



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

7th Session

Day 3&

12th Assembly

HANSARD

A CB85M APRIL 1\$, 1995

Pagination reflects print edition

The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 1995

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MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

The chair doesn't recognize a quorum. In accordance with Rule 73, Mr. Clerk, would you record the names of the Members present. The chair recognizes two additional Members in the Chamber now. Thank you.

Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 61-12(7): Minister Absent From The House

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Nellie Cournoyea will be absent from the House today to attend a meeting of provincial and territorial Ministers of Health in Vancouver, British Columbia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Morin.

Minister's Statement 62-12(7): Rent Scale Implementation

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past couple of months, the local housing organizations have been working extremely hard to see that each tenant has been counselled on the new social housing rent scale. I am pleased to announce that except for a few tenants who could not be reached, the households in every community have gone through the initial

counselling process. The unfortunate exception is Cape Dorset where illness prevented the community staff from completing the initial counselling of the tenants. In addition, where tenants have been away from their communities, a one-month grace period for their counselling and rent adjustment has been added. I thank the Members for their advice and suggestions during this implementation.

The local housing organizations will be providing the tenants with more in-depth counselling. They will continue to help tenants to adapt to the new rent scale. The Housing Corporation will continue to provide help to local housing organizations.

Again, I applaud the work the local housing organizations have accomplished. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Minister's Statement 63-12(7): National Wildlife Week

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Wildlife and the environment play an important role in the daily lives of northern residents. Every spring, during the second week of April, our children join other children across Canada, to celebrate National Wildlife Week. National Wildlife Week was created to raise awareness among Canadians about wildlife and wildlife conservation. Each year, a different theme is chosen for National Wildlife Week. This year's theme, "Wildlife...Yours To Recover," reminds us that everyone should make an effort to support wildlife and habitats that are at risk.

For the past 14 years, students across the Northwest Territories have celebrated National Wildlife Week by participating in a poster contest sponsored by the Department of Renewable Resources. Each year, we received 1,500 to 2,000 posters showing how our children interpret the theme for National Wildlife Week. Winning posters are chosen, and for the past few years, a calendar has been produced showing the winning posters. The winning posters are also sent to a national competition, where we have always had posters that receive national recognition. I am making available to all Members copies of our 1995-96 calendars.

It is encouraging and exciting to witness the enthusiasm our youth show towards wildlife and the

environment. This year, National Wildlife Week takes place from April 9th -- starting yesterday -- to the 15th, but here in the Northwest Territories, we celebrate the value of wildlife not for just one week, but every week of the year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Nerysoo.

Minister's Statement 64-12(7): Partnerships In Education

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, governments across Canada are facing the challenge of providing adequate levels of service in the face of declining revenues. In order to provide appropriate levels of service while living within our means, territorial and provincial Ministers responsible for education are developing new partnerships and finding new ways to share resources and expertise in areas of common concern. I would like to inform you of some of the initiatives in which the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and I are involved.

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The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, is working to improve the transfer of credits among universities and colleges for the first two years of undergraduate studies. Right now, the colleges in the Northwest Territories have course transfer arrangements with specific universities in southern Canada.

By improving the transfer of credits among all universities, NWT students will be able to complete their degrees at universities of their choice, rather than only at those institutions with which the colleges have special arrangements. The Council of Ministers would like to see the new arrangements in place by September 1, 1995, and they must be implemented no later than September 1st of the following year.

Mr. Speaker, many Canadians are concerned with federal budget reductions and the implications for post-secondary institutions. The Government of Canada, in announcing the new Canada social transfer, advised of its intention to reduce spending in the social envelope of health, education and social assistance by \$7 billion, in addition to capping expenditure growth.

This means that increased access to colleges, the assistance we provide to post-secondary students, and our plans to change social assistance from passive to active, will have to occur within a framework of shrinking financial resources.

To meet this challenge, Education, Culture and Employment will review the student financial assistance program in the new fiscal year to increase its access for adult learners and to bring its annual 10 per cent expenditure growth within financially sustainable levels. I expect the department to bring recommendations for this overhaul to the Legislative Assembly at the same time as the 1996-97 budget, with changes implemented in September 1997. The territorial government will also need to review its funding levels to the colleges. We have reached the point where we must reduce spending and increase our efficiency and effectiveness in order to live within our means, just as every other jurisdiction in Canada has had to do.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to advise this House that the Consortium of Western Ministers Responsible for Education is making considerable progress on a joint initiative to develop common curricula. Within the year, and possibly as early as this September, we expect to reach agreement on a common curriculum for mathematics for kindergarten to grade 8 and work is proceeding on the curriculum for grades 9 to 12.

Plans continue for the school achievement indicators program testing in science this spring, and for the first national report on education to be released this fall.

These are some of the initiatives I am pursuing with my colleagues at the national level. They are designed to improve the achievement and outcomes of our systems, as well as overall efficiency, effectiveness and excellence.

Mr. Speaker, a good deal of hard work will be needed to achieve these goals. We will also need the commitment of legislatures across this country to invest in our most important resources -- our students and our constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Tour Of Development
Projects By Dogrib Treaty 11 Council

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi...(English not provided)...my colleagues from the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council were kindly invited to join the Premier, the president of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation and the chairman of the Power Corporation board on a tour of two of the most significant developments under way in the north at this time. We were planning to visit BHP's diamond project at their Koala camp and the Snare Cascades power project. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, due to bad weather, the tour had to be postponed.

This past weekend, however, we were again presented with the opportunity to make the trip and visit these two sites. I was very impressed with the progress that has been made on both of these development initiatives, Mr. Speaker, and I was particularly encouraged by the Snare Cascades project. I was able to talk to several of my constituents who were employed at the site, and it was evident that the economic benefits of both of these projects are being realized in a variety of ways. It is important to remember, Mr. Speaker, responsible economic development is dependent on continuing goodwill and partnership between industry, government and the people of the north.

Projects such as these, if they are approached in a cooperative manner and take into account all of the environmental, social and economic impacts, will provide for a better future for all northern residents. Efforts to develop our resources responsibly will empower our people and give us the ability to shape our own destiny in the very near future.

On behalf of my constituents and the representatives who travelled with me from the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council, I would like to thank the Premier and both the president and chairman of the Power Corporation for their invitation. We appreciate being able to participate in such an interesting and informative tour. I would also like to acknowledge the generous hospitality of our hosts, which serves to illustrate the cooperative nature of these developments.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to forge rewarding partnership between government, business, industry and aboriginal people if we are to continue on the road to environmental, social and economic health and prosperity. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Springtime Safety Concerns

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the past, I have risen in this House during certain seasons of the year to remind Members that now that summer has come back and young children, who have been indoors for much of the winter, are now out on the streets playing with their bikes. Many of them

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have been deprived of all kinds of wonderful outdoor activities throughout the winter. I have noticed, over the last several days, that many young children are out on their bicycles and many of them have forgotten what it felt like since last summer when they had to be aware of traffic, dangers and so on. So I would like to remind Members that as leaders in our community we have to be extra vigilant because all these young children out on the streets again on their bikes are sometimes not as aware as adults are of the dangers that are close to them. Perhaps the press will also play their part in making sure that the public is made aware that we are in a new season and there are all kinds of dangers out there and if we're not vigilant, then we could have young children involved in accidents which perhaps could be avoided. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On St. John Ambulance
Volunteers

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to say a few words in recognition of the valuable asset the staff and the volunteers of the St. John Ambulance here in Yellowknife provide in our city's daily lives and special events and Mr. Irwin, the director. The St. John volunteers are always available for major events such as parades and special gatherings. They're out during the Caribou Carnival; the July 1st parade,

when the heat of the day can cause some problems; as well, the November 11th parade when the opposite is the case, when the cold can be a problem.

But in addition to assisting at events of this nature, they also teach programs in First Aid; everything from resuscitation to dealing with minor cuts, bruises, scrapes, allergies, to setting of bones if they are at the scene of an accident or something like that, or home events. Over the years that St. John Ambulance has been here in the north, they've played an important role in teaching countless people in the area of First Aid, which, of course, as we all know at some point in time, we hope we don't need it, but if we do it's there.

I just wanted to acknowledge the good work that the St. John people do for the community of Yellowknife and the territories in general. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Pentecostal Sub-Arctic Leadership Training College, Fort Smith

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, not only does Fort Smith have Thebacha college, but it also the home of the Pentecostal Sub-Arctic Leadership Training College.

I want, at this time, to congratulate the first five graduates who graduated from the new college building, which is a two-year program. My sincere congratulations are extended to Mr. David Evans from Fort Smith; Ms. Joy Moore from Fort Smith; Mr. Norman Anikina from Tuktoyaktuk; in addition, Ms. Patricia Hiebert from Edmonton and Mr. Vern Fisher from Fort McMurray.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Pastor Eva Nichol, I asked whether this college would allow for more students as it is such a good program. I believe what could possibly be better than training northerners to learn about the word of God and going into the communities to preach. Pastor Eva Nichol stated that they certainly could take more students but, as a college, they were unable to give any type of subsidized housing. This government used to give them a housing unit through a charity lease, but the lease has since expired. This college does not receive any funds from the GNWT, but it would be greatly appreciated if the Minister of Education would

consider allowing a few units designated for Thebacha campus for the use of the college.

In closing, I want to, once again, thank Pastor Eva Nichol and Reverend Heather Marlin for their dedication in developing the program and commend them for all the work they have done. It is also important to note that Pastor Eva Nichol was recently the recipient of the wise woman award given out by the Status of Women Council of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On RCMP Staffing In Fort Liard

MR. ANTOINE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) Today I am going to be speaking my own language. I would like to say something about the RCMP, Mr. Speaker. In Fort Liard, there is one RCMP officer. There used to be three, but now there is only one. Not long ago, this RCMP officer...There was supposed to have been another RCMP officer there, but they didn't do that. In Liard, the band council requested another RCMP officer as soon as possible. This is what I wanted to say. (Translation ends)

As a result, the RCMP indicated they would prioritize Fort Liard and fill the vacancy as soon as possible. This was the outcome of the meeting. However, as of late, the RCMP have since reneged on their position to fill the Fort Liard vacancy immediately. I understand why the community is becoming very frustrated with the situation. According to the RCMP, the

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situation in Fort Liard is now pending the staffing requirements of the RCMP detachment in Inuvik. I understand that the Member for Inuvik is going to be transferred to Liard, however, they want to get a replacement for him in Inuvik before they let him go.

I am running out of time, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure the RCMP are doing the best they can, however, when you consider the current oil and gas exploration boom that is going on in the Fort Liard region, there is a need for additional, permanent policing in Fort Liard. The community has made an urgent request for immediate permanent staff. Mr. Speaker, this situation must be looked at urgently and looked into by the appropriate administration before it is proven that one RCMP in the community is insufficient. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Turnover Of PanArctic's Assets To Communities

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about PanArctic. During the early 1960s, PanArctic started working in the High Arctic for oil and gas research. Today, they are wrapping up and will be closing down in the High Arctic. They have done a lot of work up there and they have found some oil and gas. PanArctic had employees from Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay. This has been a very big benefit to the communities. I would like to acknowledge and thank them for that. But for Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, there weren't any benefits at all to those residents.

To date, Resolute is asking PanArctic for some of their assets, if they are to be thrown out, burned or buried, such as vehicles. The hamlet of Resolute Bay has met with officials from PanArctic and...(inaudible)...They were asking if they could have some of their assets, such as vehicles or houses. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for High Arctic is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Conclude, Mr. Pudluk.

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, colleagues. The response they got was according to their agreements, they have to do this. They have been given different responses from DIAND. They are asking the government how this could be dealt with. The people of Resolute would like to get involved in cleaning the land. We know for sure there are many vehicles that are in good condition. They could be used in those communities. When the hamlet is trying to seek these assets, it costs a lot of money and is very expensive.

Further, today, I will be tabling some documents that were written to me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Support To Newfoundland Government For Use Of Seals

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the last few weeks, I have raised the issue of this government and this Legislative Assembly raising their profile across the country and around the world, trying to expand our markets to attract investors and to try to solidify our place on the national stage. In the next few weeks, I will give some concrete examples of how this could be achieved.

One example that comes to mind is in the area of fish and seals. Presently, there is an international debate going on about the turbot stock, about the Spanish quota and about over fishing off the nose of the Grand Banks.

Members are aware that our fishermen in the Northwest Territories do have a turbot quota within a 200-mile limit. However, we have to recognize that if the stock is threatened, then our quota is threatened.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear! Hear!

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Another area I think is very, very important -- and this is again happening in Newfoundland -- is there is a big push on by the federal Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Tobin, to try to revitalize the seal industry and he has

given a relatively small grant, I think \$1 million, to sealers in Newfoundland. This, along with the fact that Memorial University has come out with some new medical uses of seals, it seems to me that there is an opportunity there. As an example of what I am talking about, I think it would be an ideal situation if our Minister of Renewable Resources and our Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs go to Newfoundland to support the federal government, the governments of the Maritimes in protecting our very important fish stocks. We should also be supporting the Government of Newfoundland in looking at new markets for seals. Just as importantly, we must convince the federal government and the provincial governments that we are an important player in Confederation and when our issues come to the table, they should be taken seriously.

