providing the service, it has been discussed very extensively and the role of providing education, teaching and learning is with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The need for terminology development is also complemented in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in the delivery of programs, and this is where the education and the advancement in these areas has been directed to, so that we can consolidate not only the needs of health terminology, legal terminology but just general development of language. These resources are directed at the Department of Education, Culture and Employment who will be incorporating all these requirements in a program so that the advancement of knowledge and development in terminology is not brushed to the side but coordinated and enhanced by education, training and employment within that department. That is the intention because rather than having three different departments doing terminology development, it is incorporated in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I understand that all the decisions have been made and everything is going to be okay. Education, Culture and Employment is going to look after terminology and training, the official languages unit is going to look after the court interpreting requirements. I would like to ask the Premier then, because we are all aware that we have less money to spend in this area of official languages, what on earth is the government doing spending 45,000 precious public dollars studying the training function for interpreters through the firm of Avery Cooper if everything has already been decided and all the ducks are lined up and everything is okay? Why are we wasting money with a study when according to the Premier and the Minister of Justice, it's all been figured out. Everything is okay. Calm down, Members; you have no reason to ask questions. Why are we still studying the problem at great expense if it's all been worked out internally and everything is okay? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Page 892

Further Return To Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, I did not, in my response to the Member, say that everything is okay and everything is worked out. I said that we are trying to consolidate and put in one area to deal with the related issues. In terms of the study, I suggest that the honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment should address that issue because this is where the consolidation of this particular area of the development of language is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I am going to go back to my first question which was about the overall setting of priorities. The honourable Minister, with respect, I think has kind of done what Mr. Kakwi did yesterday and compartmentalized or departmentalized the

question by saying, this department is doing that, this department is doing that and we have an interdepartmental committee reviewing this question. I would like to again ask the Premier because she's responsible for official languages overall. I presume it's in the Premier's office so somebody can provide overall direction about priorities. Has the official languages unit sat down and decided, with less money, what are going to be the priorities and what are not going to be the priorities? Has that evaluation and global assessment been done? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, that is what we are attempting to do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that the Premier has said, we are attempting to set overall priorities, decide what is important and perhaps what is less important. So I have to ask the Premier, if, as in her words, we are attempting to do that now, -- and I think Members on this side of the House would welcome it -- then why on earth is Mr. Kakwi wielding the axe and cutting positions if the overall priority-setting exercise still is being done as we speak? Why would positions be cut before the overall evaluation and assessment that the Premier has referred to is concluded? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Madam Premier.

Further Return To Question 438-12(7): Review Of Impact Of Funding Cuts To Languages Services

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated to the House on numerous occasions, we are attempting to not departmentalize the programs we have, but work in an approach where we can get the most for the dollars we have. Because of that issue and in terms of putting their resources together, the Minister of Justice has concluded that the same type of job that was done previously, regarding terminology development, could be done without the people who were terminated in his area of responsibility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 439-12(7): Annual Cost Of Simultaneous Translation In Assembly

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I may be treading on sacred cows with this question, but we have already been talking about pigs this morning, so I will dare to do so. I would like to ask the Premier, as Minister responsible overall for official languages in the Northwest Territories, how much does it cost the Legislative Assembly to provide simultaneous interpreting services for proceedings in this Chamber on an annual basis? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

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

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question was taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to present Petition No. 6-12(7); it is in support of the continued existence of the victims' services program. Mr. Speaker, as a result of our budget considerations and because it appears there would not be sufficient funds allocated to ensure the program will continue,

this petition was circulated over the past few days. The last line of the petition reads, "We, the undersigned, believe victims should be supported and assisted in their time of crisis and strongly urge all funding bodies to adequately fund the Yellowknife victims' services programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Tabled Document 86-12(7) entitled Community Choices: Laying the Foundation for Income Support Reform - Minister's Forum on Income Support Reform,

Page 893

April 1995, in English and Inuktitut.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Arngna'naaq. Mr. Kakfwi, your point of order.

Point Of Order

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, in reviewing Hansard, I have noticed on page 2052 that I believe there was an occasion yesterday when the Member for Thebacha challenged the chair. I wish to ask for a ruling on this. Mr. Speaker, I quote you as saying "I believe the question is hypothetical." The Member for Thebacha responds by saying categorically, "I don't believe it is hypothetical," and goes on to say further, "I know I shouldn't question your ruling." Whether or not this is intentional or inadvertent, I believe the impression is there. It is certainly in the Hansard that the Speaker is being challenged. So I believe that we need to deal with this and perhaps a retraction and an apology would be in order. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

(Microphones turned off)

Speaker's Ruling

MR. SPEAKER:

I would like to thank the Member for bringing the issue up. First of all, I would like to say that I thank the Members for the respect and confidence that they have in me by selecting me. I do review the unedited Hansard on a daily basis. I review the unedited Hansard, so as to make every effort to ensure that, as Speaker, I am upholding the rules and practices and being understanding of the actions of Members of this House.

In addition, I want to be sure that the chair is not, by any action or omission, bringing into question its impartiality or sound judgement. As Speaker, if I find that I have made an error in judgement or have provided the House with information that is not correct, I believe I am bound to advise the House and admit my mistakes so as to ensure that I am serving the Members to the best of my ability.

As Members will recall, yesterday during question period, the Member for Thebacha raised a question to the Minister of Finance concerning inclusion of Metis health benefits funding in the interim supply bill. The questions and supplementaries to Oral Question 428-12(7) are contained on pages 2050 to 2053. During the exchange, the chair advised the Member for Thebacha that her second supplementary question may have been hypothetical. I would like to quote my comments when I informed the Member, and I quote from page 2052 of unedited Hansard:

"Can I ask, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, if you could rephrase the question? I believe the question is hypothetical. Perhaps the question should be if the budget is approved. Can you rephrase your question?"

The point that has given me concern was the response by the Member for Thebacha to my statement on the admissibility of her second supplementary. I quote the Member's comments from page 2052 of unedited Hansard:

"I don't believe that is hypothetical. But, Mr. Speaker, I know I shouldn't question your ruling. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance whether or not he will consider giving Metis people reimbursement of funds for the expenses they incurred as of April 1st. Thank you."

I should note again that I asked the Member to rephrase her question, which she did, and was answered by the Minister.

I am sure the Member for Thebacha, as a former Speaker and occupant of this chair, understands that it is sometimes difficult for the Speaker to immediately comprehend procedural points and explain to an offending Member that they are out of order. As all Members are aware, the Speaker is protected against reflections on his or her actions, which is a question of privilege that is afforded the occupant of the chair. This is a long-standing practice, and I quote from Beauchesne's 6th edition, Citation 168; that:

"Reflections upon the character or actions of the Speaker may be punished as breaches of privilege. The actions of the Speaker cannot be criticized incidentally in debate or upon any form of proceeding except by way of a substantive motion."

I find that the Member for Thebacha's comments yesterday in question period were critical of my actions, and her qualification did not lessen the criticism. When I was elected as Speaker, I hoped that one of the reasons that Members voted for me was my demonstrated ability to be fair and understanding in all situations. In my term as Speaker, I was hoping and praying that there would not be reflections made on the actions I take while occupying the chair. I will not, however, spout my responsibility and it is unfortunate and not with any pleasure that I have to request the Member for Thebacha to withdraw her comments. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Mr. Speaker, as I had said in discussing this issue with you this morning, it wasn't my intention to question your ruling, as I had stated earlier. And I certainly want to assure the House that it certainly wasn't, and has not been, my intention to question your ruling. I do request that the comments be withdrawn, because they were not done with any type of intention on my part to question the ruling that was made, in formulating my question to the Minister of Finance. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Tabled Document 87-12(7), the conference report from the first constitutional conference of the western NWT, it is entitled "Working Towards Consensus," and is published by the Constitutional Development Steering Committee. It is a record of the constitutional conference which was held January 18 to 22, 1995 here in Yellowknife.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Arngna'naaq.

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document. Tabled Document 88-

Page 894

12(7), review of the draft environmental impact statement guidelines for the BHP diamond mine, presentation by the Government of the Northwest Territories to the BHP diamond mine environmental assessment review process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. 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 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2; Bill 20, Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96; Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95; Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95; 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; Committee Report 6-12(7), Report on the Review of the Legislative Discussion Paper on the Draft of the New Education Act; and, Committee Report 7-12(7),

Report on the Second Annual Report, 1993-94, of the Languages Commissioner of the NWT, 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? Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that the committee continue consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Report 4-12(7), specifically to deal with the budget of the Department of Health and Social Services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Does the committee agree that we deal with Bill 1 and Committee Report 4-12(7), and particularly the Health and Social Services budget.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

---Agreed

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

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

Department Of Health And Social Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. The Minister responsible, would you be prepared to take the witness stand?

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Yes, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Do you require witnesses to assist you? Sorry, does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Sergeant-at-Arms.

Madam Premier, would you please introduce your witnesses to the committee.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. I have with me the deputy minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ken Lovely; and the director of finance and management services, John Doyle.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Premier. Welcome, Mr. Lovely, Mr. Doyle. When we left off with the Department of Health and Social Services we were on general comments. In your blue books, we will begin on page 12-09. The floor is open for general comments. The chair recognizes the Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

General Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we broke from this discussion on Wednesday, April 5th, I was making some general comments. I had made a point here that the will of the people is always there, Mr. Chairman, that health is always a key issue. There are political bodies in the community, many have been there for many years, the band councils.

I know that in one of the big centres in my constituency, Fort Simpson, the idea is to have everybody in the community work together. We have the band council, we have the village council, we have a Metis Nation office, we have government employees, and health is a very important item in this community. Lately I have been hearing that there are some problems coming forward.

I am not blaming anybody here. Any time there is a situation, problems come up and the idea here is to solve these problems. Some of the problems are related to me as the MLA representing them, and I have forwarded them to the Minister and her department. I also deal with the Mackenzie Regional Health Services with the problems.

My concern is that I know there is discussion about having a board in place, eventually, down the line. We've been hearing about this since 1988. That's quite a long time ago. Recently, there have been some changes within the department, the amalgamation of Health and Social Services. The amalgamation is going to happen at the community and regional level, we're told. This is the work that is going on. But I don't know how long that's going to take. I don't know whether these changes are going to solve the types of community problems and concerns that I have.

I guess I'm seeking some help here to try to resolve the health issues in the community. I've given the department some suggestions about how they could work with some groups in the communities, mainly with the chief and band council; that

Page 895

the local health staff, either the doctor or head of the nursing group or head of the health centre, could meet on a periodic basis with the band council as a delegation to listen to what the chief and band council are saying. The chief and band council are the political leaders of the community who also get feedback from their members. They take these concerns forward through these meetings.

I think a lot of specific health problems could be resolved if the health care givers in the community worked with the leaders of the Dene in the community to try to resolve some of these issues at the community level. I'm saying this because I'm hearing about a lot of specific health problems, as an MLA, and I've forwarded them to the Minister. They go back down the system like that and what I'm suggesting is everyone in the small communities has to live together, they should work together and they should try to deal with some of their problems at the community level.

If the Minister could take that direction and see if it could be done, I think it would eliminate a lot of problems. A lot of them might be misunderstandings within the community, differences of opinions and so forth. You have to remember, too, that the message has to get down to the health care workers that this territorial government is administering health services to a lot of treaty and Inuit people and they have special rights through treaties. Now, the territorial government is going to be administering Metis health benefits as well. These are the things that health care workers in the communities have to understand and

be sensitive to so that these different rights are not eroded by misunderstanding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to assure the Member that it is not from the lack of trying to get something formulated. We'll continue to do that and if there's some way we can work it out and impress upon the community people that it's very important to get together, we will do all we can. We've tried at the regional level and at the community level and I know that the work we do is not routine, it's sporadic. I know the desire of the Member is to set up something that is more stable and ongoing.

I'm willing to give it another try. I know it has not been easy for the Member or ourselves to try to get the different bodies together, but we're willing to deal with whatever the advanced group is. We're willing to do that in the community, we've made that offer before. We've been trying but, as usual, it's the will of the community that really drives it. Perhaps if we're not communicating enough to get our commitment through to them, then let's give it another try. We can do that in late April, after the session is finished. I'm certainly willing to go in, along with the deputy minister. Maybe a commitment by us would give more certainty to the people in the community that we want to support them in getting organized so the health issues can be dealt with.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Premier. General comments. Perhaps this would be an appropriate time to take a short break, Madam Premier, at this juncture. We'll take a short break, at the call of the chair.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The committee will now come back to order after the short break. We are at general comments. General comments. Is the committee ready for line by line or detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Line By Line

Directorate

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Page 12-10, directorate, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$8.674 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Community Programs And Services

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Community programs and services, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$84.413 million. The chair recognizes Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a number of questions about tasks under this activity. I believe one of the tasks is the youth initiatives. Can the Minister advise what the 1994-95 revised forecast is for spending in the youth initiatives task?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, for 1994-95 the revised forecast is \$337,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Premier. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could we also find out what is proposed in the 1995-96 main estimates?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

(Microphone turned off)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that \$500,000 was taken out of this task and handed on to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in the current fiscal year. I must say, I am pleased to see the money back in the program. Just a question to the Minister. Could we perhaps get some indication of the plans for making sure that people know about the availability of this money. Could we also find out whether or not there are any plans this year or next year to come forward with a supp which would move some of that

Page 896

money to Department of Education, Culture and Employment again and in general if there are any commitments for that funding that have been made already.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there will be a supp that will move \$495,000 to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for youth initiatives. There is a plan to promote this area of opportunity and that would be out of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This raises a number of questions. Why, for instance, was the money not moved prior to the main estimates being submitted so that when we were considering the Department of Education, Culture and Employment we could have more closely questioned the Minister about the plans for the spending of that money? I guess, because the money is planned to be moved, I have to ask you if this Minister is aware if the overall spending or the overall contributions will be made using the same general principles as have been used by Department

of Health and Social Services when the money is taken over by Education, Culture and Employment. I would just ask why there is a split between the two and why the money isn't being handled by just one department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, because of the consolidation of Health and Social Services, we were late getting the amount of dollars moved to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment; so, it's on the fault of our department not getting the necessary paperwork ready in time to move it into the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. My understanding is that the criteria for the type of funding that has taken place in the past will carry on, but under the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, the part of money that we have retained is the dollars that were more specific to drug and alcohol types of programming.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the 1994-95 main estimates I believe this House approved the same amount, \$837,000, on the understanding that this money would be generally used to provide support and funding for youth projects that foster leadership, community initiatives and an alcohol and drug-free lifestyle. I guess from the Minister's last comments we can then assume that the leadership and community initiatives part of that funding is what has been moved to Education, Culture and Employment. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been a lot of concern among Members in this House about funds in this task having been lapsed in the past. I think there has been a real concern that perhaps young people across the north don't have enough awareness of this sort of fund. The Minister has said that there will be a better publicity campaign brought out to ensure people do know about it. I would like to ask for a commitment from the Minister that Members of this House will be kept very well informed about the use of the funds in this program, and that Members will also be given access or made aware of what forms of publicity are being planned by both the Premier's department, Health and Social Services, and Education, Culture and Employment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I will make a commitment to make sure that the information is provided the moment we have the packages ready. As well, I am sure that I can speak on behalf of the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Nerysoo, who will do likewise.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that response. Moving on to another task, I believe that child sexual abuse is a task which is funded under this activity as well. Could the Minister advise if there has been any increase in funding proposed in the 1995-96 main estimates over what was proposed in the 1994-95 main estimates?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, with regard to the number of dollars in this specific activity, the number of dollars remains exactly the same. However, I want to say that in conjunction with moving towards allowing the social service workers in the community to do the job of counselling and being involved and having the time to

deal with child sexual abuse, there will be more time allocated at the community level through the social worker program. I believe in certain areas we have mental health workers as well, which are established positions; these people, in conjunction with social service workers, will be dedicating more time to the area of child sexual abuse, so even though the figure here hasn't increased, the anticipation is that the time that is made available at the community level will increase. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given the importance of this issue and the size of the problem in the Northwest Territories, I am somewhat disappointed that more resources have not specifically been allocated to deal with it. I appreciate the Minister suggesting that social workers will now have more time to deal with the problem but, Mr. Chairman, I have to wonder just how much extra time we're freeing up for the social

Page 897

workers. We've already heard that with this extra time, they'll be able to provide victims' services better and now they're going to be involved in providing better intervention and support services for child abuse victims.