So this is just one example of the sort of thing I am talking about. In the new few weeks, I hope to bring forward other ideas and question Ministers about their response to these initiatives. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Member's Statement On Proposal Call For Orthodontic Services In Iqaluit Region

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was delighted with the proposal, made undoubtedly with the

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encouragement of the Minister of Health, to provide orthodontic services in the Baffin region recently. However, I was very concerned that the Iqaluit Dental Clinic, which has existed since 1987, was not informed about the proposal call for orthodontic services. The proposal call was advertised in a Yellowknife-based newspaper and only at the very last minute was it advertised in Nunatsiq News, published in Iqaluit.

I was even more disappointed to learn that the proposal call issued by the Baffin Regional Health Board seems intent on setting up its own dental facility through this proposal call. I do not know if this

direction has been encouraged or authorized by the Minister of Health, but it certainly seems to be contrary to the GNWT policy of supporting established local businesses, as is done in the communities with our hotel accommodations, for example.

The Iqaluit dental facility is far bigger than the population requires and, therefore, will easily accommodate visiting orthodontic services, as it already does for visiting oral surgeons.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed schedule for the proposal call also seems oriented, both towards short-term orthodontic care and also to a very large and unnecessary involvement in its management by the Baffin Regional Health Board. I believe that where local clinics exist, the proposal call should be structured so as to encourage orthodontists to make arrangements with local clinics for space, equipment, et cetera. The Baffin Regional Health Board should only be involved in providing the direct costs for travel and accommodation, as is done and seems to be working in Yellowknife.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Iqaluit Dental Clinic has been established since 1987. As this is the only service providing dental care to the people in Iqaluit and the Baffin region today, this clinic saw it as its duty to increase specialist dental care.

Now, the proposal call has been issued and it seems designed to leave out the Iqaluit Dental Clinic. This proposal call should be reviewed and improved so as to recognize the existence of existing clinics like the Iqaluit Dental Clinic as a basis for new orthodontic services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Patterson. Item 3, Members' statements. Are there any further Members' statements? Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Morin.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 423-12(7): Responsibility For Collection Of Damage Deposits

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Koe regarding the responsibility for collection of damage deposits. The responsibility to pay for damages to rental units belongs first to the tenant. When the local housing

organization makes repairs, the money is paid out of the maintenance budget. A bill is then sent to the tenant. When the bill is paid, the money is put back into the maintenance budget.

Sometimes a bill is not paid, and this means that the money from the maintenance budget will not be returned. This is a problem because it can mean that some maintenance work cannot be done because the budget has run out.

The corporation helps the local housing organizations to collect for these damages, and encourages LHOs to act to prevent damage to these homes.

The corporation's funding of local housing organizations allows for the LHOs to recover the money from the corporation for uncollectible tenant damages after every effort has been made by the LHOs to collect from the tenants. This makes sure that other tenants are not penalized because someone damages their unit and cannot pay for the repairs. I want to make sure that good tenants still have good homes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Further Return To Question 397-12(7): Consultation Re Amendments To Migratory Birds Convention

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Zoe concerning consultation regarding amendment to Migratory Bird Convention Act. To develop a national position on amending the migratory bird convention, which is the treaty between US and Canada, the federal government began its three-year consultation process in 1990. Bilateral meetings were held between the federal government and migratory bird management stakeholders, including in the Northwest Territories, the Denendeh Conservation Board, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council in the Inuvialuit settlement area and the then Nunavut Wildlife Management Advisory Board.

In April 1992, the last formal public consultations occurred with regional meetings in Iqaluit and Yellowknife. Chief Joe Rabesca of Rae attended the Yellowknife session and capably provided input from his people. Subsequent additional ad hoc meetings were held in Canada to permit further input from

aboriginal organizations. The federal government is currently assessing the options for recognizing aboriginal and treaty rights in either the convention or Canada's Migratory Bird Convention Act.

The Department of Renewable Resources attended most meetings and facilitated territorial input so that territorial concerns could be incorporated into the final Canadian position. Throughout this process, the Department of Renewable Resources provided advice to the federal government and promoted the concept of fair, legitimate, northern access to this renewable resources.

The Government of the Northwest Territories does not have a representative on the Canadian negotiating team for the amendment to the migratory bird convention nor have we had any contact with the negotiating team. Three aboriginal representatives have been appointed to the negotiating team: Mr. Phillip Awashish, who represents the Assembly of First Nations; Ms. Rosemarie Kuptana, who represents Inuit; and, Mr. Jim Bourque, who represents the Metis. The other members are three from Foreign Affairs Canada, two from Environment Canada and one representing the provinces and territories.

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The formal negotiations with the United States will begin in the last week of April. Once the amendment to the convention is drafted and agreed to, the Government of Canada must revise Canadian Migratory Bird Convention Act. I will keep Members advised of any progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank an honourable Member for pointing out to me that Mr. Ben McDonald of the UNW is in the gallery, but he's not in his usual seat, directly across from me. I don't know if that means he no longer feels he has to monitor my performance representing workers, that he isn't flattered by my frequent recognition of his presence in the gallery or maybe it just means that someone else is sitting in his seat today.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. LEWIS:

I don't know if our rules permit this, Mr. Speaker, but I also would like to recognize Mr. Ben McDonald in the gallery. He is sitting opposite me. He has lived in my constituency for many, many years. He has been a colleague in different community things. I would like to commend him for his dedication, endurance and patience in attending our Legislature as part of his work. I do this, Mr. Speaker, because it takes a special individual to sit through all this without any opportunity to participate. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. Today I would like to recognize some of the students from the Range Lake North primary grades, the enrichment program, grades three and five. Their teacher is Ms. Teri Arngna'naaq. She is not able to accompany them today, but the parents who did accompany them are Mrs. Barbara Bilodeau and Rennie Carlson. Welcome to the Assembly.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

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

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 440-12(7): Support For Maritime Fishing And Sealing Industries

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not quite sure who this question should go to, it could be the Premier, but she is not here; or the Minister of Intergovernmental

Affairs, but he's not here. It could either be Mr. Arngna'naaq or Mr. Todd. Why don't I try Mr. Arngna'naaq, and if that is the wrong place, feel free to have one of those more appropriate to answer.

Mr. Speaker, I brought up in my Member's statement the whole area of major issues, national issues, happening right now that directly affect us. And I see a tremendous opportunity for us to support both Maritime governments and the federal government in their efforts to protect the turbot fishery.

And I see an opportunity right now with the province of Newfoundland, for us to support the efforts of the Newfoundland government and again, Mr. Tobin, to revitalize the seal industry. Would the Minister be prepared, along with a delegation of Inuit seal hunters and turbot fishermen, to travel to the Maritime provinces and demonstrate some strong support for the efforts of our government with these areas? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Renewable Resources, Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Return To Question 440-12(7): Support For Maritime Fishing And Sealing Industries

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, in the Northwest Territories, have been actively involved although it may not necessarily be at the ministerial level. We certainly have been active at the regional level.

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, which is the newly-formed organization of the Nunavut final agreement, has over the last year been very active in trying to organize themselves to be able to face many of the issues that affect the coastal communities in the east. We have had departmental officials involved in many of the fisheries activities that have been going on.

My involvement has been limited to Minister of Fisheries conferences, up until this point. In the most recent ministerial meeting, I was able to confirm with the Minister that Inuit have to take an active role in the goings-on in research that may be taking place regarding seals. The area of sealing and marketing of this new idea about making use of seal oil for medicinal purposes has been a Newfoundland effort and we certainly have been giving them our moral support.

But so far the efforts have been limited to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, the efforts of the regional Baffin hunters' and trappers' association, who are very active in trying to maintain the turbot quota that they have received in the fishing area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 440-12(7): Support For Maritime Fishing And Sealing Industries

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I didn't get a response to my question. It is well and good that the Minister's staff is involved in some way with regional groups. It is well and good that the Minister's staff is looking at providing some kind of technical support. But I really think

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the time has come for this government to use the offices of Ministers and the office of the Premier to provide a catalyst for these regional groups, for community groups, to make their concerns known on the national/international scene.

I think that it is time that we got very verbal, very vocal, very aggressive, and on the national stage. My question to the Minister; is the Minister prepared to lead a delegation of turbot fishermen, and Inuit seal hunters, to the Maritime provinces to demonstrate our support of the federal government and the Maritime governments, to protect these very important industries? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 440-12(7): Support For Maritime Fishing And Sealing Industries

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 440-12(7): Support For Maritime Fishing And Sealing Industries

MR. BALLANTYNE:

It is good to hear that, I would have liked to hear a more passionate yes, but...

---Laughter

...I certainly will accept a yes. Mr. Speaker, if I could ask the Minister, when can we expect this particular trip to happen? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Arngna'naaq.

Further Return To Question 440-12(7): Support For Maritime Fishing And Sealing Industries

HON. SILAS ARNGNA'NAAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have actually been in contact with the Minister in the format of letters. However, I have not been in contact with him over the last week or so; I have been sitting here as everybody else has. My schedule, at this point, has been quite well laid out for the next few weeks, so I don't know when I will be able to set it up, but I will certainly make a good effort in the very near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 441-12(7): Subsidized Housing For Pentecostal Sub-Arctic Leadership Training College

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Earlier today, in my Member's statement, I had stated that there is the Pentecostal Sub-Arctic Leadership Training College in Fort Smith, and I had indicated that there is a shortage of subsidized housing on that part of the college. I am wondering whether or not it would be possible for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment to consider assisting this college by looking at designating a couple of Thebacha Campus housing units for the purpose of supporting the Sub-Arctic Leadership Training

College in order to house students in Fort Smith.
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 441-12(7): Subsidized Housing For Pentecostal Sub-Arctic Leadership Training College

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just so that we are clear, I don't have a problem, Mr. Speaker, of looking into this particular matter, but it is still important that we ensure that there are units available for the Thebacha Campus; our own students who are in Fort Smith are our first priority. But I will take the advice of the honourable Member and look into this matter and see how we might be able to be of assistance.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 442-12(7): Provision Of Interpreters At Resolute Bay Healing Workshop

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 30, 1995, I made a Member's statement regarding the healing workshop being conducted in Resolute Bay. On May 11th, this workshop or seminar is going to go ahead. At that time, I asked a question about interpretation services, whether the GNWT would be able to provide interpretation services to the workshop. Now, I would like to ask Mr. Nerysoo whether his department will be making their interpreters available for the healing workshop in Resolute Bay. I think this workshop is going to be very important to the future of the community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 442-12(7): Provision Of Interpreters At Resolute Bay Healing Workshop

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can advise the honourable Member that I'm not certain whether staff is going to be available but I believe the event is a worthwhile one for us to provide support to. I will look at how we can be of assistance, whether it is with our own interpreters or through a contract arrangement so that service can be provided. We will give priority to this issue.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents and, in particular, the Nahanni Ram Tourism Association, I raised an issue about tourism zone association cutbacks. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the current status of his department's zone association review? Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The consultant for the zone association review is in the final throes right now of finalizing his report. This report will go back into the respective areas for comment. Parallel to that, I met with one of the executive directors of the Frontier Visitors' Association and I encouraged her to try to bring together all of the western zone associations in the not-too-distant future -- and I indicated we were prepared to assist in financing it -- to see if we can reach an arrangement with the zones in the industry as to how we can proceed in the coming months with respect to the initiatives we've taken for overall tourist associations, one for the east and one for the west. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was brought to my attention that his review committee breezed through my constituency very quickly. It seems as if they already know what the report is going to say. The Nahanni Ram Tourism Association did not submit any written recommendations to the visiting review committee. It's my understanding that each zone was asked a standard set of questions and their respective positions were based on voter response. I would like to ask the Minister if written recommendations or positions were required for submission to the zone review committee, outlining each zone association's position. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware of the methodology they used at the community level. I know that, as the Minister responsible for this initiative, it's important to me that we seek community input into this new strategy that has come about for two reasons: one, because there are fundamental differences in tourism development in the east and west. There is a highway system in the west, there is different geography in terms of where the client comes from and there is a non-highway air system in the east. Coupled with that, division is imminent in 1999. Those were the primary reasons for looking at establishing two associations that were more reflective of the industry.

I would suggest to the honourable Member that if there was a request for written submissions, that would be one way of doing it. I would hope there would also be the opportunity for oral submissions. If, in fact, the consultant did, as the Member suggested, move quickly through his constituency, particularly the Nahanni area, I'll look into that and see what we can do to ensure that the Nahanni Ram Tourism Association is given adequate time to send in their comments. We should seek their counsel on how we would go about reorganizing two tourist associations

in the east and the west, and how we're going to go about running the zone associations in a more cost-effective way, given the fact that we're looking at some budget restraints and cutbacks in the overall category of support for zones. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My concern with this review is that tourism in my area has a huge potential and could develop further in a lot of jobs and a lot of business opportunities for people in my constituency. This review was to develop a strategy that the department is going to follow in the future. My concern is that this review be done in a way where everybody who has a concern in my constituency has a say in it. I'm told that this review only went to Fort Simpson and they talked only to executives. They did not go into the communities to listen to the members of the tourism associations.

I would like to ask the Minister, what provisions have been made to allow each zone to comment on the review's findings? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

HON. JOHN TODD:

It's unfortunate if the consultant didn't travel into the honourable Member's riding. He knows I've spoken on a number of occasions on the importance of the Nahanni area. I think it's probably one of the most beautiful places in the Northwest Territories so I will have a look into that issue. However, there is a sense of urgency in terms of trying to find a new way of doing things. We've had to look at cutbacks, as instructed by the FMB, with respect to our zone association budgets. I guess that's the urgency.

To answer the question, I'm saying on the one hand, I'll check into why his communities didn't get an opportunity, two, that there has to be recognition that there is a sense of urgency because of budget

restraints; and, three, in terms of ongoing input, I would suggest two things: one, I believe there is a move approved by some of the existing zones to call a meeting in the not-too-distant future of all the zones in an effort to reach an arrangement with each other as to how a western tourist association should be formalized. That might be one area where the Nahanni Ram Tourism Association could participate.

Two, I will discuss with the deputy minister what steps we intend to take once the report has come forward to see if, in fact, we have consensus on the results of the report and report back to the honourable Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the total dollar value the department is

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spending to do this review? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of the actual total costs so I'd have to take that question as notice and report back to the honourable Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Patterson.

Question 444-12(7): Information On Payroll Tax For New Businesses

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, in the normal course of establishing a new business in the Northwest Territories, businesses are informed about

requirements to have a business licence and to register with the Workers' Compensation Board. A new corporate constituent of mine recently complained to the Minister of Finance and myself that, at present, there seems to be no information provided to new businesses about obligations to register and pay for the NWT payroll tax. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he's willing to do anything about this complaint. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 444-12(7): Information On Payroll Tax For New Businesses

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, it has been brought to my attention. Not wanting to cause any new businesses any problems because, obviously, if six months down the road they suddenly find out they haven't been paying the tax, they have to pay it retroactively. They may be responsible themselves. Obviously, not wishing to forego any taxes, I would like to get my hands on them as soon as possible. Just to make it easy to do business in the Northwest Territories and not have to root around for the information, I've asked the department to investigate if we can use the same sort of mechanism that WCB does or the municipal councils do with business licences, and advise new companies that they should register to pay payroll tax. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 445-12(7): Status Of Agricultural Policy

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism what is the status of the development of the agricultural policy that his department was working on. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 445-12(7): Status Of Agricultural Policy

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the agricultural policy, at least the initial report, has been completed. We're in discussions with some of the industry, particular in the honourable Member's area. I'll have to give the honourable Member a clearer update as to when I believe we'll be in a position to table it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 445-12(7): Status Of Agricultural Policy

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the session is coming to an end, can the Minister give me a timetable as to when he would be able to let us know the status of being able to table the policy? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

HON. JOHN TODD:

The Territorial Farmers' Association...

---Laughter

...three guys who grow potatoes in Fort Smith. No, I'm just joking.

---Laughter

One cow and Felix from Iqaluit. The Territorial Farmers' Association has developed this draft policy. The notes say that we've sent it out to the departments of Renewable Resources, Health, MACA and everything else because you have to get everybody's input into this thing because it's federal and heaven knows what. We're hoping that we can finalize the agricultural policy...

I'm afraid I'll have to take that question as notice, Mr. Chairman.

---Laughter

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Antoine.

Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 9th, I asked the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources questions concerning the federal royalties to the NWT mining activities. I would like to thank the Minister for the response to that. I would like to follow up and ask the Minister what is the current status of the process which directly addresses the issue of updating the NWT mineral revenues regime to bring it in line with other jurisdictions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Return To Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good question. As the honourable Member know, we are in some fairly

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sensitive negotiations right now with the aboriginal groups that are directly affected with some of this mineral exploration that's going on, particularly right across the territories. As a matter of fact, they're meeting today, I believe, in an effort to see if we can find appropriate language that would satisfy everybody so we can move forward collectively to the federal government to reach an arrangement with respect to the transfer of responsibilities.

Hypothetically, if this transfer took place tomorrow, then the royalty regime would be a priority in our eyes. We've done a whole bunch of consultative work as to what kind of competitive tax regime we would want in the territories, and there are a number of scenarios that we've been working on. However, that is not the case right now; we don't have that legislative responsibility.

However, the federal government and Mr. Irwin recently made an announcement that they're prepared to review the current royalty and tax regime as it relates to both the federal and territorial governments. I wrote a letter to Mr. Irwin last week applauding him for this effort because I think it's important. I think we're going to be able to reach an arrangement with him where it's a joint initiative between the federal and territorial governments, because ultimately if there's any change prior to minerals being transferred to this government we will inherit that change and it's extremely important that the new regime, whatever it may be, is done in a manner that's in the best interests of all northerners.

So to answer the honourable Member's question; in short form, we've undertaken an internal review of what we would see as options for a new tax royalty regime should we get the responsibility for minerals. Parallel with that, the federal government has said that they are going to review it and they have agreed that we would participate in that review and we will share with them all the work we have done with respect to royalty and tax regimes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, is there a department policy or directive in place now that specifically addresses the issue of oil and gas royalties, in light of the oil and gas exploration boom that's happening in the Fort Liard region? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

HON. JOHN TODD:

We have a policy in place that was an arrangement reached many years ago. I stand to be corrected, but I believe it's as old as somewhere in the mid-1940s in terms of the current regime. So we have a policy in place. It's inadequate. It's almost antiquated. There's clearly a need to look at a new policy as it

relates to the current structure of a public government. Ultimately, as I've been saying over the last six or seven months, any new policy that we develop will be to the benefit of whatever constitutional change takes place in the west and whatever forms of government take place, because I view it as being transferred down when those changes take place.

So there is a policy in place. It's not adequate and we need to make changes. I'm encouraged by the fact that the federal government in conjunction with ourselves are going to be able to do that in the coming months, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Antoine.

Supplementary To Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It looks like the results of this oil and gas exploration are giving some positive results, and the extracting of resources is quite imminent in the future. I would like to ask the Minister what measures are being taken by the Minister and his department to ensure a royalty regime that will ensure the GNWT will benefit from the oil and gas resources. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reality is that the current regime is, at least in my opinion and I believe in the opinion of Cabinet, totally inadequate. As I said, we're striving hard to reach an arrangement with the First Nations and aboriginal groups where we can collectively go forward to the federal government to reach an appropriate transfer of responsibility. With this transfer of responsibility, we believe that will give us the leverage necessary to restructure a royalty and tax regime that is fairer to all northerners and First Nations and is competitive with the industry itself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Supplementary To Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister and his department are currently working on the northern accord which includes minerals and oil and gas in the north. I would like to get the Government of the Northwest Territories to administer that and work with the First Nations to achieve this. Once that is done, then the department is working on an internal strategy on how to revamp the current royalty system. Today, Mr. Speaker, from the media this morning I heard a mining executive saying that, instead of trying to squeeze the last drop out of the mining industry, it is better to create more mines. I would like to ask the Minister about the work they're doing to develop a new mining strategy for the royalty regime. I wonder if he could tell the House how he and his department are developing this strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

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Further Return To Question 446-12(7): Status Of Updating NWT Minerals Regime

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I used the word "competitive." Let me assure that whatever royalty regime we put in place will not impede environmentally-sound development in the mining industry. I want to assure the honourable Member and I certainly want to assure the mining industry that if they think the current royalty regime should stay in place as we move forward in the development of major diamond mines, et cetera, then quite frankly, they better revise their thinking. I've said that consistently and I have no intention of changing it.

We do realize that industry has to be competitive but anyone who is suggesting that the current royalties, which are totally inadequate, are okay, is wrong. We clearly need to make sure that any benefits that are taken out of this country, whether it is gold, lead, zinc or diamonds, that there is some return for investment, if you want, to aboriginal northerners, First Nations,

and public government. That's my position. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ballantyne.

Question 447-12(7): Comparisons Of Royalty Regimes In Other Jurisdictions

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you. I think Members of this House support the Minister's approach on that. Just so northerners really know some comparative values of our royalty regime in the Northwest Territories and royalty regimes in other parts of Canada, perhaps the Minister could give us some comparisons, if he has them available. Perhaps he can table some comparisons between the royalty regime here in the Northwest Territories and that of other provinces and territories in the country. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 447-12(7): Comparisons Of Royalty Regimes In Other Jurisdictions

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that's an important question. I would like to elaborate on that by saying we're prepared to table not only tax regimes that are in Canada but tax regimes in the rest of the world, whether it's Chile, Australia or Brazil. These mining companies, and we're very sympathetic to them, are international in their focus in terms of where they get the best return for investment. I would suggest to you again that the current tax regime we have here is simply inadequate. We have to ensure that it's competitive so that the mining industry can move forward in its development and get a reasonable return for its investment for their shareholders. But, surely to goodness, all northerners have to equally get a return on investment, for taking these valuable resources out of our country. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 447-12(7): Comparisons Of Royalty Regimes In Other Jurisdictions

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to confirm that the Minister will then table those comparisons here in the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 447-12(7): Comparisons Of Royalty Regimes In Other Jurisdictions

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. While we don't currently have the legislative responsibility for oil, gas and minerals, we have done an enormous amount of work, internally, as to the options and looked at tax regimes and value-added components of this industry, right across the continent. I would be only too happy, Mr. Speaker, to table as quickly as I can the kinds of regimes that are in place both in Canada and across the continent. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 447-12(7): Comparisons Of Royalty Regimes In Other Jurisdictions

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I think it would be very useful to put it into some context so people can really see the royalty regime here compared to the rest of the country. If the information is available, I wonder if the Minister could table in this House the exact revenues, or as close an approximation as the Minister can find, presently received in royalties by the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 447-12(7): Comparisons Of Royalty Regimes In Other Jurisdictions

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That question was asked earlier last week by Mr. Antoine and I would be only

too happy to table it, but I would also like to tell the Member that it is \$13.4 million. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 448-12(7): Consultation With Legal Profession Re Cuts To Legal Interpreter Services

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice -- who I'm glad to see is back in the House -- about the legal interpreting program. Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, there are really four positions for Inuktitut terminologists now vacant which have not been refilled and there are two other positions scheduled to terminate June 1st. I would like to ask the Minister if he has consulted with judges, the defence bar, Crown prosecutors and legal aid clinics -- all of whom depend on this vital service -- about the major cutbacks and changes proposed for the legal interpreting program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Justice, Mr. Kakfwi.

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Return To Question 448-12(7): Consultation With Legal Profession Re Cuts To Legal Interpreter Services

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, the major cuts that the Member is referring to were made, not by this government, but by the federal government. As I said last week, the reductions we're making in the Department of Justice are reductions we feel are manageable and do not impede the ability of the government or courts to carry on with the levels of service that they expect. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 448-12(7): Consultation With Legal Profession Re Cuts To Legal Interpreter Services

MR. PATTERSON:

Mr. Speaker, I note the Minister is confident that the proposed changes which were at least implemented by his department -- it was his department that gave notice to these employees -- won't affect the administration of justice. I would like to again ask the Minister, has he talked to judges, the defence bar, Crown prosecutors, and legal aid clinics about whether they think these proposed changes will affect the administration of justice? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 448-12(7): Consultation With Legal Profession Re Cuts To Legal Interpreting Services

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, personally, I have not spoken to a judge, perhaps but twice in my life. I haven't talked to the other officials the Member is referring to, no.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Patterson.

Supplementary To Question 448-12(7): Consultation With Legal Profession Re Cuts To Legal Interpreting Services

MR. PATTERSON:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not particularly happy with that answer. When a Minister is asked about whether he has consulted, the question includes whether or not he has had his officials and deputy -- who is in regular liaison with judges, the defence bar, Crown prosecutors, et cetera -- consult about proposed changes. I'd like to ask the Minister whether he has talked to these organizations or people, directly or not. Has his department consulted with the major users of this service about substantial changes that are proposed in this vital service? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I would have to take the question as notice and check with the department to see whether officials in the Department of Justice have spoken to

the persons that the Member is referring to. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Question 449-12(7): Evaluation Of Liquor Inspection Program

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Safety and Public Services. Mr. Speaker, last week I spoke about liquor inspectors and commended the liquor inspector in Fort Smith for being able to do many inspections and ensure the liquor facilities in our community are establishments that people feel safe to go to. I think through the Minister's office, there certainly has been some comprehensive review and public consultation, taking into account the development of the new Liquor Act. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I think the best legislation in the world would not address liquor control problems unless we take a serious approach to enforcement. I'd like to ask the Minister whether or not he would agree to make a formal evaluation of the way the liquor inspection program is being implemented in the Northwest Territories, prior to the June sitting of this House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Safety and Public Services, Mr. Nerysoo.

Return To Question 449-12(7): Evaluation Of Liquor Inspection Program

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Mr. Speaker, prior to dealing with the immediate question, just so it is clear, I think the honourable Member has taken note of the 1993-94 annual report of the NWT Liquor Commission which reports on the statistics of the number of liquor inspections in each community. I just want to advise the honourable Members that this information had not been included in any of the previous reports. In fact, what it now does is give us a better understanding of the work and the commitment of this department in making sure the public knows what is happening with liquor regulation in the Northwest Territories.