I suspect that we're expecting too much of a panacea in the handing-off of social assistance to Education, Culture and Employment. Just a word of warning to the Minister, I think Members of this House will be watching very carefully to see how improved services are in areas such as this because I think Members in this House recognize what a serious problem child sexual abuse is and, in fact, how we have not really been able to anywhere near adequately, come to grips with the problem in the Northwest Territories. That's just a comment, Mr. Chairman, I don't know if the Minister wants to respond before I move on to my next concern.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member will get no argument from me in that regard. I just want to say that, certainly, in the number of community wellness workshops that I have been taking part in, this community-based consolidation, putting together a number of activities within the community to address the issues from a community level, certainly has indicated that the awareness of child sexual abuse has gained much more support in that people are willing to do something about it.

They're willing to try to battle the questions of not only why children get abused but the other social issues in the community which are linked, such as alcohol abuse. I hope this initiative, which tends to be catching on very well, along with income support reform, will meet some expectations of the communities. We certainly support the fact that we have to monitor this very carefully so it really does happen, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

I have a question in another area under this task, foster care. Earlier in this House when we were considering Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, the Minister of Finance advised the House that the supplementary appropriation included an amount which would bring the 1994-95 revised forecast amount to be spent in this area to \$5.019 million. He also advised the House that the amount proposed for the 1995-96 main estimates for this task is \$3.556 million.

I'd like to ask the Minister to explain to the House how, in fact, they can forecast a \$1.5 million decrease over this year's actuals in next year's spending for foster care?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, if the Member agrees, I would like Mr. Ken Lovely to go over the breakdown.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Lovely.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department did get an appropriation at the end of the fiscal year for foster care because of the increased numbers of cases that we experienced in that year. We are working hard now to try to determine whether or not we had an extraordinary increase that's just an anomaly, whether it is just something that will only happen once, or whether this is something we can expect to see on an ongoing basis. It's not clear at this point. We don't have an answer to that yet, we need to do more research on it.

We are looking at some initiatives that will help us over the coming year to cut down on the number of cases where we are required to apprehend children and place them in foster care. One of the first things is development of an early intervention strategy with the Departments of Justice and Education, Culture and Employment. We hope to be able to build on some of the suggestions that were given to us by the Standing Committee on Finance and the Special Committee on Health and Social Services about implementing school-based services for youth, along the lines of the model that is operating in Arviat where at-risk children are identified early and the departments cooperate to find ways to provide support to the children and family so they don't come into care. That's the first initiative.

The second thing is the development of two pieces of legislation on children and family services and adoptions, as a follow-up to the good work that was done over the years in child welfare reform. The focus of the Family and Children Services Act is to find ways to get communities to take ownership of some of the problems and find solutions that will bring community resources to bear to keep children in their homes with relatives, to find help for the parents, and to provide counselling services through the resources available in the communities and the regions.

Part of the community action fund philosophy is to try to help communities find ways to implement innovative new projects that will result in healthier families at the community level. There is \$3.2 million in that fund and we're developing the guidelines for it at the moment. It's intended to provide some help in terms of early intervention. We think that, unless we start getting to children and families before these problems occur, we're going to continue to see an increase in the number of times we have to investigate families, apprehend children, place them

in foster care, and process department adoptions to find new families for them.

There is a lot of work under way to, first of all, assess the problem but, secondly, to find cooperative ways to deal with it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Lovely. The chair recognizes Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Lovely says some encouraging things about trying to deal with the problem and in the long term, we may have some answers there but I guess my concern is are we, within the next year, going to be able to reduce by half the number of children who are apprehended. I seriously doubt that we're going to be able to see those changes happen so quickly.

Page 898

What I would ask is, since the department is, as yet, unsure of what has caused the sudden and massive increase in apprehensions, if we could get a commitment that the Minister would share with Members what the findings are of the department when they do figure out what happened over the last year to cause the sudden increase in apprehensions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Lovely. Sorry, Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, we would be pleased to share that information with the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Community programs and services. The chair continues to recognize Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under this activity, I believe that residential care for children is one of the tasks. Also, a similar problem exists here with foster care, in that Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2 added a significant amount of money, over \$.5 million,

to the 1994-95 revised forecast. And yet, we were advised by the Minister of Finance that the 1995-96 main estimates only contain the same amount of money as were in the 1994-95 main estimates. So again, I would like to ask the Minister for an explanation of how they intend to reduce their costs so significantly in this task over the course of the next year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, perhaps those two questions could have very easily been put together as the answer is very similar on the approach to dealing with these issues. Mr. Lovely did outline the issue and some of the areas where the concern had come in. There is no difference in foster care than residential care for children, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can assume that that Members will be informed of the reasons for this sudden increase in this task as well. Mr. Chairman, I believe that social assistance is normally under this activity. Can I ask if it is still shown in this activity or has it been transferred in the main estimates to Education, Culture and Employment?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, yes, it is still shown in this activity.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In consideration of Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95, the Minister of Finance suggested to the House that, in spite of the supp, adding \$2.229 million to the 1994-95 revised forecast, which would take it up to about \$34 million, he was still confident that in the 1995-96

main estimates the department would be able to live with a budget of just over \$31 million for social assistance. The Minister of Finance suggested that through better administration and controls over the distribution of social assistance these reductions would be achieved. I would like to find out from this Minister if she feels that the controls have been so lax as to allow a \$3 million expenditure this year that we won't see next year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether I would term it as lax controls, in this situation. Over a number of years, in terms of dealing with social assistance, we have been asked to try to work with the previous year's figures as if it were a controlling factor. It is a continuous desire for us to try to keep the social assistance down.

But the uptake on social assistance, as Members know, certain areas in the Northwest Territories do not have employment opportunities. They are less able to seek employment. I know that one region, where before there was very limited use of social assistance, now, because of the lack of job opportunities, more social assistance has been given out.

As well, although the figures are not all in, there are many, many, many young people, young women, or older children, having children -- those numbers are very, very high. Once a young lady has a child, there is an obligation to provide social assistance to this person. That number has vastly increased.

There are areas where we feel much more work has to be done. The only thing that I can really say that will help is to try to get to the communities, try to deal with the individual communities to bring more awareness on exactly what is happening in their communities on a global basis. We have no control over 67 births in Gjoa Haven in one year, or 72 in Arviat. Some of those young people are 13, 14, 15 years old and having children.

So we are in that blip, that is what I see when I move from community to community. That is obvious to my eyes and probably obvious to everyone else's eyes. In trying to deal with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment on investing in people, and

all the programs, we are trying to pull that together to see if there are other ways that these young people, instead of relying on social assistance, can work themselves back into training, back into an educational program. But I know that it is extremely difficult when you are raising a little child with no means of male support for that child. A lot of the demands relate to that particular area of growth. The only way that we can try to meet the Minister of Finance's expectations to keep this figure down, is to try to deal with the communities on a very proactive basis, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister's response doesn't give me much assurance that we will be able to meet the budgeted figure. We would probably be wise to consider this a holding figure in the budget.