The honourable Member also pointed out, Mr. Speaker, her concern about the number of

inspections that were carried out in Yellowknife, in particular in 1993-94. There were 205 inspections in Yellowknife and she pointed out that, in comparative terms, there were more inspections carried out in Fort Smith. What's interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that the inspection frequency that occurred in Yellowknife increased by 49 per cent since 1993-94 in Yellowknife. In other words, we've increased the total amount of inspections, as a result of the information that has been brought to our attention. So we are, in fact, already carrying out more inspections than we ever have before here in the city of Yellowknife and generally, right across the Northwest Territories.

I also want to make the honourable Member aware that her concern regarding the frequency of inspections is a very valid one and we're certainly trying to do our best, as a department, to determine how often we carry out our inspections. I would like to thank the honourable Member for raising those elements of our responsibility. It's our view that we should carry out our responsibility in a responsible fashion.

The "where" and "when" questions that she also raised previously with regard to the policy are also valid ones and we should, as a department, be able to work those issues out over the next year. Certainly as a result of our consultations and the

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legislative work we're carrying out, we'll be able to identify those issues as part of legislative requirements as well.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

Supplementary To Question 449-12(7): Evaluation Of Liquor Inspection Program

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize the Minister responded to some of the comments that I made in my Member's statement and I thank him for that. I recognize that the information on inspections had never been tabled by the Minister's office and that's why I made a Member's statement on it. It was interesting to note the lack of inspections. This is why I wanted to know whether or not the Minister would agree to undertake a formal evaluation of the way the liquor inspection program is being implemented, prior

to the June sitting of this House, at the same time we will possibly be looking at the act. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 449-12(7): Evaluation Of Liquor Inspection Program

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to advise the honourable Member that this issue was also raised in January of this year between the department and the Liquor Commission. I agree with the concern raised by the honourable Members and I want to indicate that we're proceeding with the development of a terms of reference for a review that the honourable Member suggested we conduct.

It may take us a bit more time than the time before the June session, but maybe we'll get a consensus on the terms of reference for the review before we meet then.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 450-12(7): Revised Business Incentive Policy

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Public Works. Mr. Speaker, on March 31st, I asked the Minister about a revised business incentive policy. I asked him if we could expect to have, before the final session of this Assembly in June of this year, a revised BIP presented to the Assembly. Mr. Morin would only answer that he was committed to concluding a revised BIP within the life of this government. Mr. Speaker, my question is, knowing that extensive consultation has gone on now in every region of the Northwest Territories and the results are now in and being assessed by the Minister, will the Minister commit to presenting a revised business incentive policy to the Legislative Assembly before it finally prorogues? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister responsible for Government Services and Public Works, Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 450-12(7): Revised Business Incentive Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll try my best to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

Question 451-12(7): Discussions Re Overlap And Duplication Of Programs

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. In the fall, the Minister of Finance had meetings with Marcel Masse, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and the object of the meetings between the federal government, the provinces, and the territories was to find ways to make program delivery more efficient and effective. So far, all I've really seen out of this exercise with the federal government is offloading and downloading.

I wonder if the Minister could give us an update about what's happening with those discussions. Is there, for instance, an opportunity to take over some of DIAND's programs? Perhaps we could deliver them more efficiently. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Finance, Mr. Pollard.

Return To Question 451-12(7): Discussions Re Overlap And Duplication Of Programs

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members will recall that this initiative came from the First Ministers' Conference and it came from the Prime Minister and the respective Premiers. I was assigned the responsibility for overlap and duplication for the Government of the Northwest Territories and, of course, I was dealing with Marcel Masse. In fact, just last week, Mr. Speaker, the Premier wrote back to the Prime Minister and acknowledged that the first round of these exercises were concluded and now it was time to move on to a new area. I anticipate, some time in the next six weeks, being able to start a new

round with the federal Minister, with a view to looking at some larger programs.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we were not allowed to go as large as we wanted to the first time around. There were things we couldn't get on the table. We were told, let's move along in a slow fashion and make some small bites first. At the next opportunity, though, we'll be suggesting much larger eliminations of overlap and duplication. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Ballantyne.

Supplementary To Question 451-12(7): Discussions Re Overlap And Duplication Of Programs

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In some of these areas, the government probably can get Legislative Assembly support. Dollars are getting tight and every cent is becoming precious. I wonder if and when the Minister could give us more details as to particular programs this government would like to discuss in those negotiations. And perhaps, if

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there is a strategy, if the Member could inform this House how the Legislative Assembly will be involved in that strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Pollard.

Further Return To Question 451-12(7): Discussions Re Overlap And Duplication Of Programs

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the initial round is done. There has been correspondence between the Premier and the Prime Minister. If I am the Minister chosen again to conduct this exercise, as soon as I get word from the Premier that we are going to enter into the next round, I would be pleased to convey to the Members what it is that we are suggesting in this particular round. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item

9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Report On Bill 26

MR. WHITFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Legislation has reviewed Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Jury Act, and wishes to report that Bill 26 is now ready for committee of the whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Pudluk.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

MR. PUDLUK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I would like to table, Tabled Document 89-12(7), a document addressed to me concerning the PanArctic clean-up. It has been signed by P. Amagoalik for Tabitha Kalluk near Resolute Bay. 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. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 32: An Act To Amend The Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act, No. 2

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second...

Sorry, Mr. Dent, your motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 32 has had first reading. 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 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95; Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95; Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits 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. Lewis in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

I would like to call the committee of the whole to order. What would the committee like to do this very nice afternoon? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that the committee continue consideration of Bill 22. And should we conclude that, resume consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Report 4-12(7), specifically to deal

with the budget for Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, followed by FMBS and Finance, if we should happen to get that far.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Mr. Dent proposes that we continue with Bill 22. How does the committee feel about that? Are you all agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Bill 22: Forgiveness Of Debts Act, 1994-95

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Okay, now that we have agreed on the order of business -- I assume that Members agreed, not only to the bill, but also to the other business that we go on to -- we will come back after a break when we can meet the Minister and his witnesses.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

---SHORT RECESS

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis): The committee will come back to order. Before the break, we agreed we would go to Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95, and we agreed that Mr. Pollard, if he wishes, could have his witnesses help him deal with this item. Mr. Pollard, would you like to go to the chair?

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

If I might, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Sergeant-at-Arms, show the witnesses where they have to sit.

For the record, Mr. Pollard, if you could introduce your witness for us.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Welcome, Mr. Voytilla. We are on item seven, as I understand it, of the schedule for debts forgiven. And we have just completed item seven, Canada Tungsten Mining Corporation, I believe. Is that correct? Members, is that right, that we finished?

Okay, Mr. Pollard, for the record, would you deal with item seven? There were some requests for some detail on that.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it was Canada Tungsten Mining Corporation, the department was Health, the year was 1990-91, the amount was \$11,380.92 and it was a negotiated settlement, Mr. Chairman.

Item eight was Transport Canada, airport operating costs, the department was Transportation, the year 1992-93, the amount \$217,647.14, and it was a negotiated settlement between the two governments.

Number nine was Kissarvik Corporative Association Ltd., it was for equipment rental, Public Works and Services was the department, the year was 1990-91, the amount \$11,705.22, and the reason for the write-off was the billing could not be substantiated, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, item 10 was the Receiver General for Canada, it was reimbursement claims for special art projects, ED&T was the department, 1988-89 was the year, the amount was \$70,083.06, and it was, again, because the amounts could not be substantiated.

Mr. Chairman, item 11 was 175119 Canada, operating as the NWT Marine Group, it was because of loan principal and interest, it was the NWT Business Credit Corporation in the year 1993-94, the amount \$91,188.05 and the reason for the forgiveness was public interest.

Item 12, JSL Mechanical Installations Ltd., it was accrued interest on a loan, again, made by the Business Credit Corporation in 1993-94, the amount, \$56,983.42, and it was a negotiated settlement, Mr. Chairman.

Item 13, the Liard Valley Band Development Corporation for loan principal and accrued interest, the Business Credit Corporation, the year was 1993-94, the amount was \$300,091.98, and it was written off because it was in the public interest.

Item 14 was Sahtu Contractors Ltd., loan principal and interest, BCC, 1993-94, the amount was \$145,826.15, and it was a negotiated settlement, Mr. Chairman.

Item 15 was 902888 NWT Ltd., it was loan principal, the Business Credit Corporation, that amount was \$49,712.18, and it was a negotiated settlement, Mr. Chairman.

Item 16 was 851820 NWT Ltd., operating as Curry Construction, again it was the principal of a loan, Business Credit Corporation, \$5,506.16, and a negotiated settlement, Mr. Chairman.

Item 17 was 872244 NWT Ltd., operating as D&D electric, loan principal, Business Credit Corporation, \$132,685 and the consent ordered nisi.

Item 18 was RD&W Holdings Ltd., loan principal, the Business Credit Corporation, \$19,498.58, and it was negotiated settlement.

Mr. Chairman, item 19 was MacKay Lake Lodge 1989 Ltd., again, principal on a loan, Business Credit Corporation and their write-off was \$40,959.85 through a negotiated settlement.

Item 20 was Simpson Air (1981) Ltd., loan principal, BCC, \$27,457.03, it was a litigation settlement followed by consent judgment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

That concludes the details of the debts that have been forgiven under this bill. Do Members agree that we have dealt with those details, or do you have any further questions? Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I ask the Minister with regard to item 15, who was 902888 NWT Ltd.?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Mr. Pollard, item 15.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, there were two shareholders to that particular corporation. I don't know the name of the company that they were operating under. Mr. Chairman, I would seek your counsel with regards to whether or not I should read the names of the people into the record. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Yes, Mr. Pollard, I believe the whole purpose of a numbered account achieves a couple of purposes, but I would like to get legal advice if one of them is in fact to avoid disclosure of all the principals in that company.

Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Pollard. There are several numbered companies on this list and I would like to get some legal advice before I would agree to answer your question. So the choice would be to leave it until we have that advice as to whether that is in order or not. Mrs. Marie-Jewell.

MRS. MARIE-JEWELL:

I don't know how long it is going to take to obtain the legal advice needed, Mr. Chairman, but the other one that I wanted to question was another numbered

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company, so I would appreciate if we could obtain some legal advice, taking into account the amount of funding that is being requested of this House to forgive these debts. So I would appreciate finding out whether or not we can determine who the debtors are in this case. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

I can't get this in just one minute. Do the Members agree that we leave this item until we get that advice?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Agreed. Okay, thank you very much, Mr. Pollard. We will leave this bill and come back to it once we have answered the question to the satisfaction of Members. Thank you, Mr. Voytilla.

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

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

Intergovernmental And Aboriginal Affairs

We're on the next item, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, on page 02-39 of the main estimates. Mr. Kakfwi, you're the Minister responsible. Do you have any opening comments? Mr. Kakfwi.

Mr. Kakfwi, before the break we agreed that after dealing with the bills, we'd go back to the main estimates. Since we agreed to go to 02-39, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, and since you're now in the House and are the Minister, do you have any opening comments to make to us on this item in the estimates?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Chairman. If I can proceed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Go ahead.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. The Ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs is responsible for several important tasks which are within the Cabinet's strategic planning priorities. The tasks include self-government negotiations, community transfer initiatives, settlement of land claims and their implementation, devolution and intergovernmental affairs. In its O and M budget, the ministry proposes expenditures in 1995-96 of \$4.2 million. Members will notice that this is an increase of \$240,000 over the Minister's 1994-95 budget of \$4 million.

The ministry has identified several areas in the budget where reductions are proposed in an effort to show fiscal restraint. The most significant of these are: \$138,000 from the community transfer, O and M; \$100,000 from grants and contributions for community transfers; and, \$88,000 in the directorate.

The largest proposed increase is \$400,000 which results from the added efforts required for the negotiation of self-government agreements over the next several years. The federal government has been supporting the commencement of negotiations and this government is expected to be a party to those

negotiations. These negotiations, in part, will serve to shape the future of government in the Northwest Territories. The proposed increase will be used for contributions to municipalities to allow a more informed participation in self-government discussions and for salaries to hire analysts and negotiators.

An increase of \$200,000 is proposed for the implementation of a grants and contributions to aboriginal organizations policy, specifically as it relates to special events. Up until this point, funding of \$250,000 had been budgeted for core funding for NWT Metis locals, and no funds had been budgeted for the special events component of the policy.

Mr. Chairman, the ministry currently has 24 person years under vote 1. There are three vacancies. Of the 21 employees, ten, or 48 per cent, are "indigenous" or long-term residents and six, or 29 per cent, are aboriginal. The ministry also has six approved person years under vote 4 for the implementation of land claims.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs budget proposals reflect the political and constitutional challenges that face this government and its successor over the next few years. As Members can see in the listed definitive objectives, Mr. Chairman, the ministry has an important role in coordinating and leading the government's response to these challenges and recommending to government strategic options for the future.