Page 899

Her comments give rise to another concern. The Minister talks about the need, perhaps, to increase people's awareness to change society mores, the way they think about things. The question is with this social assistance funding moving to Education, Culture and Employment, does the Minister see that department as know having the responsibility for addressing those concerns that she has just raised? Or, does the social services side of Health and Social Services continue on with trying to address those community needs?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I see us doing that in conjunction with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I don't believe that we have the financial flexibility right now to try to catch these people who are in the social assistance net. We have to work together. It isn't either/or, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It goes without question that we face a significant challenge. I hope that we do work at addressing that challenge, whether it is through Health and Social Services or Education. I think it is something that we have to try to come to grips with.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that under this activity the funding is found for community-based alcohol and drug programs. There have been a number of questions raised: whether or not these programs are being evaluated; whether the evaluations are extensive and worthwhile; as well as salaries for workers in these programs. Could the Minister advise whether these concerns are going to be addressed in the next year?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, on March 10th, the social envelope departments, including MACA at the time, agreed on three priority areas to direct community action fund resources. The projects dealing with family violence, early intervention for children and family and training for care givers will be given priority under the community action fund. There is going to be an evaluation of the existing drug and alcohol programs that exist in various communities. Where it is applicable, we will be looking at the wages and benefits of these front-line workers.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that answer. I think the Minister also touched on the answer to the next task that I was interested in, and that was family violence shelters. I know from a review in SCOF under this task, the same amount of money is included in these main estimates as was in the 1994-95 revised forecast, which wouldn't allow for any increase in funding to any of the shelters. Could the Minister confirm that it is her intention to address inflationary needs of these hard-pressed programs through the community action fund?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I thought I had indicated that previously. It is our intention to address the inflationary requirements through the community action fund, as these centres fit into the three priority items.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Community programs and services. The chair recognizes the Member for Thebacha, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, initially, I was going to make a few general comments, but I will try to roll them together under community programs and services. I have a comment with regard to social assistance. I know that social assistance is going over to Education, Culture and Employment to place together the training components. The initiative is good, however, I think we have to recognize the fact that there will be people on social assistance regardless of what areas you are going to try to get them funnelled into.

The concern I have as a Member -- and I express this many times over -- is the fact that as a jurisdiction, we are probably quite behind in our basic social assistance payments to meet basic needs. From the comments from some of my constituents, single people get anywhere up to \$300 a month to meet the basic demands of social assistance. I find this to be very questionable whether it is a basic need we are attempting to meet without the amount of support we should be giving, particularly when you take into account individuals who possibly are getting \$396 a month -- I think that is the figure -- of social assistance to provide their food and clothing expenses. On the other hand, you are giving housing allowance to civil servants of \$450 a month just to live in the north. I think that causes a real inequity in the system and an unfairness for individuals who can't get jobs to try to survive in the north. I really believe that social assistance has to be looked at. I commend the Minister's department in attempting to assist the young people with the education and training component. For social assistance, we have recognized an escalating cost over the past few years. It would be safe to say the amount is probably comparable to southern jurisdictions.

I certainly would appreciate it if the Minister would look at this particular area to increase some of the basic demands. When individuals can't have their basic needs met, many times they will come to us, as MLAs, feeling that they aren't treated fairly and expressing the problems of not having their basic needs met. They do have valid concerns when you look at it. We need to find a method to ensure that the basic needs of individuals are met.

The other comment I wanted to make, Mr. Chairman, is with regard to addictions and suicide preventions. Years ago, and not even that long ago, about six years ago, we didn't even have any treatment centres in the north to deal with addictions. It seems when all the facilities were out of the north, the process was easier for an individual to access treatment centres. They were sent to Poundmakers, Henwood, Bellwood, Action North in High Level or different areas. Now, with treatment centres across the north, it appears that it is more difficult for an individual to access treatment. Many individuals have said they used to be able to go to the alcohol and drug

Page 900

treatment centre to ask for assistance to get into a treatment centre. Now, not only do you have to go to an alcohol and drug treatment counsellor, you also have to get an assessment done and that goes to the regional alcohol and drug specialist in the community to determine whether the support should be there to send you to a treatment centre. The more assessments you get on an individual who is wanting treatment is sometimes discouraging for an individual to get the treatment by the time the decision is made that they can go for treatment. It seems somewhat ironic because the intent of building all these treatment centres across the north was to tempt people to take treatment. The accessibility to these centres should have been a lot easier for individuals.

I will save some of my comments but would appreciate if those two points were noted by the Minister. I want to see what her comments are on those. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, on the issue of social assistance payments, I know it's an issue that comes up all the

time -- whether a person can survive on social assistance. We have that responsibility and I'll take a look at that. I will talk to the Member about some of the things I see that we can do, person to person, on that issue.

Regarding the process of treatment for drugs and alcohol, if there's a centre in a community, people have to access that centre before they can go to the regional one. After the regional centre, if they want to go to something outside of the region, there's another process. We'll have to look at that because I know there have been several complaints where people have said they are not going to get the treatment in their community, that they know they won't get the treatment and they have to go to another place. Right now, because we put more regional responsibility in, they are the ones who are making the decision about whether people go from a community centre to a regional centre, from a regional centre to a territorial treatment centre. It's causing frustration.

I don't know exactly what we can do about it because we did say that the regions should try to look at what stage a person stays in a community and at what stage a person moves from A to B. I'm aware of the frustration that people are having. If there's another way we can take care of people's desire to seek treatment...I think the important part, if an individual is looking at repairing some of the problems they're having, is we should do as much as we can to get them to the right place. I'll look at that as well because it's an ongoing concern that we have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I think maybe I could suggest to the Minister that what is happening now is if an individual wants treatment, they go to the alcohol and drug treatment centre and most communities have alcohol and drug treatment programs. But we know there are only treatment centres in Iqaluit, Yellowknife and Hay River. So what is happening is an individual goes to the alcohol and drug program and they're assessed to determine whether they should go for treatment and where they should go for treatment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mrs. Marie-Jewell. I would like to ask the other Members to respect the activities that are going

on here and keep the din of their conversations down.
Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What basically is happening is an individual is assessed and then the assessment goes to the alcohol and drug specialist in the regional areas. Therefore, they are getting an assessment twice. I'm not saying that it's not good but I think the alcohol and drug programs should still have the ability to say yes, this person is sincere, they do want treatment and I can tell that they are trying their best to address their alcoholism. I think they should have the ability to call the Yellowknife and Hay River treatment centres, or the Iqaluit treatment centre, for that matter, to see if they can find a time for that individual to take that program.

Right now, that's not happening. The assessment and the decision is at the alcohol and drug specialist level within the government. Sometimes, I think individuals even go to the alcohol and drug specialist to try to convince them they need treatment when their initial request went to the alcohol and drug worker. Instead of devolving the authority to the community level, which was the intent of these alcohol and drug programs, we're basically centralizing the authority in the government.

I think maybe if you can give that authority back to the programs, it would alleviate a lot of frustration on the part of clients and you would no doubt be able to fill up the treatment centres. It is my understanding that they're not at the full capacity we had hoped they would be. You would probably move a lot of people through the alcohol and drug program. That's something I would suggest to the Minister, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I think that's good advice and we'll follow through on that. The intention never was to have the specialist impede a person's access to treatment. We will look into that and try to follow the original intent of regional decision-making.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Many people will thank you for that. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

The other comment I wanted to make, Mr. Chairman, was with regard to the overall amalgamation of the departments of Health and Social Services. There are a few of my constituents who are, no doubt, disappointed with the amalgamation but, at the same time, when I advised them of the effort to make best use of dollars spent, it has certainly made them understand the need for amalgamation of services to be delivered.