Finally, in line with the ministry's responsibility for coordination of political and constitutional development activities, I would like to briefly respond to Standing Committee on Finance recommendations numbers 10 and 11 regarding the intergovernmental function of the ministry and the Ottawa office.

The first recommendation states that: "The committee recommends that the Premier ensure that sufficient resources are provided to the government's office in Ottawa to enable the government to increase its presence in the nation's capital, so as to ensure that the Northwest Territories is adequately represented in discussions regarding financial, constitutional, self-government and other important issues."

This recommendation is related to number 11 which states that: "The committee recommends that in the next government, the duties of the Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Ministry be divided and further,

that the next Premier assume responsibility for the intergovernmental affairs responsibilities."

As background, Mr. Chairman, Members should note that this government, at the beginning of its mandate, decided to merge the Aboriginal Rights Affairs Secretariat, the Devolution office and the office of Intergovernmental Affairs under a single Minister in order to implement the "comprehensive approach to political and constitutional development" which was adopted by the Legislative Assembly in 1991.

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The comprehensive approach was based on the principle that the elements of political and constitutional development, including land claims; division; devolution of land, water, oil, gas and minerals; western constitutional development; aboriginal self-government; national constitutional reform; and, intergovernmental relations are all interconnected with each other and could not be dealt with in isolation.

It was agreed then that a separate Minister, and not the Premier, would assume responsibility for the ministry because of the importance of the comprehensive approach, the heavy workload associated with the ministry's responsibilities and the time commitment that would be involved in representing the Northwest Territories during the national constitutional discussions. Mr. Chairman, the Government of the Northwest Territories is not alone in having a separate Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Four provinces and the federal government have similar arrangements.

We should take note that this approach does not prevent the Premier and other Ministers from participating in intergovernmental issues. For example, the Premier represents the Northwest Territories in all western Premiers' conferences, annual Premiers' conferences and First Ministers' meetings. She is provided full support by the intergovernmental affairs branch of the ministry in preparing and attending these meetings. In addition, NWT Ministers regularly meet their provincial and federal counterparts.

Mr. Chairman, the political and constitutional work of the government is not yet completed. I believe the comprehensive approach to addressing these issues continues to be critical to their successful conclusion. Having said this, I am encouraged that standing committee Members recognize the valuable role

played by the Ottawa office in representing the interests of the Northwest Territories to Ottawa. I also agree with standing committee Members that the role of the Ottawa office has evolved and expanded since its incorporation into the Ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. I am committed to fully review the functions of that office and the intergovernmental affairs responsibilities of the ministry, taking into account the useful recommendations of the Standing Committee on Finance, and report on that review to the Premier and Cabinet in the near future. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Minister Kakfwi. The chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance or his delegate. Mr. Antoine.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the second year in a row, the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs was unable to appear before the Standing Committee on Finance for the review of the 1995-96 main estimates. Committee Members would prefer to have dealt with this ministry in January; however, the Members of the standing committee are now prepared to perform a detailed review of the ministry and its estimates here in the House.

The Ministry of Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Affairs has many important tasks:

new constitutional challenges in Quebec; important developments in transfer payments; and, devolution of responsibility from the federal government; new developments in circumpolar cooperation; PanArctic environmental concerns; unresolved land claims; the community transfer initiative; the creation of Nunavut; and, constitutional development in the western NWT. In short, many of the most important issues facing northerners today are all part of the responsibilities of this ministry.

Many of these issues are ones where much can be done to improve the lives of northerners.

Community transfer is one which has held much hope for government services to be provided closer to the people. Providing these services with local leadership in the community, rather than from a distant territorial capital or regional office, holds the promise of being more effective, more efficient, and more in keeping

with the actual needs and desires of northern residents.

Committee Members are concerned, however, that this ministry is not providing the leadership role it should be to the rest of the territorial government on these matters. The Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs should be taking the lead role on all of these issues; providing support and advice to individual department, where necessary. However, while the goals and objectives of the ministry suggest that this is indeed the case, it appears that the individual departments are doing all the work, especially in intergovernmental affairs. The perception is that the ministry has not adequately identified its priorities and it's not providing the leadership necessary in these important matters.

Returning to the example of the transfer initiative, committee Members are concerned that in the three years since this initiative was introduced, only two substantial transfers of responsibility to communities have taken place: in Cape Dorset and in Fort Good Hope. The standing committee feels that much more can be done in this area, as in other areas. Committee Members hope that the discussion we will have today will help the Minister and his ministry improve their performance on this and other initiatives.

Although the Minister did not appear before the standing committee, committee Members have considered these issues in their review of the main estimates.

Recommendation 10, included in the chapter on the Executive, recommends that the Premier ensure that sufficient resources are provided to the government's office in Ottawa to ensure that the Northwest Territories is adequately represented in discussions on important issues.

Recommendation 11 in the same chapter recommends that in the next government, the duties of this ministry should be divided, and that the next Premier should have responsibility for intergovernmental affairs.

We will address these recommendations specifically when we review the estimates of the Executive. Mr. Chairman, we have a number of specific questions for the Minister here in the House, as these are important issues which fall under his responsibility. Mahsi, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Mr. Antoine. We have completed the departmental comments and the

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committee comments. Would the Minister like to now take the witness table and have some help there?

Okay, the Minister has nodded. How do Members feel about that? Would you like him to now bring in his witnesses so we can deal with detail on this department? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Okay, Sergeant-at-Arms.

Thank you very much, Members. Mr. Kakfwi, you have some witnesses with you, perhaps for the record you could tell us who they are.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. On my left, the deputy minister, Bob Overvold. On my right, the director of finance and administration, Terryl Allen.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Welcome. I would like to ask Members for comments, but I have been asked by the Standing Committee on Finance, since they have made a detailed analysis of the department, if we could recognize them first of all because they've prepared some general comments or questions. I believe Mr. Antoine would like to begin.

General Comments

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we start to discuss the budget of this ministry, I have an important request for the Minister. When the Standing Committee on Finance discusses the main estimates with the Members of Cabinet, we have access to budget detail at the task level; however, we were unable to discuss the budget of this ministry in that detail with the Minister in January.

That same level of budget detail is not available to Members here in committee of the whole; the documents available here include detail only down to the activity level. As well, this ministry's budget consists of only one activity. Therefore, I think the Members present need to be able to see the ministry's budget in more detail in order that we can properly review it here in the House. Could the Minister please provide the Members with the details of this ministry's budget down to the task level, as included in the documents provided to the Standing Committee on Finance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, we will make them available.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

If we could have that and distribute it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Several other Member of the Standing Committee on Finance want to make general comments or general statements, I don't know in which order. So if the Members who are on that committee would like to continue from when Mr. Antoine left off, I will recognize them. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am also a Member of the Standing Committee on Finance and I brought a copy of my task-level detail. I would like to get into specific questioning for the Minister.

With regard to the policy and coordination section. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister, how many staff are in the policy and coordination division of the ministry? And I would also like to know what is the total cost of their salaries and wages?

The reason that I am asking this, Mr. Chairman, is that the budget documents say that there are 7.1 PYs for \$611,000 in the directorate, presumably including the deputy minister's position, the executive assistant, and an executive secretary. But I note in our

government telephone directory, it says only three other staff: a director, a policy and planning analyst, and a special advisor. So, for those reasons, I am asking this particular question. I wonder if the Minister could provide me with an answer, because what is in the budget documents is different than the telephone directory for both of these figures. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. I should remind Members that we are now dealing with a level of detail that has been available for the reasons that Mr. Antoine has given. Mr. Kakfwi, if you can respond.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The seven positions include the deputy minister; reporting to him is: an executive secretary; an executive assistant; a special advisor on constitutional affairs, which is presently based in Ottawa; a director for policy and coordination; and, reporting to that director, is a policy and planning analyst; and, a senior financial and administrative coordinator. Those are the seven.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are these positions that the Minister just outlined all filled?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Mr. Zoe, the floor is still yours.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier, I'm a little confused. The recent government telephone directory lists, as I indicated, only three positions, but the Minister has indicated there is a director and policy planning analyst. Is the Minister indicating that the names and positions listed in the telephone directory are not correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, under policy and coordination, there are three positions in the directorate, including a policy and planning analyst and a senior financial administrative coordinator. The directorate includes the executive secretary, executive assistant and the special constitutional affairs advisor.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I'll continue on. I will get to the specific task later on. I would like to ask the Minister, why does a department of only 27 staff need three staff in the role of policy and coordination? Surely this could be handled in such a small department by the deputy minister or his executive assistant. Why do you need three people?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I'm not clear what the Member is suggesting. The ministry, itself, is largely policy driven. It is a function that requires a full-time position tasked simply to look at policy and planning, doing required analysis of ongoing activities and following up on work done by the ministry. The director is in charge of general overall coordination within the directorate, specifically in charge of policy and coordination of the work of the ministry. The position of financial administrative coordinator...Again, there is \$4 million we deal with. We also do a lot of work with FMBS and other departments. There's work to be done with the federal government, other ministries and communities. These positions are required.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you look through the government budget as a whole, other departments which have more than 27 PYs don't have more than three people in their policy and coordination section so we're wondering why this particular department, with only one activity and I think four or five tasks, requires three people in their policy and coordination section. Other departments which have hundreds of people in various activities don't require that many people to do their policy and coordination.

We're questioning this because we compared it to various departments in the budget and we note this particular department had three people specifically assigned to policy and coordination. We're questioning why it is required to have these three people specifically assigned to do this work. We felt, for a cost-saving measure, there was a possibility that the deputy minister and his executive assistant could take on this role, rather than having three people in this area. We raised that concern in our internal discussions and are questioning the Minister here today.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Is that a question again, Mr. Zoe?

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, in my view and in some of the committee Members' views, we don't think this department requires this many people to do this function. We felt that this function could possibly be taken care of through the DM's office where the DM and his executive assistant could carry out all of these functions. The Minister has indicated that he doesn't think that is warranted and it should be left to the status quo. I think that most of the Members on this committee, when we discussed this issue, felt that was one possibility and could be a cost-saving measure if the role was incorporated into the deputy minister's office. I would like to ask the Minister if that could be a possibility. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you very much, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I don't know what the Member is saying. Either they are going to make a recommendation or they are just making an observation, based on their own internal discussions. I don't get the point. As far as I'm concerned, the

directorate is required and they're working full-time, as is the deputy minister. It is unlike other, very task-oriented, cut-and-dried departments. We work with people and political issues. We work with issues that are not so clear cut; dynamic issues that require, I believe, a massive amount of coordination and attention. That's what the ministry is all about.

It's not one that's prone to just having a number of tasks all piled up and just a few people. We have a number of jobs that are required to be done and all the work we do and that I'm responsible for, as a Minister, is done through the directorate. The directorate keeps me informed, on a daily basis and weekly basis, of all the different things we're involved in. They keep abreast of national issues as they develop. They keep abreast of the issues going on in Ottawa, so this government keeps a progressive profile and perspective on things so we aren't caught looking as if we're sitting on our rear ends.

It is important to have people free to monitor activities across this country. This is what the directorate does. It serves as a secretariat for the Political and Constitutional Development Committee of Cabinet as well. All the things that go on in the Northwest Territories with the aboriginal organizations, the claims, self-government issues and within Ron Irwin's office, those things alone, can keep a few people busy just trying to figure out what is going on. We try to track the policies that the federal government comes out with. We try to anticipate how they are going to form. We try to have input wherever we can with these initiatives and to keep abreast of proposals and other initiatives that the federal government may want to take.

We have ongoing discussions and dialogue with aboriginal organizations on a number of issues. It isn't possible to give a black-and-white definitive measuring stick to the Member and say this is how much work is being done. If the Member has any inkling as to how much work it takes to just keep abreast of claims alone and self-government discussions of national issues that affect this government, he might begin to get some idea and develop an appreciation of the need for the person years that are assigned to it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Kakwi. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Minister would have appeared before the standing committee, as scheduled, then we wouldn't be asking these questions. Unfortunately, he wasn't available. I don't appreciate the Minister asking what is your point. If he was there, then all of these questions would have been asked at the committee level. Unfortunately, he wasn't available. So now we are discussing his budget to get all this information from him, so we can make certain recommendations to the ministry. That is why I am asking all of these questions. We observed that while he was absent from our committee meeting.

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Mr. Chairman, those are the reasons we are asking these questions. We didn't have the opportunity to ask our committee meeting. It is only fair to say that we observed these things. That is why we are asking questions now. I don't appreciate the Minister asking what our point is; if you are going to make your recommendation, make it. We are going to wait until we receive that information from the Minister, before we make any type of recommendations. We didn't have the opportunity during the January review when we were discussing this budget. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. If you read the record tomorrow, Mr. Zoe, you did make what seemed to be a statement. After that, you did pose a question as to what the government's response was to these concerns of the committee. I think that question you did ask was answered by the Minister and the record will show it tomorrow.

We are still on this item. Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I would like to move on, Mr. Chairman, to another area of the department. I want to comment on the intergovernmental affairs side of the department. There is a feeling of the committee, and it is my personal feeling, that in the next few years, this particular component of the department is going to take on ever-increasing importance as the country debates the lead-up to and the follow-up from the Quebec referendum. Whatever happens, it could have a profound impact on the Northwest Territories.

I just want to make a few observations for the Minister. One, the recommendation about increasing

the size of the Ottawa staff doesn't reflect negatively on the staff. Liz Snider and Bernie Funston are absolutely excellent people. Our view is a look ahead to the future as opposed to any sort of crisis from the past. We feel that they need more support in Ottawa in the coming months and years. We are quite satisfied with the calibre of work that is performed in the Ottawa office.

The second recommendation that the Minister referred to in his statement about Ottawa was separating intergovernmental affairs and aboriginal affairs, and having the Premier deal with intergovernmental affairs. I think the Minister's defence of the status quo is definitely a line of thought that has a lot of merit. But we are saying in the future, not in the past...I think the Minister did a great job during the whole Charlottetown debate and he did a superlative job of raising the profile of the Northwest Territories and of doing what I talked about today about showing a usefulness in intergovernmental affairs.

Over the next four years, more and more you are going to see the Premiers and the Prime Minister dealing with affairs of state. I think that however valid the arguments the Minister has made for the continuing integration of these two components, the political reality of the next four years is going to be such that the Premier will be dealing with a lot of these issues. Again, that is no criticism of what has happened in the past. The committee recommendation is crystal-balling a little into the future and there will be a situation where more and more our Premier is going to be having to interact with other Premiers and the Prime Minister on a fairly regular basis to protect our interests.

I have some questions for the Minister. It may help members of the public if the Minister could explain in more detail the actual role of the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs when it comes to issues such as devolution, for instance; and, the Quebec situation is another issue. I asked a question to the Minister of Renewable Resources about the turbot wars. It seems to me that if we are going to get involved in that, the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs has to play a key role. So perhaps the Minister could use some examples of the role that you should play in some of these situations I have mentioned. How does that coordinate with the role of the Premier and Ministers? That would be helpful to the committee in dealing with your department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, the status quo that the Member suggests I am defending is, in fact, what I thought this Legislative Assembly and this Cabinet has always endorsed, which is to deal with all the issues in a comprehensive manner, that takes into full account all the elements that relate to it. So when we talk about Justice and aboriginal languages, it is always suggested that we take a comprehensive full-scope view of issues before we start acting. It was that message that was so resoundingly endorsed by this new Cabinet and Legislature in 1991 that led to the formation of this ministry.

In the standing committee, the Members suggest there are some functions that should be looked at, and that we should look at expanding the Ottawa office. I accepted those good suggestions but the Members and I have to substantiate why. We can't just put one or more people in there, we have to be able to substantiate to each other what it is we're trying to do. There is no difficulty in looking at how the Ottawa office is now and the tasks they are to deliver to see what kinds of changes we should make.

What we don't want to do is simply make changes without solid reasons for it. The Premier has the power to give, take away and divide up portfolios as she sees fit, but even the Premier has to be able to rationalize why she would do that. If she decides, after a full commitment to a comprehensive approach, to separate the intergovernmental function, then she has to be able to articulate why. She articulated clearly why she was wedded to the comprehensive approach in 1991 so if there is reason for change at this time, then it's probably to make sure that she has it if she is going to take up the suggestion by this committee.

There are questions about what other things we do. Well, one of the functions of the Ottawa office, of course, is to keep abreast of issues and developments across this country that would have an effect on this government and the people of the Northwest Territories. The developments of the Parti Quebecois and the separatist movement is a case in point. I think even with one person monitoring in Ottawa, it still requires those of us up here to do our part in trying to develop our own perspective as things develop almost on a daily basis.

We know that issues such as the fishing dispute with the European community has some relevance to issues up here and when it first came out, it wasn't that clear. The more we

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monitored it and kept abreast of daily developments, it became clear that we have some interest. For instance, we recently injected the fur issue into that debate and brought it to the attention to the federal Ministers and our Members of Parliament.

It is by monitoring and keeping in touch with government officials, that brings the value of these positions to my attention, at least. Some things we get advice on. We get impressions of whether the referendum in Quebec is going to be delayed, what the rift between Parizeau and Bouchard is, and what other dynamics there are in the business community of Quebec. These are all things we have ongoing discussions about and, as I said, it is not black and white. It is important that we keep interested and keep monitoring it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I would like to clarify the 1991 concept of a comprehensive approach the Minister talked about. It's a concept that the Standing Committee on Finance has pushed very hard on in dealings with the federal government. But the original intent wasn't that the whole comprehensive approach was through the ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. The fairly consistent thinking of our committee and MLAs has been that we want a comprehensive Cabinet approach so that Cabinet Ministers, led by the Premier, would deal with these issues in a coordinated way.

I want to say again that we're not making any of these recommendations as a criticism of the past. I think we're trying to look at some of the political realities of the future. If the Minister wants some examples of an enhanced Ottawa function I think there should be a specific self-government component where we have support staff in Ottawa to assist aboriginal groups as they, over the next few years, carry on with their self-government negotiations, so our government is seen

as providing constructive support, office space, fax facilities, computers, et cetera.

I also see an increasing role of the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs -- it could go to the Premier's office or, if the Minister's feelings prevail, either/or -- in dealing with a range of economic issues. What's happening, for instance, is the federal government is essentially in the process of cutting off regional development funds to many regions in the country. I see that the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs should be coordinating strategies with, for instance, the Maritimes, regarding the western diversification fund. I see that as more and more of a role.

In order to protect the very viability of the Northwest Territories in the next four years -- and the same problem will be compounded when there are two territories -- we have to demonstrate in a very visual and strong sense that we're a key player. Otherwise, we're going to be swept under the table and become irrelevant very quickly. The concept of having meetings and monitoring information is very useful and an important part of the ministry, but if the ministry is not to be with the Premier, then the ministry should provide that sort of leadership. It should say, okay, there are issues developing

across the country and this is how we're going to deal with them.

If I have concerns, as an ordinary MLA, I would like to know who I'm going to go to. I really strongly believe that we have to take a much higher profile, both nationally and internationally. That's my belief; the Minister might not share it. I would like to have somebody accountable for dealing with this. I would like to have somebody say, no, we don't want to take a high profile, I believe that's the wrong approach, I think we should just monitor, we should keep a quiet profile and let fate decide which way we're going to end up. I would like to know who is going to say that.

Now, if it was the Premier and intergovernmental affairs, the Premier would be the key person but I don't know who to ask now. I don't know who to ask. For instance, we have the turbot wars. I think we should be very vocal; that is my own personal belief. Whose responsibility is it? Is it the Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Minister's responsibility? Is it the Premier's responsibility? Is it the Renewable Resources Minister's responsibility? Is it the Economic Development Minister's responsibility? The point here, Mr. Chairman, is that we would like some

clarity as to who is going to coordinate the intergovernmental strategy? If it is this Minister, what is the strategy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Again, Mr. Chairman, just to repeat again, we are committed to doing a review. There are suggestions that the committee has made about changes they would like to see. There is no argument with the suggestions; just that I can't blindly agree to them, no more than the Premier can. We need to do a review that can substantiate very clearly the direction which different departments would like us to take. For instance, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism would be a bit offended, I would say, if I developed a staff position in Ottawa that took on economic issues. That isn't the way we work. We have written to the different departments asking them to give us some input into the type of review we will need. Give us some ideas of what your expectations of the Ottawa office are and your view of the kind of requirements we will need over the next few years. It may be that we all will agree that a very high profile approach to deal with all the issues is the way to go.

However, we all need to articulate to our people why, in this time of fiscal restraint and cutbacks; to beef up the Ottawa office is going to require some rationalization. That is what we are going to look for in the review. We think can start quickly. We have started to work on it already. It should give us the kind of ammunition we need to articulate and support the changes that the committee is looking for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Any changes will have to be rationalized. The obvious area is if our staff in Ottawa had enough time, I really think there's more that we can do with the central agencies and more we can do with deputy ministers. What is

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going to be happening in the next few years that each one of the provinces have people in Ottawa. They

have contacts and connections. We have to always be there to protect ourselves. We have to invite as many federal Ministers up here as we can. Everything is going to be more aggressive than we have operated in the past. Not because we have been wrong in the past, but because the world is changing rapidly. I think it is very necessary that we address that. I am glad to hear the Minister will review it and hopefully when we come back in June, we will perhaps have some further thoughts.

I would like to leave the future for the moment and deal with the present. Perhaps the Minister can tell us his ideas of how the department is going to deal with the whole referendum issue. What is the strategy of our government dealing with its upcoming referendum?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lewis):

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, when the Quebec election happened, there was a real sense of a tremendous momentum in favour of the separatists. With the Bloc Quebecois and the PQ together, they had sufficient momentum to muster the forces required to have an early referendum and to have a very clear categorical yes to separation. They both had different suggestions and ideas. The Prime Minister's office was to keep out of it; to simply suggest that they believe the Quebec people didn't have their heart in it and that people were concerned about economics. Different provincial Premiers, Romanow and Klein had different reactions; so did Harcourt. In the end, everyone has taken a low-key approach as if to say whatever Quebec will decide to do, they don't need to have any external pressure brought on them. This has been our view as well because Quebec hasn't always been receptive to helping the Northwest Territories, certainly not in the discussions we had about trying to become equal partners in the different forums that provinces have protected for themselves over the years.

Other than monitoring and keeping abreast of issues with regard to Quebec, we have had no request for meetings with the Ministers or the Quebec government. I don't think any of the other provincial or territorial governments have done much of that either. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

That is good to know. I think all of us agree that Quebec issues have to be handled with a lot of sensitivity. I just want to get it on the public record the approach the Minister wanted to take with these issues.

I personally don't have a problem with a slow approach with Quebec, but I still strongly feel that on economic issues we should be taking a strong high-profile approach. But it would be useful if the Minister kept Members informed as to what is happening in Quebec. All of us should keep in the back of our minds that there are more important ramifications to the Northwest Territories than just whether we ship through Montreal or not. If the centre is slashed, if Quebec leaves, the edges of confederation are hurt the worst; not as much blood pumps through half a heart, as it were. So it is a very, very significant issue for us. It has to be handled with a lot of subtlety. But what we always have to keep in mind is that we -- at the end of the day -- can probably be the most adversely affected of anybody with Quebec separating.

Or on the other hand, an area where I definitely think that the Minister should be meeting with his federal and provincial counterparts about is what happens if they don't separate, so we can have some input to whatever the fallout would be from either a referendum being delayed, or a referendum losing, and another constitutional round begins. As the Minister knows, you can never get in the game too early.

So, my question to the Minister is, is the Minister, or is the Premier's office, being kept up to date -- as I know all other Premiers are -- as to what is actually happening? And if new thinking evolves out of what happens in Quebec, can we be confident that we will be right in there on the ground floor, we won't find ourselves in another Meech Lake situation where the die is cast and we have to get into the game after the fact. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, through the principal secretary, the Premier's office is kept informed as to issues of

national significance, national interest, issues that we feel she should be made aware of as a result of our own interest here in the Northwest Territories. Our Ottawa office and our office here make a point to make sure that the information is provided to the Premier's office every day.

We are also developing a paper -- which will be developed over the next month or two -- in partnership with other departments. Other deputy ministers will scope out more of the national issues that are of concern to this government, and the approach that we should take as a government, in our view as a ministry; that this government should take in pursuing these issues.

For instance, on some issues we may very well agree and be able to articulate detail. For instance, the economic issues that the Member is continuously referring to, we may find that we are in full agreement with his sentiments and suggest that we should do that on some issues. On other issues, we may disagree and find that we want to take a more wait-and-see

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approach, a monitoring approach. So we are working on such a position paper. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi, as the leader of the Ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. General comments. I have Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the Quebec situation, I would like to ask the Minister if he has considered whether the Northwest Territories government should have a role or should be involved, or can assist in the proposed planning of the pan-Inuit referendum that has been recommended by ITC to take place around the time of the Quebec referendum. Since we want to promote the special interests of the Inuit and the people of the Northwest Territories, in case Quebec should separate, I wonder if there is a role for our government to assist in this referendum. We have an election machine and we have a Plebiscite Act that have been used in the past for these kinds of major questions. I just wonder if the Minister has any comments on that issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been keeping abreast of the work being done by the Inuit, with regard to their suggestion of having a pan-Arctic referendum. We have not been approached and we have not been asked to become involved or to lend any type of assistance. If such a question was asked, we would take this to the Premier and have it considered by Cabinet before we made any comments on it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that response. I would like to ask the Minister about intergovernmental issues more as they relate to the circumpolar

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world. Firstly, what has been the Minister's role in the proposal to create an Arctic council? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Qujannamiik. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has been of ongoing interest to the Minister for some years. We not only supported the establishment and the appointment of the Circumpolar Ambassador, Mary Simon. When she indicated interest in visiting the Northwest Territories, it was our ministry that did the support work to ensure that the meetings she wanted were arranged and scheduled appropriately for her. We ensured that there is a committee set up of the deputy ministers to ensure that the work is being done to lobby for an Arctic council and information is provided to Mary Simon's office, and, certainly to our own, about the work that she is doing overseas and in the United States; and to do political assessments of the developments that are occurring as a result of her own personal presence in that office.