I know my constituency was very supportive of the idea of amalgamation. The community got together in a couple of meetings to find out how we can do this amalgamation in the most effective, efficient and non-disruptive manner. I think that

Page 901

if there were concerns, the community was going to work with the department on them but it seems that the process is slowing down. I don't know if it's the Minister's department. Are your intentions to slow down the amalgamation because some were feeling that it was going too fast, or is it the intent to continue to support the communities that do want to see this amalgamation in an effective manner?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, there is no intention of slowing it down. I know we are slow in getting to it but we should be responding to the communities. If the communities have questions and concerns, we should be there dealing with them. If there has been a slowness to respond, it's because of our inability to respond as quickly as we should but the intention is not to slow it down.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for acknowledging that and I certainly thank her for the departmental support given to my community in trying to address this amalgamation. It's an issue that is sensitive where the community is requesting that basic needs be met and I appreciate what support

has been granted by the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Marie-Jewell. Community programs and services, page 12-11. The chair recognizes Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, earlier on, I asked the Premier about an update on the Mackenzie Regional Health Services. I do believe that it falls under this category, community programs and services. She gave us an update on the board and she indicated that there was a proposal given to the department with regard to taking on health and social services programs at the community level. She anticipates that they will be concluded around the fall of 1995.

I would like to ask the Minister...She indicated that she is going to be moving some personnel to the Deh Cho and to the Dogrib region. If I recall right, Mr. Chairman, there were going to be about 18 positions with approximately a 50/50 split going to each area. I am wondering if the department has been talking with the community representatives with regard to moving these positions to the communities.

I am raising this, Mr. Chairman, because I think it is timely that the department should be talking to the communities so that they can start making various arrangements for office space, accommodations, and so forth. I would like to ask the Premier if any discussions on the transfer of employees, for office accommodations, and for private accommodations for these individuals who are anticipated to move this year, have been discussed at the community level.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, up to this time, we have only had very general discussions on the direction that the department is going to take on this regard. Just very recently we have received the final approval to move on it. Once we are out of this session, we will be dealing in more specifics with the Development Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am raising this issue because it is very timely because the Development Corporation is in the process of expanding their facilities. It will be timely if we can get this department and possibly Public Works to start talking with the corporation so that they can incorporate certain areas for the department.

The Minister has communicated to the grand chief and various council members that these positions are going to be moved to our area and the Deh Cho area. The Minister indicated after session, but session won't be over until the end of June.

A decision has to be made very soon because the construction season is just around the corner, as most Members are aware. They have to start ordering materials so that they can expand their buildings, certain things have to be in place. That is the reason I am raising all these questions, Mr. Chairman, so that we can do this expansion in an orderly fashion. So, I am encouraging the Minister, if she could, to move on it as soon as possible. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, when I made my response, I did not mean at the end of June; I meant after this session here. During break, or whatever the term is going to be between this time and that time. So, we are not waiting until the June session, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Community programs and services. Operations and maintenance. The chair recognizes the Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, is this the place to ask about the community alcohol and drug programs?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Mr. Patterson, yes, it has been asked in this area already, some parts of it. Proceed.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a specific question about the community alcohol and drug programs. I wrote the Minister several months ago about what I consider to be inequities in benefits for workers in treatment centres and workers in community programs.

I was very grateful when the department was able to improve the salaries for treatment centre workers by providing settlement allowance last year. But it has created an inequity, Mr. Chairman. I will cite my community for example. There are alcohol and drug treatment workers working in the Baffin treatment centre who have this benefit. There are alcohol and drug workers working in the community program,

Page 902

Upassuraakut, who don't have this benefit. So there is an inequity there.

I would like to ask if the Minister of the department is looking at addressing...I should say that I understand that there are limited funds, I fully understand this. But I understood that the community alcohol and drug programs were being evaluated and that there was perhaps going to be more attention paid to getting value for money, perhaps deciding where money is being well spent and where it is not being well spent.

I would hope that an evaluation of that kind would allow us to improve the benefits to employees in centres that are determined to be doing an important job. I guess I am suggesting, even if there isn't additional money, that it can be found through the evaluation of existing programs that I understand is under way. If we are going to do this job, we should either do it well or not do it at all. And there is a long-standing feeling that we are expecting people to do important work with obviously less pay and benefits than employees in other area.

The other inequity is if you have an employee working in the mental health counselling field for the Department of Health, in a public health centre or a community health centre, they are likely to be paid a lot more generously than these workers in community programs. I am sure the Minister understands the issue. I would appreciate a response. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this specific question was brought up earlier. And we said that we would be dealing with the various drug and alcohol, and safe shelter benefits and the inequities in that, when the social envelope departments, including Municipal and Community Affairs, looked at the funding under the community action fund. It was agreed that there would be three priority areas to direct the community action fund and those are projects dealing with family violence, early intervention for children and families, and training for care givers. Hopefully we will be able to address those inequities through that fund, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Am I correct that the community alcohol and drug programs are being reviewed and evaluated with a view to ensuring that monies are well spent? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe that we are doing treatment centres and then looking at the community centres this year. As the Member is fully aware, some of these centres are a major force in the community. Others probably could be redesigned to work in another way and capture some of the specific community problems. So there is an evaluation of these projects to see whether we are spending money well and getting the benefit for the resources that are being expended. So that is being done. While we are doing that, it wouldn't make sense if a particular centre was assessed to be outdated for that community and we raised wages in that same community. It has to be done in conjunction and collaboration with what is being done and what the community's expectations are. Mr. Speaker, we are doing those two things that the Member has suggested are in need of being done. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What is the time frame on the review and when will we hear the results? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are beginning this process right away, but we won't be able to do them all at once. So there will be three or four done in each region starting almost right away. We should be finished with all of them by the end of the fiscal year. However, we are trying to move as quickly as possible to be fair to the centres and to the people who are working at the centres. We will move as quickly as possible to deal with them. The evaluations will begin almost immediately. We have the framework for the evaluations and we will try to spread out the work across the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. The chair recognizes the Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to touch on the same issue as my colleague with regard to drug and alcohol issues. Mr. Chairman, does the total amount of money that we negotiated in 1988 in the health transfer agreement...There is a specific amount that identifies drug and alcohol programs. There is a set amount of money that we receive. Is that specific amount accounted for in the main estimates for drug and alcohol programs specifically? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I believe the number in that transfer is \$3.2 million or \$3.4 million. If you look at expenditures on drug and alcohol programs, community and regional treatment centres, we are probably spending about \$9 million.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we negotiated the health transfer agreement, the specific section that I am making reference to does not include facilities. That money wasn't intended for the use of facilities. The intent was for drug and alcohol community programs. That is why we agreed to make reference to aboriginal organizations when the health transfer was taken over. We made sure that there is a specific amount of money allotted to drug and alcohol programs. It didn't encompass facilities. Is that amount allocated specifically to the community drug and alcohol programs? Thank you.

Page 903

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, the short answer is yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

If that is the case, why are other Members in the House indicating that the amount of money allotted to the drug and alcohol program isn't sufficient?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Zoe, sorry, I cut you off too soon.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I haven't done the calculations because I am not sure what the total amount was in the transfer agreement versus what we have in the budget book. I know there is going to be a difference and I think it is going to be a significant difference. I don't think that will cause a problem for additional money going into the community drug and alcohol programs. If the money was used as intended when we negotiated that agreement, then we wouldn't have a shortfall. Members on this side of the House and that corner over there won't be complaining. There is sufficient money in there to enhance the pay levels of

these individuals who are working at the grassroots level. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, on these particular community programs, we spend \$4.738 million. That is on the direct community-based programs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I am not going to continue debating with the Premier, but I know the facilities' cost wasn't part of the negotiations. The number she made reference to also includes the facilities' costs and the programs that are run here, Hay River and wherever they have these facilities. That amount of money that we negotiated under that transfer wasn't supposed to be used in that manner. I won't continue on with this, but that is the point I wanted to make. Until I do further research into this, Mr. Chairman, I won't be able to comment any further. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, the figure I gave to the honourable Member didn't take into account the treatment centres. I was just suggesting that the expenditure on the drug and alcohol programs like the Aklavik Alcohol Action Committee, Arviat drug and alcohol program, Coral Harbour council, Dene Cultural Institute program, Fort Good Hope Dene community, Fort Norman, and then we have the Rae-Edzo Friendship Centre, Tree of Peace, Peel River, Tsiigehtchic, Wrigley Dene Band are the ones that add up to \$4,502,651, Mr. Chairman, and I didn't take into account drug and alcohol treatment.