Just one more point; we, as a government, wrote to the Prime Minister shortly after the appointment of Mary Simon and before she went to Ottawa, which

resulted in the Prime Minister writing a letter to President Clinton of the United States, and this has acquired his support for the establishment of an Arctic council. So that type of work is being done and it is producing results. It is not as a result of our own intervention, but it is a result of that with many other things, especially the personal presence of Ambassador Mary Simon, that lent tremendous credibility to this quest for more circumpolar relations and the establishment of the Arctic Council.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, this is great news if our recommendations to the circumpolar ambassador has resulted in the Canadian Prime Minister persuading the American President to change the historic opposition of the US to the Arctic Council. I think this is great news and it is the first that I've heard of this breakthrough. I'm quite delighted with the Minister's response.

I guess I'd like to ask, generally, about circumpolar relations and about the ministry's role. I'm frankly concerned that circumpolar relations have not been given the priority lately that they should have been. I know full well that there has been major fiscal issues and government reorganization has been a preoccupation of the current government, but I am concerned that protocols and agreements that have been signed with Greenland, for example, and with the Sakha Republic may not have been given the attention that they should have been in recent years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, some years ago we had a function within the Ottawa office specifically assigned to take care of circumpolar issues and that position no longer exists, as part of downsizing. Since then, we have not been monitoring the agreements we've had in any detail. Certainly, I have not been keeping abreast of these things myself so I would have to ask the ministry for more details on it. I'm fairly certain we haven't been, with any great commitment or energy, keeping abreast of the past agreements we've signed.

As the Member knows, we've also signed a number of agreements with various political entities within the former Soviet Union. We've signed education agreements, language agreements, I believe, and we've had a northern management program with Russia. I will get a listing of all the different agreements that are the responsibility of this ministry and report back to Members for their information. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that response, Mr. Chairman. I think, in keeping with Mr. Ballantyne's recommendation that we should look beyond our own borders within Canada, I think it's also important to look beyond our borders in the world, particularly the circumpolar world. I know that sometimes it seems like a luxury or tremendous expense to cultivate international relations but there usually is a payoff.

Even those who are questioning the costs of circumpolar relations have to look at the visits over the years to the Soviet north which have finally produced concrete economic benefits for NWT companies in the form of construction opportunities, particularly in the Sakha Republic. I think Mr. Todd has informed Members of this House that recent exploration in Greenland about transportation initiatives could also produce some very concrete opportunities, not just savings in the cost of imported goods, but also the possibilities of applying northern Canadian technology in building airports.

I guess I would like to thank the Minister for his answer, reinforce that, in my opinion, this is a worthwhile expenditure of effort and suggest that, even though we're without a circumpolar affairs officer within the department, consideration should be given to assigning one of the existing staff with that mandate. This is just a suggestion I would like to make.

The other good reason for circumpolar work, Mr. Chairman, is the environmental threat that is very real, particularly from the Soviet Union. Oil spills and radioactive material are good reasons to have connections with the Soviet Union and to watch what is going on. Mr. Chairman, that's a comment. I won't ask the Minister for a response, I'm satisfied that he is

going to look into the issue and perhaps pay attention to my advice. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Any further general comments? Welcome back, Fred Koe. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

In the area of land claims issues, I would like to ask the Minister about the role the government and his ministry are taking with regard to self-government negotiations between aboriginal groups in the western Arctic and the federal government. I would like the Minister to describe that for me and then I'll follow up with some more questions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

In the area of self-government negotiations, it's the position of this government and the Government of Canada as well that, given the nature of the issues being negotiated, particularly programs and services presently handled by this government, the Government of the Northwest Territories has to be party to the negotiations. We could let the federal government and different aboriginal groups negotiate unilaterally without any consideration or regard for the impact on the public that we're set to serve by staying out of negotiations, but we believe it's contrary to the interests of the public, including the aboriginal people who are a substantial portion of the public. We are set to be part of the self-government negotiations at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. I would like to thank the Minister for that. Can the Minister describe the role that the government is playing in the self-government negotiations? Are there specifics that he could describe at this time? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, when the claims negotiations started some years ago, the Inuvialuit negotiations and every one subsequent to that, there was no policy that directed and gave focus to this government to participate in the negotiations. So when the self-government discussions starting being initiated, we decided that we wanted to be clear to everyone about the mandate and the manner in which we would conduct ourselves in such negotiations would be. So we drafted a self-government mandate and subsequent protocol. We brought it to Cabinet and Cabinet approved it for consultation purposes. We have circulated this paper to a number of different aboriginal groups down the Mackenzie Valley and across the territories, asking for their input.

There are two concerns at this time. One is the concern about the integrity of the bilateral relationship between First Nations and the federal government. The second concern has to do with the fact that the federal government hasn't come up with its own policy on self-government. The Liberal Party is committed to coming out with a paper on the inherent right to self-government. The last I checked, which was about two months ago, the Minister had a page of talking points after a year of discussions and internal work. So I think it is very tough. We have been pressuring the government to try to expedite the process, so that we have a good quality paper that fully embraces the inherent right and, secondly, to try to come up with it in short order, so that self-government negotiations can proceed with groups, knowing the full scope of what is available from the federal government.

At the present time, there is some attempt for negotiations to proceed, but without any mandate or knowing the full scope, it is very difficult to proceed at all. This is our thinking on it. We haven't finished the consultation on the mandate and protocol. Once that is done, we will take into account all the comments made by the aboriginal groups and make some recommendations to Cabinet as a result of that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. This policy is very important. I have heard concerns about this protocol. There have been

a lot of discussions in the past about self-government negotiations between the different First Nations people and the federal government. The Minister is saying there is no policy at the present time. He is developing a policy and is currently waiting for consultation to take place between the different First Nations groups and his ministry. Is it the position of this department that no negotiations on self-government will take place unless this policy is in place? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The federal government doesn't have a policy. We are trying to develop one for ourselves that will tell all groups, the federal government and the public, what we are going to do in the self-government negotiations; what mandate we will have in going into those talks. The federal government has no policy as such, so it is unable at this time to meet the demands of the Dogrib, for instance, who want to get into full-fledged self-

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government negotiations. They simply can't do it. They are having full-blown discussions; what they call exploratory discussions. They are directing their officials to have exploratory talks about the visions or aspirations of aboriginal groups in these talks with a view that Ron Irwin will get Cabinet to move quickly to adopt a paper on self-government, particularly a position on inherent rights. We have no demands. We are simply trying to insist that, in order for negotiations to be orderly; in order for negotiations to have some focus, we all should have very clearly spelled-out expectations, so we can get on with the work and try to articulate self-government for our people.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

Thank you. There are two different groups that haven't settled their claims according to the way other groups have; the Deh Cho and the Treaty 8 First Nations. What, if any, specific effort has the Minister and his department taken to reconcile the concerns of the Deh Cho and Treaty 8 First Nations regarding

self-government negotiations and division? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, regarding the Constitutional Development Steering Committee work, as I understand it the Members of that group have left the doors open to Treaty 8 and the Deh Cho to become full members whenever they choose to. At this time, they are enjoying observer status and have a very good rapport with the Members of that committee, as was reflected in the concluding moments of the last constitutional conference.

With regard to specific self-government discussions with Treaty 8 and the Deh Cho with the federal government, Treaty 8 is being supported in trying to move ahead with some discussions with the federal government, particularly with regard to programs and services. I'm not certain that this is moving ahead with any great speed at this time, but we have tried, particularly with the Premier, to be supportive of initiatives taken by that group.

With regard to the Deh Cho and self-government, as I said, it is exploratory at this time. They've indicated that they don't want us in the negotiations and on other issues, they want us to be informed and involved. There is no clear-cut sentiment at this time regarding it. It is our view that just about anything can go in these exploratory talks. For instance, the Deh Cho has said on occasion that they want their own separate territory and the federal government has no reason to say no because, again, they don't have a policy, but, neither can they say yes. So, all they can do at this time is maintain a holding pattern.

There have been exploratory talks with the view of finding out what the aspirations are and what it is the groups want. We know in many cases that people say they have a particular way to approach issues and they know exactly what they want but I think the federal government is of the view that if they have enough discussions with these groups, they will be able to come up with an idea of what it is that these aboriginal groups really want and then try to come up with alternative suggestions to meet the things they want met. This is the strategy, as I see it, on the part of the federal government right now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

I would like to ask the Minister, what is the ministry's position and strategy with regard to the Deh Cho position?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, it has been my view, as a Minister -- and I think the federal Minister articulated at the opening of the constitutional conference that we're not going to have three territories; we're not going to have six either in the western part of the territory -- there are going to be two territories and so whatever self-government aspirations we have, whatever political or constitutional aspirations we have as a people in the western territory, we have to accept certain realities. At this time, it seems to be that they're not setting up territories for 2,000 or 3,000 people.

Those of us who wish to pursue this can. I just think it's going to be a couple of generations before it's realized. As long as everybody accepts the difficulties of certain scenarios, it's not a problem. Nobody wants to undermine those things. But it's important, in any case, to try to get clear what it is that groups really want. For instance, if it becomes clear that the general public, the treaty public, the aboriginal public, is willing to take a decrease in the levels of services they have in order to come up with a complex system of government, that would entail, for instance, very strong regional governments. That's a message that all political leaders have to take.

As long as it's clear that's what people want, there is no agenda on our part to undermine that. But, at the same time, as a government, if a group like the Deh Cho would say we want to set up our own government and it is going to be such that there is a change in the level of service but that's our mandate in any case, we might find that we need to, not so much challenge it, but make sure the people who are going to enjoy or suffer the change in the level of service have a chance to endorse that or reject it. That's the thinking on our part. There's no secret.

As a Minister, I've talked to the Deh Cho directly and I've talked to Treaty 8 as well and have said that I

don't think it's realistic to suggest that we can actively support the territory separating. In the case of Treaty 8, it would just be for a few hundred people; and in the case of the Deh Cho, it would be a few thousand people but I don't think it's economically realistic and I've yet to hear anybody suggest that I'm wrong on that count.

At this time, the federal government is not hard-lining this. They want to find out more, as I said, about what the Deh Cho wants and why they are choosing the route they are. If there is any possible way to meet the wishes of the Deh Cho people through another approach, I think that's what the federal government wants to do. We're certainly trying to be involved in those talks to help with that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Antoine.

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MR. ANTOINE:

I would like to ask the Minister if he and his ministry are providing any resources, financial or in terms of advice, such as this government has done for the other claimant groups in the past? Are they providing that kind of service to the Deh Cho? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

With land claim negotiations, I was taking the view that it is primarily the function of the federal government and all funding for it should come from the feds. Where there are requests for assistance, advice and support by different groups, we've always taken a very positive approach to trying to meet that.

We think the federal government should also fund self-government negotiations. It should be seen as incremental costs and something the federal government should provide money for. If there is a specific request from groups, if they ask us to take a supportive role or to try to do certain jobs on their behalf, with their support, we would again be very happy to try to do that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

It's obvious that this department is not very supportive of the Deh Cho position and it would be good if the Minister and his department could work with the people of the Deh Cho to try to come to a good understanding. I don't think that's happening. I want to say that the people from the Deh Cho are people from the Northwest Territories too, and this government is to provide programs and services to everybody on an equitable basis. There is an opposition between this department and the Deh Cho. There are different philosophies. The Deh Cho are people who don't really accept anyone else's philosophy except their own. So you have to try to find a way to work together. That is the only point that I am trying to make.

Some time ago, Treaty 8 people had approached me to raise an item in Caucus. Treaty 8 wanted to meet with Caucus regarding the boundaries that were signed by this government. Mr. Kakfwi, the honourable Minister, was supposed to meet with them. Has any meeting taken place and what was the result of that meeting? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, Treaty 8 has indicated they are willing to meet with Caucus. A meeting with me was not what they were asking for. So we have passed it on to Caucus. I think it is important to make some comments here about the rift between certain political leaders in the Mackenzie Valley. It involves the former regions and members of the Dene Nation, as well as myself. When the comprehensive claim of the Dene-Metis collapsed, there was an alternative given that those people who wanted to reject the comprehensive claim. There was no alternative given to people of the communities to vote on it. The Dene assembly rejected, although it wasn't unanimous, the comprehensive claim, rather than give people a chance to vote on whether they wanted to reject it or accept it. They elected to throw it out. There was no leadership provided to tell the people what

the options were. People will recall that the Gwich'in left, the Sahtu left and that was the end of the Dene Nation.

The Gwich'in have gone on to settle their regional claim and so have the Sahtu. The Dogrib are now proceeding with that. The original dream of the Dene Nation was that the entire Dene up and down the valley would work towards one government for themselves, Metis and non-aboriginal people. That is the vision that many of us had when we originally came to support and believe in the Dene Nation. The Deh Cho says that for whatever reason, they elect to separate themselves from the other Dene from up and down the valley. They want their own separate territory. We can't rewrite history. The Dene wanted one government for themselves and they still believe if they put a proposal in front of the Deh Cho people, in front of the Treaty 8 people and give them two options: one, small regional governments; or, one single government for all Dene, Metis and non-aboriginal people, they will go for the one-government system. This is what has been driving me for half of my life. So it is a political rift. I can't, in all honesty, go to the Deh Cho and say I am going to support you blindly with whatever you want. I can't do that.