I mentioned earlier that we spent a lot more on drug and alcohol treatment, which may be \$8 or \$9 million. Then, we take into account the drug and alcohol treatment centres and Mr. Zoe is quite right, approximately \$3.4 million that was negotiated was not to go to those treatment centres. It goes to a long

list of programs, I think there are 44, right across the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Community programs and services. The chair continues to recognize Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could ask the Premier and her staff if they could provide an analysis of that section. I can't recall the section number, but there is a reference made to drug and alcohol treatment and there is money attached to that amount. Could you provide that plus the expenditures so we can compare to see if, in keeping with the intent, that money is being used in that way?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, we can certainly provide that information to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Community programs and services, operations and maintenance. Total O and M, \$84.413 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Health Services Development

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Health services development, operations and maintenance. The chair recognizes the Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under health services development, I believe you find the task medical travel. Last year when we were presented with the main estimates, they forecast a drop from \$19 million in expenditures in that task in 1993-94 to about \$17.5 million in 1994-95. Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1994-95 brought in an extra \$1.886 million to

the funding in 1994-95, which brings the total back up to \$19.464 million and we were advised when we were considering this supplementary by the Minister of Finance that the amount proposed for medical travel in the 1995-96 main estimates was just over \$16 million.

I'd like to ask the Minister, since we were unable to reduce the expenditures by the almost \$2 million that had been projected between 1993-94 and 1994-95, how does the Minister propose to actually meet a reduction of \$3.3 million in the course of 1995-96 over what was spent in the current fiscal year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, the main reason we were not able to reduce the costs of medical travel was because the agreement between the Government of the

Page 904

Northwest Territories and the Royal Alex didn't come into play until August of this year, mainly because of longer-than-expected negotiations to conclude the agreement. Any savings we had would have to be prorated rather than starting at the beginning of the year. Savings did not begin until August. That was one of the problems we had.

The department did expect to save about \$400,000 through orthodontic contracts which will result in orthodontists travelling to each region to provide services rather than having patients travel to Edmonton, Montreal and Winnipeg. This is an area where we expect to make that amount of savings.

This time around, for the second part of his question, the fact that we will be in a full working arrangement with the Royal Alex, means we expect to get more benefit out of it. It will be in full force rather than the situation last year, when it didn't start until late in the season. Those are two areas where we feel that controls will be made. As well, it's expected that, with the enhanced services at Stanton Hospital, there will also be added savings because individuals would not have to travel outside the Northwest Territories to access treatments that they are presently receiving. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to point out to the Minister that we heard last year that they were going to be able to cut the expenditures significantly. This year, the proposal is to cut almost \$3 million from the expenditures over the current year and we're talking about the same areas we were talking about cutting last year. It's difficult to see how those cuts are going to be achieved but I guess all we can do is wait and watch and hope that the Minister is correct in that we will be able to save some money.

Mr. Chairman, under this activity, I think, is also the task public health. Could the Minister advise whether or not spending has been maintained, increased or decreased in the public health task, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I would like the deputy minister to answer the question because there was movement of some money, although it stays relatively the same. Mr. Lovely can probably explain that more in detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Lovely, if you please.

MR. LOVELY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budget has been reorganized since 1994-95. We have placed some of the money that used to be in public health into the chief medical health officer task within the same activity. It's also devoted to the activity of public health so, overall, the amount of money has not decreased.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Lovely. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, from that response, I think we can take it that it has also not increased. Mr. Chairman, when I was working with the Special Committee on Health and Social Services, one of the things we heard from

people across the territories was there was a real need to increase the amount of work we do in public health; that dealing with prevention up front is, in the long run, much more cost-effective than trying to deal with treating illnesses after they occur. I have to express surprise that the government hasn't looked at ways to cut down the costs in the long run by increasing the emphasis on preventative public health work. This area needs to be made more of a priority in order to save money in some of those other areas that the Minister has suggested we can save money in. What plans does the department have to improve our public health and preventative health activities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, public health is one of those community issues that we continually try to deal with. I would think that one of the areas that has been identified in the work of the public health nurses or at the community level is, given that they deal with a lot of different things like mental health and social issues, sometimes their time is confined to dealing with the clinical operation of the public health unit. I am talking generally and about the majority of communities that don't have a hospital facility.

One of the things we have tried to do over the last six or seven years is to provide ongoing nurse training accelerated programs where the ANSIP program is available to public health nurses, so they are better able to function at the community level, as well as the continued support of the community health representatives in the community. In the Keewatin a number of community health representatives graduated which gives a very strong component, if used correctly, to these health centres. They are liaisons between the communities and the health centre.

In putting together health, social services and these components of health support services, we would like to look towards a longer approach. This would be something that we can do in dealing with communities: how best these groups of health and social workers can consolidate a program to complement each other's work. At the same time, I would like, in the near future, to bring forward more formula-based support for public health or health personnel in a community, more in line with how we do the formula in the Department of Education for

teachers. In a lot of the communities, there hasn't been a change over the last seven or eight years in the number of nurses in a community. If a community had one nurse with a population of 250, since the community grew to 350, the number of nurses hasn't changed. I think this has to be addressed in the short term. The working together of these different health and social services providers will determine where people can deal with preventative educational requirements, but still there is a lot more to do in terms of determining the make-up of what is required at a community level in these health fields.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we heard during the public hearings of the Special Committee on Health and

Page 905

Social Services, the department really needs to take a look at the philosophy that it has right now. I realize it is a difficult process to deal with when you are faced with budget cuts and you are running from crisis to crisis. If we don't find some way to get our heads around a shift in philosophy whereby we set up programs and strategies to reduce illness and disease in advance, we are not going to have enough money to deal with the health problems of people in the north. The costs, if we try to stay reactive with our programs, will be out of reach in very short order.

I am glad to hear the Minister is considering a formula for public health nurses. I know, for instance, that of all the communities that have public health nurses, I am not aware of any that have had increases in the last seven or eight years. It is a concern here in Yellowknife. I am sure it is a concern in many of the communities. I don't think it is just the public health nurses. It is a philosophy that has to be embraced by the whole department -- a shift in the approach to providing health services to northerners. Public health nurses are a very important part of that, but I just want to impress on the Minister that it has to start with the Minister and work through the entire department. There has to be a shift in philosophy in the way we approach our health problems in the north or within three to four years we will run out of enough money to come anywhere near dealing with just day-to-day problems. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I whole-heartedly agree with the Member. I don't think our thinking is different in this regard. We are all painfully aware of the responsibilities we have in this department and we have to do something about our philosophy. We intend to do that in the strategy we are developing. I cannot disagree with the Member's statement.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. We are on health services development, operations and maintenance, total O and M...Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Without naming specific communities or regions, can the honourable Minister answer a question? How many of the communities in our jurisdiction have known cases of HIV infections? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I will answer the question in a moment. We have the figures. Mr. Chairman, since 1987 the number was 27.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. We cut you off before you could conclude. Carry on.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

From 1987 to 1994, in total, there were 27 cases.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you. I believe that 27 cases are of the individual who carry the infection. My question to the honourable Minister is up to this point in time how many of the communities have no HIV infections,

without naming the specific community or the region? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does that help clarify it, Madam Minister? They are looking for the number of communities that AIDS are found in. Thank you.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I don't have them by community, but we know that in each region there are number of known cases of HIV.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Ningark, does that answer your question? Good.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, up to this point in time, are there 27 known cases? I forgot what the response was.

Yes, okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Health services development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Operations and maintenance, \$75.365 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Health And Hospital Boards

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Health and hospital boards, operations and maintenance, total O and M. The chair recognizes the Member for Iqaluit.

MR. PATTERSON:

Just one question, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I know the Minister is aware that some boards consistently have a shortfall. The Baffin health board is one. I am told that on their approximately \$18 million budget, there has historically been about \$500,000 shortfall. The board simply doesn't have enough money to deliver the services that it is mandated to provide. Every year they submit a budget of what is required and it seems that it is always short.

I understand, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister has committed to reviewing the formula for funding health boards in the territories with a view to ensuring equity, fairness and consistency. Could I confirm that this review is under way and that it hopefully will address the historic problems that some health boards seem to have with inadequate base funding? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, yes, the study is under way. Part of the problem is that the formula that is

Page 906

supplied is really an inadequate formula, so we are well on our way to addressing that. Hopefully, that will take away some of the concerns of the health boards who feel that it is almost impossible to budget properly because the formula just doesn't fit the categories of the delivery system that they have. We recognize that and the plan is to fix it so that they can operate in a reasonable way each year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Chairman, this is good news and I am very pleased that it is under way. I know it has been taken seriously by the department. Could I just ask what time frame is anticipated to complete this review and get the new formula in place?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, the plan is to have it concluded by the end of the year so it will be ready for the next government. The agreements between the health boards and the government are almost all concluded, so now we can get to work on an equal and trusting footing so that we can get this job done.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Health and hospital boards, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$93.785 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Details of grants and contributions, grants, \$290,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Carry on to 12-17, contributions, \$114.159 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Grants and contribution, \$114.449 million. The chair recognizes the Member for Baffin Central.

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can we go back to community programs and services, \$290,000?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree? Point of order, Mr. Nerysoo.

Point Of Order

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Chairman, I was just going to ask if we could conclude the call on the dollar figures and then return back to the issue that the honourable Member wanted to address.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. We can go back, if the committee agrees. We have just covered these items and have spent considerable time at it. I will ask one more time, then we can conclude this and refer back to that section.

Grants and contributions, \$114.449 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. We shall go back to health services development. Is that the item, Ms. Mike?

MS. MIKE:

Under grants, community programs and services, there is a \$100,000 growth from last year, an increase on Foster Parent Association foster homes. Is that an increase of children in foster care or has the fee been increased?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Ms. Mike. For reference for the committee, it is on page 12-14 at the top of the page, community programs and services. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, which line is it that we are talking about?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Premier. It was youth initiatives grants, it was under community programs and services on page 12-14.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, this was to support training initiatives in the purchase of specialized equipment. It was not for increases to foster care.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Point of order, Madam Premier. Ms. Mike.

Point Of Order

MS. MIKE:

Mr. Chairman, you said youth initiatives. I'm talking about the Foster Parents' Association and foster homes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

My apology, Ms. Mike, I thought that's the item you were talking about. I'll change that to the Foster Parents' Association. The Premier had it right. Madam Premier.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, there has been no change.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Ms. Mike.

MS. MIKE:

My question was, from 1994-95, it was \$190,000 and there is \$290,000 in total grants...Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, that's the total. Sorry, I thought that was for the Foster Parents' Association and foster homes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. No problem. Does that clarify the matter and can we go on? Grants and contributions, information items, health and hospital boards, pages 12-18 to 12-20, information items on pages 12-21 to 12-23. Detail of work performed on behalf of third parties is on page 12-24, total department, \$1.170 million.

Page 907

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Returning to page 12-9, program summary, operations and maintenance. The chair recognizes the Member for Natilikmiot, Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question to the honourable Premier is, since the NWT government's Department of Health is the single department that uses the airlines the most, do we get special arrangements with air carriers when we purchase tickets for people travelling on medical travel? Do we get a special deal in this area? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Madam Minister.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Chairman, I don't believe we get a special rate. I know at one time the Department of Health attempted to get a special rate with excursion fares and, as a result, some patients complained they were treated differently than other patients. I don't believe we do at this point in time. However, I would think that with the amount of travel we do, we should try to get special rates without taking away the benefits of the travel the patient receives.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Madam Minister. Program summary, operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$262.237 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree that we're concluded with the Department of Health and Social Services?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, very much. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister and the witnesses for assisting the committee in this matter. You're free to go. What is the wish of the committee? The chair recognizes Mr. Dent and then Mr. Zoe.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that the committee consider Bill 19 and, perhaps, Bill 20 and even maybe start Bill 22.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Bill 19: An Act To Amend The Elections Act, No. 2

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We're dealing with Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2. Is the Minister responsible for introducing the bill prepared to make his opening remarks? The chair recognizes Mr. Pollard.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Bill 19 is An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2. As Members are aware, Mr. Chairman, when the Standing Committee on Legislation reported on Bill 15, which also amended the Elections Act, it recommended that a further amendment be made to change the qualifications for persons running for office and sitting as a Member of the Assembly.

Additionally, Mr. Chairman, when Bill 15 was being debated in committee of the whole, I committed at the requests of Members to bring forward an amendment that would address the issue of inmates and their eligibility to be candidates in an election. Mr. Chairman, I'll be pleased to address any questions the committee may have on this amendment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Is the deputy chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation that reviewed the bill prepared to make comments? The chair recognizes Mr. Ningark.

Standing Committee On Legislation Comments

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Legislation has completed its review of Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2. The committee held a public hearing on this bill on Monday, March 27, 1995 in Yellowknife. The honourable John Pollard, the Government House Leader, appeared to present the bill at the hearing.

In its report to the House on Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, the Standing Committee on Legislation recommended that consequential amendments be made to change the qualifications for persons running for office and for sitting Members of the Assembly. The amendments were required to disqualify inmates from being eligible as candidates in an election or to hold public office, even though they will become qualified electors under the amendments of Bill 15.

Mr. Chairman, therefore, Bill 19 proposes to amend the Elections Act to provide that persons in the correctional institutions are not eligible as candidates in an election. Clause 6(2) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act states that once an elected Member becomes ineligible to be a candidate, he or she must resign their seat. The committee did not receive any presentations from the public on Bill 19. However, the standing committee was satisfied that the proposed amendment addresses a concern expressed during the debate on Bill 15 and the committee is pleased to support Bill 19.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes the standing committee's report on Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2. On March 27, 1995, the committee passed a motion that this bill be reported to the Legislative Assembly as ready for

Page 908

consideration in committee of the whole. That concludes our report. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Is the Minister who introduced the bill prepared to bring in witnesses to deal with this matter?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

If I might, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree that the Minister take the witness chair with witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, assist the Minister please.

Good afternoon, Mr. Minister, welcome to the committee. Would you be so kind as to introduce your witness to the committee.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with me is an out-of-breath Mr. Mark Aitken, legal counsel, from the Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Is out-of-breath hyphenated? Welcome, Mr. Aitken. General comments on the bill. Does the committee agree that we go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2, is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Bill 19 is now ready for third reading. Thank you, Mr. Minister and thank you, Mr. Aitken. Mr. Minister, you may speak.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I was just going to say that I believe I have another bill coming up, so I will just stay here and switch witnesses, if that is okay with the committee.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

So we don't have the out-of-breath Mr. Pollard. Thank you, Mr. Aitken.

Bill 20: Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96

We will be dealing with Bill 20, Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96. The Minister responsible for introducing the bill, Mr. Pollard, are you prepared to make your opening remarks?