I don't think it is realistic to say if the Deh Cho people want their own separate territory, let them divide. We have to find a way to meet the things they want in a larger territory. I would suggest the Deh Cho may find that they are not the only people who have principles that they believe in. They will find that the original members of the Dene Nation would strongly support almost all of the principles that are contained in their proposal. They have to make an effort to meet with the Gwich'in, the Sahtu, the Dogrib, Treaty 8, and Members of the non-aboriginal public to say here are the things we believe in, let's all work on it together. That is what started in the first constitutional conference. I have no qualms about saying the things that I don't think are going to jibe. I also have a tremendous amount of optimism about the Deh Cho meeting its aspirations. We will just have to take a different approach. It is through discussions that we are going to do it. In one meeting to discuss self-government, we were kicked out of the room. The next time we were allowed to stay, but for only part of it. We are still insisting we want to keep working. We are trying to make a positive effort. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

General comments. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE:

It is good to be reminded of a little history to put things into perspective. It is always painful to go back over

that type of history. The reality is here now. The Deh Cho have taken the position that they want to pursue. If the Minister is very optimistic, what he said here today clears a lot of these misunderstandings up. If he was able to articulate those words to the Deh Cho leadership directly and maybe to the Treaty 8, perhaps they might be more open for discussion in the future. What I am hearing is good. I just wanted to say that this ministry has to work closer with these two groups because they have taken specific directions on how they want to approach self-government, land claims and it needs a lot of discussion. It is going to be hard to go in there and tell them they have taken the wrong approach. The people the Minister has working in this department has to be able to communicate very well with the leaders of the Deh Cho. That is lacking right now. I don't really know why his department was kicked out of the room when they were talking about self-government, perhaps

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they don't trust the people who are there. If that is the case, they are going to have to work on building up that trust somehow.

As for Treaty 8 First Nations not wanting to meet with the Minister, why is that? There have to be reasons for the type of positions that these different aboriginal groups have taken. They don't just do it because they feel like it. There have to be reasons. The way to overcome that is more open dialogue between this government department and the Deh Cho and Treaty 8 First Nations. Those are general comments on this one, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister, you want to respond?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When the Deh Cho and the other chiefs of the Dene Nation met prior to the constitutional conference, I was invited to go down and speak with them, so I had -- without any notes or a prepared statement -- gone down and given them my expectations of the conference and how I thought it should be focused. In the resulting comments, perhaps I was too negative and hard on the Treaty 8 and Deh Cho position, as I understood it, and simply called for some changes. I didn't gain any fans from that particular leadership group.

As Members know, the constitutional conference itself mended a tremendous number of fences, and the goodwill that resulted is still enjoyed by people now. It was a very positive conference, it showed the extent to which ordinary people are willing to go to embrace the massive degree of change that aboriginal groups are calling for. The dynamics of these negotiations are difficult to explain, and I can't explain the animosity or the goodwill that results.

For instance, when the Gwich'in started negotiations, the Gwich'in decided to become very tight knit and to exclude all outside people. I was the Minister at the time; we were very supportive of their negotiations. We worked very hard with the federal government with them to expedite their negotiations. We, too, we received a tremendous amount of negative feelings and animosity from the Gwich'in in the course of the negotiations.

There was no appreciation for the fact that some of us involved, particularly Bob Overvold and myself, were largely responsible for at least 75 per cent of the content of the Gwich'in claim, because it came from Dene/Metis comprehensive claim. There was no appreciation for the ownership and the work that we put into it. There was very little fanfare given to some of the issues that we advanced on behalf of the Gwich'in. The dynamics were such that the Gwich'in were under the impression that they were doing all this work on their own, and they were going to do it and they didn't want anyone coming to their aid. At least, politically, that seemed to be the perception. So, we did our work and didn't expect any applause or praise and we weren't disappointed, we didn't get very much of it.

The animosity that digs in any time that we sit down for negotiations. It was in the Sahtu negotiations, not to any great degree, but it was there. Presently, with the Dogrib, there is a lot of apprehension and animosity on the part of some leaders, about this government's position. Or apprehension as a result of our lack of clear position on self-government. It ties into many other issues.

So, it is difficult to say or explain how it all works, but I do know that the dynamics, at the best of times, are incredibly complex. It is no surprise, given that the issues that we deal with are forever. Once you give up some land, once you decide not to define certain rights, once you decide certain rights are not worth dying for and you are willing to extinguish them, it is forever.

So the stress from the magnitude of what you are doing is tremendous and there is some aberration, perhaps, in some of our behaviour. Once it is done, relations and...(inaudible)...our relationship with the Gwich'in right now is as if those days of perceived battle and differences never happened. Same with the Sahtu, and I expect it will be the same with all groups as we resolve these issues of self-government and comprehensive claims. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. I have Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The comments that I have to make begin with the fact that at the very beginning of our committee discussion this afternoon, several Members of the Standing Committee on Finance wanted to make comments, and I wasn't sure whether they were personal comments or whether they were comments that came from the committee.

One of the advantages of being on SCOF, of course - - and I was there for four years and certainly appreciated a deep insight into all kinds of things in government -- is you are exposed to so much of the detail of the ongoing operations of the government. So I am not quite sure whether I am hearing the full recommendation of the committee or whether I am hearing individual personal opinions or subjective ideas, and so on, about the ways things should go when Members speak in committee of the whole.

However, I did hear some things, and I certainly respect all our committees and the recommendations that they make. But just a few observations; I was in Ottawa when the referendum took place in 1981, and I ate a lot of left-over food and other things, at various celebrations around the city which weren't held, simply because the referendum lost. There were all kinds of events planned for the night, I remember going to one with an old friend of mine who was the only person we had in Ottawa at that time. He went to everything; everything you wanted him to do, he showed up, went there, briefed people back home as to what should happen. So I have a bit of a bias about all the kinds of things that should be going on in Ottawa. In the nearly 30 years that I have been involved in government, in one shape or form, I've been trying to get as much stuff out of Ottawa, for the north, as we could; trying to get as many things done back home as we could.

And we have seen various developments in the south that have replaced things that one time we depended upon the government to look after. They have been referred to this afternoon; the Circumpolar Commission, the Inuit Tapirisat that was evolved, and all kinds of other groups in Ottawa that have

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a watching...(inaudible)...if you like, on many of the things that go on in Ottawa.

Anything that we do there has to be focused on the issues of the day. We have done that in the past, on the Meech and Charlottetown accords; we've made sure that we had good constitutional people, because we could be very, very deeply affected if some of the proposals that were being thrown around at that time went into effect.

So I do have concerns about -- unless you have far more information than the rest of us do -- what we should be doing, because there are huge gaps there, or because there are huge problems that are not being addressed. Maybe SCOF has information that we don't have about why we should be doing something. I would have to be convinced that there is a tremendous workload that suddenly evolved that wasn't there before. I thought the busy time for us was when we were doing Meech Lake and Charlottetown. I remember it because it was very active. Lots of people were going back and forth.

What I want to know now is what has suddenly caused the need to have a new dynamic? I'm hearing a bit about the Quebec referendum and that was going to cause the dynamic to change; that we would really have to get involved and do all kinds of things. I have never heard that before. I didn't know the Quebec issue was going to be a huge thing that would have the kind of impact that we saw potentially arising out of the national concern for the Constitution. I recognize that it's an important event, but I can't see how this is a huge thing in the way it is being played up to be.

Neither can I see a lot of things, as well. You can build an argument for doing almost anything. If it is a little flat fish called a turbot which is suddenly a big issue we have to deal with, well okay, let's hear all the arguments about what we can do about the little fish. Maybe we can adopt it as our territorial fish, we can make it our symbol or maybe we could ask Newfoundland to adopt it temporarily as a symbol so

it could be a symbol that will gather everyone around for a fight.

I'm not downplaying the importance of economics, I'm not downplaying the importance of the Quebec question. What I'm asking is, really, how are we going to build up a case for building up Ottawa when for the last 30-odd years, we've been trying to get as much done here as we can. Every time we see something, we say this makes sense and we'll do it now, have a go at it. That's just one comment that came to mind when I heard about this big chase for building up Ottawa. We really have to do something there.

I'm not against doing anything that makes sense. If it makes sense, you can see it's a priority, it matters, if you get value for money and so on, I have no problem. But I haven't heard the big argument why this is suddenly a big, huge earth-shattering thing where suddenly we are forced and pressed to do something.

It struck me very soon that our government is going to be very much criticized if it did more than simply play its part. To his credit, Mr. Kakwi recognized that early on too. It is not our government that should decide, it is the people of the west who would decide the way we would go. We would play our appropriate role, but to criticize someone for not showing leadership when you're told that's not something people want you to lead, it seems to me to make sense that you don't do it. If that's something people don't want you to do, then you should say, okay, we'll play our role, like everybody has asked us to do.

I hear the same comments also about the kind of involvement this government should have in the whole issue of land claims and so on. People have told us to stay away from it. How can you show leadership when you're told that this isn't a role that people would like you to play, that this is what they want to see done. If you go and show leadership, say this is what I think, you get dumped on because that's not what people think you should be saying. They don't agree with you.

I've heard this statement before from Mr. Kakwi about the way he sees things. He's made it quite clear that this is a vision that he feels will sell, could be funded, and is "doable", if you like. Then people make statements and say no, you're showing leadership in the wrong way, that's not what we mean by leadership. Leadership means doing just exactly what people tell you to do. He's demonstrated that he

can do both. He can do what he's told, to just stay out unless he feels what is right is to show some leadership in the overall direction we should go as a western territory.

That's the end of my statement, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much for recognizing me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. We are dealing with Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister a concrete question about the government's involvement in the Makivik offshore claim in James Bay. I would like to ask the Minister: what our government's role is in these negotiations; what our status is; whether there are limits on our status; and, what position the GNWT is taking on

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two issues that I understand are the subject of the Makivik claim. One, the proposal to create a giant wildlife management regime between the NWT, Quebec and aboriginal organizations for joint wildlife management; and, two, on possible claims for land on offshore islands that are within the jurisdiction of the Northwest Territories by the Makivik Corporation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would have to ask for a detailed report on the negotiations regarding wildlife cooperation, the suggestions of having a joint approach to wildlife management with Makivik and the Quebec government. On the second point regarding lands being claimed that are NWT lands, again, I would need to get a briefing on that as well. The discussions are ongoing on an monthly basis but I don't have a detailed report. I'd have to get that for the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. It seems that some of the information you require, requires some time to put together, Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

I understand, Mr. Chairman, this may be considered an obscure issue but I do think it has important implications for the NWT and Nunavut. As we approach the issue of the Quebec referendum, I also think that the question of offshore islands in James Bay and Hudson Bay becomes more and more important. I guess I would just like to flag for the Minister that this issue is of concern to Members like myself whose constituency, along with that of Mr. Pudlat, is subject to negotiations.

My constituency goes to Ungava and includes, for the time being anyway, Killinik Island, which is a major offshore island with major fishery potential. I'm interested in the question. Perhaps I should have given the Minister notice that I was going to ask it here, but I guess I would like to be briefed and I'm sure Mr. Pudlat might like to be briefed as well, if not Members of the Nunavut Caucus, because I think this has implications for Nunavut.

I know we're capable of being represented by Liz Snider, in whom I have great confidence, but I am concerned that we, in these negotiations, are part of the federal team, and I don't know how this constrains us and I don't know whether there are problems being experienced because we can't take an independent position; whereas, the Government of Quebec may have more freedom and flexibility than we do.

I just wanted to throw those issues out, and I would appreciate getting a briefing, Mr. Chairman. It's not urgent, but I think it would be useful for us to have a briefing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Just a short comment to clarify that we are part of the federal team and we're not a separate party. Secondly, we will provide detailed briefing papers for the Members, particularly for Mr. Patterson and Mr. Pudlat, as soon as possible. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We seem to be running out of time.
General comments from the floor. Mr. Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON:

Just a question before we conclude this afternoon, Mr. Chairman. There's a new Division Secretariat being established in the Executive. What I would like to ask is how does this Division Secretariat relate with the Ministry of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, and why is it not part of that ministry rather than being part of the Executive Council Secretariat? It very much relates with the NTI and the political work associated with Nunavut, the Nunavut Implementation Commission. I'm just wondering why it reports to the Executive and the Premier and not through this ministry. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We'll carry on tomorrow. I will recognize the clock and rise to report progress to the Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, witnesses. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come to order. We're on item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 22 and Bill 1 and Committee Report 4-12(7) and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Seconded by Mr. Dent. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

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

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 15: An Act To Amend The Elections Act

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

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

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

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, No. 2, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 19 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

Bill 20: Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 20, Loan Authorization Act, 1995-96, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

---Carried

Bill 20 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, item 22, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there are meetings for tomorrow morning at 9:00 am of the Caucus and at 10:30 of the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, April 11, 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

18. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and

Executive Council Act, No. 2

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

- 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

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned
until Tuesday, April 11, 1995, at 1:30 pm.

--ADJOURNMENT