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the purpose of the Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96, is to authorize the making of loans to municipalities. It is a requirement of the Northwest Territories Act that the lending of government funds be authorized by this Legislative Assembly. This act is an annual act which, for the 1995-96 fiscal year, will provide the authority to lend up to a maximum of \$9.1 million to municipalities. This amount represents an increase of \$2.1 million from the \$7 million authorized for 1994-95 fiscal year.

Municipalities that have identified a requirement for loans include Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Fort Simpson, Hay River and Inuvik. The nature of municipal purposes for which these loans will be used include the repair of existing municipal property, a recreation centre and limited lot development. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Pollard. Is the chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance, which reviewed the bill, prepared to make comments on the bill? The chair recognizes Mr. Antoine.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are dealing with Bill 20, Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96. The Standing Committee on Finance reviewed Bill 20 on April 5, 1995. Members discussed the bill and agreed that it should be moved into committee of the whole for further discussion and action. The standing committee appreciates the importance of this bill and providing financing for the NWT municipalities. Members will take this opportunity in committee of the whole to raise any specific questions they may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Antoine. General comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Page 909

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford): The chair recognizes the Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

General Comments

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, the limit of the authorization is \$9.1 million. If I recall right, the Minister indicated also that last year the limit was \$7 million. That also incorporated a board of education request. Is the amount that they are requesting also including requests from school boards?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Minister, I had neglected to ask you if you required some assistance, at the point where I should have asked it. Are you comfortable dealing with this yourself or would you like the assistance of your department?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring in a witness. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that a witness assist the Minister?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

There is agreement. Sergeant-at-Arms, please assist the witnesses.

Thank you. Mr. Minister, would you please introduce your witness?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, I have with me Mr. Eric Nielsen, deputy minister of Finance, GNWT.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Welcome, Mr. Nielsen. It looks like you have been out in the sun. Welcome to the committee. Mr. Minister, there was a question asked by Mr. Zoe. Do you still recall the question?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Zoe is correct. Last year the Yellowknife Education District No. 2 needed \$1 million. This year there is no request from any education boards. The request is from Fort Smith for \$350,000; Fort Simpson, \$415,000; Hay River, \$3 million; Inuvik, \$1 million; Yellowknife, \$4.24 million, for a total of \$9.005 million, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

General comments. Does the committee agree we go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Clause 1.

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):

Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 20, Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96, is ready for third reading?

Page 910

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Bill 20 is now ready for third reading. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister and his witnesses for assisting the committee. What is the wish of the committee?

Bill 22: Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95

Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95. Is the Minister responsible for the bill prepared to introduce the bill to the committee? Mr. Pollard.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, thank you. The purpose of the Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95 is to authorize the forgiveness of certain write-offs listed in the schedule to the act. Pursuant to section 25(1) of the Financial Administration Act, the forgiveness of a debt or obligation exceeding \$1,000 to the government and most boards and agencies must receive Legislative Assembly approval. When a debt is forgiven, no further collection action shall be pursued. The forgiveness being proposed in this act will not require

a new appropriation. Allowance for doubtful accounts appropriations were affected at the time it was determined that collection of the debt was considered unlikely.

Even though an account is written off, Financial Management Board Secretariat government accounting still pursues collection action against the debtor. In the files that have been identified for forgiveness, it is determined that collection of the debt is no longer possible. Mr. Chairman, a large component of the accounts being forgiven are bankruptcies, negotiated settlements and unsubstantiated debts. The number of accounts being forgiven this year is significant, due to the fact that the last forgiveness act was for the year 1988-89. A review of the write-off files is being conducted on an ongoing basis. To date, these files have been identified for forgiveness. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Is the chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance prepared to make his comments? But before I turn to you, I noticed Mr. Dent had his hand up. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize in the gallery, the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Member of Parliament for the Western Arctic.

---Applause

Here we are, now wasn't that worth the wait, Mr. Dent? The chair recognizes Mr. Dent.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. DENT:

Certainly, Mr. Chairman. I have the report on behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance.

Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee on Finance reviewed Bill 22 on April 5, 1995. Members discussed the bill and agreed that it should be moved into committee of the whole for further discussion and action.

The total amount of the debts being forgiven by this bill is substantial, over \$1.25 million. Standing committee Members understand that many of these losses were the result of bankruptcy or negotiated settlements with debtors and that the amounts are unrecoverable.

However, Members may have some questions regarding some of the items in this bill and we'll take this opportunity to raise them with the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Minister would you like to take the witness stand. Will you need some assistance with other member of your department to deal with this matter?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

If I might, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree that the Minister take the stand and bring in witnesses?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you help the Minister.

Welcome, Mr. Minister. Would you please introduce you witness to the committee.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Welcome, Mr. Voytilla. General comments on Bill 22. The chair recognizes the Member for Thebacha, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

General Comments

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not being on the Standing Committee on Finance -- I know as an alternate, I was once discussing part of this -- I would like to know whether or not the Minister could provide an explanation to the House on each of these write-offs or debts forgiven by the government.

Over the past couple of days, we have been hearing extensively from Ministers about the need to save funding, the need to be able to watch our funding, and the demands that are going to be placed upon us. I would like to know what efforts were made to allow for the debts to be forgiven. And, as a Member, I would also like to know the purpose for each of them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

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

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first one that I have is Dionne Furs, purchase of inventory; the amount was \$8,817.88 and the reason for the forgiveness was bankruptcy.

Page 911

Number two, the Receiver General for Canada, it was a reimbursement claim for special art projects, \$70,083.06, and we were unable to help.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Mr. Minister, could you do them in the order that they are listed here? You missed number one, you missed Voyages, you started at number two with Dionne furs.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. In the order of the bill then, Mr. Chairman, with Voyages Goliger Quebec Inc., this was a contribution under the financial assistance to industry policy, \$25,000 and the cause was bankruptcy.

Dionne Furs, I believe I did, Mr. Chairman.

The next one is Red Carpet Distribution Inc., the amount was \$46,199.25. It was a bankruptcy, Mr. Chairman, and negotiated settlement.

The next one is Robert Edward Galbush, that is medical travel, Health. It was incurred in 1989-90 and in the amount of \$2,413.75. The reason was bankruptcy, Mr. Chairman.

The next one is Michel Dupuis, ration assistance, Personnel, 1988-89. The amount is \$2,000 and the reason is bankruptcy.

The next one is David John Lundrigan, operating, I believe, Crazy Dave's Audio Visual, the creditor was Public Works and Services, the year was 1988-89, the amount was \$2,703.68. It was for rent of a retail store and the reason for the forgiveness was bankruptcy.

Then we have the Canada Tungsten Mining Corporation, the reason for that is medical expenses.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Mr. Minister, I regret to interrupt you, but the clock has reached 2:00. I have to rise and report to the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Good afternoon. 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. Your committee has been considering bills 1, 19, 20 and 22, and would like to report progress, and that bills 19 and 20 are ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Seconded by Mr. Antoine. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

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

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there will be meetings on Monday at 9:00 am of the Standing Committee on Finance and

also at 9:00 am of the Standing Committee on Legislation, at 10:30 am of the Ordinary Members' Caucus, 11:45 am of the Striking Committee and at 12:00 pm of the Management and Services Board.

Orders of the day for Monday, April 10, 1995:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2

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

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

- Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Fair Practices Act

- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Retirement Plan

Beneficiaries Act

- Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95

- Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95

- 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
Page 912

- 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

- Committee Report 6-12(7), Report on the Review of the Legislative Discussion Paper on the Draft of the New Education Act

- Committee Report 7-12(7), Report on the Second Annual Report, 1993-94, of the Languages

Commissioner of the NWT

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act

- Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2

- Bill 20, Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Monday, April 10, 1995, at 1:30 pm.

---ADJOURNMENT